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The Relationship between Background Music and Customers' Emotion towards Duration of Stay in Restaurants

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Abstract

Food service in Malaysia has grown positively and to a certain extent is being labelled as 'sophisticated'. The atmosphere in restaurants such as the colours, scents, temperature and music have become some of the essential elements that influence customers' behaviour. Previous studies have shown that music genre, rhythm and tempo were able to arouse the emotion of customers, thus affecting the patrons' consumption and duration of stay. Therefore, this study aims at reporting the empirical investigation of background music, emotions and duration of customers' stay in cafés and restaurants. The findings of this study revealed the relationship of the background music managed to arouse the emotion of patrons which led to lengthening the duration of customers' stay and increasing their consumption. The positive response among the customers indicated that the use of music in restaurants plays an integral part. As such, it is important for restaurateurs to choose suitable music to create pleasant atmosphere as it influences customers' emotion.

Keywords: Background Music, Emotion, Duration of Stay

1. Introduction

Types of music genre, rhythm and tempo in restaurant play integral part in influencing consumers' behaviour. In food service establishment, music can be assessed through four characteristics which are the tempo of the music (Milliman, 1986; Caldwell & Hibbert, 2002), type of music (Magnini & Thelen, 2008; North, Shilcock & Hargreaves, 2003), difficulty of the

music (North & Hargreaves, 1996) and volume of the music (Guéguen, Hélène & Jacob, 2004). Pleasant and good music could arouse the positive behaviour of the customers to lengthen the duration of stay and spending, thus generating profit for the restaurateurs. This has been supported by Radocy and Boyle (1997) who suggested that appropriate music that is played in a restaurant or retail setting will make people tend to spend their money and time. As mentioned by Roger (2006), when pleasure is increased, it can affect the behaviour of the customer. Morrison (2001) noted that customers' emotion is a factor to arouse the positive impact on time and money spending. In addition, customers also lengthen the duration of stay in restaurants and increase their expenses as well (Milliman, 1986; Sullivan, 2002; Akrin, 2013). On the same note, there are an abundance of studies on consumer acceptance regarding music (Milliman, 1986; Caldwell & Hibbert, 1999; North, Shilcock & Hargreaves, 2003; Akrin, 2013; Soh, Jayaraman, Choo & Kiumarsi, 2015). However, there are few studies that focus on music and the duration of stay in café restaurants specifically in Malaysia.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Background Music

Music is an important factor to be considered in business. Most customers perceive that when the fast tempos of music are played, the store will become cool and modern and when the slow tempos of music are played, the store will become tiring and dull instead of relaxed and calm. Research findings show that music has different styles and the suitable volume can influence the perception of the customers. People's behaviour can be influenced by background music as it distinctly affects the time that they are prepared to wait (Areni & Kim, 1993). Moods and behaviours can be altered by music (Donovan, Rossiter, Marcolyn and Nesdale, 1982) as certain, favourite music gives a positive effect on consumers' mood. Most studies have examined that emotional (Michael, 2002) and behavioural (Cameron, Baker, Peterson & Braunsberger, 2003) responses rather than cognitive ones (Oakes, 2003). Music has been manipulated in its structural characteristics such as time (rhythm, tempo, phrasing), the degree of highness or lowness of a tone which is pitch (melody, mode, harmony) and texture (timbre, orchestration and volume), and it is effective elements such as valence (liking), familiarity and types of the music (Jain and Bagdare, 2011). To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of retail and service operations, background music can be obtained from the concept of atmospherics which is an area of environmental psychology (Yalch, 1990). Schmitt (1999) showed how the sensory experiences of shoppers can be created and enhanced by music that is the valuable primary element of atmospherics.

2.2 Emotion of Customer

Music has become an important variable to create appealing store experience and it can connect straight to the customers (Burghelea, Plaias & Murad, 2015). When music is played, the customers will feel the environment so much better and the emotional state while waiting will have a better evaluation. Hul, Dube and Chebat (1997) focused on types of music that people like to listen to or that have produced positive emotion and the types of music that people dislike and uncomfortable listening to. Alpert and Alpert (1989) stated that happy music background will change the mood of the customers to happy mood and contrasting situation occurs if sad music is played. To reduce the counter-productive psychological condition such as frustration, anxiety, depression and negative mood, background music can be applied to enhance the positive condition of the shopping experience (Herrington & Capella, 1994). Bruner (1990) also suggested that other researchers should do more studies involving music and marketing aspects since music has been long considered as effective and efficient for activating the moods and nonverbal communication and it can also be a powerful emotion stimulus towards customer behaviours.

