

The Impact of Atmospherics on Customer Experience at the Seattle Coffee Shop at Medstone Umhlanga

By
Craig Vadivalu



Alec Bozas

Research



BCom Honours in Strategic Brand Management

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the Bachelors Degree of Honours in
Strategic Brand Management at Vega School of Brand Leadership, a brand of the
Independent Institute of Education (IIE)

DECLARATION

I Craig Vadivalu hereby declare that this Research submitted for the Bachelor Degree of Honours in Strategic Brand Management to the Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

Student Number: 

Date: 13 December 2020



Signed by C.Vadivalu

WORDS: 10 902

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to say thank you to my supervisor, Alec Bozas, for his help and guidance along my research journey. This would not have been possible without him.

Thank you to my grandparents, siblings and the rest of my family for their love and support. Lastly, thank you to my parents for their love, support and encouragement throughout my academic journey. Their guidance and support has shaped me into the person I am today.

ABSTRACT

This research investigated the impact that ambient factors such as lighting, sound, odours and design layout have on customers' in-store experiences. Identifying the atmospheric variables and their impact on customer experience was beneficial as it will enable Seattle to enhance customer experience and improve the brand's image. The problem was a perceived failure by Seattle, to identify positive and negative atmospheric contributors. This research followed a qualitative approach; it used mailed interview schedules and video-based interviews to elicit in-depth client information from 11 individuals who have visited or purchased from the café. This was appropriate as an in-depth description of client experiences was required. Furthermore, it prevented physical interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings indicated both the positive and negative atmospheric variables within Seattle. However, Seattle's overall store atmosphere resulted in a positive customer experience, thus, resulting in a favourable perception of the brand. In addition, recommendations have been made as to how the brand can improve the atmospherics in order to retain existing clients and attract new ones.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER PAGE.....	I
DECLARATION.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	III
ABSTRACT.....	IV
LIST OF FIGURES.....	IX
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	X
CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 CONTEXTUALISATION.....	1
1.3 RATIONALE.....	2
1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	2
1.5 RESEARCH PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTION.....	2
1.5.1 RESEARCH PURPOSE.....	2
1.5.2 RESEARCH QUESTION.....	3
1.6 OBJECTIVES.....	3
1.7 SUMMARY AND CHAPTER OUTLINE.....	3
1.8 CONCLUSION.....	4
CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW.....	5
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	5
2.2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION.....	5
2.2.1 MEHRABIAN AND RUSSELL'S SOR FRAMEWORK (1978).....	5
2.2.2 THE TURLEY AND MILLIMAN MODEL (2004).....	6

2.3 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS LITERATURE.....	8
2.3.1 ATMOSPHERIC STIMULI.....	8
2.3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE: TO IDENTIFY HOW ATMOSPHERICS PROMOTE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE.....	8
2.3.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE TWO: TO IDENTIFY NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTORS SO THAT THERE CAN BE CONTROLLED AND AVOIDED.....	11
2.4 CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF KEY TERMS.....	14
2.5 CONCLUSION.....	14
CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	16
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	16
3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM.....	16
3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	17
3.4 POPULATION.....	18
3.5 SAMPLING.....	19
3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS.....	21
3.6.1 APPLICATION OF DATA COLLECTION METHODS.....	23
3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS.....	24
3.7.1 APPLICATION OF DATA ANALYSIS METHODS.....	25
3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS.....	25
3.9 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTIONS.....	27
3.10 CONCLUSION.....	27
CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	28
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	28

4.2 RESPONDENT PROFILES.....	28
4.2.1 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS - EMAIL INTERVIEW SCHEDULES.....	28
4.2.2 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS - VIDEO BASED INTERVIEWS.....	29
4.3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS IN RELATION TO OBJECTIVES.....	29
4.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE.....	30
4.4.1 QUESTION ONE.....	30
4.4.2 QUESTION TWO.....	31
4.4.3 QUESTION THREE.....	32
4.4.4 QUESTION FOUR	33
4.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE TWO.....	34
4.5.1 QUESTION ONE.....	34
4.5.2 QUESTION TWO.....	35
4.5.3 QUESTION THREE.....	36
4.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE THREE.....	37
4.6.1 QUESTION ONE.....	37
4.6.2 QUESTION TWO.....	38
4.6.3 QUESTION THREE.....	39
4.7 CONCLUSION.....	39
CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	40
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	40
5.2 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	40
5.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE.....	40
5.3.1 FINDINGS FROM PREVIOUS LITERATURE.....	40
5.3.2 FINDINGS FROM DATA COLLECTED.....	40
5.3.3 CONCLUSION.....	40
5.3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	41

5.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE TWO.....	41
5.4.1 FINDINGS FROM PREVIOUS LITERATURE.....	41
5.4.2 FINDINGS FROM DATA COLLECTED.....	41
5.4.3 CONCLUSION.....	41
5.4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	41
5.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE THREE.....	42
5.5.1 FINDINGS FROM PREVIOUS LITERATURE.....	42
5.5.2 FINDINGS FROM DATA COLLECTED.....	42
5.5.3 CONCLUSION.....	42
5.5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	42
5.6 RESEARCH QUESTION.....	43
5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	43
5.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	43
5.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	44
5.10 LIMITATIONS.....	44
5.11 DELIMITATIONS.....	45
5.12 CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	45
REFERENCES.....	46
APPENDICES.....	52
APPENDIX A: PROOF OF ETHICAL CLEARANCE.....	52
APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORMS.....	53
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	56
APPENDIX D: GOOGLE IMAGES.....	58
APPENDIX E: SUMMARY TABLE.....	61

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 2.1: MEHRABIAN AND RUSSELL'S SOR FRAMEWORK (1978)	5
FIGURE 2.2: THE TURLEY AND MILLIMAN MODEL (2004)	7
FIGURE 4.1: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS FOR EMAIL INTERVIEW SCHEDULES	28
FIGURE 4.2: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS FOR VIDEO BASED INTERVIEWS	29
FIGURE 4.3: RESPONSE IN RELATION TO DECORATIVE LIGHTING	30
FIGURE 4.4: FRAGRANCES - COFFEE OR BAKED GOODS	31
FIGURE 4.5: ATTRACTIVE INTERIOR DESIGN ASPECTS	32
FIGURE 4.6: FEELINGS IN RELATION TO NATURAL LIGHT	33
FIGURE 4.7: RESPONSE IN RELATION TO CLOSE SEATING	34
FIGURE 4.8: RESPONSE IN RELATION TO OVERCROWDING	35
FIGURE 4.9: IMPACT OF NOISE	36
FIGURE 4.10: INSTORE IMAGERY AND DESIGN	37
FIGURE 4.11: AWARENESS OF MUSIC WITHIN A CAFÉ	38
FIGURE 4.12: RESPONSE IN RELATION TO COMFORTABLE SEATING	39

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PROOF OF ETHICAL CLEARANCE.....	50
APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORMS.....	51
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	54
APPENDIX D: GOOGLE IMAGES.....	56

CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This research aimed to investigate and identify how the use of atmospherics at Seattle Coffee, Medstone Umhlanga affects customers' experiences and impacts the brand's image. The problem is a perceived failure by the management to identify positive and negative atmospheric contributors as the ambience of a venue adds to the overall experience (Waters, 2019). Therefore, failure to appreciate the importance of atmospherics could result in Seattle losing clientele. This research identified positive and negative atmospheric contributors in order to reduce negative experience at the business and thereby help the management improve client experiences in the café. It highlights atmospheric stimuli and how they can be manipulated to provide the best possible experience for customers. The following theories and models are examined in this study, the Mehrabian- Russel Model and the Turley and Milliman model.

1.2 CONTEXTUALISATION

A store's environmental stimuli and ambience affect customer emotions, thereby, affecting customer experience, perception and purchase behaviour (Waters, 2019). Therefore, these factors can influence the way customers perceive a brand. Having the necessary knowledge about ambient stimuli allows a brand and its management to manipulate the environment to deliver the best experience. A customer who has a pleasant experience is more likely to return and perceive the brand in a favourable manner, thus, enhancing the brand's image (Nasermoadeli, Ling and Maghnati, 2013). However, an unpleasant experience may negatively affect the brand's image. The key concepts include:

- Customer experience
- Branding
- Brand Image
- Atmospherics
- Physical Evidence
- Customer Satisfaction
- Client Loyalty
- Increased Profits

1.3 RATIONALE

Atmospherics refer to the background environment. This environment should be stimulating through the use of appropriate lighting, colour, sound and space (Cant and Van Heerden, 2013). Atmospherics influence customer moods, buying behaviour and perceptions of the brand. This can result in a negative or positive experience (Cant and Van Heerden, 2013). Understanding and being aware of atmospherics, and incorporating them into store design is important to stimulate positive customer experience which will lead to an enhanced brand image. The reason for this research was to help Seattle Coffee identify what is lacking and how it can be addressed in order to improve customer in-store experience. This research provides useful insights that Seattle Coffee Medstone Umhlanga can use to increase their customers' rate of purchase, rate of entry, time spent in the store and overall in-store experience.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem is a perceived failure by Seattle management to identify positive and negative atmospheric contributors to customer experience. A customer's in-store experience has a direct impact on the businesses success and the way it is perceived by customers, thus, impacting a brand's image (Cant and Van Heerden, 2013). Businesses need to identify how their physical space positively and negatively affects customer experience. A lack of understanding of how ambient-related factors impact client experience may prevent Seattle from identifying these elements. This is a problem as failure to appreciate the importance of atmospherics could result in existing clients spending less than they might if the ambience was less suited to their taste; if unaddressed Seattle could lose clientele.

1.5 RESEARCH PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTION

1.5.1 RESEARCH PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is to explore how in-store design and layout (atmospherics) affects customer experience at the Seattle Coffee Shop in Medstone Umhlanga. Eliciting client responses enabled this research to advise Seattle Coffee on how to improve on atmospheric elements that are lacking, as well as aspects within the store that should not be changed. This is useful in achieving increased customer loyalty, repeated purchases, increased profits and an enhanced brand image.

1.5.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

How do atmospherics influence customer experience and their perception of the Seattle Coffee Brand in Medstone Umhlanga?

1.6 OBJECTIVES

- To identify how atmospherics promote a positive experience.
- To identify negative contributors so that it can be controlled and avoided.
- To provide Seattle Umhlanga with an understanding of atmospherics and how they can be implemented for greater success.

1.7 SUMMARY AND CHAPTER OUTLINE

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Chapter one justifies the reasons for the research and has provided an overview of the rationale and benefits of the research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two consists of key theories and literature relating to this research. A review of previous literature has been done to provide this research with a solid foundation.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter three consist of the methodology that was used for this research. It indicates the paradigm, research design, population, sample and data collection and analysis methods.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Chapter four presents and interprets the research findings obtained through data collection.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter five highlights each research objective and its conclusion and recommendation. This chapter includes suggestions for further research and answers the research question established in chapter one.

1.8 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research aim, question, problem and objectives have provided detail about the nature of this research. This research was conducted using a qualitative methodology in order to achieve the aim and objectives set out above. Chapter two presents the literature review.

CHAPTER 2- LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature review and includes the theories and models upon which the research was based. The presentation of literature related to the research topic, the research purpose and the research objectives.

2.2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2.2.1 THE MEHRABIAN-RUSSEL MODEL (1978)

The Mehrabian-Russel Model, also known as the S-O-R model, is used to understand how an environment affects a person and results in an experience and response. The S-O-R model focuses on the stimuli (S), the organism being customers (O) and a response or approach (R) (Kusumowidagdo, Sachari and Widodo, 2012).

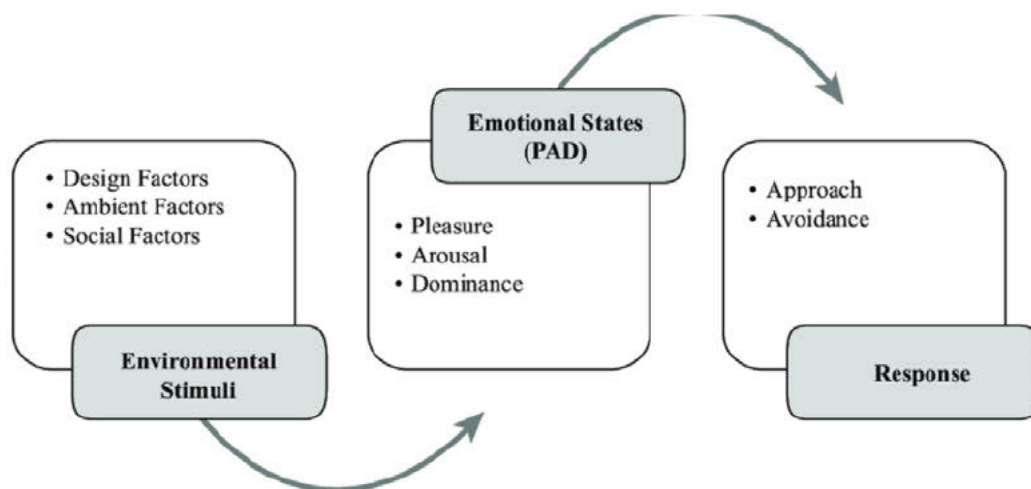


Figure 2.1: Mehrabian and Russell's SOR framework (Kusumowidagdo et al. 2012).

This model relates to this research as a store's environment (S) has an impact on a customer's (O) experience; this experience can be positive or negative and will result in a response (R) by the customer.

