

**ROLE OF SERVICE ENCOUNTERS IN CREATING PATRONS'
EXPERIENTIAL VALUE IN CLASSIFIED RESTAURANTS IN NAIROBI
CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

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DEDICATION

To my family

“To succeed...you need to find something to hold on to, something to motivate you,
something to inspire you.”

~Tony Dorsett

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS AND TERMS

- Classified Restaurants** : These are star rated restaurants. Classification assigns a star rating of between one (standardized services) and five (superior services). Classified restaurants are usually stand-alone restaurants. This excludes restaurants within hotels that are already star rated.
- DINESCAPE** : This is a modified model of SERVQUAL that is used to measure the patrons' experience with the restaurants' physical environment during service encounter such as facility aesthetic, lighting, ambience, layout, Table setting and service staff.
- DINESERV** : In the study perspective, this is a modified model of SERVQUAL that is used to measure the patrons' personal encounter experience with the restaurants' employees such as food quality, atmosphere, service quality, convenience, price and value.
- Experiential Value** : This is the patron evaluation of services efficiency, service excellence, authenticity and playfulness in the service encounter while dining a restaurant.
- Patron** : Refers to a current customer/ client in the classified restaurants.
- Personal Service Encounter** : These are patrons' encounters with the restaurants' service environment (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy).
- Physical Environment Service Encounter Restaurant** : These are the patrons' encounters with the restaurants' physical environment (Facility Aesthetics, Ambience, Lighting, Table Setting, Layout and Service Staff).
- Restaurant** : A premise where patrons can sit, order, eat and pay for a meal served to them. A restaurant can be a standalone facility or within a big hotel. For example, a five star

hotel could have five or more restaurants inside one facility. These restaurants are referred to as food outlets points. A restaurant could be simple (fast food or quick casual) where patrons get ready to eat foods or complex (themed, fine dining) where patrons order and wait for food to be prepared.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DINESCAPE	:	Dining Servicescape
DINESERV	:	Dining Service
ET		Experiential Theory
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
GOK	:	Government of Kenya
MEAACT	:	Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism
PROI	:	Patrons' Return on Investment
SERVQUAL	:	Service Quality
TDF	:	Tourism Development Fund
TRA	:	Tourism Regulatory Authority

ABSTRACT

The growth and diversity of restaurants has been tremendous worldwide. This growth has been fuelled by quality service encounters hence repatronage. Service encounters involve a high degree of interaction between staff, customers and the physical environment. Harmonizing the three interactions is a milestone that could act as a competitive advantage in the highly competitive restaurant business environment. However, managing the three interactions has been outlandish for many restaurant owners and managers. In light of the aforementioned, the current study sought to determine the role service encounters play in creating patrons experiential value in classified restaurants. Thus, the study adopted DINESERVE and DINESCAPE models in deriving the constructs that were used to measure service encounters and Experiential Theory (ET) in deriving constructs that were used to measure patrons' experiential value. The study targeted all classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya. While employing descriptive survey design, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used in selecting individual from the target population for inclusion in the sample. Data were collected using both closed and open ended self-administered questionnaires which were distributed to a sample size of 387 participants. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to determine internal reliability of the constructs where coefficients ranging 0.67 to 1 were considered adequate for data analysis and reporting. Both quantitative and qualitative data analyses were used. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data were percentages, means and standard deviation were used to report data. Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression analysis were further used to examine the relationship and test the study null hypotheses. The study results revealed a significant positive relationship between personal service encounter dimensions and patrons experiential value. In addition, the study revealed a significant positive relationship between (ambience, table setting and service staff) as physical service encounter drivers and patrons' experiential value. The study further revealed DINESERVE model as the most significant predictors of patron's experiential value. Finally, qualitative analysis conducted on major themes derived from opened ended questions resulted to percentages which revealed personal service encounters as key to creating patrons experiential value. The study recommends that owners and managers need to develop strategies geared towards boosting patrons' experiential value by ensuring elegant service encounters for sustainable classified restaurant business.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The restaurant industry is a global, multi-billion dollar service oriented economy. According to Victoria and Jhenna, (2013), the service oriented industry comprise of establishments that vary greatly in appearance, settings and service offering. They further state that the industry is highly dependent on the quality of service encounters it offers to its patrons. According to Walter and Edvardsson (2012), service encounters are the direct interaction between service providers, patrons and the physical environment within a restaurant while dining out. In the same vein, Dev and Heesup (2011) ascertain service encounters as the tangible (The physical environment) and intangible (The services offered) elements involved during service offering process in a restaurant environment. Thus, as acknowledged by Walter and Edvardsson (2012), service encounters are paramount in determining patrons' experiential value (the excitements and fun moments patrons generate while dining out).

In the United States of America, restaurant service industries encourage quality service encounters as a strategic decision to become more appealing to customers (The National Restaurant Association, 2014). Due to quality service encounters, sales from the service industry are huge and were projected to top \$709 billion, up by 3.8% from 2014, thus remaining part of the nation's second largest private employer (Restaurant Canada, 2015). In the same tune, customers in Canada prefer to have meals in restaurants were service encounters are geared toward customers needs than in hotels. For this reason, Canada's restaurant service industry sales were expected to add up to more than \$77 billion in 2016 placing it in the lime light for

increased revenue generation for the government among other benefits (Restaurant Canada, 2015). However, despite the immense benefits, service delivery has been the main challenge affecting restaurants (Restaurant Canada, 2015). In Hong Kong for example, in spite of its well-developed city, quality service has increasingly become important for all types of its service oriented companies. Thus, its restaurant service industry has been among the service- oriented economy's leader in job creation and income generation with anticipations to add over 1.7 million new positions in the next decade (The National Restaurant Association, 2014).

In sub Saharan Africa, the restaurant service industry has remarkably grown, resulting into a range of restaurant establishments hence stiff competition (Ernst & Young, 2010). Due to the stiff competition, service encounters have been emphasized as the key dimensions to gain a competitive edge (Walter, Edvardsson, & Öström, 2010). Restaurant establishments that have embraced personal service encounters (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) and physical environment service encounters (Facility Aesthetics, Ambience, Lighting, Table Settings, Layout and Service Staff) have attracted enormous income (Ernst & Young, 2010). In line with the afore mentioned, Victoria and Jhenna (2013) noted that patrons service encounter satisfaction may encourage re-patronage due to the fun and excitement gained hence a great experiential value (Aesthetic Appeal, Playfulness, Service Excellent).

Driven by an improving economy, and emphasis on service quality, the Kenya's restaurant industry has turned to be a major contributor to the Gross Domestic Product GDP (Finance and Private Sector Development African Region, 2010), resulting into high economic returns, foreign exchange earnings, creation of employment, development of infrastructure and improved living standards of locals

(World Bank, 2013). In addition, the government, through Kenya Utalii College has laid huge emphasizes and investment to have qualified personnel operate this highly income generating industry. Hotels and Restaurant Authority under the Ministry of Tourism has also been mandated to classified restaurants (Three, Two and One star) for ease of identification ,service quality assurance and compliance with the sectors' set laws, rules and regulations in an effort towards promoting service excellence (Kenya Gazette, 2003). However, despite the huge growth and emphasis on quality restaurant products, the industry has been faced with challenges among them poor service encounters (personal and physical environment) emanating from failure of getting the right skilled personnel thus resulting to reduced fun and excitement for patrons dining out (patrons experiential value). Thus, according to Hye and Jin (2015), there is need to make service encounters more enjoyable in an effort to reduce perceived risk associated with purchasing a service. Therefore, a proper integration of the key service encounter components may determine the dining experience which may eventually improving the buying experience

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

Restaurant institutions irrefutably represent a relatively important percentage of the larger hospitality industry (World Bank, 2013). It has therefore become an important component in employment and creation of modern economies. Annually, the restaurant industry accounts for 18% of the total foreign exchange, 11% of the Gross Domestic Product [GDP] and 30% of jobs linked to the industry (Finance and Private Sector Development African Region, 2010). However as stated by Nyoike, Langat, Karani and Langat (2014), this growth has been faced with challenges especially associated with service encounters and stiff competition. They further

acknowledge that the scarcity of finding the right skills for the job has resulted to service encounters challenges.

In line with the afore mentioned, the Ministry of Planning and National Development (2005) has stated that the Kenya's hospitality industry is facing a shortage of 30,000 skilled professionals. Precisely, the restaurant industry which is part of the wider hospitality industry has negatively been impacted by shortage of skilled professionals. This has resulted to negative patrons' experiential value due to poor service encounters (personal and physical environmental). Firstly, Dev and Heesup (2011) acknowledge that poor personal service encounters (the intangibles) may wipe out patrons' excitement and the fun that comes with dining out. Thus, this thesis sought to examine the relationship between personal service encounters and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi city county, Kenya.

Secondly, as noted by Drach- Zahavy (2010), a slight failure in the physical environmental service encounters may lead to substantial failure in service delivery. He suggested that improving the physical environment service interactions between patrons and the tangibles of a restaurant is critical in creating positive experiences which may influence the success of a business. Subsequently, this thesis sought to determine the relationship between physical environment service encounters and patrons' experiential value.

Thirdly, Drach- Zahavy (2010) acknowledge that identifying and understanding customer overall experience gained through service encounters is a strategic research goal for creating positive experiential value hence sustained business growth. In the strength of his acknowledgment, this thesis equally sought to examine

the effect of both personal service encounters and physical environment service encounters on patrons' experiential value.

Early researches in the field of hospitality industry reveal an overreliance on service quality (SERVQUAL) model as a measure of service encounters (McCull-Kennedy, et al., 2012). Despite its enormous usage, the model has been criticized by a number of academics (Harr, 2008). Most of the model's criticism arose concerning its validity, reliability and operationalization of expectations and dimensional structures. However, there is general agreement that SERVQUAL items are reliable predictors of the overall service process (Walter & Edvardsson, 2012). As a result, alternative measures of service encounters have been developed. In tourism and hospitality industry, Stevens, Knutson, & Patton (1995) have developed DINESERVE model which has been useful while measuring personal service encounters. In addition, Ryu and Jang (2008) coined DINESCAPE model which encompasses twenty one items measuring physical environment service encounter. Given the little adoption of the two models to hospitality research in Kenya, this thesis sought to integrate both DINESERV and DINESCAPE models in order to establish the relative importance of the key service drivers in creating patrons experiential value.

By addressing the above mentioned gaps in knowledge, it is hoped that the findings may enhance patrons' experiential value thus generating a competitive advantage for the classified restaurant industry in line with the wider tourism industry's vision 2030.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives;

1.3.1 General Objective

To determine the role of service encounters in creating patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i) To examine the relationship between personal service encounters and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- ii) To determine the relationship between physical environment service encounters and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- iii) To examine the difference in the role of personal service encounters model (DINESERV) and physical environment service encounters model (DINESCAPE) on patrons' experiential value.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

On the basis of the study objectives, this thesis addressed the following hypotheses:

H₀₁: There is no relationship between personal service encounters and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

This hypothesis was addressed using five sub-hypotheses in order to establish the relationship between DINESERV model dimensions (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) and patrons' experiential value;

H_{01a}: There is no relationship between tangibility and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{01b}: There is no relationship between reliability and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{01c}: There is no relationship between responsiveness and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{01d}: There is no relationship between assurance and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{01e}: There is no relationship between empathy and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H₀₂: There is no relationship between physical environment service encounters and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

This hypothesis was addressed using six sub-hypotheses in order to establish the relationship between DINESCAPE model dimensions (facility aesthetics, ambience, lighting, Table settings, service staff and layout) on patrons' experiential value;

H_{02a}: There is no relationship between facility Aesthetics and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{02b}: There is no relationship between ambience and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{02c}: There is no relationship between lighting and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{02d}: There is no relationship between Table setting and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{02e}: There is no relationship between layout and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H_{02f}: There is no relationship between service staff and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants' in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

H₀₃: There is no difference in the role of personal service encounters model (DINESERV) and physical environment service encounters model (DINESCAPE) on patrons' experiential value.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study findings are useful to different stakeholders within the hospitality industry.

1.5.1 Ministry of Tourism

The findings are beneficial to the Ministry of Tourism by serving as a reference point in policy formulation regarding setting service encounter standards to be followed in classifying restaurants for service excellence. This may help in bridging the gap between the industry and Hotels & Restaurant Authority that has been mandated to set classification standards for the restaurant industry in Kenya. By revealing the role of service encounters in creating patrons experiential value, the findings of this thesis may be useful to the Ministry of Tourism while; 1) Conducting institution reviews regarding restaurants' classification, 2) Laying suggestions for enhanced and informed standards during periodic classification efforts. This may ensure enhanced patrons' service delivery which may act as a competitive advantage to the larger tourism industry.

In addition, the findings may act as strategic resource that private investors may adopt in product differentiation which may translate to creation of more job opportunities for both skilled and semi-skilled personnel as stipulated in the Kenya's vision 2030. Finally, the results of this study may help enhance a greater return on investment due to repeat businesses arising from patrons' positive experiential value.

1.5.2 Credible source of information for Hospitality Academia

The findings are valuable in ensuring that hospitality students who are anticipated to work as managers and supervisors within the restaurant industry understand the role service encounters play in business sustainability. Thus, hospitality students with adequate knowledge and understanding of service encounters may be in a position to make decisions concerning enhanced restaurant industry. For instance, by revealing the role of service encounters on patrons' experiential value, the hospitality academia may be in a position to train students in line with competitive service provisions of the tangibles and intangible elements of a restaurant.

1.5.3 Hospitality Restaurant Practitioners

By revealing the role of service encounter in shaping patrons' experiential value, the findings may be constructive in developing appropriate policies and procedures geared towards enhancing patrons' experiential for business operations excellence. Such policies may be used in realizing restaurants' strong organizational cultures which may act as unique strategies in attracting and maintaining high level talents. Finally, a strong restaurant culture would create energy and momentum. This may allow front line employees feel valued and express themselves freely. Happy and energized front line employees make patrons feel valued too, hence a great experiential value. Specifically practitioners may be in a position to develop appropriate strategies directed towards enhancing patrons' experiential value. Besides, the findings may be helpful in identifying critical success factors associated with delivering positive experiential value for patrons.

1.5.4 Hospitality Students

The findings may be useful in preparing hospitality students to become future managers and supervisors. It is important for hospitality students, who are prospect

managers and supervisors to understand how the restaurant industry operates. Thus, the results are helpful to hospitality students by granting them with the knowledge and a clear understanding regarding the industry expectations in relation to the role service encounters dimensions play in creating patrons' experiential value.

1.5.5 Future Research

The thesis findings provide a sound base for future research pertaining service encounters on patrons experiential value in hospitality and tourism related disciplines.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted within some domains which include:

1.6.1 Subject Scope

The study covered the role of service encounters in creating patron experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi city county, Kenya. Specifically the study sought to determine the relationship between personal service encounters and physical environment service encounters on patrons' experiential value. Moreover, the dual effect of personal service encounters and physical environment service encounter on patrons' experiential value was established.

According to Ryu and Jang, (2008), studies regarding the combined effect of personal service and physical environment encounters have been scarce. Thus, the result of service encounters in classified restaurants (Personal and Physical environment) may yield positive or negative patrons experiential value. However, service recovery used by negative experiential value is beyond the scope of the current study. Therefore, the study comprised of patrons from classified restaurants in Nairobi City County region as they are deemed to have hand an experience of

service offering. Besides, the region is home to majority (82%) of classified restaurants in Kenya (Kenya Gazette, 2003).