2.3 Duration of Stay

Duration of stay of the customers is important in retail because it will increase the spending of the customers (Garlin & Owen, 2006). Yalch and Spangenberg (1990) found that although familiarity is related to the increase in apparent duration of stay, there is a decrease in definite duration which proposes that creating generalisation about how music influence the customer can be dangerous. The duration of stay of the customers and the spending of the customers will be influenced by music preferences in the store. Oakes (2003) discovered that waiting queue for student perceived time waiting can be shorter with absence of music, and with slow music the duration of student perceived time waiting will exceed the perceived duration. Bailey and Areni (2006) suggested that the number of songs which can lead to different tempo will affect the perceived duration. Milliman (1982) explained that the movement of the customers become slower when slow music is played which takes 128 seconds. On the other hands, fast music will take 109 seconds for the movement. Interestingly, because of the longer time to spend in the store, then more money can be spent under a slow music condition. The volume of the music also affects shoppers' behaviours, in particular, time spent in store and perceived time spent in store. Smith and Curnow (1966) found that supermarket shoppers spend significantly less time in store when the music is loud.

2.4 The Relationship between Background Music, Emotion and Duration of Stay

Musical preferences of target consumers must be matched because it leads to positive marketing outcomes such as satisfaction, delight, browsing and spending time (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). A study by Milliman (1982) discovered that music tends to change one's perception of spending time in a store. Meanwhile, emotion is intense feelings directed at someone or something. Moods are less intense feelings than emotions and often (though not constantly) arise without a specific event acting as stimulus. Most experts believe that emotions are more fleeting than moods. Emotions are usually accompanied by distinct facial expressions and are action-oriented in nature, while moods are cognitive in nature (Robbins & Judge, 2015). Mood is a primary mechanism for altering information-processing priorities and for shifting modes of information processing. In other words, mood is to modulate or bias cognition (Davidson, 1998). The relationship between mood and reaction to situational factors such as emotion is natural (Soh et al., 2015). To determine factors in consumers' approach-avoidance behaviours, the interaction between pleasure and arousal aspects are emphasised (Donovan et al., 1982). Approach behaviours are known as the wish to enter and explore and to be satisfied in the environment, while avoidance behaviours are referred to as the want to leave the environment. In order to create a good retail environment, an appropriate degree of arousal should be in consideration. According to Donovan (1982) and Sweeney and Wyber (2002), pleasure is a determinant of approach-avoidance consumer behaviours and arousal interacts with pleasure as if arousal increases approach behaviours in pleasant environments. As for dominance, it shows significant influence on behaviour. Baker and Cameron (1996) claimed that arousal is positively related to willingness to buy. Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010) support this statement by claiming music creates moderate levels of arousal that yields positive retail outcomes. The influence of the music is an effective atmospheric signal on purchase behaviour outcomes such as sales in ringgit. In addition, research showed that more money is spent in wine store when classical music is played (Areni and Kim, 1993). Due to pleasure and approach behaviour induced by typical environment, soft music is able to increase the expenditure (Sullivan, 2002). Eventually, it is proven that best use of music in atmospheric setting should be applied so that it can help to increase the total sales. Music can be a positive hearing signal to enhance the emotion and behaviour of the customer. Furthermore, the willingness to buy has positive relation with pleasure and arousal (Baker & Cameron, 1996). Gorn (1982) stated that customers will transmit the feeling on hot to evaluate

their pleasure with the store or its products. For the good mood of shopper, they will evaluate their shopping experience more positively than when they are in bad mood (Swinyard, 1993). The increase of rate of the activity can be related with higher levels of arousal (Smith & Curnow, 1966). This arousal can increase the purchase intentions and time spent, while the higher spending of money can be related to greater level of pleasure (Sherman, Mathur & Smith, 1997). Donovan et al. (1982) suggested that both time spent and willingness to return can be influenced by the pleasure and arousal. There are two contrasting behaviours of emotional responses which are approach and avoidance. Approach behaviour includes staying, exploring and affiliating with others in the environment (Booms & Bitner, 1980), while avoidance behaviour involves escaping from the environment and ignoring to communicate with others (Donovan et al., 1982).

3. Methodology

This study was carried out by using a quantitative approach through cross sectional study applied with self-reported and self-administered questionnaire. The use of quantitative research in this study is acceptable as the aim of the study was to gain wider information on the influence of background music towards duration of stay in the cafe restaurants, and the influence of background music towards emotions of the customers. This study used correlation analysis to analyse the relationship between variables. The survey was conducted at selected cafe-restaurants located in Sunway Carnival at Seberang Jaya, Penang. A total of 240 respondents who were the customers of the cafes were asked to help answer the questionnaire. A five (5) point Likert scale adapted from Kim (2006) was used and there were 6 items used in section A to measure the background of music. In section B there were 12 items that were adapted from Kim (2006) and Soh et al. (2015). Meanwhile, in section C there were 3 items adapted from Akrin (2013). The data were coded and keyed in the Statistical Package for the Social science (SPSS) version 20 for analysis.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Demographic Profiles

Table 1: Demographic Profile

	Classification	Frequency n=240	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	123	51.3
	Female	116	48.3
Age	<18	40	16.7
	19-25	98	40.8
	26-30	72	30.0
	>30	30	12.5
Ethnic origin or race	Malay	155	64.6
	Chinese	43	17.9
	Indian	34	14.9
	Others	8	3.3
Employment status	Student	73	30.4
	Employed	138	57.5
	Not employed	19	7.9
	Others	10	4.2