There are two options for customer experience; either a positive experience or a negative experience. A store's environment is made up of design, ambient and social factors (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). Cant and Van Heerden (2013) stated that the

environment has a direct impact on a customer's mood and experience. Sight, sound, fragrance, colour and layout all fall under a store's ambience and design appeal, thereby, influencing customer moods (Cant and Van Heerden, 2013). The customer, referred to as (O) in the model, may be stimulated by the environment, this stimulation can be pleasant, however, it may also be unpleasant (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). Therefore, environmental stimuli can affect an individual's emotional state in term of pleasure, arousal and dominance. According to Bakker et al., (2014) pleasure refers to the level of satisfaction and happiness experienced; whilst arousal focused on the level of mental stimulation, either relaxed, calm or excited. The last emotional state, dominance, refers to the perceived amount of control an individual has; the focus is on the feeling of confinement, loss of control and discomfort (Bakker et al., 2014). An individual's (O) emotional state is measured in terms of pleasant and unpleasant (Bakker et al., 2014).

An unpleasant experience may cause a customer to react (R) by avoiding the store. This suggests that the response of avoidance can result in fewer purchases, thus, negatively affecting Seattle Coffee. However, an environment (S) that is stimulating, inviting and attractive can result in pleasant customer experience (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). As a result, the customer (O) may react (R) by continuing to purchase from Seattle; increased customer loyalty and repeat purchases will result in higher sales volumes and greater profits for the brand.

2.2.2 THE TURLEY AND MILLIMAN MODEL (2004)

According to Kusumowidagdo et al., (2012) the Turley and Milliman model incorporated the classic Mehrabian and Russell model. Kotler stated that there are four dimensions of atmospherics, namely, sight, sound, scent and touch. In the Turley and Milliman model, atmospheric stimuli are divided into five categories, exterior, general interior, store layout, interior display and human variables (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). These factors impact customers and can determine the amount of time spent in a store, the number of purchases and the level of satisfaction. The time spent in a store, items examined, the number of purchases and level of satisfaction is determined by a customer's in-store experience (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). Therefore, atmospheric stimuli play a vital role in the success of a brand. Focus is placed on the customer and ensuring that their experience is satisfactory.

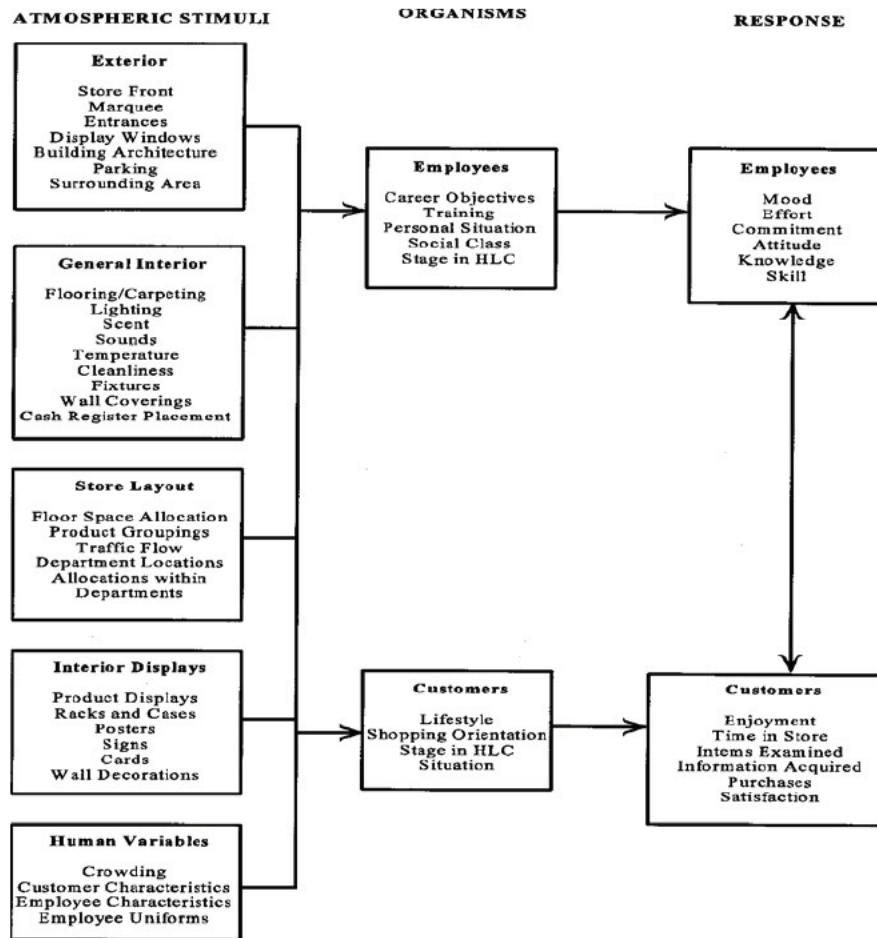


Figure 2.2 : The Turley and Milliman Model (Kusumowidagdo et al. 2012).

This model suggests that customers are influenced by not only one, but many factors. A store's interior lighting, sound and temperature together with layout and space may affect their customers' shopping orientation (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). Customer response can then be measured by satisfaction, enjoyment and the rate of purchase. According to Kusumowidagdo et al., (2012) businesses aim to create an environment that is welcoming and encourages relaxation.

This research focused on the customer, however, the Turley and Milliman model highlights how an employee's working environment contributes to their quality of work and level of productivity (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). According to Kamarulzaman et al., (2011) a good quality environment can improve productivity and employee satisfaction, thus, linking to employee characteristics under the stimuli human

variables; atmospherics impact the way employees interact with customers, thereby, having a direct impact on customer experience.

Therefore, this model links to this research as it identifies various environmental stimuli, the effect it has on employees and customers and how it can be used to provide the best customer experience.

2.3 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS LITERATURE

2.3.1 Atmospheric Stimuli

According to Krümpelmann (2018), environmental stimuli can be grouped into three factors, namely ambient factors, store design and human variables. Ambient factors include lighting, fragrance, temperature and sound; these factors are termed nonvisual as they are intangible (Krümpelmann, 2018). Store design refers to the layout within a store, the spacing of furniture and décor used; whilst, human variables relate to employee characteristics and the customer service provided (Krümpelmann, 2018). According to Krümpelmann (2018), both the design factors and human variables are considered tangible and visual stimuli. This relates to a customer's touch and sight appeal (Cant and Van Heerden, 2013). It is known that these factors play a role in customer satisfaction and purchase behaviour (Krümpelmann, 2018). Baker et al., (1994) stated that a store's ambient factors refer to its background environment.

2.3.2 Research Objective 1: To identify how atmospherics promote a positive experience

Lighting

According to Krümpelmann (2018), lighting is used in stores to create a brighter and inviting space. Lighting affects customers on a subconscious level; it changes the way they feel and evokes pleasant feelings (Cooper, 2017). Soft lighting on walls and featured spaces create a relaxed and intimate environment, this works well for cafés, restaurants and coffee shops as people socialise, work and read (Cooper, 2017).

Cafés and coffee shops are encouraged to choose quality over quantity in relation to lighting (Wardono, Hibino and Koyama, 2012). A well-lit area is essential for customers to view menus and items ordered (Wardono et al., 2012). It is important to use

appropriate colour temperature lighting; the use of colour corrected fluorescent lamps are encouraged as they are high-quality and ensure a pleasant experience (Wardono et al., 2012). Ciani (2010) suggested that cafes and restaurants need lighting to bounce off the walls, create contrast and create a warm appearance. The use of lighting to create contrast is widely accepted and encouraged.

Fragrance

Ambient scent has the ability to attract and satisfy customers. Doucé et al., (2013) noted that the scent of chocolate attracts customers, therefore, it is suggested the scent of chocolate in a coffee shop can be used to attract customers and improve sales. Pleasant ambient scents such as freshly baked biscuits, pastries and brewed coffee omit pleasant emotions, thereby, attracting and enhancing customer experience (Spence and Carvalho, 2019).

According to Bouzaabia (2014), a pleasant ambient scent improves the customer's perception of a store's environment, its products and quality; furthermore, it encourages repeat purchase. Bouzaabia (2014) mentioned that it improves the level of pleasure experienced. Although a pleasant scent improves experience; Bouzaabia (2014) argues that it does not contribute to the amount of time spent in a store. According to Krümpelmann (2018), the scents within a store contribute to a customer's feelings. Krümpelmann (2018) mentioned that neutral and pleasant scents create a sense of recreation.

Research has suggested that the scent of freshly baked bread creates a homely feeling; this links to the smell of coffee and pastries in coffee shops as it has the ability to create a warm and inviting space (Krümpelmann, 2018; Varley, 2014). Scents that are neutral and pleasant improve a customer's perception of a store and its products (Spangenberg et al., 1996). This leads to greater customer satisfaction and an enhanced brand image. Krümpelmann (2018) stated that associated scents can be used to attract customers and improve customer purchase and brand loyalty.

Sound

According to Morrison et al., (2011) music has an impact on customer satisfaction and experience, as a result, music can affect a customer's perception of a store. Music leads to pleasure and arousal, thus, linking to a customer's state of mind in the Mehrabian S-O-R model (Krümpelmann, 2018; Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). Little research has been conducted on the type of music played in coffee shops, however, large amounts of research suggest that music influences the time spent within a store, money spent and rate of satisfaction (Milliman, 1986; Krümpelmann, 2018). According to Morrison et al., (2011) soothing background music creates a pleasurable atmosphere, thus, the use of soothing music is expected to create a positive experience for customers in a coffee shop. Kellaris and Rice (1993) stated that softer music is perceived as calming, relaxing and less irritating, further linking to the emotional state of a customer. Therefore, it is important to control the volume of music in order to create a tranquil space.

Design layout

Design and layout incorporates space, décor and furniture that is used to create a setting. Customers spend a lot of time in coffee shops and cafes, as a result, furniture used in these spaces need to be comfortable (Desai, 2011). Desai (2011) stated that it is important to create a sense of 'hominess' as it creates a warm and embracing space. According to Desai (2011), the use of wood and natural colours create a calming, comfortable and welcoming environment. This improves customer satisfaction and experience within coffee shops. Therefore, customers perceive the store positively, thereby, enhancing the brand's image (Cant and Van Heerden, 2013). The use of pastel and subdued colours are encouraged; whilst comfortable and soft furniture can be used to increase the amount of time spent in a store (Desai, 2011). Colours, décor and space provide visual stimulation which improves customer experience, as well as mental state (Desai, 2011).

Human Variables

According to Soares and Elmashhara (2020), store personnel have the ability to positively influence customer satisfaction, thus, contributing to a pleasant experience. This suggests that helpful and friendly staff improve customer moods, leading to an enhanced customer experience. Interaction between personnel and customers can

influence customer perception of a brand (Krümpelmann, 2018). Friendly staff improve customer experience and enhance the perception of service quality, thus, leading to a favourable brand image (Baker et al., 1994; Krümpelmann, 2018).

Crowding within a store can be split into two dimensions, the number of people within the store and the space within the store (Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya, 2006). It is important to control crowding in order for customers to have a pleasant experience (Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya, 2006). A space can either be low or high density in terms of crowding. A study conducted by Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya (2006) suggests that low-density cafes, 54 seats and less, reduce overcrowding and in turn contribute to greater customer satisfaction (Desai, 2001; Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya, 2006).

2.3.3 Research Objective 2: To identify negative contributors so that they can be controlled and avoided

Lighting

The use of cold fluorescent bulbs should be avoided as it removes a warm appearance, thus, creating an environment that may be unpleasant to the human eye (Martin, 2018). According to Spence and Carvalho (2019), in an unpublished study, the focus was on the effect that dim lighting and bright lighting had on the amount of coffee consumed in a café. The research found that customers who enjoy strong coffee preferred brighter lighting, whilst customers who preferred weak coffee preferred dim lighting (Spence and Carvalho, 2019). This suggests that both variations of lighting have a different impact on each customer's rate of consumption; however, little is known about how the level of lighting affects customer satisfaction and in-store experience.

Scent

The aim is to ensure that the environment has a neutral and pleasant scent; this ensures that customers are happy and not discouraged from a store. Cafés and coffee shops need to avoid scents such as burning oil, burning bread and unhygienic odours. (Guéguen and Petr, 2006; Krümpelmann, 2018). Burning and unhygienic odours can cause dissatisfaction to customers, this can negatively affect customer experience, thus, negatively affecting the perception of a brand.

Unpleasant odours create the perception of a dirty and unhealthy environment, this can hinder customer satisfaction and result in fewer future purchases (Cant and Van Heerden, 2013). According to Bouzaabia (2014), a store's fragrance does not contribute to the amount of time spent in a store, however, Krümpelmann (2018) argues that fragrance does influence time spent within a store, as an unpleasant scent may cause customers to leave.

Sound

Kellaris and Rice (1993) found that the volume of music affects a customer's perception of time spent in a store; as a result, loud music tends to reduce the amount of time customers spend in a store. This suggests that coffee shops should avoid loud music in order to keep customers seated for longer periods. Louder music is perceived as less relaxing and unpleasant (Morrison et al., 2011; Kellaris and Rice, 1993). Kellaris and Rice (1993) suggested that customers perceive loud music as more irritating, therefore, the volume of music needs to be controlled to ensure that customer satisfaction is achieved. Unsatisfied customers can potentially affect a store's reputation and brand image.

Background noise can play a role in customer satisfaction. Coffee machines and blenders are generally loud and can sometimes be unpleasant; however, Spence and Carvalho (2019) pointed out that certain types of coffee machines, especially those that are popular, tend to create auditory satisfaction. This leads to an enhanced coffee taste and an improved overall experience (Spence and Carvalho, 2019). According to Spence and Carvalho (2019), machine manufacturers have now incorporated the most appropriate noise into machines; this suggests that coffee shops should consider the noise factor when purchasing equipment.

Design Layout

The use of furniture materials such as metal and steel tend to create a cold industrial environment, thus, removing warmth and a sense of hominess in a store (Desai, 2011). According to Desai (2011), visual stimulation has many benefits, however, stores need to be aware of overstimulation which can cause negative feelings, discomfort and even stress. The positioning of furniture needs to be close enough to

support socialisation through conversation (Wardono et al., 2012). Furniture positioned too far away from each other may hinder socialisation and create frustration, resulting in an unsatisfied customer (Wardono et al., 2012). Poor customer experience may negatively influence a customer's perception of a brand and prevent return in the future.