1.6.2 Geographical Scope

The study was carried out in Nairobi city county, Kenya. The region is home to forty six out of fifty six classified restaurants hence suitable for the study at hand. Besides, the county is home to the capital city which is hugely populated with middle class income earners with the ability to spend within the classified restaurants.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study was carried out in classified restaurants within Nairobi City County between the month of May and July 2016 and therefore generalization of findings to represent the entire population and entire months of the year should be done with much caution. In addition, the current study was limited to classified restaurants only thus, results and conclusions need to be interpreted with much prudence. For instance, any predictions that may be made from the study findings should be based on a limited size and assumptions should not be made to include all institutions that fall within the restaurant industry in Kenya. Lastly, since descriptive survey design was used for data collection and analysis, changes that may occur in future on the role of service encounters in creating patrons' experiential value may not be considered.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

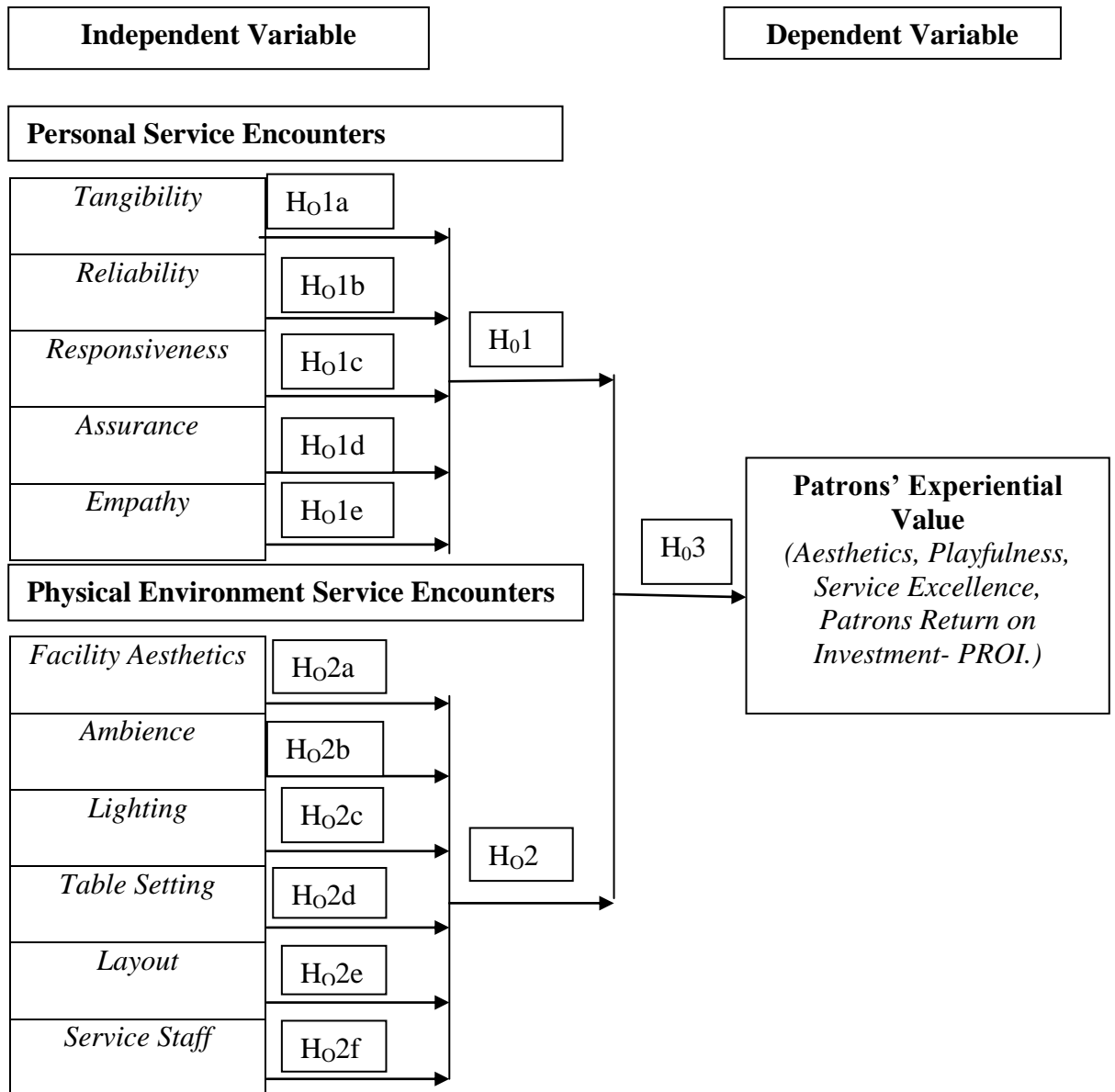


Figure 1.1: Schematic Diagram

Source: Author 2018

Patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants is as a result of interplay of many interactions. Foremost, personal interactions which take place between restaurants' employees and patrons during service offering thus reflecting the intangible

elements of the restaurant setting whose variables were measured using DINESERV model (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) against patrons' experiential value (Aesthetic, Playfulness, Service Excellence and Patrons Return on Investment -PROI). These dimensions were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

In addition, the restaurants' physical environment occurs during service offering when patrons interact with tangible elements of the restaurants. These interactions were measured using DINESCAPE model (Restaurant Aesthetics, Ambience, Lighting, Table Setting, Layout and Service Staff) against patrons' experiential value. These dimensions were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The dependent variable (patrons' experiential value) was measured using 8 items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Patrons' experiential value is not only as a result of personal and physical environment interactions, but also patron-patron interactions, though not in the scope of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A review of the literature has been structured under the following sub headings: First is an understanding of two concepts (Service encounter and experiential value), second is personal service encounter on patrons' experiential value and finally physical environment service encounters on patrons' experiential value. In addition, the chapter discusses relevant theoretical frameworks and models which supports the study and ends with a summary and gaps in knowledge.

2.2 Service Encounters

Walter and Edvardsson (2012) have stated that service encounter is the direct interaction between a service operation and its patrons and may take varying forms. Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) have noted that restaurant service encounters may be positive or negative. Drach-Zahavy (2010) has further acknowledged that during the dining process, several interactions occur, which in turn, develop an overall patron's experiential value. While the overall positive or negative experiential value is important to determine, service recovery efforts that may follow in an event of negative experiential value is beyond the scope of this study.

Research in the field of hospitality and tourism has distinguished a number of key service encounters features which involve face to face interactions between employees - customers - patrons, the physical environment and patrons and the patrons- patrons (Walter *et al.*, 2010). Dev and Heesup (2011) have further acknowledged that Service encounters can be classified into two main dimensions. The first is the personal interactions between a service provider and a patron which bring out the aspect of intangibility. In line with the aforementioned, Shahin and

Jamshidian (2010) have affirmed that the quality of personnel interactions are important and can be evaluated based on the service providers' competence in listening skills and the level of dedication which is hardly encouraged. Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) have further noted that a service provider's behavior at the point of service delivery may influence patron's expectations towards the service offering. Therefore, Jin, Lee and Gopalan (2012) have affirmed that staffs' attitude could be seen as highly important by customers and according to Drach-Zahavy (2010), it is critical to focus on personnel competences since they are required to make service encounters more enjoyable during a service process.

In line with the aforementioned, Shahin and Jamshidian (2010) have acknowledged that service encounters particularly those involving organizations' employees typically have a high impact on patrons, and the quality of service encounter is thus an important ingredient in the overall patrons experiential value. Walter and Edvardsson (2012) in their mention stated that service encounters may have an impact on employees in relation to their motivation, job satisfaction which may affect patrons' experiential value. Consequently, there is need for restaurant organizations to manage service encounters effectively for the benefit of patrons, employees and the whole restaurant firm for achievement of organizational goals (Hyun, 2010).

The second classification according to Drach-Zahavy (2010) is the physical environment of a restaurant. This is a period during which a customer interacts with the physical facilities and other tangible elements in the restaurant environment (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009). In addition, Shahin and Jamshidian (2010) have affirmed that tangible physical environment positively impacts on customers' perception of quality, satisfaction and plays an important role in determining re-

patronage intentions. McColl-Kennedy *et al.* 2012) have found out that physical environment factors have direct effect on the senses of patrons and can lead to subjective judgments derived from an individual's personal judgment for an outcome.

In conclusion, Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) have noted that positive interactions may help reduce perceived risk associated with purchasing a service hence improving the patrons' experiential value. Researchers have further acknowledged that the quality of interaction between patrons and service providers during a service encounter in a restaurant is vital. Indeed, Varca (2009) noted that it is at this point in time that patrons' judge the services provided to them. In line with the aforementioned, restaurant service offering is a complex process (Jin, Lee & Gopalan, 2012).

However, despite the complexity, economists argue that service encounter is where emotions meet economics in a moment of truth giving rise to a fruitful business (McColl-Kennedy, *et al.* 2012). Therefore, as Varca (2009) has noted, for restaurant businesses to survive in the modern competitive environment, service encounters should be seen as the heart of any organization. This Indeed is probably the reason why Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) have described service encounters as the real time, a process where patrons evaluate and assess the quality of services offered to them by coming into a face to face interaction with the restaurant which highly determines their return on the investment.

Nevertheless, Drach-Zahavy (2010) has affirmed that service encounters are transactional interactions where front line employees provide services to patrons in a restaurant setting. These interactions are critical since successful service provision depends heavily on successful service encounters (Shahin & Jamshidian, 2010).

Therefore, the current study seeks to identify the key service encounter drivers that may create great experiential value for patrons in classified restaurant in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Recently, few studies indicate that Service encounter is the period during which patrons interact with service provision. In a restaurant setting, encounters may include patron's interaction with front line employees, automated systems, physical facilities and any other visible or invisible elements (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011). Precisely, personal, physical environment and patrons- patrons' dimensions emerge as the key components of restaurants encounters (Hye & Jin, 2015). These key components develop restaurant experiences which evaluate the restaurants service quality (Aaijaz & Ibrahim, 2011). Therefore, Service encounter is a combination of service outcomes in the process of service delivery (Edvardsson *et al*, 2010).

2.3 Personal Service Encounters

This section discusses personal service encounters between the service staff and patrons on the basis of DINESERV model dimensions.

2.3.1 Tangibility

Tangibles refer to a restaurants' physical design, appearance of the staff and cleanliness of rest rooms and the whole dining areas (Markovic *et al.*, 2010). In addition, tangibles refer to the cleanliness of the servicescape to include; clean utilities on the table, clean food service area, clean and tidy restaurant, clean and hygiene corridors, clean rest rooms, and clean exits (Lap- Kwong, 2017). These dimensions translate to the restaurant's interiors, the appearance and conditions of the cutlery, tableware and uniform of the staff, the appearance and design of the menu, and comfort of seats. Tangibles are used by restaurant establishments to

portray image and as a sign of quality. This dimension is therefore important as it enables patrons determine expectations for the restaurant establishment.

Numerous empirical studies have reported the importance of this dimension towards creating a positive patrons' experiential value. For example, a study by Walter *et al.* (2010) carried out in Swedish restaurants titled: 'The physical environment as a driver of customers' service experiences at restaurants' reported this dimension as very important. He reported that physical environment comprising of tangible and intangible aspects of the restaurants was generally favorable towards creating positive customer service experiences. In addition, Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) found tangibles to come after assurance and empathy dimension with a strong positive correlation with customer satisfaction hence creation of patrons' experiential value.

Walter *et al's* study (2010) was conducted in a more developed nation as compared to Kenya and used a critical incident technique where data collected were purely qualitative. While this approach was meaningful, they did not consider DINESERV model while measuring the influence of physical environment on customer service experiences while dining in the restaurants. Another study conducted by Ramseook-Munhurrum (2012) entitled 'Perceived service quality in restaurants service: Evidence from Mauritius', investigating service quality dimensions in island economy restaurant; found out customers to be satisfied with the tangible dimensions of a restaurant setting. Lastly, Lap- Kwong 2017 in his study entitled 'The role of servicescape in Hotel Buffet restaurant', conducted in Hong Kong China found cleanliness of the servicescape dimension to have the highest score of factor mean among four dimensions that included; cleanliness of the servicescape, signs, symbols & artifacts, ambient conditions and spatial layout. Therefore, the

need for the current study which sought to investigate the role of tangibility aspects of classified restaurants in Kenya on patrons' experiential value using DINESERV model.

2.3.2 Reliability

According to Marković *et al.* (2014) reliability involves freshness and temperature of food, consistent services, correcting anything that is wrong correctly, accurate billing and receiving ordered food. Therefore, reliability is the ability to perform and deliver on promises. The finding of Walter and Edvardsson (2012) reported that service reliability significantly influenced patrons' perception of service excellence. According to Wu and Liang (2009), reliability influence patrons opinion of service excellence hence creating patrons' experiential value. Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) also found reliability to have a moderate positive correlation with customer satisfaction hence positive patrons' experiential value. However, the results of Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012), showed that customers were influenced more by the tangibility dimension of a restaurant in creating experiential value than the reliability dimension.

Thus, the need for classified restaurants to determine the critical role of this dimension in ensuring that all promises made to patrons are met which may include serving foods and drinks in the right time, quickly corrects anything that is wrong, accurate guest checks and serving foods exactly as the patrons ordered it. This may ensure sustainability of classified restaurants in the current competitive restaurant environment.

2.3.3 Responsiveness

According to Markovic *et al.* (2010), responsiveness in restaurants relates to staff assistance with the menu or wine list and prompt response to customers' special or extra needs and requests. This is the willingness to help patrons and provide prompt service. This dimension is concerned with customers' requests and responding to questions promptly and attentively. For example, a study conducted by Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) on Service Quality and Customers Satisfaction in Arabic restaurants acknowledged responsiveness to have a moderate positive correlation, despite being the lowest variable in the list of service quality attributes (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) in creating customer satisfaction hence positive patrons experiential value.

In addition, the results of a study conducted by Ramseook - Munhurrum (2012) investigating service quality dimensions in island economy restaurant, Mauritius showed that customers are less satisfied with reliability dimensions of a restaurant setting. In conclusion, Qin, Prybutok, and Zhao (2010) research showed that patrons' perception of great service excellence was to a great extent influenced by responsiveness on the employees, prompt and quick service and extra effort to handle patrons' requests.

In line with the afore mentioned, classified restaurants could be termed as responsive depending on their ability to communicate to customers and the long it will take to give answers to a given problem. Thus, for classified restaurants to thrive in this dimension, it is important to involve patrons in determining the responsiveness of the establishment.

2.3.4 Assurance

Markovic and Komsic (2010) have defined assurance as the employees' knowledge and courtesy and the service providers' ability to inspire trust and confidence to patrons, and the ability of patrons to give recommendations about the staff who served them. The results of a study conducted by Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012) investigating service quality dimensions in island economy restaurant, Mauritius indicated that customers of a restaurant are less satisfied with the assurance dimension.

In addition, a study conducted by Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) entitled 'Service Quality, Customers' Satisfaction and The Moderating Effects of Gender' in Arabic restaurants affirmed the strongest positive correlation of assurance among tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy dimensions with customer satisfaction in a restaurant hence positive experiential value. Finally, Qin *et al* (2010) found employees' level of competence, experience and confidence when handling patrons to influence assurance to a great extent. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that classified restaurants understand the contribution of assurance dimension in creating patrons experiential.

2.3.5 Empathy

According to Markovic *et al.* (2010), empathy refers to providing personalized attention to customers, anticipating special dietary requirements and being sympathetic towards patrons' problems. Empathy is the caring and customized attention a restaurant provides to its customers. This may mean going out of the way in meeting customers' special requirements, for instance, providing vegetarian food. Thus, a customer should be treated as he is unique and special. In this regard, a restaurant may show empathy by knowing and calling customer their names and the

ability to identify their needs and preferences. Empirical study have shown this dimension as more suitable in the restaurant industry while building relationship with customers hence determining chances of business survival.

In line with the aforementioned, a study conducted by Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) entitled 'Service Quality, Customers' Satisfaction and The Moderating Effects of Gender' in Arabic restaurants affirmed a strong positive correlation of empathy after assurance in creating customer satisfaction hence positive patrons experiential value. In addition, Tan *et al.* (2014) in their study on service quality and customer satisfaction in two Chinese restaurants also found similar results. Therefore, in classified restaurants, empathy may be important to ensure customer loyalty as service contact employees may know customers' needs, wants, tastes and preferences hence great experiential value.

2.4 Personal Service Encounter on Patrons Experiential Value

The DINESERV model - which represents a role of the personal service encounters-, has received much attention in the psychology, retailing and marketing studies. The model is divided into five parts: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The personal service encounter creates patrons experiential value in which patrons determine their aesthetics, playfulness, service excellence and return on investment. The application of the model facilitates a clear understanding of the role of employees' patrons' interactions on experiential value.

Literature review has suggested that cleanliness (Tan, Oriade & Fallon, 2014), security and safety (Harr, 2008), employees' empathy and ability (Markovic & Komsic, 2010), suitable location (Walter & Edvardsson, 2012), value for money (Tan, Min, Chin, Amran & Hamid, 2011) and physical facilities (Markovic &

Komsic, 2010) are attributes that patrons in hotels perceive as important in creating their experiential value. Research has shown that ultimately, patrons' experiential value is strongly influenced by selected elements that make up personal service encounters (Harr, 2008). Finally, further researchers have recently suggested that considering the interaction between personal service encounters and physical environmental, service encounter is another facet of understanding how customer experiential value is generated in the dining setting (Gurel, Orhan & Fazil, 2014).

Despite indications that some influential factors multi-layer to make up both personal and physical environmental service encounters and combine to affect patrons experiential value, surprisingly little research in the service sector, specifically classified restaurants, has examined the role of service encounters in shaping patrons' experiential value. Additionally, little empirical research has verified the relationship between possible influence of personal service encounters using DINESERVE model and physical environment encounters using DINESCAPE on patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi city county, Kenya. Furthermore, the role of service encounters in shaping patrons experiential value still remains unclear both empirically and theoretically. Thus the elements that combine to shape patrons experiential value in the restaurant industry should be empirically tested, specifically in Kenya, in order to develop efficient service strategies that may enable satisfy patrons' desires.

2.5 Physical Environment Service Encounters

This section discusses personal service encounters between the restaurant's physical environment and patrons on the basis of DINESCAPE model dimensions.

2.5.1 Facility Aesthetics

According to Ryu and Jang (2008), facility aesthetics refers to architectural design and interior designs and décor, all of which contribute to the attractiveness of the restaurants' dining environment. Patrons spend hours observing (knowingly or unknowingly) the interior of the dining area, which is likely to affect their experiential value when they enter the dining areas of a restaurant.

A study conducted by Dev and Heesup (2011) stated that patrons may be influenced by the color scheme of the dining area. Ryu and Jang (2008) further acknowledged that different colors lead to different moods, emotions and feeling and subsequently influence patrons' experiential value. Other aspects of facility aesthetics that make patrons feel happy as suggested by Hye and Jin (2015) are plants and flowers, dining chairs and tables of high quality, pictures and painting that are attractive. Hye and Jin (2015) further affirm that the above mentioned facility aesthetic aspects may create perceived quality on the dining experience thus influencing patrons' experiential value. Therefore there is need for classified restaurants in Nairobi City County to find out if facility aesthetics influence patrons' experiential value.

