

## **Influence of Interior Designs on Marketing Performance Selected of Rated Restaurants in Eldoret Town**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of the study was to establish influence of commercial interior design on marketing performance of selected rated restaurant in Eldoret Town. Commercial interior design involves the beatification of interior space for business purposes. In marketing performance restaurants to get repeat guests, interior design can play a major role in giving the first impression. Some restaurants have not prioritized interior design which affects their competitiveness in the market and thus/hence miss out on the industry ratings. It is from these justifications that the study did answer the following objectives: to establish how universal interior design affects restaurant marketing performance, to examine how sustainable interior design affects restaurant marketing performance, to ascertain evaluate how kitchen and bath interior design affect restaurant marketing performance, and to identify how lighting design affects restaurant marketing performance. The study did use a descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study was 20 respondents (managers and supervisors) from 10 selected star rated restaurants in Eldoret town. All respondents were obtained using a census sampling technique, and were purposively selected. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire using the "drop and pick" method. Thereafter, data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of the tool SPSS version 21. The specific findings showed that universal interior, sustainable interior and kitchen designs contribute significantly to more customers coming to the restaurants. The main finding reported was that interior design plays a pivotal role in the success and marketing performance of any business. Therefore, the study concludes that interior design has an influence in marketing performance of restaurants. The study recommends that owners in commercial enterprises should include interior design in their planning.

**Key words:** Commercial interior design, marketing performance

## **Introduction**

Commercial interior design involves the development of interior space used for business purposes. Physical environment is the most significant feature of the total product and restaurant has a great influence on the image has to be able to provide a good atmosphere for the restaurant and can act positively to the customer satisfaction as Kotler (1973) cited. The hospitality industry is a service industry that includes lodging, food and drink services, event planning, theme park transportation, cruise lines, and travel. A restaurant is a business that prepares and serves food and drinks to guests in exchange for money, and they are rated in terms of facilities, menu on offer, and pricing (Thapa,2007).There is a growth of restaurants in Eldoret Town, and they compete regarding accessible locations that have ample parking space and suitable pricing on their menus.

## **Statement of the problem**

When commercial interior design is given a major priority, it creates the first impression as space in the restaurant is managed well; there will be a balance in the comfort level both for employees and guest Lighting creates a special atmosphere to cater for occasion e.g. dinner. The arrangement of Fitting And Fixtures (F &F) And Use Of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by the employees reinforce the performance and brand sells as it drives the business and at the end guests gets satisfied and have enjoyable experience.

Some restaurants have failed in planning the commercial interior design; they lack waiting areas for guests as they wait to be served this create a mass at the entrance. Noise level in the restaurants are high; this makes guest converse loudly. Accessibility is a problem for both employees and guests especially those with special needs and this compromise everyone safety during rush hours. Hygiene level has not been observed to the standard restaurants cannot sanitize the whole place from floor to ceiling and it is contributed by too much clutter and overzealous décor which crowds the place and does not bring out the theme (Thapa, 2007).

## **Objectives of the study**

The research objectives were:

- i. To establish how universal interior design affects marketing performance of restaurants.
- ii. To examine how sustainable interior design affects marketing performance of restaurants.

- iii. To evaluate how kitchen and bath interior design affect marketing performance of restaurants.
- iv. To identify how lighting interior design affect marketing performance of restaurants.

### **Significance of the study**

The commercial interior design takes a significant role in marketing performance of restaurants. There are a number of persons and institutions who can benefit from this. It enables the restaurants owners/ investors and management of restaurants to recognize the element of commercial interior design that impacts marketing performance of restaurants and incorporate them in their strategies and decisions. For guests, the study can provide suitable learning outcomes in which they can choose a place for value, and for scholars or researchers they can use the study findings for new knowledge acquisition and for further research.

### **Literature review**

#### **Marketing of restaurants**

Marketing performance involves activities designed to promote regular sales and encourage increased business at slack periods. There four types of marketing performance are particularly useful for restaurants operations. Advertising is concerned with contacting and informing the existing or potential market, providing information on the products and services available and encouraging purchase. The coverage is wider can provide the opportunity for more information to be available to guests on demand. Merchandising related mainly to the point of sale marketing. Its main role is to improve the average spend per head of the guest. Personnel selling refer to the ability of the staff in restaurants to actively contribute to the marketing of sales.