Human Variables

According to Desai (2011), overcrowding affects mental health and induces stress; this results in a negative experience and poor perception of a store and brand. According to Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya (2006), a crowded space is a highly dense environment; either in terms of the number of seats or the number of people present. Crowded spaces cause customers to feel claustrophobic, uncomfortable and confined, thus, reducing enjoyment and resulting in a poor experience (Krümpelmann, 2018; Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya, 2006).

Crowding influences the rate of entry, customers may not enter a store that is overcrowded and may prefer to look elsewhere (Krümpelmann, 2018; Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya, 2006). This can reduce the time and money spent in the store as well as discourage customers from entering the store (Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya, 2006). Order and collection areas need to be situated separately to reduce crowding and ensure easy movement; this links to the design and layout aspect of a store (Desai, 2011).

Unfriendly and hostile staff may reduce service quality and threaten the brand's image (Baker et al., 1994; Krümpelmann, 2018). This suggests that customer experience is affected by an employee's attitude, characteristics and friendliness. Poor employee service can taint a customer's perception of a store and its level of quality, thus, negatively impacting the brand's image (Ha and Jang, 2010).

2.4 CONCEPTUALISATION OF KEY TERMS

Environment: this refers to the area in question; in the case of this research, the Seattle Coffee Shop (Collins Dictionary, 2020).

Stimuli: an element that results in a change to another; in this case, it refers to noise and its impact on customers (Collins Dictionary, 2020).

Experience: refers to the process of undergoing or observing an event (Collins Dictionary, 2020). In term of this study, it refers to customers' contact and observation within a store.

Décor: refers to the furnishing and design layout of a room (Collins Dictionary, 2020). This refers to the furniture, paintings and ornaments used within a coffee shop.

Intangible: refers to the inability of being touched; it has no physical form and cannot be touched (Collins Dictionary, 2020). In the case of this research, it refers to music within the store.

Tangible: refers to an object that is perceptible by touch (Collins Dictionary, 2020). In the case of this research, it would refer to furniture that can be physically touched.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a customer's experience within a coffee shop is influenced by environmental stimuli. Atmosphere, design and layout and human variables each have a positive and negative influence on customer experience. These elements should be manipulated and controlled. Growing popularity in coffee shops and cafés have resulted in many well-established competitors. Therefore, stores need to create a unique atmosphere that is tailored to create a pleasant experience and satisfy their customers' needs. The above literature has highlighted the importance of atmospherics and the positive and negative results of environmental stimuli. It supports the Mehrabian- Russel Model, as well as the Turley and Milliman model. Therefore, it is vital for Seattle Coffee to consider atmospherics in order for them to

identify areas that work well and those areas that do not. This allows Seattle to reduce poor customer experience and in turn, enhance the brand's image. Chapter three presents the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to identify and explain the methodology that was used. This chapter highlights the research paradigm, research design, population and sample used to obtain the necessary information and findings. Furthermore, this chapter indicates the data collection and data analysis methods that were used; as well as a description of how it was applied.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to du Plooy-Cillers et al., (2014) qualitative research focuses on discovering the meaning in experiences. The aim is to understand and describe the meaning and subjective experiences of individuals; thus, one cannot measure and quantify these experiences (du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014). Therefore, a qualitative approach was chosen over quantitative and mixed methods.

This research aimed at determining how store atmospherics affects customer experience at the Seattle Coffee Shop in Medstone Umhlanga. Therefore, the paradigm chosen for this study was interpretivism (Maree, 2019). Interpretivism focuses on studying people to gain an in-depth understanding of their social actions and experiences (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014). Interpretivism allows one to understand and describe experiences (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014).

This relates to this study as it provided an in-depth understanding of customer experience in relation to stimuli within the store. According to Du Plooy-Cillers et al., (2014), interpretivism is influenced by several traditions which include, phenomenology, hermeneutics and symbolic interactionists; for the purpose of this research, focus was on phenomenology as it aimed to understand an individual's experience and the way they make sense of the world (du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014). This allowed for the interpretation of customer experience and the reaction, being satisfaction or dissatisfaction; further linking to qualitative research.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design was a phenomenological study. Phenomenology is a research design approach that focuses on understanding the experiences of a phenomenon (Maree, 2019). A phenomenological approach provides a rich description of human experience (Manen, 2007). This links to customer experience. This research followed a qualitative approach as phenomenology focuses on interpreting the meaning of experiences so that they can be described (Maree, 2019).

According to Maree (2019), hermeneutic phenomenology and transcendental or psychological phenomenology are two approaches of phenomenology. Hermeneutical phenomenology focuses on documenting and analysing the lived experiences of individuals whilst transcendental or psychological phenomenology focuses less on the interpretation of the researcher and more on the description of the experiences of participants. Therefore, focus was on the interpretation and description of each participant's experience in relation to the store's environmental stimuli (Maree, 2019).

According to Maree (2019), once the phenomenon has been identified, information relating to customer experience can be collected. Information collected was analysed to identify specific statements and quotes that were grouped to form themes (Maree, 2019). A textual and structural description of information was conducted. A textual description of experience refers to the description of what participants experience, either pleasant or unpleasant (Maree, 2019). A structural description of their experiences highlighted each participant's experience in relation to the ambient conditions in the Seattle Coffee Shop in Medstone Umhlanga (Maree, 2019). Textual and structural descriptions were then combined to obtain an overall essence of the experience (Maree, 2019).

The research was conducted using, Zoom, Facetime, WhatsApp video and emails as the COVID-19 pandemic prevented face-to-face interaction (Sulcas, 2020). Information was obtained from individuals who have purchased from or have been to the Seattle Coffee Shop in Medstone Umhlanga. These individuals were chosen as they have personally interacted with the store. This allowed them to describe their experiences and how the store's environmental stimuli affects their in-store

experience. Their feedback was useful in determining the positive and negative effect that each environmental stimuli creates.

Interview schedules were used to obtain information from participants. Open-ended questions were used to obtain an in-depth description of each customers' perception, opinion and experience in relation to the store's environment. Emailed interview schedules were chosen as face-to-face interviews were not advised as South Africa approached their COVID-19 peak (Writer, 2020). Although the quality of online surveys is lower, the acquired feedback would have adequately provided insight into customer experience. This approach ensured that information was still collected during the pandemic. Customer feedback was then compared to previous literature in order to identify similar themes that were analysed to help answer the research question.

3.4 POPULATION

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014), the population for this research refers to all the individuals who possess the attributes and or characteristics that apply to this research. It refers to the group of people that possess certain characteristics which makes them useful to the research (Maree, 2019). In quantitative research, the population needs to be truly identifiable in order for a sample to be drawn that represents the population (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014). A sample that represents its population would have been required if this research was quantitative (Delice, 2010). However, generalising findings to a larger population is not important as this research followed a qualitative approach (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014).

The population consisted of individuals who have been to and or purchased from the Seattle Coffee Shop in Medstone Umhlanga. The population consisted of an undetermined number of clients who support the café. A small sample size of 11 respondents was used as this research did not intend to generalise its findings to the broader population. The characteristics of the population included individuals who have purchased from the cafe, individuals who are above the age of 18 and individuals who live between Durban North and Ballito. These characteristics helped to identify potential respondents.

3.5 SAMPLING

The Intended sample size was 15 individuals; however, this was changed to 11 as respondents were difficult to find whilst the submission deadline was approaching. Therefore, the sample consisted of 11 individuals who have purchased from the Seattle Coffee Shop in Medstone. A smaller sample size was used to obtain an in-depth description and understanding of each participant's in-store experience. A sample of 11 individuals was adequate as this research followed a qualitative approach (Elliott, 2020). Non- probability sampling was chosen for the purpose of this research. According to Elliott (2020), non-probability sampling is used to create a sample by using a non-random process. A non-random process refers to the task of identifying known individuals (Elliott, 2020). This is the opposite of probability sampling which aims to provide respondents with an equal chance of participation by randomly selecting individuals (Elliott, 2020).

Elliott (2020), stated that non-probability sampling is used to identify specific individuals that relate to a study. This can be done by asking friends and family members (Elliott, 2020). Respondents were sampled by asking friends and colleagues who have been to the café to participate. Elliott (2020), stated that non-probability sampling is often used in qualitative research. This is appropriate as this research is qualitative and more subjective than quantitative research which aims to generalise its findings to a greater population (Elliott, 2020). Non-probability sampling was chosen as this research was time-limited and the population was difficult to access (Maree, 2019). Maree (2019) stated that representing a population and generalising findings should always be considered when using non-probability sampling. However, representing the population did not apply to this research as it followed a qualitative approach (Elliott, 2020).

The non-probability sampling method that was chosen and used is convenience sampling. According to Maree (2019), convenience sampling is a quick and inexpensive sampling tool that does not result in a representative sample. Convenience sampling allowed for the collection of individuals who were already known and available (Maree, 2019). This method allowed for the easy identification of respondents (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016). This was the most appropriate

method as it allowed for quick and easy data collection. Furthermore, it allowed for the preliminary testing of the interview schedule during its development, thereby, contributing to the trustworthiness and credibility of this research (Maree, 2019).

The individuals who were identified were already known customers, thus, linking to convenience sampling. In addition, convenience sampling ensured that there were respondents available; especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This method was used to prevent any delays in data collection. Finding more respondents was challenging as only 9 respondents were identified out of 11. Therefore, the identified respondents were asked to suggest other individuals with characteristics that applied to this research; this sampling method is referred to as snowball sampling (Maree, 2019). According to Maree (2019), snowball sampling is used to expand one's sample size by asking respondents to suggest other individuals with the same characteristics as the population. Although snowball sampling was not intended, it was later used to identify two more respondents.

The Inclusion and exclusion criteria used when sampling:

Inclusion criteria: Regular customers of Seattle Coffee Medstone Umhlanga.
 Individuals who have visited Seattle Coffee Medstone.
 Individuals over the age of 18.

Exclusion criteria: Individuals that have not been to the Seattle Coffee Shop in
 Medstone Umhlanga.
 Individuals who have not been to any Seattle Coffee Café.
 Individuals under the age of 18.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHOD(S)

At the start of this research, in-person interviews were intended for the purpose of data collection as they have a strong reputation for high participation rates (Krouwel, Jolly and Greenfield, 2019). However, due to COVID-19, this was not possible. As a result, mailed interview schedules and video conference interviews were chosen as the data collection methods. It had been hoped to hold one or two online focus groups however it was impractical as load shedding had been instituted and potential respondents were unable to join focus groups outside of business hours when load shedding was over.

Interview Schedule

The interview schedule used for the mailed interview and video interview was based on the research objectives that were mentioned in chapter one. A draft schedule was prepared once the objectives had been drafted and was modified after having conducted the literature review. The first objective asked four questions whilst objective two and objective three asked three questions each. The interview schedule asked two additional questions for respondents to discuss their unmentioned thoughts.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted on two individuals to ensure that the questions were credible and related to this research. This helped to identify one question that appeared to be vague. This question was later changed to be more specific. In addition, there were no loaded, leading or double-barrelled questions.

The following type of questions were used in the video interview and mailed interview schedule:

Open-ended questions: This was used to elicit ideas, opinions and feelings from participants. This allowed for in-depth feedback and responses that may not have been considered (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014).

Specific questions: Questions that focus on certain environmental stimuli and its impact (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014).

General questions: These are questions that apply to the entire situation, the understanding of atmosphere and customer satisfaction (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014).

The following format was applied to questionnaires and interviews:

- The nature of the research.
- Simple and clear worded questions were used to reduce misunderstanding and confusion; this improved the validity and quality of the findings.
- Fewer questions were asked to prevent respondents from feeling overwhelmed. Du Plooy-Cillers et al., (2014) stated that fewer questions increase the response rate.
- Respondents were then thanked for their contribution and participation.

Both methods helped to reduce research costs, research delays and COVID-19 health-related issues that may have possibly affected participants. Furthermore, online responses helped to reduce participants' fear of contracting COVID-19, thus, allowing them to focus on the interview questions. According to Krouwel et al., (2019), video conference interviews use Internet-based platforms that allow respondents to see and hear the researcher. Video conference interviews allowed respondents to reply in detail and enabled the researcher to analyse body language and ask respondents to elaborate on what would have been a relatively basic and meaningless response. This is important and relevant as this research aimed to elicit client information relating to their experiences within the store and how it was affected by atmospherics. Video interviews allowed respondents to ask questions and clear up misunderstandings; this ensures that the most accurate information was collected (Quad, 2016).

In addition, mailed interview schedules containing three objectives and a range of questions for each objective were used to obtain in-depth feedback from respondents. Mailed interview schedules were used for respondents who did not want to participate

in video interviews. The interview schedule was appropriate as respondents could answer questions in their own time whilst in the comfort of their own home (DeFranzo, 2012). This method allowed for a broad range of data to be collected. For example, opinions, beliefs, attitudes and experiences. This relates to customer experience and is therefore considered appropriate for this research.

3.6.1 APPLICATION OF DATA COLLECTION METHOD(S)

Once respondents were identified, the interview schedule and the consent forms were emailed to 6 of the 11 respondents. Due to South Africa's national lockdown, five Google images that highlighted the café were selected and emailed to participants. This was done to help respondents remember their experience within the store. Respondents were informed that they need to read and sign the consent forms. They were then requested to complete the questions within 10 days. As respondents sent back the completed interview schedule and the signed consent forms, their names were ticked off a list of respondents. Respondents who did not complete the interview schedule were mailed a friendly reminder.