2.5.2 Ambience

Ambience means intangible background characteristics that have a subconscious effect on patrons. These background effects include temperature that is comfortable, music that relaxes patrons and aroma that is enticing. Previous research has shown that back ground music can affect customers perception of excellent services, increase sales, influence purchasing intentions and generate effective response of experiential value (Dev & Heesup, 2011).

According to Lap- Kwong (2017), ambient condition contained five items in a descending order of preference by customers while dining in a restaurant as background music/ sound, overall ambient condition, sufficient lighting, appropriate temperature, good air quality of the restaurant. However, among four dimensions that included ambient condition, spatial layout, signs, symbols & artifacts and cleanliness of servicescape, ambient was third which suggested that customers were neutral about this dimension (Victoria & Jhenna, 2013).

The effect of pleasant aroma as a powerful tool to increase sales has gained much attention in the retail business (Chebat, Morrin & Chebat, 2009). In equal measure, there is need for classified restaurants to find out if ambience might influence patrons' experiential in any way.

2.5.3 Lighting

Researchers have found out that lighting is one of the most salient physical stimuli in restaurants. According to Dev and Heesup (2011), owners of restaurants should learn that subdued, warm and comfortable lighting symbolically convey full service and relatively high prices. However, bright lighting may symbolize quick service and lower prices.

Previous researches have shown the impact of lighting level preferences on patrons' experiential value. For example, Victoria and Jhenna (2013) found a relationship between lighting that creates warm color and patrons preference of service excellence. Heung and Ngai (2011) reported that illumination is directly associated with the changes in experiential value. In addition, Han and Ryu (2009) found that the type of illumination a restaurant adopts may immensely influence the physical environment service encounters of a restaurant hence impacting on the overall

experiential value. However, Dev and Heesup (2011) argued that low temperatures are associated with negative affective status. Thus, there is need for classified restaurant to establish the role of the lighting dimension in creating patrons experiential value while dining out in a restaurant.

2.5.4 Table Setting

Table setting is the high quality table ware and visually attractive linen. Ryu, Lee, and Kim (2012) found out that table setting was one of the most important tangible qualities of the restaurant that customers considered while dining in a restaurant. According to Liu and Jang (2009), table setting is an important element in the restaurants design since the way tables are set and decorated positively determines patrons experiential value. Classified restaurants should be designed to deliver prestigious top quality service encounters to fulfill expected patrons experiential value. Therefore there is need for classified restaurants to have Table ware that is of high quality, have linen that are attractive, and table setting that is virtually attractive.

2.5.5 Layout

Layout means the way in which objects which include machinery, equipment and furnishings are arranged within the environment. According to Lap-Kwong (2017), spatial layout include, how restaurant layout is easy to the food that you want, how easy it is to get to where you want for example, rest rooms, parking areas and smoking areas. In his findings, out of four dimensions that include; ambient conditions, spatial layout, signs, symbols & artifacts and cleanliness of the servicescape, spatial layout was the lowest in the ranking. This implied that customers were neutral towards the quality of spatial layout.

In the same vein, Dev and Heesup (2011) stated that a well-designed layout can facilitate fulfillment of patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants. They further affirmed that layout may have a direct effect on patrons desire to return on the restaurant environment. In addition, the results of a study conducted by Aaijaz and Ibrahim (2011) in fast food chain restaurants found customer to attach great value and importance to an establishment's layout in their decision to return to the investment. However, Harr (2008) found restaurant layout to have no direct effect on patrons desire to return to the investment. Therefore, service encounters should specifically be designed to add some level of experiential value in classified restaurants to ensure that the layout plan is appropriate and appealing for patrons.

2.5.6 Service Staff

Increasingly, service organizations, either small or large are making efforts in management of service encounters (Hyun, 2010). According to Aaijaz and Ibrahim (2011), continuous research has enabled service organizations to be able to identify the need of the market place and, to facilitate responsiveness to customers, there is need to select and train customer- contact staff to have appropriate personal qualities, skills and knowledge. Liu and Jang (2009) have further acknowledged that some service organizations are active in identifying the needs of both internal and external customers during the service process. Internal customers refer to employees in any organization (Jin *et al*, 2012), where in the context of the current study internal customers mean front line employees who are deemed to be in close contact with restaurant establishment. External customers refer to patrons patronizing the restaurant establishment (Drach- Zahavy, 2010).

Internal and external customers involve social elements that refer to people (employees and customers) in the service setting (Hyun, 2010). Jin *et al* (2012)

stated that social factor usually include employees and patrons appearance, adequate numbers of employees and the dress or physical appearance. Drach- Zahavy (2010) further noted that for effective service delivery processes, service staff needed to be managed. Thus, as Jin *et al.* (2012) noted, it is important to give adequate attention on staffing policies and procedures.

Additionally, there is need for recruitment and selection of the right types of customer contact staff with appropriate socialization, training and supervision efforts (Liu & Jang, 2009). Thus, restaurant organizations need to encourage organizations with high profile leadership and a service culture to be able to maintain high level staffing policies and procedures. However, since it is difficult to control physical appearance of patrons, only employee appearance and their number is put in to measure to assess their effect on patrons experiential value. Drach- Zahavy (2010) studied the effect of social cues (number/ friendliness and appearance of employees) and reported that the more the social cues present in the environment, the higher the patrons' experience value. Therefore, restaurant organizations need to ensure that they have attractive and an adequate number of employees who make patrons feel good and cared for. In addition, Liu and Jang (2009) stated that it is important for restaurant organizations to not only consider its service systems, procedures and environment but also pay enough attention to the most important element in management of service encounters with regard to staffing policies and practices.

According to Nyoike, Langat, Karani, and Langat (2014), there is need for recruitment and selection of "the right types" of patrons contact staff and also appropriate socialization or training and supervision efforts enabled by a service culture. Further, it is an appreciation of internal customers that has led a number of service organizations to involve all their staff in programs designed to improve the

quality of service to the final customer. However many service establishments have not yet fully realized the importance of interpersonal relationships or service encounters within organizations or which elements should be combined with what to enhance patrons experiential value in restaurants'. Therefore a number of skills and characteristics are needed for employees to perform effectively in the service encounter. These skills are in line with Hyun (2010) who has found out a number of skills and characteristics that may be seen necessary for restaurant employees to perform effectively in the service encounter. He stated these skills as, processes, procedures & technical skills, people skills, behavioral flexibility, adaptability and empathy in creating a great patron's experiential value.

2.6 Physical Service Encounters on Patrons Experiential Value

Experiential value is defined differently by patrons according to the experience obtained through the process of service encounters (Jeong, *et al.*, 2009). Heung and Ngai (2011) have further emphasized that the value obtained is important to develop patron satisfaction. In accordance to Jin, Lee and Gopalan (2012), restaurants create different stages of patron experience through different stimulations which include environment, atmosphere and layouts. This brings out the different perceptions and judgment level where experiential value (services efficiency, service excellence, aesthetic and playfulness) focuses on the meaning that patrons retain from these experiences (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011).

Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) have further acknowledged that most of the patron services are characterized by an encounter between a provider of the service and a patron in an environment dominated by the service organization. Patrons interact with the buying environment in two dimensions: the personal interaction encounter

and the physical environment encounter (Han & Ryu, 2009). Blešić and Tešanović (2011) have further argued that, if restaurant organization can provide a good working environment for their employees to enhance attitude, they can exert themselves to provide patrons with good experience.

On the other hand, Han and Ryu (2009) mentioned that service process do not just involve customers and employees but includes their interactions with the environment and other tangible factors as well. They have further stated that it is not limited to the human encounter, but covers every happening of the human interactions which can involve non-human interactions as well. Therefore Ramanathan and McGill (2011) noted that to effectively manage patrons, restaurants must be concerned with the entire experience a patron has with the restaurant which could be determined by the ability to establish the key physical service encounters during dining.

2.7 Experiential Value

Blešić and Tešanović (2011) defined experiential value as patron assessment of services efficiency, service excellence, aesthetic and playfulness in the service encounter. Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) further acknowledged experiential value as the backbone for enhanced patrons' satisfaction, loyalty and brand personality. According to Hyun (2010), experiential value may be due to direct usage or distanced appreciation of restaurants products and services. Specifically, restaurants that evaluate all dining activities before and after dining experience generate total experience for restaurant dinners.

Fisk *et al.* (2011) affirmed that experiential value is divided into four frames by intrinsic/extrinsic sources as; consumer return on investment which comprises of the

active investment of financial, temporal, behavioral and psychological resources that potentially yield a return; service excellence which reflects an inherently reactive response in which the consumer admire an entity for its ability to serve as a means to a self-oriented end. In the same tune, Mathwick, Malhotra and Rigdon (2001) acknowledged that Experiential Value Scale (EVS) consist of four dimensions (Aesthetics Appeal, Playfulness, Service Excellence and Customer Return on Investment ROI) to measure this phenomenon in the retail environment. The first dimension, aesthetic appeal is defined as the unity of physical objects and their rhythm in the overall “performance”. Aesthetic appeal is further divided into two (visual appeal and entertainment). Visual appeal is the salient visual element of the environment and entertainment are those aspects of the service environment or the service itself that excite the customer. Hyun (2010) in his study found aesthetic appeal as an aspect of service performance with its visual appeal driven by the design, physical attractiveness and beauty of the surrounding.

The second, playfulness comes from within a customer and involves creating a theatrical environment (providing fun, excitement, and entertainment). According to Jin, Lee and Gopalan (2012), playfulness is reflected in the intrinsic enjoyment that comes from engaging in activities that are absorbing to the point of offering an escape to the demands of the day. On the same note, McColl-Kennedy *et al.* (2012) affirmed that hospitality businesses are required to create memorable events for their patrons for inherent pleasure. Gremler and Gwinner (2008) noted that intrinsic enjoyment creates memories which become products that create enormous economic value for a restaurant over competitors

The third dimension, service excellence, according to Keng, Huang, Zheng and Hsu (2007), involves the degree to which products and services offered to customers

meet their expectations. According to Hyun (2010), patrons attach a certain value to an experience through various interactions involving either direct usage or distanced appreciation of hospitality products. Verhoef and Lemon (2009) have further argued that to fully understand how service encounters affect patrons' experiential value, it is necessary to find the relationship between services encounters constructs and experience value. In conclusion, a study by Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) found that restaurants that emphasis on creating positive experiential value led to several positive outcomes such as improvement of patron service excellence; intentions for repurchase (Brakus *et al*, 2009); aesthetic appeal and playfulness (Jeong, Fiore, Niehm & Lorenz, 2009), which further depend profoundly on the service encounters.

Lastly, Customer Return on Investment (ROI) is the functional facets of the consumption process which involves the active investment in economic, temporal, behavioral and psychological resources that are traded in favor on the experience. In the same vein, Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) noted that if restaurants are able to create a high value for customers, this led to competitive advantage over competitors. Similarly, Mathwick *et al.*, (2001) acknowledged that ROI is the comparative amount of value a customer receives from a transaction vis-a-vis the money, time and effort investment by the same customer.

Classified restaurant owners and managers should acknowledge that restaurant experiences include more than simply eating what the patron want. Thus, when examining an experience, it is necessary to establish the four dimensions of patrons' experiential values to improve the understanding of patrons in the consumption process. While this is the case, there is need for Experiential Value Scale (EVS) to be applied to the service industry, specifically in classified restaurants in an effort

the measure patrons' experiential value phenomenon as formed by service encounters through the dining consumption process.

2.8 Theoretical Frameworks

The study adapted the following models:

2.8.1 DINESCAPE Model

Dining for restaurants patrons is more than eating out. This is because patrons seek a memorable experience away from home. The physical environment play a critical function in assessing the role of service encounters in creating experiential value of patrons during a dinning session (Ryu & Jang 2008). DINESCAPE model is a six-factor scale that was developed to measure classified restaurant aesthetics, ambience, lighting, table setting, layout, and service staff. This model formed the basis for measuring the physical environment of classified restaurants where questionnaires where developed in line with the model. According to Marković et al. (2014), the Servicescape of a restaurant firm has a significant impact on patron revisit intention and a restaurant brand image. Thus, the current study adopted all the six factor scale of DINESCAPE model and determined each of their roles in creating patrons' experiential value while dinning in classified restaurants.

2.8.2 DINESERV Model

DINESERV model is a modification of SERVQUAL model which seeks to assess patrons' experience while dining in a restaurant. DINESERV model developed by Stevens, Knutson and Patton (1995) is a simple tool designed to determine how customers view restaurant servicescape quality. It was adopted to investigate factors that influence service experience by the patrons and include five aspects, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Moreover, the five aspects formed the basis for the study's questionnaire. In line with this, Marković *et al.*

(2014) have mentioned that restaurant firms need a standardized, systematic and qualitative measurement to assess their performances, since continued service quality to patrons may lead to a positive experiential value. While DINESERV model was developed to view restaurants quality, this study adopted DINESERV model to determine how patrons interact with employees while dining in classified restaurants. Thus, DINISERVE model informed this study by adopting all its five aspects tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. The influence of their interactions in creating experiential value was also established.

2.8.3 Experiential Value Theory

Experiential value theory postulates that individuals make direct and distant evaluation of the services and products they consume as the foundation for experiential value perception (Blešić & Tešanovic, 2011). According to Kolb' experiential theory involves a combination of experiences, perception, cognition and behavior. Kolb' further stated that learning is a process whereby knowledge is created through a transformation of personal and environmental experiences. The theory further postulates that for an individual to gain genuine knowledge from an experience, abilities such as; learner's willingness to actively be involved in an experience, ability to reflect on the experience, analytical skill to conceptualize the experience and make decision and problem solving skills to use the newly gained ideas from the experience are required. In the same vein, Mathwick *et al*, (2001) developed a four dimension experiential value scale (EVS). The four dimension scale includes Aesthetics, Playfulness, Service Excellence and Customer Return on Investment (ROI) that was used the measure experiential value of customers in the retail environment.

Experiential value theory has been useful in this study in determining patrons' ability to reflect on the services offered throughout the dining process. The theory has also had the ability to evaluate experiences gained which eventually offers a base for decision making regarding future revisit intentions, service excellence, aesthetic appeal and playfulness in the same classified restaurants. Therefore, this theory was useful in the study in determining the contribution of DINESERV and DINESCAPE models in creating patrons' experiential value regarding the services offered in the classified restaurants.

2.9 Knowledge Gaps

The review of literature revealed several research gaps. First, literature revealed that most studies on service encounter relied heavily on SERVQUAL model while assessing and measuring service quality in restaurant setting. While this is the case, these studies did not deal with the dual-effect of DINESERV and DINESCAPE model in determining experiential value and therefore the need for the present study.

Little is known about service encounters in classified restaurants in Nairobi County, Kenya, which justifies the rationale for conducting the current study given the classified restaurants' economic contribution to the overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP), creation of skilled and semi-skilled job opportunities for the locals in line with Kenya's vision 2030, hence improving their living standards not leaving aside infrastructural development.

In addition, review of literature has revealed that most studies on service encounter in creating patrons experiential value in restaurants has been carried out in developed nations, with African nations, specifically Kenya remaining under - explored; thus calling for the need of the present study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides information and details about the methodology that was utilized while addressing research hypotheses. It describes the research methods, research design, study area, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability, pre-testing, data collection procedures, analysis techniques, data presentation, and ends with logistical and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

Kombo and Tromp (2006) have stated that a research design can be seen as the structure of any research. In addition, Orodho (2003) has noted that research design is a scheme that is used to generate answers to problem. In the same tune, Kothari (2004) has further acknowledged that it can be seen as a blueprint through which data collection, measurement and analysis lie upon thus guiding the researcher through various steps to allow solutions to given problems. Thus, the study used descriptive survey design for sampling, data collection and analysis while collecting data. Ader, Mellenbergh, and Hand (2008) noted that the use of descriptive survey design saves time, expenses, and the amount of information generated is valid since the respondents' bias is reduced by ensuring that they complete identically self-reported measures without any inference.

The design was helpful while assessing the role of service encounters in the creation patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi City County. Specifically, the design enabled to determine the relationship between service encounters and patrons' experiential value.

3.3 Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2006) have defined population of a study as the entire group of individuals, objects or cases with some similar observable characteristics. The target population of the current study comprised of all classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study participants were drawn from a sampling frame of all the classified restaurants within Nairobi city county region comprising of five star, four star and three star restaurants (Kenya Gazette, 2003) These participants were perceived to have greater levels of knowledge pertaining to service encounters in classified restaurants and their personal experiences might have been shaped by various interactions.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

Sampling refers to the process of selecting individuals, cases, or objects from the target population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2006). The selected group must contain elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Ordho & Kombo, 2002; Mugenda & Mugenda 2006). Thus, the current study used stratified and simple random sampling techniques in selecting individuals from the target population for inclusion in the sample.

Stratified random sampling is used to achieve the desired representation from various subgroups in the population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2006). Thus the population is divided into two or more groups using a given criterion. Cases are then randomly selected from each stratum. Hence, the current study used stratified random sampling to achieve the desired representation from classified restaurants. Thus, classified restaurants were divided into three groups using star category criterion; five, four and three (Kenya Gazette, 2003). Participants were then randomly selected from each stratum.