According to the American Marketing Association (2022, “marketing performance is an organizational function and a set of process for creating, communicating and delivering value to customer and for managing customer`s relationships in ways that benefit the organizations and its stakeholders “. Therefore marketing performance is measured by the number of customers prefer a given product as compared to another. Wong (2005), marketing therefore involves exchange of product which creates utility (the power to provide consumers with goods and wants to satisfy their needs).

Design in Tourism and Hospitality has several definitions which seek to explain its meaning. According to Katsigiris and Thomas, (2009), they suggest that design entails decorations, shapes, sizes and styles in all aspects of ‘soft’ factors such as building, ambience, comfort,

image and style and ‘hard’ factors such as cost, ergonomics, noise, safety, or space. According to Ransley and Ingram, (2001), restaurant is significant tool in enhancing the building attractive appeal creating an atmosphere in public areas such as the lobby and attracting guests in the process. Halim and Halim (2019), asserts that a hotel’s physicals design modifies guest’s inferences and perception of quality. In fact research has also examined the importance of design in front line areas of hospitality operations with Jang and Countryman (2006), discussing the critical importance of design for hotels and Thapa (2007) investigating how design features create attractions on guest and their behavior towards the restaurant’s overall environment.

Cooking is an art and so should be the “exhibition space”. Through design, more and more are turned into memorable spaces. Themes are highly recommended, pushing creativity to new heights and turning each venue into a unique destination. Lavinia (2015), further explains how modern designs have blurred indoors and outdoors boundaries. Sensory experiences goes along way therefore many marketers and production staff are focused on producing products that will stimulate positively sensory experiences. This “principle” was well integrated in the array of services offered by modern restaurants owners who struggle to keep indoor outdoor transition as “ethereal” as possible.

### **Theory of the study**

According to the Marshallian economic model, individual buyers will spend their income on those goods that will offer the greatest satisfaction, depending on their tastes and the relative prices of goods. The antecedent of theory can be traced back to both Adam Smith and Jeremy Betham. In accordance with the doctrine of economic growth developed by Smith, man is said to be motivated in all his actions by self-interest (Kotler, 1979). According to Kotler (1979), the theoretical work of Alfred Marshall is found in his method to examine the effect of change in a single variable for examples prices when all other variables are held constant, based on simplified assumptions. Marshall’s method and assumption have been redefined to the modern utility theory, where the economic man maximizes his utility and does this by carefully calculating of any purchase he makes. According to Marshallian model, the lower the price of a product, the more the quantity of that product purchased and the lower the price of a substitute commodity, the higher the sales of that substitute and vice versa. Also the sales of a product will be higher, provided it is not an inferior good if the real income is higher and greater volume of sales will be realized as promotional expenditure is increased.

## Methodology

The study was guided by descriptive research design. Kothari (2012) defines the descriptive design as a type of research design that involves collecting respondents from a defined group of people. The target population of the study was 20 respondents who included managers and supervisors from the selected rated restaurants in Eldoret Town. The rating was according to Tourism Regulatory Authority in Kenya reports on the performance of hospitality industry for a period of 3 months (January to March 2019).

All the respondents (target) population were sampled using census sampling technique. According to Kothari (2012) census involves a process where all the population is contacted. The managers and supervisors were chosen purposely because they are key in decision making. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) structured questionnaires are simple, compressive and it is easy to administer to the respondents. The questionnaire was structured to answer the objective of the study based on semantic scale. Data was collected in a period of one week using “drop and pick” methodology. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including; frequency, and percentages.

## Results

This study presents the results regarding the objectives. The results are presented in form of frequency distribution tables, tables and charts. The aim of the questions is to establish how the interior designs contribute to performance of selected restaurants. The questions covered the objectives of the study. The findings were presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Number of years in business**

Years	Frequency (N=20)	%
Below 5 years	3	10%
6-10 years	6	30%
Above 11 years	12	60%

The findings in Table 1; majority of the respondents (12) have been in business for more than 11 years with a percentage of 60%, 30% have been in business between 6-10 years while 10% are still new in the business. The finding shows that they are aware of what is happening in their industry. Table 2 shows a summary of the findings on the type of marketing employed by the respondents.