In addition to the 6 respondents, 5 respondents were chosen and agreed to participate in video-conference interviews. Interviews were conducted over FaceTime and WhatsApp. Online interviews were used to reduce the threat of COVID-19 transmission. Participants were asked to choose from a range of timeslots over a 10-day period. Exceptions were made for respondents who could not be interviewed over the 10 days. This allowed for the effective planning of each interview. Each respondent participating in the video interview was emailed consent forms and five Google images of the café. At the start of each interview, respondents were briefed with the nature of this research. Each respondent was reminded that the interview was being recorded and that their audio would be used to verify notes made during the interview. Respondents were told that there were no wrong answers; this helped to relax respondents who felt anxious.

Respondents were then asked a range of open-ended questions. Respondents were asked to elaborate on responses, in order to clarify matters. Notes were taken in a booklet as respondents answered each question. Follow-up questions were asked to ensure that in-depth explanations were noted; this helped to clear up any

misunderstandings that would have resulted in errors during data collection. Furthermore, video interviews ensured that all questions were answered. At the end of the interview, respondents were asked if they had any issues or suggestions that were not covered during the interview. Finally, respondents were thanked for their participation. If the circumstances had been different, data collection would have occurred through face-to-face interviews.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD(S)

It was planned that thematic analysis would be used to identify themes and patterns within the data that has been collected (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014). According to Caulfield (2019), thematic analysis is used to analyse qualitative data, thereby, making it an appropriate analysis method for this research. Descriptions are closely examined to identify opinions, ideas and topics (Caulfield, 2019). According to Caulfield (2019), thematic analysis is used to unearth information about an individuals' opinions and experiences which can be found within their responses. This will be useful when trying to analyse customer experience in relation to Seattle's environment.

There are two thematic analysis approaches namely, the inductive approach and the deductive approach (Caulfield, 2019). According to Caulfield (2019), the inductive approach is when data is used to determine important themes; whereas, the deductive approach uses preconceived themes to analyse the data and find information that relates to each theme. Two objectives will be used as themes to analyse responses. This is done to help provide direction during data analysis. Using the deductive approach is appropriate as this research's theoretical framework provides an idea of themes that are expected.

The thematic analysis process involves familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, naming themes and writing the analysis (Caulfield, 2019). Collected data will be read in order to provide an overview before analysis. According to Caulfield (2019), familiarisation involves transcribing audio responses and reading through response. Therefore, audio from the interview will be transcribed, whilst responses from the mailed interview schedule will be read. Coding will be then done to highlight phrases within the responses. Caulfield (2019) stated that coding helps to describe

and group feelings and ideas expressed within the text. This can be used to highlight elements that contribute to a customer's negative and or positive experience.

3.7.1 APPLICATION OF DATA ANALYSIS METHOD(S)

Thematic analysis was used to identify specific themes, codes and patterns relating to this research. Once data was collected, audio from the online video interviews was transcribed into a booklet. Transcriptions, along with responses from the interview schedules were read to obtain a general understanding. Responses were closely examined using deductive coding. Deductive coding was used as the identified objectives were translated into themes and used to analyse responses.

The following objectives were used as themes:

- To identify how atmospherics promote a positive experience.
- To identify negative contributors so that it can be controlled and avoided.
- To provide Seattle Umhlanga with an understanding of atmospherics and how they can be implemented for greater success.

Data was uploaded to Wordle to identify word-clouds. Word-clouds identify words and or phrases that appear most frequently (Wordle, 2014). Wordle helped to identify codes that were related to each theme. Codes that were too vague or irrelevant were discarded. Through coding, certain themes presented itself. Codes were grouped into specific themes which were later compared to the dataset to ensure that no relevant information was excluded. Themes that emerged during coding were defined and linked to the objectives for this research; thus, improving data analysis. Care was taken to ensure that researcher bias did not affect the analysis of the findings. This was done by analysing each set of findings and assessing the trends objectively.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

In a qualitative study such as this, the term trustworthiness refers to the validity and reliability of the research (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014). In terms of validity, a pilot study was conducted to allow people to view the research questions to ensure that they are relevant to the study. This research is trustworthy as the questions are relevant to the objectives. The research was carried out in an objective and scientific

manner; information was analysed in such a manner to ensure that researcher bias was removed.

Confirmability

This a subset of trustworthiness; it refers to how accurately the collected data represents the research and its findings (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014). Findings need to flow freely from the data; therefore, the research process was scrutinised to ensure that readers obtain the same findings from the collected data. Great attention was given to the interpretation of data to ensure that the findings were based on the experience of participants instead of the researcher (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). This helped to reduce researcher bias and contribution; thereby, ensuring that the research was accurate and trustworthy. Findings that do not support the data collected, reduce the reliability and validity of the research (Du Plooy-Cillers et al., 2014). Collected data was interpreted thoroughly to ensure that the research findings are trustworthy. Findings were confirmed through the interpretation of data; this improved the trustworthiness of the research.

Bracketing

Another measure the was used to ensure the trustworthiness of this research is, bracketing. According to Maree (2019), bracketing refers to the voluntary efforts of the researcher to set aside their own experiences in order to obtain a fresh perspective of a phenomenon. Bracketing involves identifying a phenomenon and then bracketing out one's personal experiences while collecting data from several participants who have experienced the phenomenon (Maree, 2019). Bracketing was used to ensure that the research is free from researcher bias; this contributed to the validity and reliability of this study.

Credibility

According to Korstjens and Moser (2017), credibility is a subset of trustworthiness. Credibility refers to the level of confidence in the truth of the research findings (Korstjens and Moser, 2017). It is used to determine if the research findings can be trusted (Korstjens and Moser, 2017). Triangulation is an important technique used to determine the credibility within research (Korstjens and Moser, 2017). According to

Korstjens and Moser (2017), triangulation is the process of using multiple data sources and collection methods.

Data triangulation

This was used to collect secondary data in the form of literature (Korstjens and Moser, 2017). Data triangulation involves using multiple data sources and sites (Korstjens and Moser, 2017). This ensured that credible information was used for the foundation of this research. Furthermore, method triangulation involves the use of multiple data collection methods (Korstjens and Moser, 2017). This research used both email interview schedules and online video-based interviews. Therefore, more than one data collection method was used to triangulate the findings and increase the credibility of this research.

3.9 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTIONS

This research is bound to provide Seattle Coffee in Medstone Umhlanga with findings that indicate strengths and weaknesses relating to store design and layout which may affect the brand. Findings will indicate areas that the brand can improve in order to enhance customer experience as well as the brand's image.

This research will provide useful information relating to the store's aesthetics' and how it affects a customer mood and experience. It will provide information relating to customer behaviour, that Seattle Coffee can use to increase a customer's rate of purchase, customer loyalty, rate of entry and time spent in the store. Having this information will reduce the brand's likeliness to discourage customers and create an unpleasant experience.

3.10 CONCLUSION

The planned population and sampling technique contributed to the selection of respondents for this research. Planned data collection methods were used to elicit client information relating to customer experience. Information was then analysed according to the data analysis plan. These steps contributed to successful collection and analysis of information. Chapter four presents the research findings.

CHAPTER 4 - RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the data which was collected from Seattle Coffee customers through emailed interview schedules and online video-based interviews. The data collection methods used were appropriate and made data collection easier during the COVID-19 pandemic (Hedding et al., 2020). Data has been analysed and interpreted and findings have been presented in figures, tables and word-clouds to improve and or enhance the understanding of the data. This was a small-scale qualitative study; therefore, findings are not generalisable to the population. This research obtained valuable information relating to customer experience concerning atmospherics and may be useful to Seattle Coffee and other brands within the service industry.

4.2 RESPONDENT PROFILES

Respondent profiles were used to document the number and gender of participants in the emailed interview schedule and video-based interviews.

4.2.1 Profile of Respondents - Email Interview Schedule

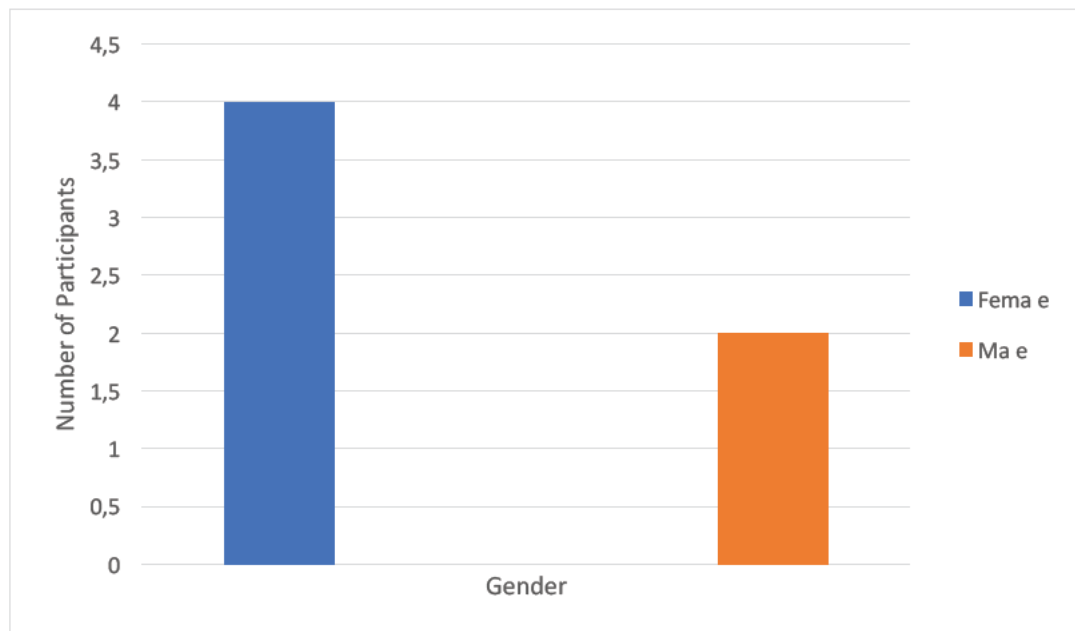


Figure 4.1 Profile of respondents for email interview schedules

4.2.2 Profile of Respondents - Video-based Interviews

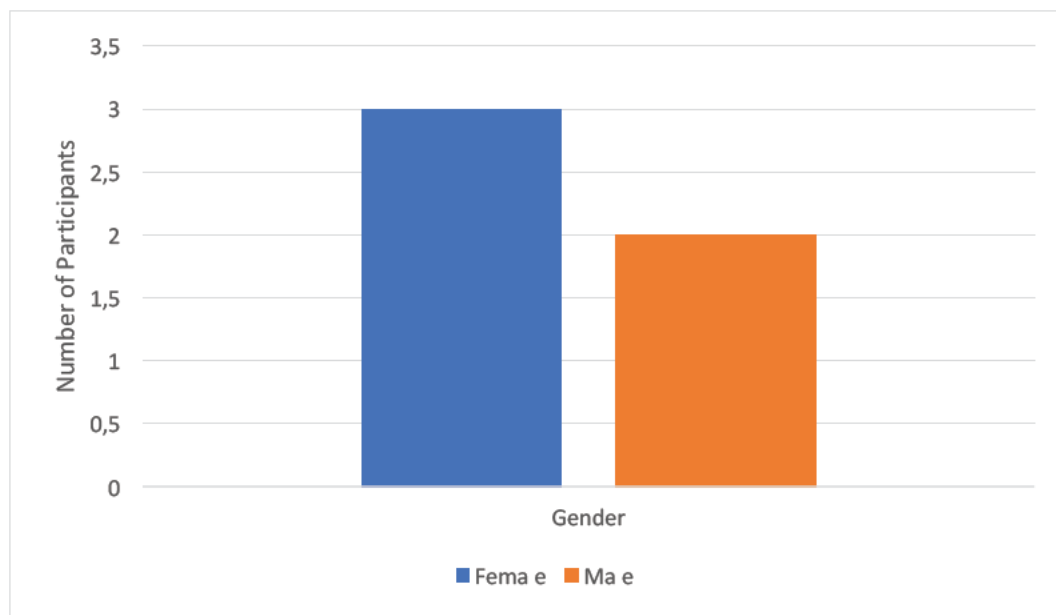


Figure 4.2 Profile of respondents for video based interviews

4.3 Presentation of Findings in Relation to Objectives

Three research objectives which were established in chapter one were used to group interview questions from the data collected. Their responses have been visually represented using word clouds.

4.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE: TO IDENTIFY HOW ATMOSPHERICS PROMOTE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

4.4.1. Question 1: How does the decorative lighting in Seattle make you feel?



Figure 4.3 Response in relation to decorative lighting

Respondents were asked to describe how Seattle's use of decorative lighting made them feel. Decorative lighting was described as warm and inviting; respondents mentioned that it made them feel comfortable and relaxed, thus, linking to a positive experience. Identifying the impact of these elements allows for an understanding of lighting and the positive effect it has on customer experience. This relates to the research problem which was a perceived failure to identify positive and negative atmospheric contributors. Furthermore, findings related to previous literature as Krümpelmann (2018) mentioned that appropriate lighting affects a customer's subconscious and creates an inviting space.