Simple random sampling was used to select the required number of participants (patrons) in proportion to the total number of classified restaurants (Table 3.1). This is in line with Mugenda and Mugenda (2006) who mentioned that the technique ensures each respondent has equal chances of representation. The technique was used in selecting at random participants dining in classified restaurants during the time of research for inclusion in the study sample.

3.5 Sample Size

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), sample size refers to the number of cases, subjects or respondents that are considered enough for data collection. In cases where the total population is not known, Fisher, Foreit, Laing, Stoeckel, and Townsend (2002) stated that fifty percent (50%) of the target population is appropriate. Based on the above mentioned suggestions and given that the study used descriptive survey design, the sample size was determined using Fisher *et al.*, (2002) formula to compute the appropriate sample size of patrons as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where:

n = the desired sample size (if the target population is greater than 10,000),

Z^2 = standard score at 95% confidence level (1.96),

p = the proportion in the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured (50%),

q = 1-p

e = desired level of statistical significance (5%) at 95% confidence level

$$n = \frac{1.96^2(50\%)(100\% - 50\%)}{(5\%)^2} \cong 384 \text{ participants}$$

By applying the formula above, the desired sample size for a target population greater than 10,000 (n) were 384 participants. The desired sample size (384 participants) was to be divided among the total target population (46 classified restaurants) to determine the number of participants to be included from each star category for the study. However, due to pretesting where a restaurant from each star category was picked, the number of restaurant was reduced to 43. Thus, to determine the number of participants for inclusion, the desired sample size (384 participants) was divided by 43 classified restaurants (384/43) yielding 8.93 participants. Thus 9 participants were considered for the study from each of the 43 classified restaurants yielding 387 participants (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Sample Size Determination

Restaurants' Star Category	No. of Restaurants	No. of Participants based on Fisher et al.'s (2003)
5-Star	4	$9 \times 4 = 36$
4-Star	15	$9 \times 15 = 135$
3-Star	24	$9 \times 24 = 216$
TOTAL	43	387

Notes: The number of participants is higher than 384 due to approximation in the computation. The number of participants selected from each classified restaurant was calculated as follows: $384/43=8.93$, thus 9 questionnaires were administered.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Orodho (2003) has stated that there are several methods that can be used to collect quantitative data. He further stated that the choice entirely depends on the purpose and nature of the study, research timeline and budget. Additionally, in line with Mugenda and Mugenda (2006), self-administered questionnaire are a cost effective way of obtaining data. Therefore, self-administered questionnaires were chosen as the most appropriate means of obtaining information from patrons within the

speculated timeframe. Consequently, Kothari (2004) stated that questionnaires integrate objectiveness while analyzing and generalizing data, thus giving a chance of getting feedback from the participants in a more or less organized way.

Thus, the use of questionnaires ensured a higher response rate since supervisors and front line employees assisted the patrons who had been selected for the study in filling the questionnaires in a fast and easy way. The questionnaire used for the study was developed based on the two models and one theory (DINESERV, DINESCAPE and Experiential Value Theory). The questionnaire was divided into four parts; participants' demographic information, participants' personal service encounter on experiential value, participants' physical environment service encounter on patrons' experiential value and the effect of experiential value. Questionnaires used a five-point Likert scale, with anchors 'strongly disagree' as 1 and 'strongly agree' as 5. This made it easier and speedier for selected patrons to complete the questionnaire and coding for quantitative data analysis (Kothari, 2004).

3.7 Pretesting

Questionnaires set for a particular study should be tested before conducting the main data collection process. It is indeed advisable that pretesting be done on cases which are not to be included in the sample but share similar characteristics (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2006). Ramenyi (2011) has suggested using small samples of between four (4) to eight (8) individuals as good enough for pretesting. Therefore, five (5) patrons from each star classified restaurant (5-star, 4-star, and 3-star) were randomly selected yielding a total of fifteen (15) patrons as demonstrated in Table 3.2.

Table 3. 2: Sample Size for Pretesting Questionnaires

Restaurants' Star Category	No. of Restaurants	No. of Patrons for Pretesting
5-Star	1	5*1=5
4-Star	1	5*1=5
3-Star	1	5*1=5
TOTAL	3	15

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2006), 1% to 10% number of cases in the pretest is enough depending on the sample size. Thus, fifteen questionnaires were distributed to patrons' dining in all the three star category classified restaurants' for pretesting. All the fifteen questionnaires were returned yielding a 100% response rate. Pretesting was conducted to improve the questionnaires and to identify any unexpected errors.

In addition, it helped the researcher to establish the time it took for a respondent to fill in the questionnaire (10-15 minutes for the current study), existence of amorphous questions and omissions of important questions. Discrepancies that were identified which included typing errors were corrected and adjusted in order to enhance the usability of the research instruments. The process also helped the researcher to gather other important comments which were very appropriate and of great value to the study and thus enhanced data collection. For instance, some patrons expressed the necessity to indicate numbers identifying the Likert scale categories on top of each model dimension items for ease of reference. The validity and reliability of questionnaires are discussed in the next section.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

3.8.1 Validity

Mugenda and Mugenda (2006) states that an instrument is valid if it measures what it is intended to measure and accurately achieves the purpose of which it was designed. Thus, validity determines whether the means of measurement are accurate and whether they are actually measuring what they are intended to measure in a precise, credible and transferable manner (Kothari, 2004). Additionally, validity is how accurate the data obtained represents the variables of the study (Creswell, 2005; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2006). Thus, this thesis used both content and constructs validity to assess the internal validity of the instruments. The former validity was ensured through the help of supervisors' reviews to determine whether the inter-layered items accurately represented the concept under study, while the latter was ensured using constructs derived from other studies to measure the study variables.

3.8.2 Reliability

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2006), reliability is the degree to which research instruments yields consistent results after repeated trials. Additionally, a scale is internally consistent if the items measured are highly correlated to one another. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients was used to assess the reliability of the scale measurement and coefficients ranging from 0.67 to 1 were considered appropriate for the study (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006). Three separate Cronbach coefficient reliability estimates for all variables are presented in Table 3.3 with the lowest ($\alpha = 0.750$) physical environment service encounters and highest ($\alpha = 0.975$) personal service encounters. All the three constructs had Alpha coefficients above the threshold and therefore were considered adequate for data analysis.

Table 3. 3: Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for Internal Reliability

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Personal service encounters	29	0.975
Physical environment service encounters	21	0.750
Patrons' experiential value	8	0.932

3.9 Data Collection Techniques

The researcher sought permission from managers and in their absence, supervisors of classified restaurants in the sampling frame. This was done through booking a prior appointment through e-mail and telephone and later walking in to their offices after appointments were confirmed. Drop and pick later method was used to distribute self-completed questionnaires after receiving the initial agreement authorizing the go ahead for data collection from various classified restaurants in the order that the permission was granted.

Several e-mail reminders and follow-up phone calls were made to the managers of the classified restaurants to help persuade patrons to fill the set questionnaires to ensure chances of high response rate. Managers and or supervisors were left with the predetermined number of questionnaires (9 in number) in order to distribute them to patrons based on their availability, acceptance and in different timings.

3.10 Data Analysis

Data analysis commenced when the distributed questionnaires were received. Foremost, the received questionnaires were sorted based on completeness of data. Only questionnaires with complete data were considered for analysis. As suggested by Kent (2001), data were edited, coded and entered into statistical package SPSS version 20.0 for requisite analysis.

Secondly, frequency computations and percentages were run in order to clean the dataset and to identify incorrect entries and missing values. The incorrect entries and missing values were rectified in line with the data in the questionnaires. Cross tabulations were then used to establish participants' demographic characteristics and their intention to visit classified restaurants again.

Inferential statistics were conducted in line with the research hypotheses. The first two hypotheses were tested using Pearson Correlation coefficient (r) whereas the third hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis at 5% significance level (Table 3.4). Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) statistical technique was used to determine the linear strength or weakness, where probability value (p - value) was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables (personal service encounters and physical environmental service encounters) and the dependent variable (patrons' experiential value).

Moreover, multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the difference in the role of DINSERVE and DINESCAPE models on patrons' experiential value. Multiple regression analysis yield a Coefficient of Determination indicated by R^2 which demonstrates the percentage of variation in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables. Elliott and Woodward (2007) have pointed that multiple regression analysis can be used to establish the predictors of an outcome variable as well as show the most significant ones. The overall hypothesized multiple regression model equation was:

$$EV = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{DINESERV} + \beta_2 \text{DINESCAPE} + e$$

Where EV = Experiential Value, DINESERV = Dining Service Quality, DINESCAPE = Dining Servicescape, β = regression coefficients based on the predictor variables, e = regression model error, and α = regression model constant.

Table 3. 4: Data Analysis Plan

Research Objectives	Method of Analysis
i) To examine the relationship between personal service encounters and patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi city country, Kenya.	Pearson Correlation coefficient (r) 5% significant level Accept at $p < .05$, fail to accept at $p > .05$
ii) To assess the relationship between physical environment service encounters and patrons experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi city county, Kenya.	Person correlation coefficient (r) 5% significance level Accept at $p < .05$, fail to accept at $p > .05$
iii) To examine the difference in the role of personal service encounters model and physical environment service encounter model on patrons' experiential value.	Multiple linear regression analysis 5% significant level Accept at $p < .05$, fail to accept at $p > .05$

Source: Researcher 2018

3.11 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Researcher logistics refer to the processes or activities that a researcher must address to ensure successful completion of a research project (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2006). Thus, the study logistics consisted of (1) obtaining a research permit from Kenyatta University Post-Graduate Board and National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), (2) pretesting of the research instrument, (3) budget planning, (4) collecting filled questionnaires, and (5) editing and coding.

Field work logistics comprised of familiarization with classified restaurants' managers and supervisors, creating rapport with the participants during data collection, and acquainting with the questionnaires (giving a range of numbers to the restaurants which were involved in data collection) to avoid disorientation.

During the actual data collection process, each participant was informed of the purpose study and provided with a questionnaire which comprised of an introduction letter. The letter outlined the purpose of the study and informed the respondents of their participation rights. Participants were not requested to indicate their names in the questionnaire thus, ensured and protected their privacy.

Ethical considerations include keeping all information confidential and anonymous. Therefore, data collected regarding this study was handled with utmost confidentiality. To ensure discretion, information collected was used for the purpose of this thesis only.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the analysis of data gathered using questionnaires. First, this chapter describes response rate results and demographic profile which comprise of: gender, age, restaurants' star rating category, and the dining frequency. In addition, the chapter presents the results of the relationship between dependent and independent variables by hypotheses testing using correlation and multiple linear regression analyses. Moreover, the chapter presents the results of the role of service encounters in creating patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

4.2 Response Rate

Three hundred and eight seven (387) questionnaires were distributed to study participants. Out of these questionnaires, 320 were returned. However, 90 had missing data and were discarded resulting to 230 usable ones. Therefore, response rate was computed with the 230 usable questionnaires ($230/387*100$) yielding 59.43%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2006), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting. A response rate of 60% is good and above 70% is very good. Thus, a response rate of 59.43% was considered good for data analysis and reporting.

4.3 Respondents' Demographic Profiles

This section presents the results of the respondents' demographic characteristics comprising of gender, age, restaurants' star rating category, and the dining frequency.

4.3.1 Gender of Patrons Dining in Classified Restaurants

With regard to gender of the study respondents, majority n=127, (55%) were male slightly outnumbering female restaurant patrons n=103, (45%), (Figure 4.1).

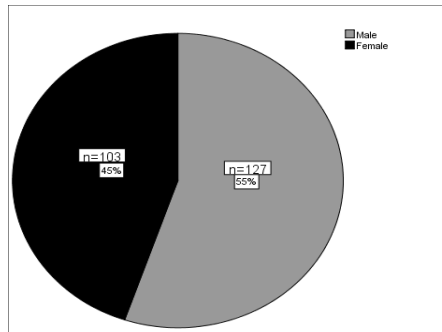


Figure 4.1: Participants' Gender

This implies that classified restaurants are dominated by male than female patrons. This distribution is consistent with Markovic *et al.* (2010), an empirical study in the city restaurant setting' carried out in Croatian city restaurants which found slightly more representation of male (50.6%) than female (49.4%) respondents in their study. However, a study conducted by Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012) in Mauritius investigating service quality dimensions in island economy restaurant, indicated 52% of the respondents being female, while 48% were male.

A cross tabulation between gender and intention to revisit the restaurants revealed that majority of respondents who would visit the restaurant again were male n=127, (54.6%) followed by female n=103, (45.4%), (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Gender and Intentions to Visit Classified Restaurant Again

		Intention to Visit again			
		Yes		No	
		N	%	N	%
Gender	Male	112	54.6%	15	60.0%
	Female	93	45.4%	10	40.0%
	Total	205	100.0%	25	100.0%

This implies that male patrons find more value in classified restaurants than female patrons. It may also imply that classified restaurants are able to deliver service encounters in line with male patrons' expectations. These results are consistent with Harrington, Oltenbacher, and Way (2010) who found female respondents to rate highly quality indicator attributes, setting attributes and dietary attributes as more important compared to men respondents.

4.3.2 Age

Results of the respondents' age profile are exhibited in Table 4.2. These results indicate that majority n=112, (48.7%) had age ranging from 31 to 40 years followed by those whose age was above 40 years n=71, (30.9%).

Table 4.2: Age of the Respondents Dining in Classified Restaurants

Age	n	%
17-20 years	4	1.7
21-30 years	43	18.7
31-40 years	112	48.7
>40 years	71	30.9
Total	230	100.0

This may imply that respondents in the age ranging 31- 40 years may have disposable income to spend. These respondents may also have other motivating

factors for example sporting and business friends whom they have to meet in social but well set environments. Therefore, classified restaurant managers may focus more on patrons in this age blanket years and develop unique products geared toward satisfy this market segment. This study is consistent with previous studies that examined the intentions of young patrons' segment to patronize the food service industry (Tan *et al*, 2014). Similarly, Kisang and Soocheong (2008) have noted that young adults viewed eating out as part of their daily lives. However, Markovic , *et al*. (2010) had different results indicating that majority of customers visiting restaurants were 41 years of age and above.

A cross tabulation of age with intentions to revisit the restaurant revealed that, 205 respondents n=205, (100.0%) who formed the majority would revisit the restaurant again while only 25 respondents n=25, (100.0%) did not have intentions to visit particular restaurants again, (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Age by Intentions to Visit Classified Restaurant Again

Age	Intention to Visit again			
	Yes		No	
	N	%	n	%
17-20 years	4	2.0%	0	.0%
21-30 years	41	20.0%	2	8.0%
31-40 years	96	46.8%	16	64.0%
>41 years	64	31.2%	7	28.0%
Total	205	100.0%	25	100.0%

These results indicate that majority of classified restaurants' patrons who are in the age bracket 31 to 40 years and > 41 years respectively had high intentions of visiting the restaurant again. However, respondents in the age bracket 17-20 years (2%) and 21-30 years (20%) respectively in a descending order had lower intentions to visit

the classified restaurants. The prior could be fuelled by the fast growing middle income generation with disposable income to spend on leisure and tourism and the thriving business class with ample money to spend respectively, while the later could be as a result of dissatisfaction emanating from restaurants' service and physical encounters. These results are consistent with findings by World Bank (2010) which in its financial inclusion in the Middle East and North Africa suggested a need to meet the ever rising demand for both international tourists and the continents own fast growing middle class.

Nevertheless, in regard to age and intentions to visit the restaurant again, some respondents $n=25$, (100%) had no intentions to visit the restaurant again. Specifically, respondents between the age of 31-40 years $n=16$, (64%) had the highest number of respondents who did not have intentions to visit the restaurant again followed by 40 years and above $n=7$, (28%) and 21-30 years $n=2$, (8%) in a descending order. This may be attributed to the poor personal and physical service encounters they experienced while dining in the classified restaurants. These results are consistent with Markovic *et al.* (2010) who in their study found that 47 per cent of the respondents in the age ranging 20-35 years old who did not have intentions to visit the restaurant again. A further study conducted by Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012) investigating service quality dimensions in island economy restaurant, Mauritius indicated that respondents in the age ranging 30-39 (45%), did not have intentions to visit the restaurant in future.

4.3.3 Frequency of Visit

With regard to frequency of restaurants' visit, majority of respondents $n=118$, (51.3%) had visited the restaurants more than five (5) times followed by those who had visited between 2 to 4 times $n= 88$, (38.3%), (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Frequency of Visit to Visit Classified Restaurant.

Frequency	n	%
Once	24	10.4
2-4 times	88	38.3
>5 times	118	51.3
Total	230	100.0

The frequency of visit shown in Table 4.4 is average considering respondents who had visited the restaurant more than five times. This is below the suggested threshold of 80% (Kotler & Keller, 2015). Thus, in order for classified restaurants to ensure business sustainability, at least 80% of repeat business must be maintained. This calls for strategies geared towards ensuring and enhancing patrons' experiential value by delivering excellent customer service that would engender repeat visit intentions by patrons. Results demonstrated in Table 4.4 also reveal that classified restaurants were attracting new customers n=24, (10.4%). This implies that classified restaurants were able to attract few new patrons. This was due to the stiff competition within hospitality related business establishments. Thus, classified restaurant managers need to ensure delivery of superior customer value products and services to the new patrons in order to retain and attract more through good word of mouth.