**Table 2: Types of marketing**

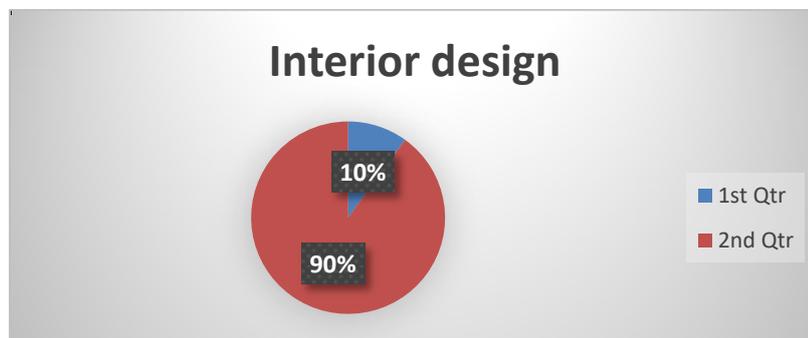
Types of marketing strategy	Frequency N=20	%
Personal	2	10%
Media	4	20%
Branding	9	45%
Merchandising	5	25%

According to the findings in Table 2 respondents were asked on the type of marketing used. Majority (45%) responded that branding was mostly used media and merchandising was fairly used at 20% and 25% respectively, while for personnel marketing was the least with 10%. Table 3 shows the number of customers visiting the restaurant.

**Table 3: Number of customer visiting the restaurant**

Numbers	Frequency n=20	%
0-50	-	0%
51-100	8	40%
101-150	11	55%
151-above	1	5%

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents (55%) stated 101-150 customers visit the restaurant in a day, 40% of the respondents gets visitations between 52-150 customers, while only 5% stated that they get more than 151 customers, and from the finding none got below 50 customers per day. The number of visitations is a clear indication of good performance among the restaurants. When asked whether the establishment had done commercial interior design the response was as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Availability of commercial interior design**

Figure 1 shows that majority of the restaurants 90% have done commercial interior design while 10% have not done commercial interior design. The finding shows that majority of restaurants have commercial interior designs in their establishment. The study further asked

the respondents to indicate which of the items provided the customers are attracted to. Findings were reported in Table 4.

**Table 4: Customer attractions**

Items	Frequency	%
Comfort level	4	20%
Enjoyable experience	5	25%
Reinforced performances	2	10%
Branding and image	5	25%
All of the above	4	20%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the findings in Table 4, it is clear that most of the restaurants responded that enjoyable experiences and branding and image were their main attractive items in restaurants, represented by 25%, while 20% responded that all were their main successes, and another 20% said comfort level was their main success. Last but not least, 10% responded that reinforced performance was their main success. From the observation checklist it was observed that 93% had lighting provision that caters for special atmosphere, 89% had special provision for fixtures and fittings in the kitchen and bath, 54% had sufficient indoor air quality, 42% had adequate space for both customer and staff, 27% had improved on sustainable energy conservation while 23% had layout that caters for special needs. This enables all types of customers to enjoy the services offered by the restaurants. Table 5 presents findings on the level of agreement regarding commercial interior designs performance

**Table 5: Level of agreement on commercial interior design performance**

Statements	Number	Mean	S.D
1. The space in the restaurant is accessible for both customer and staff	20	3.421	0.643
2. The layout of the restaurant caters for special needs.	20	2.613	0.432
3. The indoor air quality is sufficient enough.	20	3.511	0.321
4. There is improvement to enhance sustainable energy conservation.	20	2.743	0.701
5. There is special provision for fixtures and fittings in the kitchen and bath.	20	4.216	0.321
6. There lighting provision does create special atmosphere.	20	4.416	0.213