4.4.2. Question 2: What fragrance or scent within the Seattle Coffee shop creates a positive experience for you?

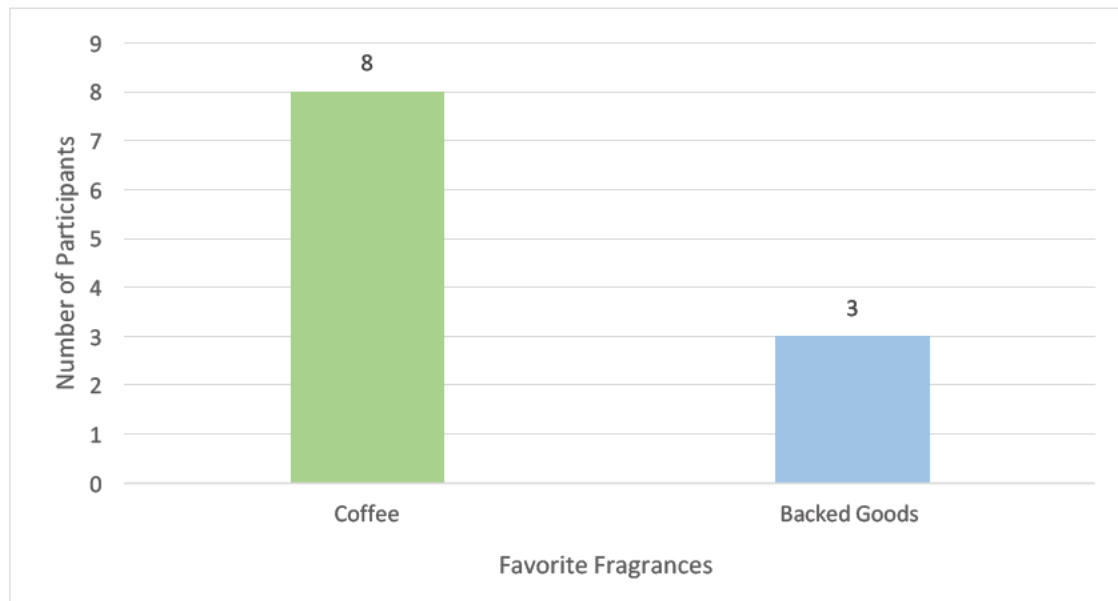


Figure 4.4 Fragrances- Coffee or baked goods

Out of a total of 11 respondents, 8 respondents mentioned that they enjoy the smell of coffee beans and coffee aromas; whilst 3 respondents mentioned that the smell of baked goods, such as pastries and types of bread, was pleasant. The smell of freshly baked goods and coffee aromas were listed as major scents that attracted respondents to the café. Respondents also stated that the scents created a positive experience for them, thus, linking to customer satisfaction and the identification of positive contributors. In addition, respondent x stated that the smell of freshly baked goods was pleasant and elicited childhood memories. This links to previous literature where Spence and Carvalho (2019) stated that freshly baked biscuits omit pleasant emotions.

4.4.3. Question 3: Please discuss which interior design aspects attracted you to the café



Figure 4.5 Attractive interior design aspects

Respondents were asked to highlight interior design aspects that attracted them to the café. Respondents stated that the café's large windows and modern lighting were a key focal point that drew them towards the café. Furthermore, respondents mentioned that the wood, furniture and colour palette, which made up the design aspect, attracted them to the café. Respondent X noted that the wooden elements blended perfectly with other elements in the café; this created a pleasant feeling. Another respondent mentioned that the use of wood created a warm area; thereby, linking to previous literature which stated that a warm and inviting environment improves customer satisfaction (Desai, 2011).

4.4.4. Question 4: How does Seattle's use of natural light and open windows make you feel?



Figure 4.6 Feelings in relation to natural light

Seattle's use of natural light and large open windows made respondents feel refreshed and energised. Respondents noted that the aspect of fresh air created a pleasant and enjoyable experience for them. Respondent X noted that the fresh air and natural light made the small area appear larger; thereby, strengthening the importance of the use of light to enhance an area.

4.5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTORS SO THAT THEY CAN BE CONTROLLED AND AVOIDED

4.5.1. Question 1: How does the close seating layout within Seattle make you feel?



Figure 4.7 Response in relation to close seating

Respondents described their feelings in relation to the café's seating layout. Words that stood out were intimidating, lack of privacy and uncomfortable. It was noted that respondents enjoyed a large communal table as it allowed for a gathering of a few friends and colleagues. However, findings indicate that respondents felt uncomfortable due to the close seating layout. It was noted that respondents felt intimidated and uncomfortable as they felt other customers could overhear their conversation. Lack of privacy was a concern especially when trying to have a conversation within the café. This discomfort creates a negative experience and reduces a customer's level of satisfaction within the store. Findings linked to the Mehrabian-Russel Model (1978) as the café's design factors (S) affects a customer's emotional state (O) and results in a reaction (R) (Kusumowidagdo et al., 2012). Close seating (S) was found to reduce a customer's perceived level of privacy, causing them to feel closed off or tense (O). This links to dominance in a customer's emotional state within the SOR model. As a result, customers were dissatisfied and responded (R) by leaving the café.

4.5.2. Question 2: Please discuss your experience with a busy store or overcrowding in Seattle; indicate whether this lead to a positive or negative experience

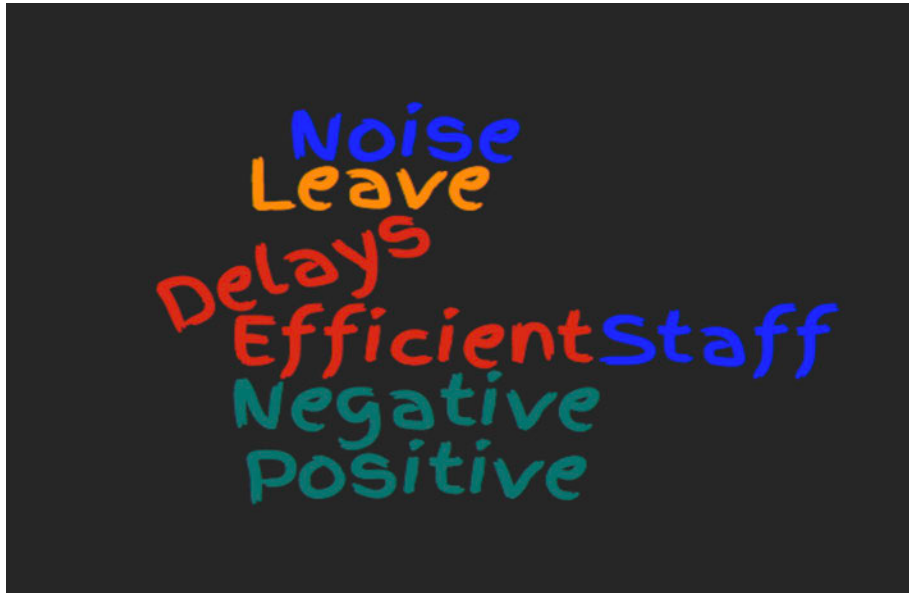


Figure 4.8 Response in relation to overcrowding

Respondents mentioned that an overcrowded store resulted in them spending less time in the café. Respondents were less likely to enter and purchase from the café. This links to Krümpelmann (2018) who stated that crowding influences the rate of entry within the store.

Overcrowding can be an issue if it is not managed effectively. This creates a negative experience for individuals. Noise disturbance and delays associated with overcrowding stood out as major issues as participants go to the café to relax and unwind. Noise from crowding relates to the auditory aspect of an environment; therefore, highlighting how an unpleasant sound reduces customer satisfaction. However, respondent X noted that staff at Seattle are efficient and managed orders well. This suggests that the efficiency of human variables is essential for the creation of a positive experience, thus, linking to previous literature by Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya (2006). Findings suggest that overcrowding may be experienced at certain hours of the day, for example, lunch. However, staff efficiency and the ability to manage customers contributed to a pleasant experience. Thereby identifying the importance of human variables in an atmosphere.

4.5.3. Question 3: Please discuss how general noise and sound in Seattle affects your mood

Answer: Generally Seattle is fairly relaxed when I go there. The noise from the machinery does get a bit frustrating, in particular the noise from the blender.

coffee and work are closely related. Noise shouldn't be an aspect related to a coffee store as it isn't a social gathering but an intimate and relaxing time alone or with another.

General noise in Seattle can be annoying especially when you are working and music inside Seattle can be nice.

Figure 4.9 Impact of noise

The sound of machines and nearby traffic was described as being annoying at times. Respondents noted that the sound of the café's blender was frustrating; thereby, suggesting that it created an unpleasant and negative experience. This is supported by previous literature which states that background noise, in particular, machines and blenders are loud and unpleasant (Spence and Carvalho, 2019). Identifying the emotional impact of the noise factor is necessary to reduce negative contributors in order to promote a positive experience; thus, linking to this research's objective.

4.6. OBJECTIVE 3: TO PROVIDE SEATTLE UMHLANGA WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF ATMOSPHERICS AND HOW THEY CAN BE IMPLEMENTED FOR GREATER SUCCESS

4.6.1. Question 1: Please discuss how Seattle's use of instore imagery, wood, grey tones and industrial aesthetic make you feel?

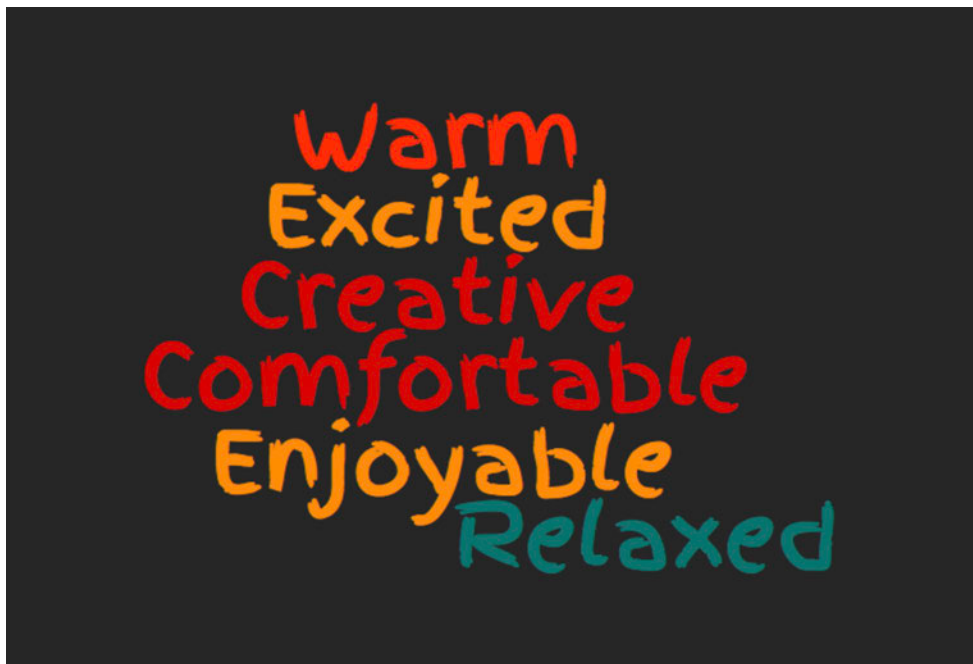


Figure 4.10 Instore imagery and design

Respondents described their feelings in relation to Seattle's interior design and aesthetic. Keywords from responses have been depicted above in a word cloud. The words that appeared the most frequently were 'comfortable' and 'enjoyable'. Seattle's use of grey neutral tones created a comfortable space; thereby, linking to the warmth created by the café. The word 'enjoyable' suggested that customers had a positive experience within the café. This question helped to identify Seattle's existing elements that contribute to a positive in-store experience, thus, linking to the purpose and objective of this research.

4.6.2. Question 2: Please discuss how music in a coffee shop affects your mood and overall experience

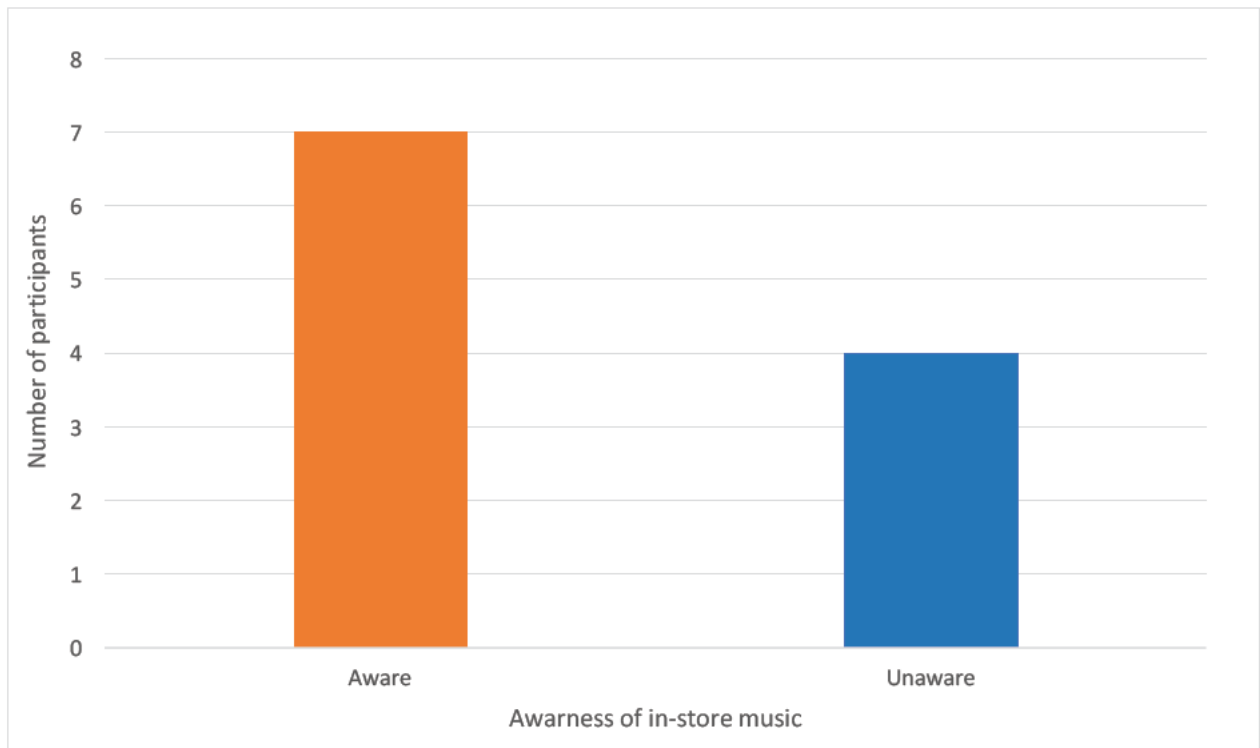


Figure 4.11 Awareness of music within a cafe

Respondents were each asked to describe their thoughts and opinions relating to the use of music within a general café environment. Individuals who were aware of music noted that they enjoyed slow and soft music as it made them feel relaxed and content. They mentioned that louder music created an uncomfortable environment. This relates to Kellaris and Rice (1993) who stated that louder music is perceived as less relaxing. This finding helps to improve one's understanding of atmospherics as it identifies both the positive and negative effect; thereby linking to this research's objective.