Analysis of frequency of visit and intentions to visit classified restaurants revealed that, the majority n=205, (100.0%) would revisit the restaurant again, (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5: Frequency of Visit and Intention to Visit again by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Frequency of Visit	Intention to Visit again			
	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Once	17	8.3%	7	28.0%
2-4 times	77	37.6%	11	44.0%
>5 times	111	54.1%	7	28.0%
Total	205	100.0%	25	100.0%

Those who had frequented classified restaurants over five times had the highest intention n=111, (54.1%) to visit again. This could imply that patrons who had visited classified restaurants over five times had generated some loyalty with the service encounters. However those who had visited classified restaurants once had the lowest intentions n=17, (18.3%) of revisit. This may imply that patrons who had visited classified restaurants the first time had higher expectations that could not have been met by the particular classified restaurants hence wanting to sample other hospitality related establishments. Thus classified restaurant managers need to formulate a system that may be able to establish first time patrons and treat them in a very warm way as a strategy to maintain them. According to Markovic *et al.* (2010) study carried out in Croatian city restaurants setting, majority of the respondents who visited particular restaurants two or more times indicated a degree of loyalty. In addition, a study conducted by Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012) in Mauritius investigating service quality dimensions in island economy restaurants, indicated that 84.6% of patrons ate at the restaurant once per month, 2.5 % ate at the restaurant at least once in 15 days while 12.9 % visited the restaurant for the first time.

4.4 Specific Objective One: Descriptive Analysis of Personal Service Encounters and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

The study sought to examine the relationship between DINESERV model dimensions (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) and patrons' experiential value. All the elements were measured using a 5- point likert scale anchored at 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

4.4.1 Tangibility

Table 4.6 shows ten statements indicating respondents' opinions about the surveyed tangibility element in classified restaurants in a descending order. The overall feeling of the respondents' tangibility element of classified restaurants was relatively positive. Out of the ten items, seven had a mean ranging between 3.90 and 3.95. Respondents rated highly 'The restaurant has comfortable seats in the dining room' ($\bar{x}=3.95$, $Sd=.29$) indicating that patrons highly considered comfortable seats while dining in classified restaurants in determining their positive dining experience. Patrons were also happy with attractive menus that reflected restaurants image, a comfortable and easy to move dining area, a clean dining area and a good décor in line with image and price range. Nonetheless, three items had a mean ranging from 3.89 to 3.73 indicating that some of the respondents were "undecided" about the tangible experience. The lowest rating of the listed statements was 'The restaurant has attractive parking areas and building exteriors' ($\bar{x}=3.73$, $Sd=.66$), followed by a tie between "Has rest rooms that are thoroughly clean and has staff members who are clean, neat, and appropriately dressed" with a mean of ($\bar{x}=3.89$).

Table 4.6: Descriptive Analysis of Tangibility Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	n	\bar{x}	Sd
Has comfortable seats in the dining room	230	3.95	.29
Has a menu that is readable	230	3.94	.31
Has a visually attractive dining area	230	3.94	.37
Has a décor in keeping with its image and price range	230	3.94	.34
Has dining areas that are thoroughly clean	230	3.93	.34
Has a dining area that is comfortable and easy to move around	230	3.92	.38
Has a visually attractive menu that reflects the restaurant's image	230	3.90	.43
Has rest rooms that are thoroughly clean	230	3.89	.39
Has staff members who are clean, neat, and appropriately dressed	230	3.89	.46
The restaurant has attractive parking areas and building exteriors	230	3.73	.66
Valid n (List wise)	230		

This implied that unattractive parking quarters negatively affect patrons stay at the classified restaurants. Therefore, there is need for the management to find ways of ensuring that patrons have ample, safe and secure parking for their vehicles. In addition, management should ensure that staff members are absolutely clean, neat and appropriately dressed at all times as well as scrupulously clean rest rooms in regard to the items low mean.

These results resonate well with a study carried out by Walter *et al.* (2010) in Swedish restaurants entitled 'Drivers of customers' service experience at restaurants' who found tangibility dimensions to be fundamental in creating patrons experiential value. These results are also consistent with another study conducted by Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012) investigating service quality dimensions in island economy restaurant, Mauritius whose findings showed that customers were mostly influenced by the tangibility dimensions while dining in restaurants. However, according to Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015), tangible only came after the

assurance and empathy dimensions but had a strong correlation with customer satisfaction hence positive patrons' experiential value.

4.4.2 Reliability

Table 4.7 indicates five statements that measured respondents' reliability with classified restaurants offerings in a descending order.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Analysis of Reliability Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	N	\bar{x}	Sd
Serves your food exactly as you ordered it	230	3.73	.70
Provides an accurate guest check	230	3.69	.72
Quickly corrects anything that is wrong	230	3.60	.77
Serves you in the time promised	230	3.59	.79
Is dependable and consistent	230	3.52	.83
Valid N (Listwise)	230		

From Table 4.7, the means of respondents' level of agreement with reliability items ranged between undecided. This indicated that most respondents were slightly neutral with the reliability aspect of the restaurant service offerings. The highest rated statement was 'The restaurant serve food exactly as you ordered it' (\bar{x} =3.73, Sd=.70) and the lowest 'The restaurant is dependable and consistent' (\bar{x} =3.52, Sd=.83).

Classified restaurants' managers should ensure that food is served exactly as orders by patrons and is dependable and consistent and that it's served within the promised time. Managers should further empower customer –contact- employees to ensure they are able to provide accurate guest check while quickly correcting anything wrong.

These findings are consistent with Wu and Liang (2009) who found reliability to influence patrons' opinion of service excellence hence creating great patrons

experiential value. Wu and Liang (2009) and Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) also found similar results. However, the results of a study conducted by Ramseook-Munhurrum (2012) investigating service quality dimensions of economy restaurants in an island in Mauritius showed that customers were more influence by the with the tangibility dimension of a restaurant in creating patrons experiential value than the reliability dimension.

4.4.3 Responsiveness

Table 4.8 exhibits analysis of the respondents' level of agreement with the three statements measuring responsive service delivery in classified restaurants. Generally, respondents were neutral about the responsiveness dimension while dining in the restaurants. The highest rated item was 'Service employees put more effort in order to handle patrons special requests' (\bar{x} =3.67, Sd=.74).

Table 4.8. Descriptive Analysis of Responsiveness Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	N	\bar{x}	Sd
Gives extra effort to handle your special requests	230	3.67	.74
During busy times have employees shift to help each other maintain speed and quality of service	230	3.66	.72
Provides prompt and quick service	230	3.65	.76
Valid N (Listwise)	230		

Results demonstrated in Table 4.8 implied that respondents were not generally very happy with what they encountered in regard the responsiveness dimension. Such encounters could negatively influence their experiential value with the restaurants. Thus, there is need for managers to fully understand the responsiveness dimension and ensure that customer contact employees' have the ability to; offer prompt and quick service, to maintain speed and quality of service during busy times and to give extra effort to handle special requests made by patrons. This would act as a

competitive advantage for classified restaurants which are able to successfully manage this dimension over other classified restaurants.

These results are consistent with a study conducted by Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012) investigating service quality dimensions in island economy restaurant; Mauritius which found customers to be less satisfied with the responsiveness dimension of restaurant setting hence negatively affecting their satisfaction level. However, a study conducted by Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) in Arabic restaurants found responsiveness to have a moderate positive correlation despite being the lowest in the list of service quality attributes which included; (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) in creating patrons experiential value. Finally a study by Qin, Prybutok, and Zhao (2010) revealed that responsiveness greatly influenced patrons perception of great service excellence hence great experiential value.

4.4.4 Assurance

Table 4.9 exhibits the results of six statements measuring assurance about the surveyed classified restaurants. Generally, respondents were neutral about the assurance service delivery with means ranging from 3.67 and 3.76. The highest rated statement in this dimension was ‘The restaurants service staff makes me feel personally safe’ (\bar{x} =3.76, Sd=.64) and the lowest was ‘The restaurant has personnel who are both able and willing to give you information about menu items, their ingredients and methods of preparation’ (\bar{x} =3.67, Sd=.73). In regard to these results, managers should ensure that service staffs are well trained, competent and experienced and fully supported to make patrons personally safe.

Table 4.9: Descriptive Analysis of Assurance Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	n	\bar{x}	Sd
Makes you feel personally safe	230	3.76	.64
Seems to give employees support so that they can do their jobs well	230	3.69	.72
Makes you feel comfortable and confident in your dealing with them	230	3.69	.73
Has employees who can answer your questions completely	230	3.68	.74
Has personnel who seem well trained, competent and experienced	230	3.67	.73
Has personnel who are both able and willing to give you information about menu items, their ingredients and methods of preparation	230	3.67	.73
Valid N (Listwise)	230		

In addition, managers should ensure that service staff are; comfortable and confidence while dealing with patrons, are able to answer questions completely to patrons, willing to give information about menu items, their ingredients and methods of preparation to both new and repeat patrons. This may portray as a strategy to a great sense of service excellence.

These results are consistent with those of Qin *et al* (2010) who found that assurance was to a great extent influenced by employees' level of competence, experience and confidence when handling patrons. In addition, Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) in their study conducted in Arabic restaurants affirmed a strong positive correlation of assurance with customer satisfaction hence great patrons' experiential value. However, Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012) in his study Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) found that customers of Mauritius restaurants are less satisfied with this dimension

4.4.5 Empathy

Analysis of the respondents' level of agreement with empathy service delivery revealed a mean range of 3.66 to 3.68. This implied that respondents generally

neutral with items of empathy service delivery, (Table 4.10). Respondents rated highest ‘The restaurant seems to have the customers’ best interests at heart’ (\bar{x} =3.68, Sd=.72). The level of agreement with the restaurant ‘Has employees who are sensitive to your individual needs and wants rather than always relying on policies and procedures’ was slightly lower compared to other items of empathy dimension (\bar{x} =3.66, Sd=.73).

Table 4.10: Empathy Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	N	\bar{x}	Sd
Seems to have the customers best interests at heart	230	3.68	.72
Anticipates your individual needs and wants	230	3.68	.71
Has employees who are sympathetic and reassuring if something is wrong	230	3.67	.74
Makes you feel special	230	3.66	.75
Has employees who are sensitive to your individual needs and wants rather than always relying on policies and procedures	230	3.66	.73
Valid N (Listwise)	230		

This implied the need for managers to empower and ensure that employees are more sensitive to patrons’ needs and wants rather than always relying on the set policies and procedures.

These findings are consistent with those of Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) who found empathy to have a strong positive correlation in creating customer satisfaction hence positive patrons experiential value. In addition, Tan *et al.* (2014) also found similar results in their study on service quality and customer satisfaction in two Chinese fast food restaurants. However as Tan *et al.* (2014) further noted, this dimension needs to be considered as a competitive advantage by future hospitality related managers.

4.5 Specific Objective Two: Descriptive Analysis of Physical Environment Service Encounters and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

The study sought to assess the relationship between DINESCAPE model dimensions comprising of facility aesthetics, ambience, lighting, Table setting, layout and service staff and patron's experiential value. All the elements were measured using a 5- point likert scale anchored at 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

4.5.1 Facility Aesthetics

Table 4.11 showed five items indicating respondents' analysis about the surveyed facility aesthetics element in classified restaurants in a descending order. Respondents agreed with all items measuring this dimension of DINESCAPE model.

Table 4.11: Descriptive Analysis of Facility Aesthetics Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	N	\bar{x}	Sd
Has furniture (e.g. dining Tables and chairs) of high quality	230	4.02	.16
Has colors that create a warm atmosphere	230	4.02	.16
Has wall décor that is visually appealing	230	4.01	.23
Has plants and flowers that makes me feel happy	230	4.01	.19
Has paintings/pictures that are attractive	230	3.99	.30
Valid n (Listwise)	230		

Respondents rated respectively the restaurants 'Has furniture of high quality' ($\bar{x}=4.02$, Sd=.16), 'Has colors that create warm atmosphere' ($\bar{x}=4.02$, Sd=.16), 'Has wall décor that is visually appealing' ($\bar{x}=4.01$, Sd=.22), 'Has plants and flowers that makes me feel happy' ($\bar{x}=4.01$, Sd=.19), and 'Has paintings that are attractive' ($\bar{x}=3.99$, Sd=.30). These results indicated that, while dining in the restaurants, patrons value furniture of high quality, colors that creates warm atmosphere, décor that appeals to the eye, Servicescape with plants and flowers and eye-catching wall hangings that creates a feel good effect.

These findings concur with those of Han and Ryu (2009) who found quality furniture, different moods, emotions and feelings to subsequently influence patrons' experiential value. The results are also in line with those of Dev and Heesup (2011) who found that dining chairs and tables of high quality, pictures and paintings that are attractive may create perceived quality of dining experience that would positively impact on patrons' experiential value. In line with the afore mentioned results, Hye and Jin (2015) found that plants and flowers, dining chairs and tables of high quality and pictures and painting that are attractive make patrons feel happy which may create perceived quality on the dining experience hence influencing patrons experiential value. Thus managers and supervisors of classified restaurants need to ensure that facility aesthetics dimension is critically considered in the service environment.

4.5.2 Ambience

Table 4.12 shows four statements indicating respondents' opinion about the surveyed classified restaurants.

Table 4.12: Descriptive Analysis of Ambience Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	n	\bar{x}	Sd
Has aroma that is enticing	230	4.00	.16
Has temperature that is comfortable	230	4.00	.20
Has background music that relaxes me	230	3.82	.48
Has background music that is pleasing	230	3.81	.49
Valid n (Listwise)	230		

Respondents agreed that restaurants have aroma that is enticing (\bar{x} =4.00, Sd=.16) and temperature that is comfortable (\bar{x} =4.00, Sd=.20). However, respondents had a slightly low agreement with the restaurant 'has background music that is pleasing' (\bar{x} =3.81, Sd=.49) suggesting that some restaurants should invest in the installation

of background music as it is deemed to have an impact on patrons' experiential value.

These results are consistent with Dev and Heesup (2011) who found out that aroma, temperature and music can affect customers' perception of excellence in services delivery that would influence purchasing intentions and generate effective response of experiential value. However, Lap- Kwong (2017) found patrons to be neutral about this dimension. Thus managers need to have a clearer understanding on the ambient dimension which if well addressed may improve the dining experience of patrons.

4.5.3 Lighting

Table 4.13 shows three statements indicating respondents' opinion on the lighting dimension.

Table 4.13: Descriptive Analysis of Lighting Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	N	\bar{x}	Sd
Has lighting that creates a warm atmosphere	230	4.02	.13
Has lighting that creates a comfortable atmosphere	230	4.01	.11
Has lighting that makes me feel welcome	230	4.01	.11
Valid n (Listwise)	230		

From Table 4.13, respondents agreed with all the statements measuring lighting dimension and rated respectively the restaurants 'Has lighting that creates a warm atmosphere' (\bar{x} =4.02, Sd=.13), 'Has lighting that creates a comfortable atmosphere' (\bar{x} =4.01, Sd=.11) and 'Has lighting that makes me feel welcome' (\bar{x} =4.01, Sd=.11).

These results are consistent with Dev and Heesup (2011) who found out lighting dimension to be one of the most salient physical stimuli in restaurants. In addition,

Han and Ryu (2009) reported that illumination is directly associated with the changes in experiential value. However, Heung and Ngai (2011) noted that bright lighting may symbolize quick service and lower prices.

4.5.4 Table Setting

Analysis of the respondents' view about the restaurants table setting design revealed a mean range of 3.89 to 3.96. Table 4.14 indicates that respondent's agreement with table setting items were comparatively low compared to other DINESCAPE dimensions suggesting that managers need to invest more on table setting element as it may negatively affect patrons' experiential value.

Table 4.14: Descriptive Analysis of Table Settings Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	N	\bar{x}	Sd
Has Table ware (e.g. glass, china and silverware) that is of high quality	230	3.96	.27
Has Table setting that is visually attractive	230	3.92	.32
Has linen (e.g. Table cloths, napkins) that are attractive	230	3.89	.39
Valid n (Listwise)	230		

Results (Table 4.14) are inconsistent with Ryu *et al* (2012) who found table setting to be the most salient tangible qualities of a restaurant.

4.5.5 Layout

Table 4.15 shows statements indicating respondents' opinion about the surveyed layout dimension. Respondents agreed with the restaurant 'has seating arrangement that gives me enough space' (\bar{x} =3.97, Sd=.29) and 'has layout that makes it easy to move around' (\bar{x} =3.97, Sd=.28).

Table 4.15: Descriptive Analysis of Layout Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	n	\bar{x}	Sd
Has seating arrangement that gives me enough space	230	3.97	.286
Has layout that makes it easy to move around	230	3.97	.278
Has seating arrangement that makes me feel crowded	230	2.83	.969
Valid n (Listwise)	230		

However, they disagreed with the restaurant having seating arrangement that made them feel crowded ($\bar{x}=2.83$, Sd=.97) demonstrating that the restaurants seating arrangement was satisfactory. These results conquer well with Dev and Heesup, (2011) who found out that a well-designed restaurant layout facilitated a fulfillment of patrons' experiential value.