Findings in Table 5 shows that respondents with a mean of 3.421 (SD 0.643) suggested that space in the restaurant is accessible for both customer and staff. Respondents stated that the layout of the restaurant caters for special needs at a mean 2.613 (SD 0.432). The findings from the respondents at a mean of 3.511 (SD 0.321) stated that the indoor air quality is sufficient enough. There is improvement to enhance sustainable energy conservation this is according to respondents with a mean of 2.743 (SD 0.701).The findings from respondents with a mean of 4.216 (SD 0.321) showed that there is special provision for fixtures and fitting in the kitchen and bath. Lastly from the findings it showed that respondents with a mean of 4.416 (SD 0.213) stated that the lighting provision does create special atmosphere. Many of these findings showed that the restaurants have sufficient spaces for both staff and employees, have appropriate layout, and have suitable fixtures and fitting that are attractive. These items have improved the appearance and marketability of the restaurants. To ascertain the responses on the items outlined in Table 5 the study did conduct an observational study. Table 6 presents findings from observational checklists.

**Table 6: Results from observational checklists**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Is there space in the restaurant that is accessible for both customers and staff	42% (4)	58% (6)
2. Does the layout of the restaurant cater for special needs	23% (3)	67% (7)
3. Is the indoor air quality sufficient	54% (6)	46% (4)
4. Is there improvement for sustainable energy conservation?	27% (2)	73% (8)
5. Is there special provision for fixtures and fitting in the kitchen and bath?	89% (9)	11% (1)
6. Is the lighting provision does create special atmosphere.	93% (9)	7% (1)

From the researcher observation checklist (Table 6) showed majority of the restaurants (58%) did not have accessible space for both customers and staff. The researcher's findings on the observation checklist (Table 6) showed that majority of the restaurants (67%) did not have a layout that caters for special needs. Findings from observational checklists (Table 6) showed that indoor air quality is sufficient enough among the 54% restaurants. Findings from the observation checklist (Table 6) showed that 73% of the restaurants had no improved designs for sustainable energy conservation. There were special provision for fixtures and fitting in the kitchen and bath in 89% of restaurants according to the observation checklist (Table 6). From the observation checklist (Table 6) findings it showed 93% of the restaurants had lighting provision which create special atmosphere.

The study did establish that interior designs are essential to improving the appearance of restaurants. From the responses and observational checklists, many of the restaurants were reported to have exceptional interior designs, and this has largely contributed to the number of customers visiting per day. This is supported by Ransley and Ingram (2012) who postulated that interior designs are key attractive components in hospitality related establishments. Interior design becomes a primary agent that those marketing restaurants should embrace in their physical infrastructure.

### **Conclusion**

Commercial interior design in restaurants is regarded as a core aspect that contributes towards adding value to both operations and guests. It is therefore not only evident in all aspects of human endeavor, but also relates fundamentality to all people, thereby highlighting the importance of commercial interior design to marketing restaurants. The study concludes that universal interior design element both tangible and non-tangible are contributors to guest's overall experience at a destination and can be decisive factors in determining guest satisfaction or dissatisfaction during their stay. The study concludes that sustainable interior design is effective in providing a friendly environment that customers are comfortable with. The study further concludes that the kitchen and bath interior design provides conducive environment to staff that are able to offer customers quality satisfactory services. Lastly, the study concludes that lighting interior design is appropriate in providing conducive environment that is attractive to the customers.

### **Recommendations**

In order to ensure that guests are satisfied and become loyal to a restaurant, the marketing team needs to ensure that the restaurant interior designs are of high quality, unique and creates—memorable experiences. This could be achieved through hiring well know commercial sustainable interior designers who have travelled the world and know different cultures to come with design that will leave guests with a wow experience and those yet to visit want to have tastes of the restaurant. The restaurants need to change their lighting interior designs by adopting latest technologies. Adopting the latest technology would also be of great advantage especially if it is to capture a larger market share. Most people are becoming tech- savvy and latest technology would be attractive to them. Marble, glass fiber and other latest commercial interior designs alternated at least after five years. The use of universal interior designs would create a new sense of style to a guest making him curious to

know what style is next. The above recommendations if successfully implemented would create a loyal customers base, customer satisfaction and who knows maybe a good word of mouth across the borders.

### **Suggestions for further studies**

The study recommends that future studies need to be conducted in other regions and restaurants. Other researchers need to use customers as part of the respondents in order to seek from customers regarding the commercial interior designs.

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