4.6.3. Question 3: Please discuss how the use of comfortable seating affects your experience in a coffee shop

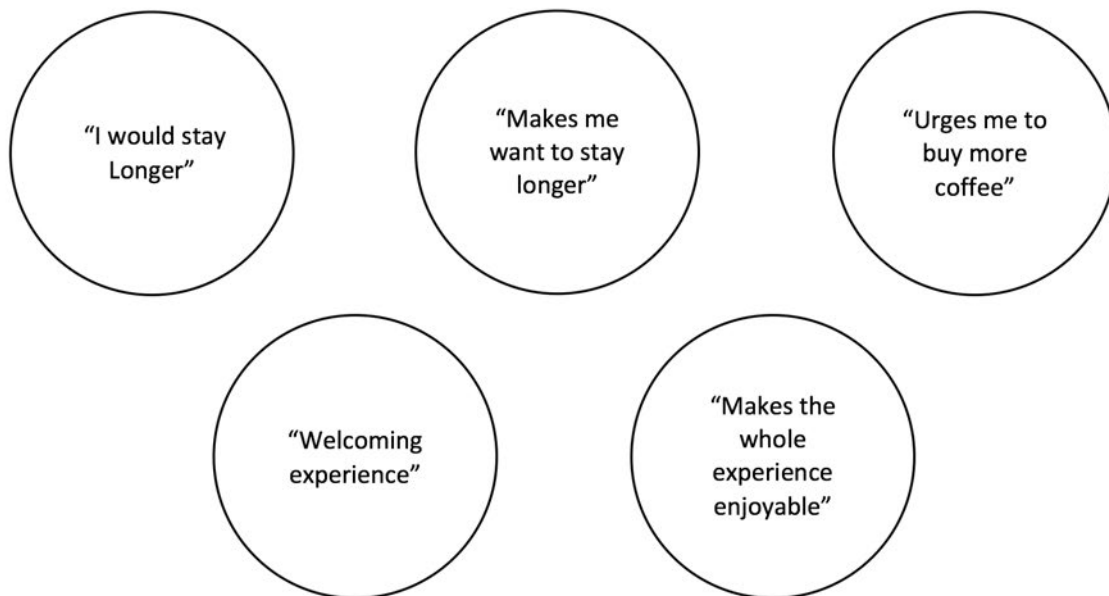


Figure 4.12 Reaction to comfortable seating

The findings revealed that cafés with comfortable seating attract individuals, increase the amount of time customers spend in a store and the number of purchases made. Comfortable seating was described as welcoming as it enticed customers to sit down. Therefore, comfortable furniture attracts and satisfies customers. This is supported by Desai (2011), who stated that furniture needs to be comfortable and embracing. Respondent x note that they would leave with their coffee if there were no comfortable seats available. The amount of time spent in the store can be used to measure customers' level of satisfaction. Therefore, longer periods spent in a store suggest a positive experience.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented and interpreted findings that were obtained from data collected through interview schedules and online video-based interviews. Findings related to the research problem and research objectives. This was supported by previous literature on atmospheric stimuli.

CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides conclusions and recommendations for each of the three-research objective. Finding obtained from data collected have been used to support the following conclusions and recommendations. Lastly, this chapter ends with suggestions for further research.

5.2 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings and recommendations have been structured under each objective to improve the readers' experience and or understanding.

5.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE - TO IDENTIFY HOW ATMOSPHERICS PROMOTE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

5.3.1 Findings from the Literature

As mentioned in chapter two, Krümpelmann (2018) stated that lighting can be used to create an inviting space; whilst freshly baked biscuits and pastries omit pleasant emotions and attract customers into a store (Spence and Carvalho, 2019). Furthermore, Desai (2011) stated that the use of wood and natural colours creates a calming, comfortable and welcoming environment. This leads to a pleasant experience and a high level of satisfaction.

5.3.2 Findings from the video-based interview and mailed interview schedules

The finding from data collected links to and supports those from the previous literature. Findings support the literature as respondents mentioned that the smell of baked goods was pleasant and elicited childhood memories. Respondents mentioned that the use of wood created a warm and inviting space; this supports the literature.

5.3.3 Conclusion

From the research gathered for this objective, findings revealed atmospheric attributes and how they create a positive experience. This information can be used by Seattle to manipulate their environment in order to enhance customer experience within the café.

5.3.4 Recommendations

Findings suggest that Seattle should open its large stacking windows more often as this attracts customers and positively affects their mood. An improved mood will result in greater customer satisfaction.

5.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2 - TO IDENTIFY NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTORS SO THAT THEY CAN BE CONTROLLED AND AVOIDED

5.4.1 Findings from the Literature

In chapter 2, Spence and Carvalho (2019) stated that Coffee machines and blenders are generally loud and can sometimes be unpleasant. Furthermore, Krümpelmann (2018); Yildirim and Akalin-Baskaya (2006) noted that crowded spaces cause customers to feel claustrophobic, uncomfortable and confined, thus, reducing enjoyment and resulting in a poor experience.

5.4.2 Findings from the video-based interview and mailed interview schedules

Research findings support those from the previous literature. This can be seen as respondents mentioned that the sound of the blender was quite unpleasant. This links to Spenser and Carvalho (2019). The statement by Krümpelmann (2018) is supported as respondents noted that an overcrowded environment felt confined and reduced the time they spent in the café. Furthermore, Desai (2011) mentioned that overcrowding affects mental health and induces stress; this results in a negative experience and poor perception of a store and brand.

5.4.3 Conclusion

From the research gathered for this objective, findings revealed atmospheric attributes that create a negative experience. Identifying atmospheric stimuli that create a negative experience is beneficial as it allows Seattle to reduce and or avoid these factors.

5.4.4 Recommendations

Finding suggest that Seattle should increase the spacing between tables when trying to rearrange furniture within a small space. This will help customers feel comfortable

whilst preventing overcrowding. Investing in a low disturbance blender will help to reduce the amount of noise experienced in the café; thus, improving customer satisfaction.

5.5 OBJECTIVE 3 - TO PROVIDE SEATTLE UMHLANGA WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF ATMOSPHERICS AND HOW THEY CAN BE IMPLEMENTED FOR GREATER SUCCESS

5.5.1 Findings from the Literature

A store's design and colour has the ability to influence the way customers perceive their surroundings. Desai (2011) stated that colours, décor and space provide visual stimulation which improves customer experience, as well as mental state. Soothing background music was found to create a pleasant atmosphere, thereby, creating a positive experience (Morrison et al., 2011).

5.5.2 Findings from the video-based interview and mailed interview schedules

Research findings support those from the previous literature as respondents mentioned that Seattle's colours created a warm and inviting space. Responses further supported Morrison et., al (2011) as customers preferred soothing slow music instead of loud and fast music.

5.5.3 Conclusion

From the research gathered for this objective, findings revealed atmospheric attributes and how they create a positive or negative experience; thus, improving Seattle's understanding of atmospheric stimuli. This understanding allows Seattle to manipulate their environment to achieve customer satisfaction.

5.5.4 Recommendations

From what respondents have mentioned, they suggest that Seattle should use slow and soft music rather than fast and loud music as this is more appealing. Furthermore, the café should ensure that newly purchased furniture is comfortable as this attracts clients and influences their perception of the café.

5.6 RESEARCH QUESTION

Atmospheric stimuli affect a customer's senses; this results in an emotional reaction. People use their emotions to make decisions. Emotions influence the way people perceive their surroundings. As a result, Seattle's atmosphere creates an emotional reaction which led customers to perceive the brand in a favourable manner. The cafe's design and layout, scent, lighting and sound made consumers feel comfortable and content; this feeling resulted in a positive perception of the brand.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance customer experience whilst reducing unpleasant experiences. Seattle should consider more elements of nature in the café. This can be done by incorporating the colour green through the use of plants. Due to the café's small space, the seating layout and the efficiency of staff need to be monitored to prevent overcrowding. This will help to reduce negative customer experience and the perception of an overly crowded café. Beanbag chairs can be incorporated into the café to create more intimate and inviting space. This enhances the way customers view the brand as the brand is perceived as more customer-centric.

5.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- To obtain a more accurate representation of Seattle Coffee customers, a larger study should be conducted as this research was small-scale.
- To investigate the impact of atmospherics in other retail outlets, clothing stores and supermarkets.
- To conduct a wider study across South Africa

5.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Informed consent: participants must know that they are taking part in this study. They need to provide consent. Participants were asked to provide verbal or written consent before participating in a questionnaire or interview.
- Avoid deception: when conducting interviews, it is important not to belittle any responses. Interviews were conducted in a professional and respectful manner.
- No persons under that age of 18 were interviewed. Participants were asked to indicate if they are over the age of 18.
- People suffering from mental disabilities and those who are in jail were not interviewed for ethical reasons.
- Confidentiality and anonymity: Anonymity is when the names of the respondents are never recorded (Wiles et al., 2008). Whereas confidentiality is where the names are recorded but they are kept secret and the respondent's identity is not revealed (Wiles et al., 2008). It is important to maintain confidentiality and anonymity as participants may not want their personal information revealed.

5.10 LIMITATIONS

- The study focused on the general public and their interaction with Seattle Coffee in Medstone Umhlanga. This was a limitation as face-to-face interviews are not recommended due to the COVID-19 lockdown (Sulcas, 2020).
- Participants were self-selected.
- This research had a limited time span due to the deadline.
- Due to COVID-19 interaction between customers and the Seattle Coffee Shop has decreased. Information from participants may be based on the memory of past experiences; experiences before South Africa went on a national lockdown (Sulcas, 2020). Therefore, information may be limited to what respondents can remember.
- The response rate was limited as participants are busy during the pandemic.
- It may be difficult to separate the effect of one specific influence from another.

5.11 DELIMITATIONS

This research was limited to only individuals in the La Lucia, Umhlanga and Ballito area that have visited the Seattle Coffee Shop in Medstone Umhlanga. This was done to ensure that only information relating to Seattle Coffee Medstone Umhlanga was obtained.

5.12 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This research investigated the impact of atmospherics on customer experience within the Seattle Coffee Shop in Medstone Umhlanga. The literature review done in chapter two provided the theoretical framework which helped to provide this research with direction. Emailed interview schedules and video-based interviews were used to collect data from respondents. Opened-ended questions allowed for in-depth responses. Findings indicated that Seattle's atmospherics positively affected in-store customer experience; thereby, answering the research question. Findings in chapter four identified factors relating to positive and negative contributors within the store. This links to the research objectives and the research problem. The research problem was solved as the findings and interpretation of findings provide an in-depth description of atmospherics and its positive and negative impact on the customer experience. This allows Seattle to identify and evaluate in-store atmospherics, thereby, solving the problem which was a perceived failure to identify positive and negative atmospherics contributors. Should Seattle implement the various recommendations made, the café would improve its ambience and entice clients to visit more regularly, stay longer and buy more, thus, increasing Seattle's profitability and brand image.

REFERENCE LIST

Baker, J., Grewal, D. and Parasuraman, A., 1994. The Influence of Store Environment on Quality Inferences and Store Image. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22(4), pp.328-339.

Bakker, I., van der Voordt, T., Vink, P. and de Boon, J., 2014. Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance: Mehrabian and Russell Revisited. *Current Psychology*, 33(3), pp.405-421.

Bouzaabia, R., 2014. The Effect of Ambient Scents on Consumer Responses: Consumer Type and His Accompaniment State as Moderating Variables. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, [online] 6(1). Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijms.v6n1p155> [Accessed 4 June 2020].

Caulfield, J., 2019. *How To Do Thematic Analysis | A Step-By-Step Guide & Examples*. [online] Scribbr. Available at: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/thematic-analysis/> [Accessed 10 September 2020].

Cant, M. and Van Heerden, N., 2013. *Marketing Management*. 2nd ed. Cape Town, South Africa: Tutor and company Ltd.

Ciani, A., 2010. *A Study Of How Lighting Can Affect A Guest's Dining Experience*. Masters degree. Iowa State University.

Collinsdictionary.com. 2020. *Collins Dictionary*. [online] Available at: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com> [Accessed 10 June 2020].

DeFranzo, S., 2012. *Advantages And Disadvantages Of Surveys*. [online] Snap Surveys Blog. Available at: <https://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/advantages-disadvantages-surveys/> [Accessed 9 September 2020].

Delice, A., 2010. *The Sampling Issues In Quantitative Research*. Marmara University.

Desai, A., 2011. *The Function and Design of Cafés: Throughout Time*. New York City.

Du Plooy- Cilliers, F., Davis, C. and Bezuidenhout, R. 2014. *Research Matters*. Cape Town South Africa: Juta and company Ltd.

Elliott, R., 2020. *Probability And Non-Probability Samples - Geopoll*. [online] GeoPoll. Available at: <https://www.geopoll.com/blog/probability-and-non-probability-samples/> [Accessed 13 September 2020].

Etikan, I., Musa, S. and Alkassim, R., 2016. Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, [online] 5(1), pp.1-4. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304339244_Comparison_of_Convenience_Sampling_and_Purposive_Sampling [Accessed 5 July 2020].

Guéguen, N. and Petr, C., 2006. Odors and Consumer Behavior in a Restaurant. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 25(2), pp.335-339.

Ha, J. and Jang, S., 2010. Effects of Service Quality and Food Quality: The moderating role of atmospherics in an ethnic restaurant segment. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, [online] 29(3), p.521. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0278431909001601> [Accessed 6 June 2020].