4.5.6 Service Staff

Table 4.16 shows that the level of respondents' agreement with the service staff dimension ranged from undecided to agreement. The results suggest that respondents had very high expectations on; attractive employees who made them feel good and well neatly- dressed employees respectively ($\bar{x}=3.90$, Sd=.483), ($\bar{x}=3.88$, Sd=.466). In addition, respondents also felt that the number of employees expected to make them feel cared for was not adequate as they may have wished ($\bar{x}=3.88$, Sd=.466).

Table 4.16: Descriptive Analysis of Service Staff Items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	n	\bar{x}	Sd
Has attractive employees who make me feel good	230	3.90	.483
Has employees who are neat and well dressed	230	3.88	.466
Has an adequate number of employees that makes me feel cared for	230	3.88	.466
Valid n (Listwise)	230		

These results are consistent with Jin *et al* (2012) who noted that social factors which include employees and patrons appearance, adequate number of employees who care appropriately to the customers , employees dressing mode and their physical appearance are key determinants with the way patrons feel while dining in a restaurant. Drach- Zahavy (2010) further noted that for effective service delivery in restaurants, there is need to manage service staff. In the same tune, Liu and Jang (2009); Jin *et al.* (2012); Nyoike, Langat, Karani, and Langat (2014) acknowledged the importance of giving adequate attention on staffing and recruitment policies and procedures in order to select the right employees who understand customer needs and wants.

In conclusion, Jin, Lee and Gopalan, (2012) acknowledged the need for restaurant organizations to understand both internal and external customers during the service process. Thus, as noted by Liu and Jang (2009), classified restaurant managers should ensure that this dimension has the highest mean score if a positive customer-service staff relationship is to be realized and maintained hence higher patrons experiential value.

4.6 Specific Objective Three: Descriptive analysis of the Roles of Service Encounter Models and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

Table 4.17 showed that respondents were undecided with the created experiential value while dining in classified restaurants. All items in the construct had mean values (\bar{x}) ranging 3.93 and 3.66 demonstrating that respondents were not completely sure and comfortable with the items in this construct. Specifically, the statement “*The restaurant is aesthetically appealing*” had the highest mean in the construct ($\bar{x}=3.93$, $Sd=.401$), followed by “*I like the decorations and dining experience*” ($\bar{x}=3.91$, $Sd=.434$). The statement that had the lowest mean in the construct was “*Dining in this restaurant makes me forget my stress*” ($\bar{x}=3.66$, $Sd=.686$), followed by “*When I think of this restaurant I think of service excellence*” ($\bar{x}=3.73$, $Sd=.684$).

These results may imply that respondents did not find classified restaurants to be highly aesthetically appealing, and to have unique decorations and dining experiences. In addition, respondents had low opinion on services offered at the classified restaurants. They felt that services offered did not emulate service excellence and that dining in these restaurants did not help them forget their stress. This may suggest that patrons had high expectations about classified restaurants that were not attained, thus implying that restaurant managers have a role to play towards enhancing patrons’ experiential value. Therefore, classified restaurant managers should have the ability to determine the best strategies that may enable patrons be directly involved in an experience creation, be able to reflect on the experience, conceptualize the experience and make informed decisions regarding the experience. This may lead to patrons being able to evaluate whether the classified restaurant

encourages playfulness, offers excellent service products and whether they are likely choose that restaurant in the future.

Table 4.17: Descriptive Analysis of Experiential Value items by Patrons in Classified Restaurants

Items	n	\bar{x}	Sd
The restaurant is aesthetically appealing	230	3.93	.401
I like the decoration and dining experience	230	3.91	.434
I feel happy when I eat in this restaurant	230	3.85	.582
Dining at this restaurant makes me feel cheerful	230	3.84	.580
I think of this restaurant as excellent in the product it offers	230	3.81	.587
I intend to dine in this restaurant again	230	3.79	.598
When I think of this restaurant I think of service excellence	230	3.73	.684
Dining at this restaurant makes me forget my stress	230	3.66	.686
Valid n (Listwise)	230		

These results concur well with Hyun (2010) who specifically found aesthetic appeal as a key aspect of service performance where patrons considered more the physical attractiveness and beauty on the surrounding in creating a positive experiential value. Gelbrich and Roschk (2011) also noted that patrons behaviors in the consumption of restaurant services is complex and in order to deal with the dynamic market behaviors, restaurants need to understand all the elements that make up experiential value. The results are also similar to those of (Brakus *et al*, 2009); (Jeong, Fiore, Niehm & Lorenz, 2009) who found that when experiential value is high, patrons have more intensions to visit the restaurant and are more cheerful by the outcome of their dining experience. In conclusion, the results are consistent with Kolb's theory which posits that individuals make direct meaning to an experience through a combination of experiences conceptualization skills which are created through a learning process and the ability to transform the learnt experiences into genuine knowledge.

4.7 H₀₁: There is no Relationship Between Personal Service Encounter and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

Based on DINESERV model, an overall hypothesis was set (H₀₁: There is no relationship between personal service encounters and patrons' experiential value). This hypothesis was addressed using five sub-hypotheses in order to establish the relationship between the model dimensions (Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) and patrons' experiential value. Pearson Correlation Coefficient (*r*) technique was used to examine the relationship between these sub-hypotheses and patrons' experiential value.

4.7.1 H_{01a}: There is no Relationship between Tangibility and Patrons' Experiential Value

To evaluate the relationship of tangibility factor and patrons' experiential value of classified restaurants, Pearson correlation analysis was used. Pearson correlation is a statistical technique that is used to measure the linear dependence between two variables giving a value between +1 and -1 inclusive where 1 is the total positive linear correlation, 0 is nonlinear correlation, and -1 is the total negative linear correlation.

Data gathered were analyzed using Pearson correlation to determine the role of tangibility (independent variable) to the overall patrons' experiential value (dependent variable). SPSS was used to determine the results of Pearson correlation.

Based on tangibility, H_{01a} posited that tangibility will have no relationship on patrons' experiential value. Correlation results demonstrated in Table 4.18 revealed a weak significant positive correlation ($r = 0.368$, $p = .000$). Results also revealed p value less than 0.05 and thus, H_{01a} failed to be accepted.

Table 4. 18: Correlation Analysis of Tangibility and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

		Experiential Value	Hypothesis
DINESERV	Pearson Correlation	.368*	
Tangibility	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	230	H _{01a} : Not accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

This implied that restaurant' tangible elements such as availability of ample parking areas, attractive dining areas, linen and kitchenware, menu design and covers, clean dining areas, and comfortable seats would affect the experience of patrons while dining.

Other studies have found similar results. For instance, a study by Marković *et al.* (2014) titled: 'Does restaurant performance meet customer expectations? An assessment of restaurant service quality using a modified DINESERVE approach.' in Opatija Riviera Croatia found top attributes of tangibility dimensions which included accurate bills, easily readable menu, error- free served order (food) and clean, neat and appropriately dressed staff as the most influential in meeting customer expectations in restaurants. Lap- Kwong (2017); Walter *et al.* (2010).also found similar results. However, according to Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015), despite this dimension having a strong positive correlation with customer satisfaction and creating great patron experiential value, it came after assurance and empathy dimensions.

4.7.2 H_{01b}: There is no Relationship between Reliability and Patrons' Experiential Value

To evaluate the relationship of reliability factor and patrons' experiential value of classified restaurants, Pearson correlation analysis was used. H_{01b} posited that, reliability factor will have no relationship with patrons' experiential value. Pearson correlation results revealed a moderate positive significant relationship ($r=0.621$, $p=0.000$). Results also revealed p value less than 0.05 (Table 4.19), thus H_{01b} was not accepted.

Table 4. 19: Correlation Analysis of Reliability and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESERV	Pearson Correlation	.621*	
Reliability	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	230	H _{01b} : Not accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

These results implied that service delivery that was timely, offered as promised, dependable, and accurate affect the dining experience of patrons.

These results concur well with those of Ramseook- Munhurrum (2012) who found reliability to have a moderate positive correlation with customer satisfaction hence positive experiential value. The results are also consistent with Markovic and Komsic (2010) study findings in France restaurants that rated reliable service as the most important dimension of service delivery. Finally, the results are consistent with Wu and Liang (2009); Walter and Edvardsson (2012) who found service reliability to significantly influence patrons perception on service excellence.

4.7.3 H_{01c}: There is no Relationship between Responsiveness and Patrons' Experiential Value

On the basis of this dimension, H_{01c} hypothesized that responsiveness will have no relationship with patrons experiential value. Pearson correlation results indicated a moderate significant positive relationship ($r=0.606$, $p=0.000$), further indicating p value less than 0.05 level of significance (Table 4.20), thus failing to accept H_{01c}.

Table 4.20: Correlation Analysis of Responsiveness and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESERV	Pearson Correlation	.606*	
Responsiveness	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	230	H _{01c} : Not accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

This demonstrated that, quick and responsive service that is offered on timely manner is critical in creating patrons experiential value while dining in classified restaurants.

These findings are in accordance with the findings of Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) who found responsive dimension to have a moderate positive correlation despite taking the lowest position in the list of service quality attributes (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) and to a great extent influence dining experience of customers in service offering organizations. In addition, Qin, Prybutok, and Zhao (2010) found that responsiveness dimension was greatly influenced by employees prompt and quick service, and the extra effort they put to meet patrons requests.

4.7.4 H_{01d}: There is no Relationship between Assurance and Patrons' Experiential Value

H_{01d} hypothesized that assurance will have no relationship with patrons' experiential value. Correlation results revealed a moderate significant positive relationship ($r=0.606$, $p=0.000$) and p value less than 0.05, Table 4.21. These results provided sufficient statistical evidence to fail to accept H_{01d}.

Table 4.21: Correlation Analysis of Assurance and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESERV	Pearson Correlation	.606*	
Assurance	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	230	H _{01d} : Not accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

These results demonstrated that patrons' were moderately comfortable with the assurance dimension where employees made patrons feel personally safe and confident. This may have been due to the management supporting employees and ensuring that employees were well trained, competent and experienced. Thus, patrons were able to forming a positive total dining experience.

The study findings presented are similar to Liu and Jang (2009) who reported assurance dimension as critical in measuring customer satisfaction while dining out in a restaurant. Similarly, Qin *et al* (2010) found the same results. However, these results differ slightly with those of Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) who found assurance to have a strong positive correlation with customer satisfaction hence creating a positive patrons experiential value.

4.7.5 H_{01e}: There is no Relationship between Empathy and Patrons' Experiential Value

To evaluate the relationship of empathy factor to patrons' experiential value of classified restaurants, Pearson correlation coefficient was used. With regard to this dimension, H_{01e} posited that empathy will have no relationship with patrons' experiential value. Correlation results revealed a moderate significant positive relationship ($r=0.619$, $p=0.000$) (Table 4.22) and p value less than 0.05. Thus, H_{01e} was not accepted.

Table 4.22: Correlation Analysis of Empathy and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESERV	Pearson Correlation	.619*	
Empathy	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	230	H _{01e} : Not accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings above suggest that employees' seems to have customers best interest at heart, have the ability to anticipate individuals need and wants treat patrons with a human feel and are sympathetic and reassuring if something is wrong. These findings are similar to those of (Marković *et al*, 2014); Tan *et al*. (2014). However, Omar, Ariffin and Ahmad (2015) found empathy dimension to have a strong positive correlation in creating patrons satisfaction hence positive patron experiential value.

4.8 H₀₂: There is no Relationship between Physical Environment Service Encounters and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

Based on the DINESCAPE model, an overall hypothesis was set (H₀₂: There is no relationship between physical environment service encounters and patrons'

experiential value in classified restaurants). Dharmawirya and Adi (2011) have stated that there are several determining factors for a restaurant to be considered as good or bad. They further stated that if these factors are determined and managed carefully, they have the ability to encourage return on investment for patrons. Thus, this hypothesis was addressed using six sub-hypotheses in order to establish the level of relationship between the physical service encounter model dimension (facility aesthetics, ambience, lighting, table settings, service staff and layout) on patrons' experiential value. Pearson correlation coefficient (r) technique was used to examine the relationship between this model dimension and patrons' experiential value.

4.8.1 H_{02a}: There is no Relationship between Facility Aesthetics and Patrons' Experiential Value in Classified Restaurant in Nairobi City County, Kenya

Based on facility aesthetics, sub-hypothesis H_{02a} posited that there is no relationship between facility aesthetics and patrons' experiential value. Results demonstrated in Table 4.23 revealed a negative weak correlation ($r = -0.069$, $p > 0.295$), and p value greater than 0.05 level of significance thus H_{02a} was accepted

Table 4.23: Correlation Analysis of Facility Aesthetics and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

		Experiential Value	Hypothesis
DINESCAPE	Pearson Correlation	-.069	
Facility Aesthetics	Sig. (2-tailed)	.295	
	n	230	H _{02a} : Accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the results demonstrated above, H_{02a} was accepted. This implied that facility aesthetics (attractive paintings, appealing wall décor, plants and flowers, colors of the wall and furniture of high quality) was not influencing the overall patrons' dining experience for classified restaurants.

These results are contrary to the findings of Kim and Moon (2009) who in their study stated that customers may spend more than two hours in upscale restaurants in an effort to become aware on the facility aesthetics before, during and after dining and may influencing the overall patrons' dining experience. These results are also inconsistent with Ryu and Jang (2008) who studied the influence of restaurants' physical environments on customers' emotion and behavioral intentions in the United States of America and found a significant positive relationship between facility aesthetics and arousal emotions in restaurant customers.

These results are also inconsistent with those of Dev and Heesup (2011) who investigated the key factors affecting behavior intentions in full service restaurants and found that patrons spend hours observing knowingly or unknowingly the interior of the dining areas which they found to affect patrons experiential value. In the same line, Ryu and Jang (2008) implied that ensuring comfortable atmosphere should not be undervalued. They further suggested that just as a restaurant would

change items on a food menu, design new and more attractive menus after a while, the same should be done regularly to the atmosphere of a restaurant to change and give a new look of paintings and pictures, plants and flowers, color and furniture.

Finally, the results are also inconsistent with the findings of Hye and Jin (2015) who in their study on the roles of the physical environment, price perception, and customer satisfaction in determining customer loyalty in the restaurant industry found facility aesthetics element to highly influence patrons' experiential value. However, Victoria and Jhenna (2013) in their study conducted in Philippines casual restaurants found that warm temperatures were average in creating patrons' aesthetic appeal.

4.8.2 H_{02b}: There is no Relationship between Ambience and Patrons' Experiential Value in Classified Restaurant in Nairobi City County, Kenya

Based on this DINESCAPE dimension element, H_{02b} posited that ambience has no relationship on patrons' experiential value. Pearson Correlation results presented in Table 4.24 indicated a moderate positive significant relationship ($r=0.459$, $p=0.000$) and p value less than 0.05, thus failing to accept H_{02b}.

Table 4.24: Correlation Analysis of Ambience and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESCAPE	Pearson Correlation	.459*	
Ambience	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	230	H _{02b} : Not accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

These results implied that background music, temperature and aroma positively influence patrons experience while dining in the restaurant. These results are

consistent with those of Qin *et al.* (2010) who in their study indicated that restaurant management should set standardized policy guidelines in an effort to adjust music and lighting.

The results are also consistent with those of Ryu and Jang (2008) who in their study on the influence of restaurants' physical environments on customers' emotion and behavioral intentions in the United States of America revealed ambience as the most influential element of physical environment dimension to patrons' experiential value. Moreover, Chebat, Morrin, and Chebat (2009) found that intangible background sub dimensions (music, aroma and temperature that is comfortable) had an effect on the invisible senses hence causing an unintentional positive effect on the customers.

Victoria and Jhenna (2013) in their study entitled "A research study on Dinescape factors differences between leading fast food and casual dining restaurants in Philippines" have further revealed that background music that is appealing can affect customer perceptions of business places, influence customer service excellence, increase shopping and waiting time and influence customers re- purchase intentions to a business indicating similar results. They also noted that aroma that is enticing has become a powerful tool to influence return on investment and has gained much attention in positioning modern businesses. Lap- Kwong (2017) also found similar results.

4.8.3 H_{02c}: There is no Relationship between Lighting and Patrons' Experiential Value in Classified Restaurant in Nairobi City County, Kenya

Based on lighting, H_{02c} posited that lighting has no relationship on patrons' experiential value. Study results as demonstrated in Table 4.25 ($r=-0.053$, $p>.424$)

revealed a moderate negative correlation and p value greater than 0.05 level of confidence thus H_{02c} was accepted.

Table 4.25: Correlation Analysis of Lighting and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESCAPE	Pearson Correlation	-.053	
Lighting	Sig. (2-tailed)	.424	
	n	230	H_{02c} :Accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Thus, lighting that creates a warm and comfortable atmosphere in restaurants has no significant effect on patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants.

These results are inconsistent with Ryu and Jang (2008); Heung and Ngai (2011) who reported that illumination is directly associated with the changes in physiological arousal of customers which may have intentions on experiential value. The result findings are also inconsistent with these of Victoria and Jhenna (2013), who in their study entitled "Dinescape factors differences between leading fast food and casual dining in restaurants in Philippines" found a relationship between lighting that creates warm color and patrons' reference of service excellence. They further found that lighting that creates a comfortable and warm atmosphere had a great influence on patrons' playfulness in restaurants. However, Dev and Heesup (2011) found that low temperatures are associated with negative affective status. Thus, Victoria and Jhenna (2013) suggested that managers and owners of restaurants should see this dimension as a factor to be considered in improving the overall bright outlook of the dining areas which may positively affect service excellence, playfulness, aesthetics and return on investment.