Type of music tempo	Slow	131	54.6
	Fast	109	45.4

Most of the respondents (51.3%; n=123) were males and 48.3% (N=116) of them were female. The respondents' age ranged from below 18 to more than 30 years old as shown in table 1. Most of the respondents aged from 19 to 25 years old with 40.8% (N=98). Respondents who were more than 30 years old had the lowest percentage which was 12.5% (N=30). Most of the respondents were Malays with 64.6% (N=155). The respondents with other ethnic origin or race had the lowest percentage that was 3.3% (N=8). Meanwhile, the lowest percentage of employment status in this study was others which was 4.2% (N=10) and the highest percentage was customer that has been employed that was 57.5% (N=138). The result also showed that, most of respondents preferred slow tempo music in the café restaurants with 54.6% (N=131) and 45.4% (N=109) preferred for the fast tempo of song. Based on the demographic result, it can be said that working Malay women tend to patron the cafes or restaurants in Seberang Jaya, especially those aged between 19-25 years old and most of them prefer to hear slow songs instead of fast songs. However, this research was conducted during lunch time and, therefore, it might influence the selection of music. The results should not be generalised to other factors because the difference percentage between male and female was relatively small.

4.2 Correlation

Table 2: Strength of correlation

Variable	Background music	Emotion	Duration of Stay
Background music	-	.596**	.137*
Emotion	.596**	-	.185**
Duration of Stay	.137*	.185**	-

Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01

The results indicated that there is large strength of correlation coefficient between background music and emotion of the customers (p value = <0.01), $r = .596$. This shows that background music plays an important part in influencing the emotion of customers. This has been supported by Baker and Cameron (1996), who claimed music is useful for hearing signal that can enhance the emotion and behaviour of the customers. Meanwhile, background music and duration of stay have a small strength of correlation coefficient (p value = p<0.05), $r = .137$. Even though the strength is relatively low, it still shows that music can influence the customers' duration of stay. Down (2009) noted that music does influence customer duration of stay in restaurants. This situation occurs probably because of the consumers dislike the tempo of music while they are in the café restaurants. Eventually, the effect of the emotion of customer towards the duration of stay also has small strength of correlation coefficient (p value = p<0.01), $r = .185$. Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010) stated that music preference of target consumers must be matched to the musical preference because it can lead to positive marketing outcomes such as satisfaction and delight, browsing and spending time.

4.3 Mediating Effect of Emotion of Customer towards Relationship between Background Music and Duration of Stay

Table 3: Result from regression analysis for mediating factor

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)		
(Constant)	3.608	.772		4.676	.000
Direct	.022	.041	.042	.528	.598
Indirect	.041	.020	.160	2.010	.046

Dependent variable: Duration of stay

Table 4.3 shows the result of the regression analysis. The R^2 after adding the mediating factor which is the consumers' emotion is 0.598. This shows that only 59.8% of the variation in duration of stay can be explained by background music and customers' emotion. The direct effect is between the independent variables and mediating variable or between mediating variable and dependent variable. Meanwhile, the mediational effect in which independent variable leads to dependent variable through mediating variable is called indirect effect. Baron and Kenny (1986) proposed a four-step approach in which several regression analyses are conducted and significance of the coefficient is examined at each step. The first step is simple regression analysis between background music and duration of stay. The result showed that there is slight relationship. The second step is simple regression analysis between background music and emotion. The result showed that there is a moderate relationship. The third step is simple regression analysis between emotion and duration of stay. The result showed that there is a slight relationship. The last step is a multiple regression analysis between background music, emotion and duration of stay. Based on table above, consumer emotion mediated the relationship between background of music and duration of stay, indirect effect $\beta = 0.041$ and p value = 0.046. The direct effect of background music and duration of stay was $\beta = 0.022$ and p value = 0.598 which the effect is after controlling for the mediation effect. Hence, it was found that emotion mediates the relationship between background music and duration of stay. As mentioned by Burghilea, Plaias and Murad (2015), emotion can influence the duration of the customers by playing the suitable music. This is supported by Van der Zwaag, Westerink and Van den Broek (2011) who indicated that music is supposed to influence the happiness, surprise, pleasantness, anger and fear to the listeners. Happy music produces more happiness and less sadness when compared to sad music. Through this finding, it can be concluded that background music is an essential element to attract customers to dine longer in a restaurant. Therefore, entrepreneurs should choose and play suitable songs that can maintain the customers' emotion. Due to pleasure and approach behaviour induced by typical environment, music is able to increase the expenditure (Sullivan, 2002). Eventually, it is proven that best use of music in atmospheric setting should be applied so that it can help to increase the total sales. Therefore, it is evident that the relationship of music and customers' emotion do play a role in the duration of stay in restaurants. Music selections should be one of the factors for restaurant operators to consider when dealing with customers.

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