Hedding, D., Greve, M., Breetzke, G., Nel, W. and Jansen van Vuuren, B., 2020. COVID-19 and the Academe in South Africa: Not business as usual. *South African Journal of Science*, [online] 116(7/8), pp.1-2. Available at: <https://www.sajs.co.za/article/view/8298> [Accessed 17 October 2020].

Kamarulzaman, N., Saleh, A., Hashim, S., Hashim, H. and Abdul-Ghani, A., 2011. An Overview of the Influence of Physical Office Environments Towards Employee. *Procedia Engineering*, [online] 20, pp.262-268. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877705811029730> [Accessed 6 June 2020].

Kellaris, J. and Rice, R., 1993. The Influence of Tempo, Loudness, and Gender of Listener on Responses to Music. *Psychology and Marketing*, [online] 10(1), pp.15-22. Available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/mar.4220100103> [Accessed 5 June 2020].

Korstjens, I. and Moser, A., 2017. Series: Practical Guidance to Qualitative Research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), pp.120-124. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092> [Accessed 9 December 2020].

Krouwel, M., Jolly, K. and Greenfield, S., 2019. Comparing Skype (video calling) and in-person qualitative interview modes in a study of people with irritable bowel syndrome – an exploratory comparative analysis. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 19(1).

Krümpelmann, L., 2018. *The Influence Of Store Environment On Customers' Satisfaction And Purchase Behaviour*. Wageningen University and Research.

Kusumowidagdo, A., Sachari, A. and Widodo, P., 2012. The Impact of Atmospheric Stimuli of Stores on Human Behavior. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, [online] 35, pp.564-571. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812004351> [Accessed 5 June 2020].

Manen, M., 2007. Phenomenology of Practice. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 1(1), pp.11-13.

Maree, K., 2019. *First Steps In Research*. 3rd ed. Pretoria South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers.

Martin, T., 2018. *Should You Buy Warm Or Cool Lights For Your House?*. [online] CNET. Available at: <https://www.cnet.com/how-to/should-you-buy-warm-or-cool-lights/> [Accessed 8 June 2020].

Milliman, R., 1986. The Influence of Background Music on the Behavior of Restaurant Patrons. *Journal of Consumer Research*, [online] 13(2), p.286. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/jcr/article-abstract/13/2/286/1846377> [Accessed 4 June 2020].

Morrison, M., Gan, S., Dubelaar, C. and Oppewal, H., 2011. In-store music and aroma influences on shopper behavior and satisfaction. *Journal of Business Research*, [online] 64(6), pp.558-564. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0148296310001116> [Accessed 4 June 2020].

Nasermoadeli, A., Ling, K. and Maghnati, F., 2013. Evaluating the Impacts of Customer Experience on Purchase Intention. *International Journal of Business and Management*, [online] 8(6), pp.128-130. Available at: <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijbm/article/view/20550> [Accessed 10 July 2020].

Quad, A., 2016. *RESEARCH TOOLS: INTERVIEWS & QUESTIONNAIRES – Research Methodology In Education*. [online] Lled500.trubox.ca. Available at: <https://lled500.trubox.ca/2016/225> [Accessed 13 September 2020].

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research Methods for Business Students*. 1st ed. Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall.

Soares, A. and Elmashhara, M., 2020. *Emotional, Sensory, And Social Dimensions Of Consumer Buying Behavior*. IGI Global.

Spangenberg, E., Crowley, A. and Henderson, P., 1996. Improving the Store Environment: Do Olfactory Cues Affect Evaluations and Behaviors?. *Journal of Marketing*, [online] 60(2), p.67. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1251931?origin=crossref&seq=1>[Accessed 6 June 2020].

Spence, C. and Carvalho, F., 2019. The Coffee Drinking Experience: Product Extrinsic (atmospheric) influences on taste and choice. *Food Quality and Preference*, 80, pp.7 - 14.

Sulcas, A., 2020. *CORONAVIRUS: Fighting Covid-19: Will SA'S Lockdown Work (And What Does That Mean)?*. [online] Daily Maverick. Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-03-31-fighting-covid-19-will-sas-lockdown-work-and-what-does-that-mean/#gsc.tab=0> [Accessed 10 July 2020].

Varley, R., 2014. *Retail Product Management*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge.

Wardono, P., Hibino, H. and Koyama, S., 2012. Effects of Interior Colors, Lighting and Decors on Perceived Sociability, Emotion and Behavior Related to Social Dining. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 38, pp.362-372.

Waters, S., 2019. *Why Store Atmosphere Matters To Your Customers*. [online] The Balance Small Business. Available at: <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/atmosphere-2890162> [Accessed 9 December 2020].

Wiles, R., Crow, G., Heath, S. and Charles, V., 2008. The Management of Confidentiality and Anonymity in Social Research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11(5), pp.417-428.

Wordle.net. 2014. *Wordle*. [online] Available at: <http://www.wordle.net> [Accessed 11 July 2020].

Writer, S., 2020. *Fears Over South Africa'S Covid-19 'Doubling Rate' As It Passes Germany And France In Total Cases*. [online] Businesstech.co.za. Available at: <https://businesstech.co.za/news/trending/414439/fears-over-south-africas-covid-19-doubling-rate-as-it-passes-germany-and-france-in-total-cases/> [Accessed 10 July 2020].

Yildirim, K. and Akalin-Baskaya, A., 2006. Perceived Crowding in a Café/Restaurant with Different Seating Densities. *Building and Environment*, 42(9), pp.3410-3417.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: PROOF OF ETHICAL CLEARANCE



4 August 2020

Student name: Craig Vadivalu
Student number: [REDACTED]
Campus: IIE Vega School Durban

Re: Approval of BCOM Honours in Strategic Brand Management Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS/PGDIP ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

[X] There are some aspects that you still need to address in your proposal. You will need to address these aspects in consultation with your supervisor before you may proceed (see below):

Please discuss with your supervisor how you will address these issues listed below:

Please note: **Your fieldwork may only proceed once you address the following issues:**

- Minor revisions to your proposal as agreed to with your supervisor.
- No research will be undertaken on site.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. You will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. You may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. You responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary, no minors may be interviewed and nor may you interview people who are in any institution.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.
7. The research must be conducted in the public domain.

Supervisor: Alec Bozas

[REDACTED] 04/08/20

[REDACTED]
Campus Postgraduate Co-ordinator (CPC): Carolanda du Toit
10/08/2020

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORMS



CONSENT FORM TEMPLATE

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants
To whom it may concern,
My name is Craig Vadivalu and I am a student at IIE Vega School Durban. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Alec Bozas about atmospherics (lighting, sound, layout, smell) and how it can contribute positively or negatively to a customer's in store experience. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of atmospherics and how it can contribute positively or negatively to a customer's in store experience. Findings can identify areas that the brand can improve <u>in order to</u> enhance customer experience as well as the brand's image. Information relating to the stores aesthetics' and how it affects customer mood and experience will be useful to stimulate positive experience and reduce unpleasant experience. Findings can be used to increase customer purchase, customer loyalty and time spent in the store. I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.
What will I be doing if I participate in your study?
I would like to invite you to participate in this research because it will be useful in determining how a store's atmosphere contributes to a customer's positive or negative experience. This will provide me with information to support my research. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to ask you a range of open-ended question in order to gather information relating to your experience. You can decide <u>whether or not</u> to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer <u>particular interview</u> questions.
Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?
Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your experience. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.
Do I have to participate in the study?
• Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary; • If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so; • Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.
Will my identity be protected?
I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my

supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega School Durban, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my Honours in Strategic Brand Management. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Craig Vadivalu

[Redacted]

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Alec Bozas

[Redacted]

Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Craig Vadivalu about atmospherics (lighting, sound, layout, smell) and how it can contribute positively or negatively to a customer's in store experience.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

- I agree to be interviewed for this research.
- My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
- My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
- I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
- I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature	Date



CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING

Consent form for participants	
I, _____, agree to allow Craig Vadivalu to audio record my interviews as part of the research about atmospherics (lighting, sound, layout, smell) and how it can contribute positively or negatively to a customer's in store experience.	
This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:	
• My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private. • The recordings will be stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer. • Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.	
Signature	Date

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview Schedule

This research aims to understand the impact atmospherics has on customer experience. Atmospherics refers to environmental stimuli. This includes the lighting, sound, scent and design layout within a store.

Objective 1: To identify how atmospherics promote a positive experience.

Questions:

1. Please discuss how the decorative lighting within Seattle makes you feel ____

2. What fragrance or scent within the Seattle coffee shop creates a positive experience for you? _____

3. Please discuss which interior design aspects attracted you to the cafe _____

4. How does Seattle's use of natural light and open windows make you feel? ____

Objective 2: To identify negative contributors so that they can be controlled and avoided

Questions:

1. How does the close seating layout within Seattle make you feel? _____

2. Please discuss your experience with a busy store or overcrowding in Seattle; indicate whether this lead to positive or negative experience _____

3. Please discuss how general noise and sound in Seattle affects your mood ____

Objective 3: To provide Seattle Umhlanga with an understanding of atmospherics and how they can be implemented for greater success.

1. Please discuss how Seattle's use of instore imagery, wood, grey tones and industrial aesthetic make you feel? _____

2. Please discuss how music in a coffee shop affects your mood and overall experience. _____

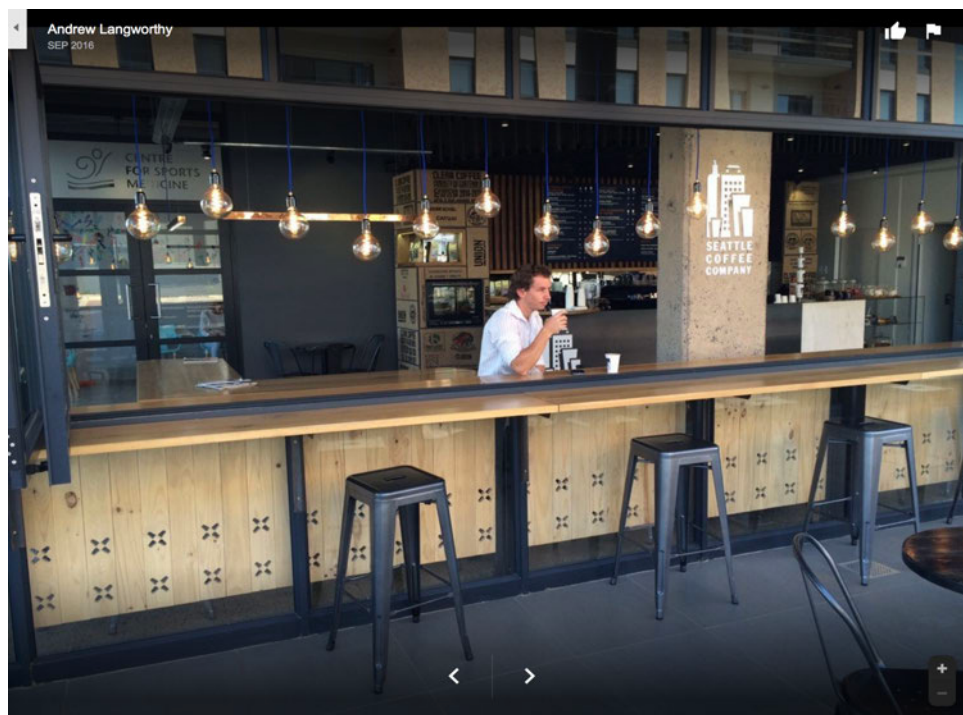
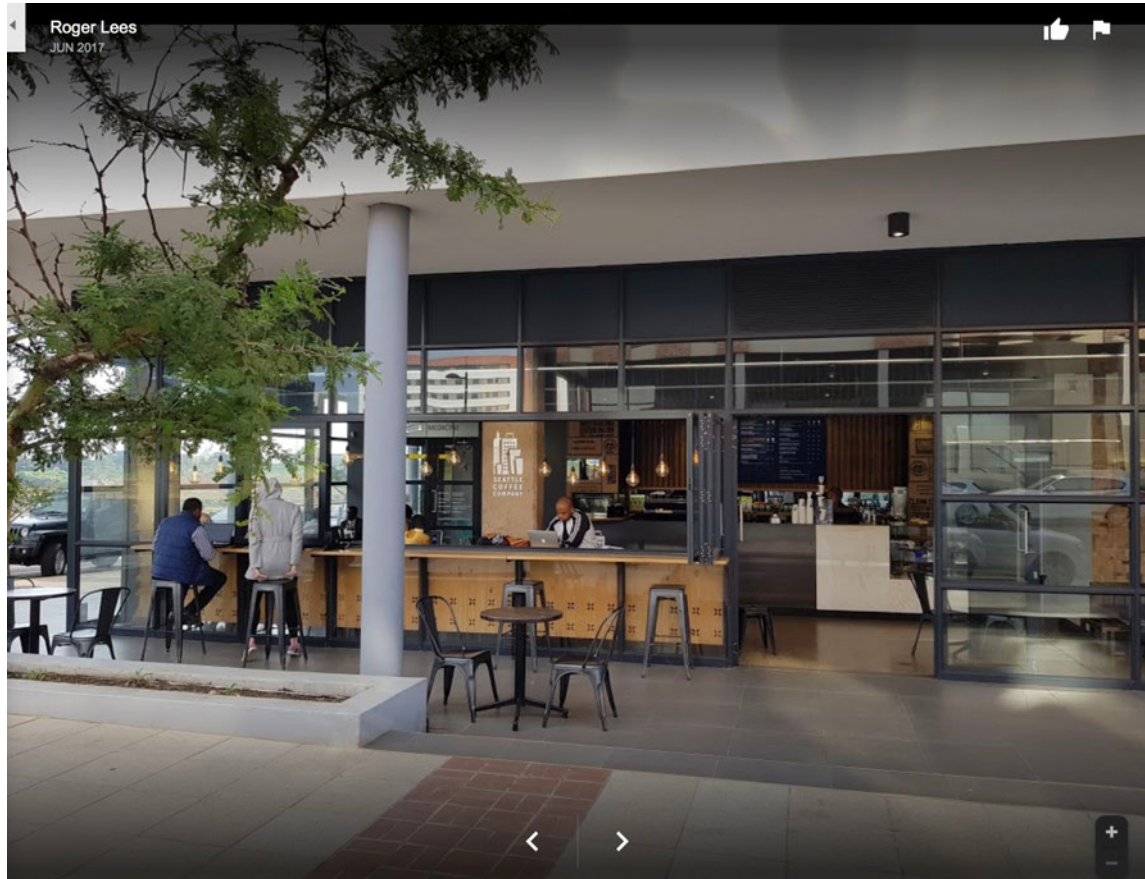
3. Please discuss how the use of comfortable seating affects your experience in a coffee shop _____