4.8.4 H_{02d}: There is no Relationship between Table Setting and Patrons' Experiential Value in Classified Restaurant in Nairobi City County, Kenya

Based on Table 4.26, H_{02d} suggested that table setting has no relationship on patrons' experiential value. Results revealed a weak positive significant correlation coefficient ($r=0.246$, $p<0.000$) between table setting and patrons experiential value as demonstrated in Table 4.25. Results on p value ($p=.000$) indicate value less than ($<$) 0.05 giving enough empirical evidence not to accept H_{02d}.

Table 4.26: Correlation Analysis of Table Setting and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESCAPE	Pearson Correlation	.246*	
Table Setting	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	230	H _{02d} :Not accepted

*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Therefore, classified restaurants with high quality tableware, linen and table settings that are visually attractive have a correlation on patrons' experiential value.

These results are consistent with Liu and Jang (2009) who in their study entitled "DINESCAPE: A scale for customers' perception of dining environments" found that the way tables are set and decorated positively determine patrons experiential value. Ryu, Lee, and Kim (2012) similarly found that spacious and neat table setting make patrons feel that they are in a prestigious and elegant environment hence creating a positive patrons experiential value.

4.8.5 H_{02e}: There is no Relationship between Layout and Patrons' Experiential Value in Classified Restaurant in Nairobi City County, Kenya

Based on layout dimension, H_{02e} hypothesized that layout has no relationship on patrons' experiential value. Pearson results demonstrated in Table 4.27 indicated a

negative weak correlation ($r=-.020$, $p>.758$) and p value greater than 0.05 thus H_{02e} was accepted.

Table 4.27: Correlation Analysis of Layout and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESCAPE	Pearson Correlation	-.020	
Layout	Sig. (2-tailed)	.758	
	n	230	H_{02e} : Accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on these findings, restaurants with seating arrangements that give enough space, seating arrangements that are not crowded and a layout that makes it easy to move around had no influence on patrons' experience while dining in the restaurant.

These results are consistent with Harr (2008) who found restaurant layout to have no direct effect on patrons' desire to return to the investment. However, these results are inconsistency with those of Aaijaz and Ibrahim (2011); Dev and Heesup (2011), who found that patrons attach great importance to an establishments' layout in their decision to return to the investment hence a well-designed layout can fulfill patrons experiential value.

4.8.6 H_{02f} : There is no Relationship between Service Staff and Patrons' Experiential Value in Classified Restaurant in Nairobi City County, Kenya

Based on service staff, H_{02f} posited that service staff has no relationship on patrons' experiential value. Results revealed a moderately strong significant correlation between service staff and patrons experiential value ($r=0.793$, $p<.000$) and a p value less than 0.05. Therefore, H_{02f} was not accepted.

Table 4.28: Correlation Analysis of Service Staff and Patrons Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

DINESCAPE	Pearson Correlation	0.793*	
Layout	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	230	H _{02f} :Not accepted

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Therefore, restaurants that have attractive and well-dressed employees, adequate numbers of employees who make patrons feel cared for influence patrons' experiential value.

These results are consistent with Jin *et al.* (2012) who noted the importance of giving adequate attention on staffing policies and procedures so as to select the right employees who have the ability to related to the desired social relationships which influence patrons' experiential value in way of repurchase intentions. The results are also consistent with Liu and Jang (2009) who acknowledged the need for service organizations to embark on identifying the needs of both internal and external customers for total performance during the service process. Finally, the results are in line with those of Drach- Zahavy (2010) who suggested the need to manage service staff for effective service delivery hence positive patrons experiential value in restaurants.

4.9 H₀₃: There is no Difference in the Role of Service Encounter Models on Patrons' Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants

To evaluate the influence of DINESERV and DINESCAPE models on patrons' experiential value while dining in the restaurants, multiple linear regression analysis was utilized. The results of the regression model summary are demonstrated in Table 4.29.

Table 4.29: Regression Analysis Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.845 ^a	.746	.411	.36509	.416	80.826	2	227	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), DINESCAPE, DINESERV

Results in Table 4.29 showed ($r=.845$, $P=.000$, $R^2=.746$). This implied that the model was significant ($p<0.05$) yielding a correlation coefficient R equal to 0.845 which pointed to a substantial positive relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. In addition, regression results yielded a significant coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.746$, indicating that approximately 74.6% of the variance in patrons' experiential value could be explained by the model significant predictor variables. Results presented in Table 4.30 revealed that, both DINESERV and DINESCAPE models were significant predictors of patrons' experiential value.

These results are in line with a study conducted by Capistrano and Padilla (2013) entitled "Dinescape factor difference between leading fast food and casual dining restaurants in the Philippines" which found that besides food quality, price, service quality and convenience, Dinescape factors affect the purchase behavior and loyalty of customers.

Table 4.30: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.326	.724		1.832	.003
	DINESERV	.616	.056	.639	11.017	.000
	DINESCAPE	.046	.205	.013	.225	.032

a. Dependent Variable: EXPE_VALUE

As shown in Table 4.30, the effects of DINESERV ($\beta = 0.616$, $t = 11.017$, $p = 0.003$) and DINESCAPE ($\beta = 0.046$, $t = 0.225$, $p = 0.032$) were all significant at 5% significance level. Thus, the hypothesis H_{03} : There is no difference in the role of personal service encounters (DINESERV model) and physical environment service encounters (DINESCAPE model) on patrons' experiential value was not supported. Results in Table 4.30 also indicated that DINESERV model was the most significant predictor of patron's experiential value (DINESERV ($\beta = 0.616$)) indicating a strong positive linear relationship compared to DINESCAPE model (DINESCAPE ($\beta = 0.046$)) indicating a weak positive linear relationship. The overall regression model equation was as follows:

$$EV = \alpha + \beta_1 DINESERV + \beta_2 DINESCAPE + e$$

Where EV = Experiential Value, DINESERV = Dining Service Quality, DINESCAPE = Dining Servicescape, β = regression coefficients based on the predictor variables, and α = regression model constant. Rewriting the formula with regression model coefficients yields the following equation:

$$EV = 1.326 + 0.616 DINESERV + 0.046 DINESCAPE + 0.724$$

Regression model equation indicates that a unit change in DINESERV (0.616DINESERV) and DINESCAPE (0.046DINESCAPE) models would lead to a total change in patrons' experiential value equivalent to addition of model constant, models' beta weights and the error term.

The study multiple regression analysis findings of DINESCAPE are consistent with Walter, Edvardsson, and Öström, (2012) who in their study entitled "The physical environment as a driver of customer' service experiences at restaurants" conducted in Sweden specifically in three Swedish restaurants in different locations found physical environment to have both functional and social dimensions which are important drivers of customer service experiences in restaurants. Their findings further indicated that customers interact with the physical environment drivers in person which may result in creation of meaning and values expressed as feelings, views, imaginations and deeds.

On the other hand, multiple regression analysis findings of DINESCAPE are consistent with Wu and Liang (2009) who have noted that patrons' experiential value is strongly influenced by selected elements that make up personal service encounter.

A study conducted by Walter, Edvardsson, and Öström (2010) in Swedish restaurants, investigating frequent drivers of customer service experiences as described by customers in their own words- the voice of the customer, using a critical incident technique described the dimensions of drivers of customers' favorable and unfavorable experiences as the frequency drivers, the social interactions, the core services and the physical context. Their results showed that most frequent drivers as social interactions, followed by the core services with the

physical environment least. Shahin and Jamshidian (2010) in their study found that the DINESERV and DINESCAPE models form key components in evaluating patrons' experiential value while dining in a restaurant.

In addition, Yuan and Wu (2008) suggested that, considering the interaction between personal service encounters and physical environment service encounters is another facet of understanding how patrons' experiential value is generated in the dining setting. Thus the current study sought to establish the role of personal service encounters (DINESERV model) and physical environment service encounters (DINESCAPE model) on patrons' experiential value (Table 4.30), indicating DINESERV model as the most significant predictor of patron's experiential value.

4.10 Qualitative Data Analysis

Table 4.31 has revealed that majority of the respondents (n= 146, 60.83%) were happy with most personal service encounters elements. Specifically, respondents were happy with attractive dining areas, food that was served in the promised time, prompt and quick service, well trained personnel who also had the best interest of patrons at heart.

In regard to physical environmental service encounters, (n=94, 39.16%) of respondents agreed that classified restaurants were attractive since they had recently been repainted with good ambience and less noise. Respondents also agreed that the restaurants had welcoming lighting, attractive table setting with adequate number of employees who attended to their needs.

In regard to patrons experiential value, majority (n= 141, 58.75%) agreed that they would visit the restaurant in future. Respondents in this category felt that the restaurant service was excellent which made them cheerful hence they were able to

forget their stress. On the other hand, minority number of respondents (n=99, 41.25%) felt that they would not visit classified restaurants again in the future. These respondents felt that classified restaurants were not different from other cheap restaurants in town where waiters messed up with their orders and thus felt that these restaurants did not have service excellence.

Table 4. 31: Qualitative Data Analysis

Table 4.31: Qualitative Data Analysis	Personal Service Encounters	Physical Environmental Service Encounters	Patrons Experiential Value
Method of data collection	Open ended questions	Open ended questions	Open ended questions
Major Themes Derived	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The classified Restaurant has : • Attractive dining area • Serves in the promised time • Provide prompt and quick service • Has well trained personnel • Personnel have the best interest of the customer at heart. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractive since it has been repainted recently • The place is less noisy • The place has good ambience • Has welcoming lighting • Attractive table setting • The place is less overcrowded • Has adequate number of employees. 	<p>Yes I will visit again in future because;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel cheered up while dinning here • I forget my stress as I enjoy my foods and drinks • This restaurant has service excellence <p>No I will not visit again in future because;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not different from cheap restaurants in town. • Waiters mess up with orders therefore not excellent in service • I didn't not feel happy while dining in this restaurant
Number of Respondents (n)	n= 146	n= 94	Yes (n)= 141 No (n)= 99
Percentage (%)	60.83%	39.16%	Yes-58.75% No- 41.25%

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summaries major findings and highlights the challenges related to service encounters that enable create patrons' experiential value while dining in classified restaurants in Nairobi city county, Kenya. This chapter also draws conclusions, implications and recommendations for future studies related to service encounters within hospitality industry.

5.2 Summary of Research Findings

This study sought to assess the role of two services encounters dimensions (personal service encounters and physical environmental service encounters) in creating patrons' experiential value in classified restaurants in Nairobi County, Kenya. Moreover, the study sought to specifically examine the relationship between; personal service encounters and patrons' experiential value, physical environment service encounters and patrons experiential value and to determine the difference in the role of the two service encounter dimensions in creating patrons' experiential value. To achieve results, the study revealed the following findings:

First, descriptive statistics results for personal service encounter dimension on tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy items revealed a neutral response by patrons dining in classified restaurants in creating their experiential value. In addition, descriptive results for physical environment service encounter dimension further revealed an agreement level with most facility aesthetics, ambience and lighting items in creating patrons' experiential value while dining in classified restaurants. However, patrons were neutral with table setting, layout and service staff items in creating their experiential value. This would mean

that respondents were happy with the physical environment service encounters as portrayed by the agreement level. However respondents seemed puzzled about their encounter with the service providers (front line employees) and felt that their expectations were not fully met.

Second, Pearson correlation results for personal service encounter dimension yielded strong positive correlation outcome for reliability, $r = .0621$ followed by empathy, $r = .619$ and a tie between responsiveness, $r = .606$, and assurance, $r = .606$. However, tangibility element had a weak positive correlation, $r = .368$ in creating patrons experiential value. The results notably revealed a strong influence on personal service encounters drivers in creating patrons experiential value compared to physical environment service encounters. This would mean that respondents were strongly inclined by personal service encounters in creating positive patrons' experiential value (aesthetic appeal, playfulness, service excellence and return on investment) while dining at classified restaurants.

Thirdly, Pearson correlation results for an examination of the relationship between physical environment service encounter dimension and patrons' experiential value while dining at the classified restaurants revealed a positive strong correlation for service staff $r = 0.793$, moderate weak positive correlation for both ambience, $r = .459$, weak positive relationship for table setting element, $r = .246$, negative strong correlation for facility aesthetics, $r = -0.069$, negative moderate correlation for lighting, $r = -0.053$, and negative weak correlation for layout, $r = -0.020$. . This implied that this dimension positively but weakly influenced creation of positive experiences by patrons while dining in classified restaurants.

Finally, in regard to the relative importance of the key service encounter dimensions (both personal service encounters and physical environmental service encounters) in creating patron experiential value, multiple regression analysis results revealed DINESCAPE model (personal service encounters), $B=.616$ as a key service driver model in creating patrons experiential value while dining out in classified restaurants as compared to DINESCAPE model (physical environmental service encounters), $B=.046$.

5.3 Conclusions

On the basis of the illustrated study findings, conclusions were depicted. Foremost, results revealed a positive relationship between personal service encounter dimensions (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) and patrons' experiential value. Thus, it can be concluded that Patrons were comfortable with most personal service encounter dimensions of classified restaurants.

Results further revealed positive relationship among aspects of the physical service encounter dimension (Ambience and Table Setting and service staff) and patrons' experiential value while dining in classified restaurants. However, results also revealed a negative relationship on aspects of the physical service encounter dimension (Facility Aesthetics, Lighting and Layout) and patrons' experiential value. Therefore, it can be concluded that patrons were not very happy with some physical environment service encounters while dining in classified restaurants. This could be caused by failure of classified restaurants in encouraging patrons' feedback after the consumption process.

Finally, an examination of the difference in the role of the two service encounter dimensions (personal service encounters and physical environmental service

encounters), Personal service encounters dimension was highly regarded by patrons' as the key service encounter drivers in creating patrons experiential value than physical environmental service encounter dimension.

5.4 Study Recommendations

5.4.1 Suggestions for Classified Restaurateurs

The results of the study suggest that reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy contributed moderately high to patrons' experiential value on the personal service encounter dimension. However, patrons' felt that majority of the statements of the tangibility dimension did not agree in creating patrons experiential value. In particular, patrons did not agree with some components of the tangible dimension in creating their experiential value. For example, patrons felt that restaurants did not have attractive parking areas and building extensions. Therefore, classified restaurateurs should ensure more parking area for patrons. To an extent, patrons also felt that classified restaurants did not have members who were thoroughly clean, neat and appropriately dresses. Therefore, classified restaurants need to enforce clean, neat and appropriate dress code for different occasions in an effort to enhance patrons' experiential value.

In regard to reliability, majority of patrons felt that food was served exactly as ordered and guests were checked accurately. However, patrons felt that they were not served in the promised time and that restaurants were not dependable and consistent .Therefore, classified restaurant management should ensure that they have enough personnel who are able to serve patrons in real time hence increasing their dependency and consistency which may act as a competitive advantage for them.

Regarding responsiveness dimension, patrons felt that they were given extra effort in handling their special requests. However, they felt that they were not provided with prompt and quick service as they wished. As earlier suggested, restaurant managers should ensure they have enough personnel who attend to patrons requests promptly and quickly.

With the assurance dimension, patrons felt personally safe while dining in the classified restaurants. However, the same patrons felt that these restaurants did not have adequate personnel who were able and willing to give them information about menu items, their ingredients and methods of preparation. Thus there is need for restaurant managers to emphasis food and menu knowledge in their staff training.

Finally on empathy dimension, patrons felt that restaurants employees had customers' best interest at heart. However, they felt that employees were no sensitive to patrons' individual needs and wants but rather relied more on the set policies and procedures. Classified restaurants management should pay attention in training and empowering their staff. Empowering staff would enable the management to delegate duties freely and with confidence which may boost patrons' experiential value.

On the other hand, patrons felt that facility aesthetics, lighting and layout dimensions were off below cut in contributing to their experiential value on the physical environment service encounter dimensions. Therefore, there is need for classified restaurateurs and managers to encourage patrons feedback after the consumption process. Patrons' feedback information would act as a platform where informed decisions concerning patrons' changing need, wants, taste and preferences would be refocused. This would help develop modern strategies on all the

components that make up the physical environment service dimension in an effort to enhance patrons' experiential value.

5.4.2. Suggestions for Policy

The Kenya Safari Lodges and Hotels to incorporate the findings of this study in establishing high value classified restaurant products geared towards its core activities towards achieving vision 2030.

The Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA) to incorporate the findings of this study in developing standards and guidelines that are necessary to ensure an all round service delivery process through quality service encounter dimensions while carrying out the classification exercise for restaurants in Kenya.

Kenya Utalii College to ensure that service encounters dimensions are incorporated in training qualified professionals for the hospitality and tourism industry in an effort to restore the lost image of classified restaurant

5.4.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The present study was conducted in reference to classified restaurants which only offer foods and drinks within Nairobi city county, Kenya. It is therefore recommended that similar studies be conducted outside the present study area and to include other hospitality related establishments which offer the accommodation aspect. This would provide a wider perspective in forming generalization regarding the role of service encounters in creating patrons experiential value within the wider hospitality industry.

Data was collected between May 2016 and July 2016. This was before the new classification of hotels and restaurants was gazetted. Therefore, there is need for present studies to be conducted in line with the newly gazette classification on hotels and restaurants.

The present study used descriptive survey design to evaluate the role of service encounters in creating patrons experiential value within classified restaurants. The study suggests a longitudinal survey design that may determine the effects of service encounters in classified restaurants for over a prolonged period of time.

The current study employed both DINESERV and DINESCAPE to measure both personal and physical environment service encounters. While a study of this nature may have been important in helping understand the role the two dimensions play in creating patrons' experiential value while dining in classified restaurants, the aspect of food which patrons may consider in creating experiential value was left out. Therefore future studies should address the aspect of food while determining patrons' experiential value while dining in hospitality related establishment.

The present study adopted Personal Service Encounters and Physical Environment Service Encounters as the only measurable variables in creating patrons experiential value. Therefore, there is need for future studies to measure the effects of intervening and moderating variables. This may help determine their intervening and moderating effects for both DINESERV and DINESCAPE models in creating patrons' experiential value while consuming hospitality related products and services.

The present study used probability value (*P* Value) statistics to determine the acceptance level of the set hypotheses. While this is the case, there is need for future studies to adopt the critical value approach to accept or fail to accept the set hypotheses. In addition, the current study adopted sub hypotheses derived from the main constructs of both DINESERV and DINESCAPE to address the major hypotheses set for the study. However, future research may collapse the items in the

sub constructs and use composite index to determine the main hypotheses' contribution on patrons' experiential value.

The findings of this study were generalized to all the star rated restaurants in Nairobi City County. While this was the case, future studies may be based on the different restaurant star rating categories (five, four and three star) to establish if there is a difference in the role of service encounters (personal and physical environment) in creating patrons experiential value in classified restaurants.

Finally, while about 74.6% of variation in patrons' experiential value could be explained by the models significant predictor variables (DINESERV and DINESCAPE), there is need for future research to establish possible predictor variables that could explain the 25.4% of the variation in the present study.

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APPENDICES**Appendix 1: Introduction letter**

**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
School of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Faculty of Hospitality Management**

My name is **Serene Njeri Muhoro**, MSc student at **Kenyatta University** carrying out a research on **The Role of Service Encounters in Creating Patrons' Experiential Value in Classified Restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya**. I am kindly requesting you to participate in this study whose findings will help restaurateurs and employees in developing appropriate strategies directed towards enhancing the patrons' experiential value. Kindly be informed that all information provided by you will be treated with utmost privacy and findings will only be used for academic purpose. Your participation is voluntary and if any queries with reference to the research, please do not hesitate to contact me on **0710613684**.

Thanking you in advance.

Appendix 2: Research Instrument**General Information**

- a) Gender:
 Male Female
- b) Restaurant Star Category
 5-star 4-star 3-star
- c) Your age in years [*Tick Appropriately*]
 17-20 21-30 31-40 >40
- d) How many times have you dined in this restaurant?
 Once 2-4 times Above 5 times

Questionnaire for Patrons

- e) On a scale of 1 to 5 (*'5' being Strongly Agree and '1' being strongly Disagree*), to what degree do you agree with the statements below with respect to the restaurant's service experience?

Tangibles	5	4	3	2	1
1. The restaurant has attractive parking areas and building exteriors					
2. Has a visually attractive dining area					
3. Has staff members who are clean, neat, and appropriately dressed					
4. Has a décor in keeping with its image and price range					
5. Has a menu that is readable					
6. Has a visually attractive menu that reflects the restaurant's image					
7. Has a dining area that is comfortable and easy to move around in					
8. Has rest rooms that are thoroughly clean					
9. Has dining areas that are thoroughly clean					
10. Has comfortable seats in the dining room					
Reliability	5	4	3	2	1
1. Serves you in the time promised					
2. Quickly corrects anything that is wrong					

3. Is dependable and consistent					
4. Provides an accurate guest check					
5. Serves your food exactly as you ordered it					
Responsiveness	5	4	3	2	1
1. During busy times have employees shift to help each other maintain speed and quality of service					
2. Provides prompt and quick service					
3. Gives extra effort to handle your special requests					
Assurance					
1. Has employees who can answer your questions completely					
2. Makes you feel comfortable and confident in your dealing with them					
3. Has personnel who are both able and willing to give you information about menu items, their ingredients and methods of preparation					
4. Makes you feel personally safe					
5. Has personnel who seem well trained, competent and experienced					
6. Seems to give employees support so that they can do their jobs well					
Empathy	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has employees who are sensitive to your individual needs and wants rather than always relying on policies and procedures					
2. Makes you feel special					
3. Anticipates your individual needs and wants					
4. Has employees who are sympathetic and reassuring if something is wrong					
5. Seems to have the customers best interests at heart					

- f) On a scale of 1 to 5 (*'5' being Strongly Agree and '1' being Strongly Disagree*), to what degree do you agree the statements below with respect to the restaurant's physical environment experience?

Facility Aesthetics	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has paintings/pictures that are attractive					
2. Has wall décor that is visually appealing					
3. Has plants and flowers that makes me feel happy					
4. Has colors that create a warm atmosphere					
5. Has furniture (e.g. dining Tables and chairs) of high quality					
Ambience	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has background music that relaxes me					
2. Has background music that is pleasing					
3. Has temperature that is comfortable					
4. Has aroma that is enticing					
Lighting	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has lighting that creates a warm atmosphere					
2. Has lighting that makes me feel welcome					
3. Has lighting that creates a comfortable atmosphere					
Table Settings	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has Table ware (e.g. glass, china and silverware) that is of high quality					
2. Has linen (e.g. Table cloths, napkins) that are attractive					
3. Has Table setting that is visually attractive					
Layout	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has seating arrangement that gives me enough space					
2. Has seating arrangement that makes me feel crowded					
3. Has layout that makes it easy to move around					
Service Staff	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has attractive employees who make me feel good					
2. Has an adequate number of employees that makes me feel cared for					
3. Has employees who are neat and well dressed					

3. On a scale of 1 to 5 (*'5' being Strongly Agree and '1' being Strongly Disagree*), to what degree do you agree the statements below with respect to the restaurant experience?

Effect of Experiential Value	5	4	3	2	1
The restaurant is aesthetically appealing					
I like the decoration and dining experience					
Dining at this restaurant makes me feel cheerful					
I feel happy when I eat in this restaurant					
Dining at this restaurant makes me forget my stress					
When I think of this restaurant I think of service excellence					
I think of this restaurant as excellent in the product it offers					
I intend to dine in this restaurant again					

Interview Schedule Questionnaire for Patrons

4. Are you willing to visit the restaurant again? (Please tick appropriately)

Yes (*Please answer question 9*)

No (*Please skip question 9 and go directly to question 10*)

5. Please indicate the reasons why you would visit the restaurant again.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

6. Please indicate the reasons why you would not visit the restaurant again.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

7. Does this restaurant allow you to be actively involved in creating an experience?

(Please tick appropriately)

Yes (Please answer question 12)

No (Please skip question 12 and go directly to question 13)

Please indicate how the restaurant has expected you to participate actively in the service delivery process.....
.....
.....

8. Please indicate the reasons that make you feel that the restaurant has not involved you actively in the service delivery process.....
.....
.....

Thank You

Appendix 3: Kenya Gazette on Classified Restaurants

324 26-6018 2002-06-20 304

- 1324 THE KENYA GAZETTE 13th June, 2003

SCHEDULE—(Contd.)

Name of hotel	Address	No. of beds	Location
Mara Hippo Tented Camp	P.O. Box 69513, Nairobi	64	Narok
Mara Intrepids Club	P.O. Box 74888, Nairobi	60	Narok
Governors Camp	P.O. Box 48217, Nairobi	66	Narok
Fig Tree Camp	P.O. Box 40683, Nairobi	130	Narok
RESTAURANTS			
Five Star:			
Tamarind Restaurant	P.O. Box 88785, Mombasa		Mombasa
Nairobi Tamarind Restaurant	P.O. Box 74493, Nairobi		Nairobi
The Carnivore Restaurant	P.O. Box 56685, Nairobi		Nairobi
Tratoria Restaurant	P.O. Box 4059, Nairobi		Nairobi
Pavement Restaurant	P.O. Box 72228, Nairobi		Nairobi
The Lord Errol Restaurant	P.O. Box 999, Village Market		Nairobi
Shehna Restaurant	P.O. Box 81676, Mombasa		Mombasa
Four Star:			
Rudys Restaurant	P.O. Box 26023, Nairobi		Nairobi
Tamambo Restaurant	P.O. Box 1131, Sarii Centre, Nairobi		Nairobi
Minar Restaurant (Argwings Kodhek Road)	P.O. Box 41869, Nairobi		Nairobi
Simba Restaurant (NAS)	P.O. Box 19098, Nairobi		Nairobi
China Jiangsu Restaurant	P.O. Box 66912, Nairobi		Nairobi
China Plate Westlands	P.O. Box 10271, Nairobi		Nairobi
Kengeles-Koinange Street	P.O. Box 25289, Nairobi		Nairobi
Nairobi Mamba Village	P.O. Box 74760, Nairobi		Nairobi
Berbers Oasis Restaurant (Jamhuri Showground)	P.O. Box 57144, Nairobi		Nairobi
Nairobi Nihonjin Club	P.O. Box 47718, Nairobi		Nairobi
Rangers Restaurant	P.O. Box 63539, Nairobi		Nairobi
Tin Tin Restaurant	P.O. Box 58077, Nairobi		Nairobi
Kowloon Restaurant	P.O. Box 22635, Nairobi		Nairobi
Alan Bobies Bistro	P.O. Box 44991, Nairobi		Nairobi
Haandi Restaurant	P.O. Box 13855, Nairobi		Nairobi
Three Star:			
Green Corner Restaurant	P.O. Box 61479, Nairobi		Nairobi
The Porter House	P.O. Box 42023, Nairobi		Nairobi
The Mara Restaurant	P.O. Box 48608, Nairobi		Nairobi
Hongkong Restaurant	P.O. Box 48255, Nairobi		Nairobi
Choma Zone	P.O. Box 49842, Nairobi		Nairobi
Erusha Restaurant	P.O. Box 38965, Nairobi		Nairobi
Moonsoon Ventures	P.O. Box 1108, Sarii Centre		Nairobi
Singh Restaurant	P.O. Box 83860, Nairobi		Mombasa
The Horseman	P.O. Box 24360, Nairobi		Nairobi
Raccourse Restaurant (Nairobi West)	P.O. Box 40373-00100, Nairobi		Nairobi
Kengeles Restaurant (Nairobi West)	P.O. Box 25282, Nairobi		Nairobi
Churrascos	P.O. Box 54474, Nairobi		Nairobi
Boko Boko Restaurant	P.O. Box 5144, Diani		Kwale
Theos Restaurant	P.O. Box 14427, Westlands		Nairobi
Tanager Bar & Restaurant	P.O. Box 58836, Nairobi		Nairobi
Kengeles (Lawington)	P.O. Box 25289, Nairobi		Nairobi
Hooters Bar & Restaurant	P.O. Box 21915, Nairobi		Nairobi
Red Bull Restaurant	P.O. Box 21915, Nairobi		Nairobi
Stavrose Restaurant	P.O. Box 50449, Nairobi		Nairobi
Garden Square Restaurant	P.O. Box 73489, Nairobi		Nairobi
Conference Caterers	P.O. Box 73487, Nairobi		Nairobi
Ali Barbours C. Restaurant	P.O. Box 53, Ukunda		Kwale
Hongkong Chinese-Bamburi	P.O. Box 82881, Mombasa		Mombasa
China Plate Restaurant	P.O. Box 10271, Nairobi		Nairobi
Roro Chinese Restaurant	P.O. Box 689, Village Market		Nairobi
Furusato Japanese Restaurant	P.O. Box 38965, Nairobi		Nairobi
Home Park Caterers	P.O. Box 26035, Nairobi		Nairobi
Yulis Restaurant Aquandrom	P.O. Box 10286, Bamburi		Mombasa
Minar Restaurant (Nyalii)	P.O. Box 83167, Mombasa		Mombasa
Mapango Reef Restaurant	P.O. Box 96, Watamu		Malindi
Hunters Steak House	P.O. Box 90574, Mombasa		Mombasa
Minar Restaurant (Loita Street)	P.O. Box 41869, Nairobi		Nairobi
Berbers Oasis Restaurant (Harambee Avenue)	P.O. Box 57144, Nairobi		Nairobi

Dated the 5th May, 2003.

N. G. MAKORI,
Secretary,
Hotels and Restaurant Authority.

GAZETTE NOTICE NO. 5693

THE HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS (CLASSIFICATION OF HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS) REGULATIONS, 1988
CLASSIFICATIONS

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by regulations 2 and 7 of the Hotels and Restaurants (Classification of Hotels and Restaurants) Regulations, 1988, the Hotels and Restaurants Authority classifies the hotels and restaurants listed in the schedule in the manner specified in the schedule:

SCHEDULE

Name of hotel	Address	No. of beds	Location
TOWN HOTELS			
<i>Five Star:</i> Windsor Golf and Country Club	P.O. Box 45589-00100, Nairobi	24	Nairobi
<i>Four Star</i> Fairview Hotel	P.O. Box 40842-00100, Nairobi	167	Nairobi
<i>Three Star:</i> Six Eighty Hotel	P.O. Box 43436-00100, Nairobi	544	Nairobi
Silver Springs Hotel	P.O. Box 61362, Nairobi	184	Nairobi
Hotel Sirikwa	P.O. Box 3361, Eldoret	210	Eldoret
Merica Hotel	P.O. Box 560, Nakuru	144	Nakuru
<i>Two Star:</i> Kwality Hotel	P.O. Box 44275-00100, Nairobi	21	Nairobi
Greenhills Hotel	P.O. Box 313, Nyeri	210	Nyeri
<i>One Star</i> Wagon Hotel	P.O. Box 2408, Eldoret	72	Eldoret
VACATIONAL HOTELS			
<i>Five Star:</i> Sun "N" Sand Beach Resort	P.O. Box 2, Kikambala	600	Kilifi
<i>Four Star:</i> Travellers Beach Hotel	P.O. Box 87649, Mombasa	576	Mombasa
Leisure Lodge Limited	P.O. Box 84383, Mombasa	506	Kwale
Leopard Beach Hotel	P.O. Box 34, Ukunda	318	Kwale
L.T.I. Kaskazi Beach	P.O. Box 138, Ukunda	382	Kwale
<i>Three Star:</i> Safari Beach Hotel	P.O. Box 90690, Mombasa	440	Kwale
Alliance Jadini Beach Hotel	P.O. Box 84616-8400, Mombasa	320	Kwale
Alliance Africana Sea Lodge	P.O. Box 84616, Mombasa	322	Kwale
Voyager Beach Resort	P.O. Box 34117, Mombasa	462	Mombasa
Papillon Lagoon Reef Limited	P.O. Box 5292, Diani	234	Kwale
Turtle Bay Beach Club	P.O. Box 457, Malindi	350	Malindi
<i>Two Star:</i> Le Soleil Beach Club	P.O. Box 8473, Mombasa	222	Kilifi
Kenya Bay Beach Hotel	P.O. Box 767, Mombasa	250	Mombasa
Chaie Paradise Island	P.O. Box 4, Ukunda	110	Kwale
LODGES			
<i>Five Star:</i> Samburu Serena Safari Lodge	P.O. Box 48690, Nairobi	124	Samburu
<i>Four Star:</i> Lake Naivasha Simba Lodge	P.O. Box 66601, Nairobi	140	Nakuru
<i>Three Star:</i> Mara Safari Club	P.O. Box 52581, Nairobi	90	Narok
Aberdare Country Club	P.O. Box 449, Nyeri	92	Nyeri
Lake Naivasha Sopa Resort	P.O. Box 72630, Nairobi	160	Nakuru
<i>Two Star:</i> Lake Elementaita Lodge	P.O. Box 66, Gilgil	70	Nakuru
RESTAURANTS			
<i>Four Star:</i> The Horseman Restaurant	P.O. Box 24360-00500, Nairobi		Nairobi

Dated the 30th June, 2004.

I. S. KIRINYA,
Secretary,
Hotels and Restaurants Authority.

Appendix 4: Ethical Review Approval



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke

Website: www.ku.ac.ke

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

Our Ref: H60/I1081/08

DATE: 31st March 2016

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
& Innovation
P.O Box 36023-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR SERENE NJERI MUHORO – REG. NO. H60/I1081/08

I write to introduce Ms. Serene Njeri Muhoro who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for M.Sc degree programme in the Department of Hospitality Management.

Ms. Muhoro intends to conduct research for a M.Sc. Proposal entitled, “The Role of Service Encounters in Creating Experiential Value of Patrons in Classified Restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya”.

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,



**MRS. LUCY N. MBAABU
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

Appendix 5: Research Authorization



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
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when replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
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NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No
NACOSTI/P/16/37849/10746

Date:

3rd May, 2016

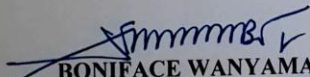
Serene Njeri Muhoro
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*The role of service encounters in creating experiential value of patrons in classified restaurants in Nairobi City County, Kenya,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **29th April, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.


BONIFACE WANYAMA
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.