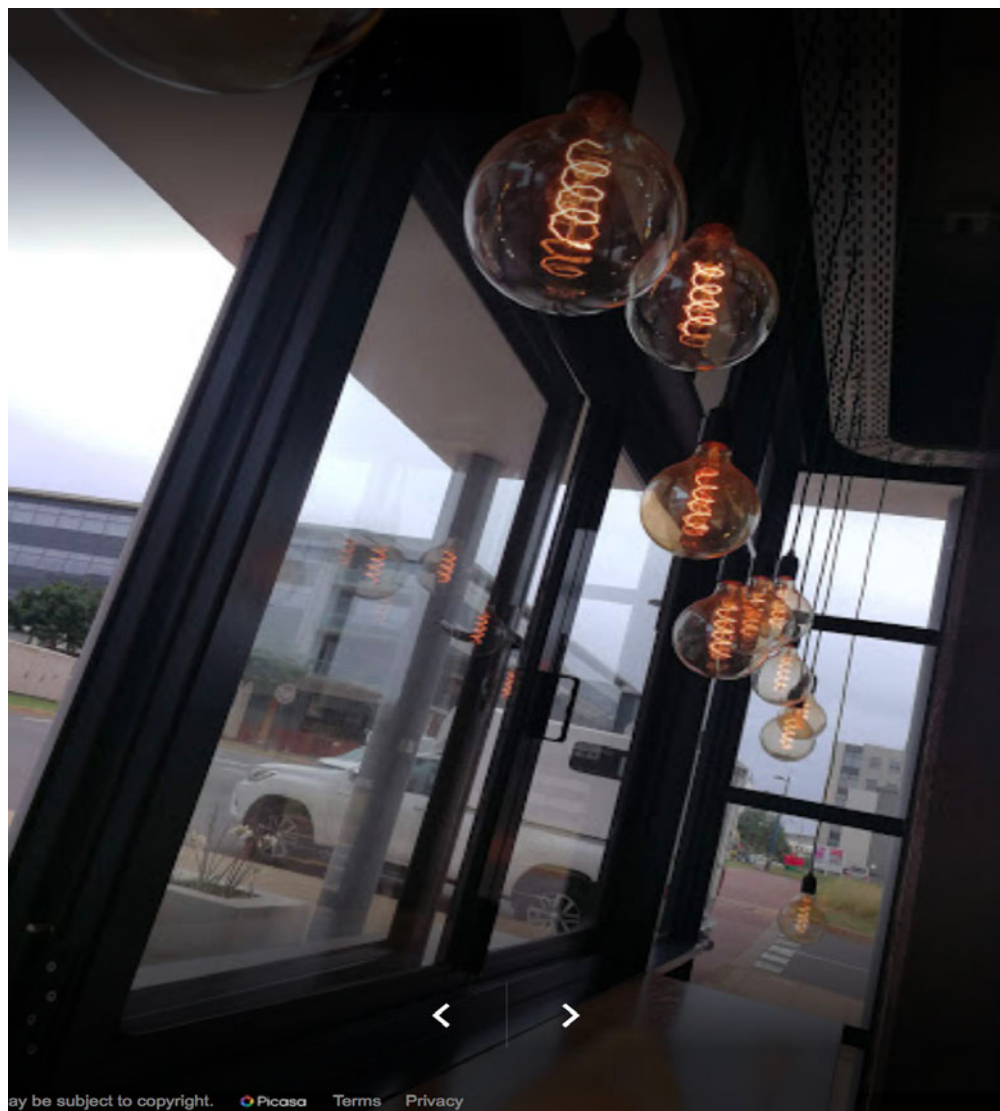
Are there any issues that you would like to mention concerning good or bad experience within the Seattle coffee shop, that you have not covered in your responses? _____

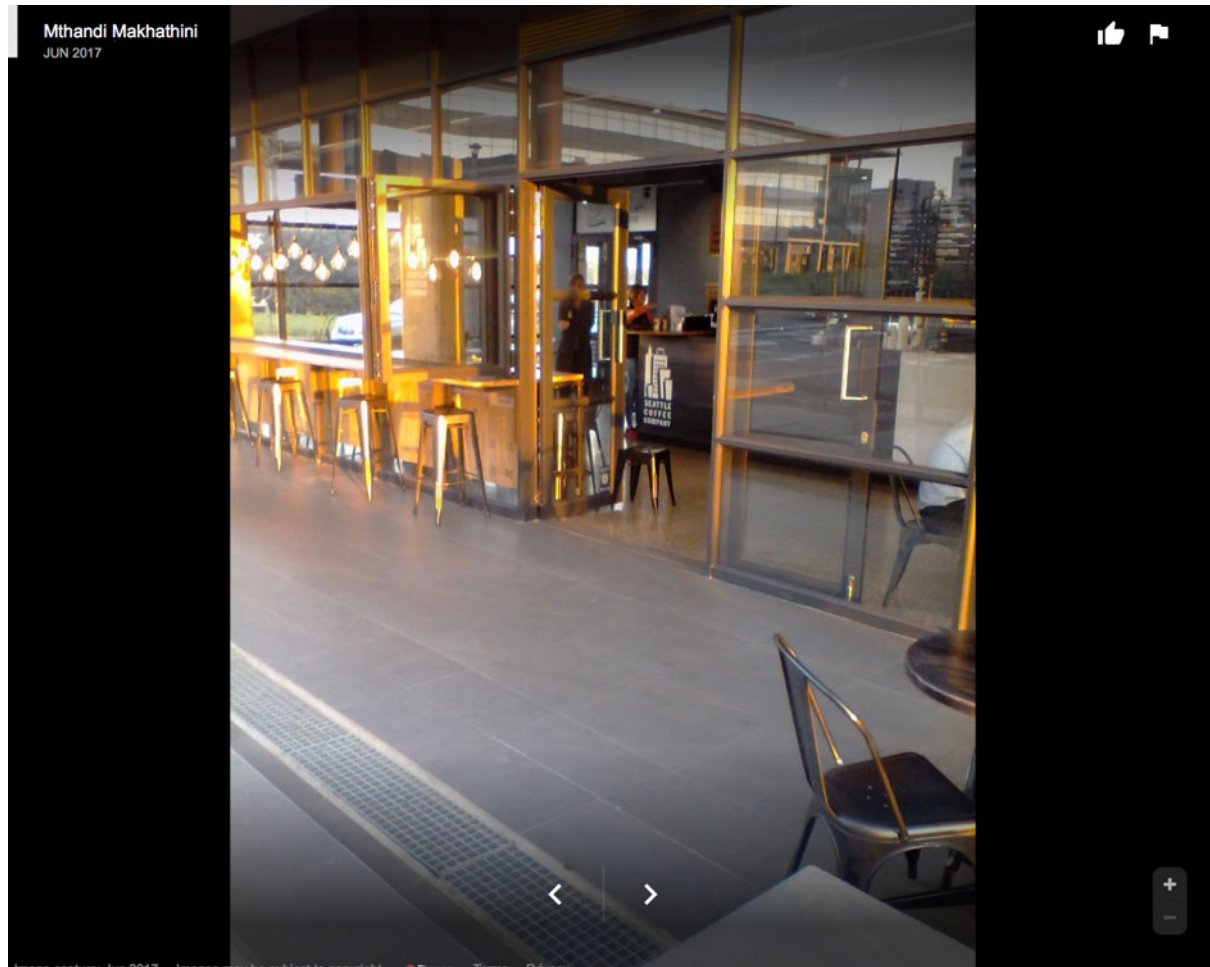
Do you have any suggestions as to how to improve customer experience within the store? _____

Thank you for your participation

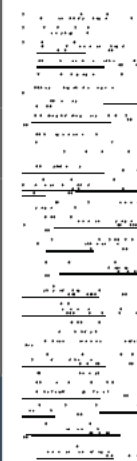
APPENDIX D: GOOGLE IMAGES OF SEATTLE COFFEE IN MEDSTONE
UMHLANGA







APPENDIX E: SUMMARY TABLE

Research Purpose/Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	References
e p pose of t s esse c s to apop s ow at cap e ce effects c sb e ap e ce att e Seate coffee s op Medico e U a ga By est g cet fo ato t a esse c w be sb e to advee Seate coffee ow to pove o at cap e ce as we as aspects t e o d ot ba c e g d e w be est so w g cessed c sb e oyty expected p c esse s d cessed p of t	How do at cap e ce fe ce c sb e ap e ce d e pa cepto of e Seate Coffee b a d Medico e U a ga?	At cap e ce s e to t e ba go d e vo et s e vo et s d ba et at g t o t e se of app op ele g t g co o so d a d e p e (Ca t a b e Hae de 2 15) At cap e ce f e ce c sb e e code b y g be vo e d e p epto s of te b d s e se t a eg etve o p o t i ve ap e ce (Ca t a b e Hae de 2 15) U de te d g e d be g esse of at cap e ce s d co po et g t e to sb e de g a p o t i t at sb e p o t i ve c sb e ap e ce w c w eed to s e e ce d b a d e p e		h m 1 e co cepto at cap e ce C sb e esteficio s depe de to a ap e ce g t g so d o o a d fag e ce h m 2 e Me sb e R ese ode (19 5) e ay & M a ode (2) ese ode s e to c sb e esteficio s d ow s e d e ap p o t i ve ap e ce c b e ap e ce b e c sb e s e h m 4 Advee p to At cap e ce t Reasec o b e c t i ve o s to de t y ce at cap e ce p o o b e p o t i ve ap e ce Reasec o b e c t i ve ba to de t y ce ap e ce co t b e se t i at t e y ce ba co to de d e o d e d		e esse c b o w e q e t i ve ap e ce Q e t e t r a esse c s e ce s b o ap o s e d e de de p to c t o de o t e q e e ce s t e t r o s Population e p o p a t o w co s t o f e ce t o f t e Seate Coffee s op Medico e U a ga e p o p a t o w co s t o f a d e d e d d e d e ce o s e bee t o t e Coffee s op Co ve e ce s p g wee eed Co ve e ce s p g s e q e t e t r a p g e t o t i s e ap p o p a t o e e s e q e t e t r a e t d y (Me e 2 15)		i f o ad co se t p a t i c i p e t e eed to p o r d e co se t And de ce to t e p o t i o t to be t e a y e p o e e N o p e s o d e t a t e p a t t e w be t e w eed P a p e e f e g u e t a t e d e b t e e d e ce s e s w o t e t e w eed Co f e t e y e o y t r a p o t i t a t e co f e t e y a d e o y t e p a t i c i p e t e y o t e t e p e s o a f o a t o e eed	A o w e ce d e d s p a c e ce e s e a e g e t i ve ap e ce P a s s e t f a g e ce s d i e e o f coffee bee s a t t e c t e c t g c s b e s e s e w e s p o t e t e c s b e s Ap p o p a t o e g t g e f e c t c s b e s e e d e A s p e c i a t a t s b o b g t o c ce e s e g e t i ve ap e ce w e e s e s d s p a c e ce e s e d e a d g o y o d Co s e s e p o t e t e s t y f e ce s c o b e s e p a ce p t o of a b e d N e t a e e e t y o o s e s e e o t e g e	
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/Hypotheses/Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution	
ap o b e s e p e ce v e d e s t o de t y p o t i ve d e g e t i ve co t b e s e c s b e ap e ce s e s p o b e s e f o ap p o p a t o e p o t e ce of at cap e ce co d e t Seate ce g e t e s e	C s b e s e p e ce B a d g B a d g e At cap e ce P y ce w e d e ce C s b e s e e t e f i c i o C e t i o y t e R e p e t e s e e l c e s s e d p o t i	C s b e s e p e ce B a d g B a d g e At cap e ce P y ce w e d e ce C s b e s e e t e f i c i o C e t i o y t e R e p e t e s e e l c e s s e d p o t i	e Me sb e R ese ode (19 5) e ay & M a ode (2)			e esse c w e t e o p o b e t y se p g e t o t Co ve e ce s p g s e be se de t e esse c co s t t e c sb e s of Seate coffee (Me e 2 15)	e esse c w e t e o p o b e t y se p g e t o t Co ve e ce s p g s e be se de t e esse c co s t t e c sb e s of Seate coffee (Me e 2 15)	e esse c b o d b o p o r d e Seate Coffee P e Q e s e U a ga t f d g e t e d e d e e t e g e s d w e e e e e e t g b e b e s e d e s d a p o t i c y e f e c t e b e d F d g e w d o e e e t i t e b a d e p o r d e d e t e s e c s b e s e p e ce e esse c w p o r d e s e f f o a t o e e t g t e s e s e e e e t e s e d e o t e f e c t s e c s b e s e d e s e p e ce i f o a t o e e t g t e Seate Coffee ce be e e d b e e e e c s b e s e e e d o p c e e c s b e s e y t e s e d e t y a d t e a p t e s e H a v g t e s t o w e d e t e b e d e e e s e d e s e a p e c s b e s e d e c e s e p a s s e t ap e ce		

