

“EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF SERVICE SCAPE ON CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION IN THE GHANAIAH HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: A CASE
STUDY OF GOLDEN TULIP KUMASI.”

KNUST

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Executive Master of Business Administration (Strategic Management and Consulting -Option) and that, to the best of my knowledge it contains no material previously published by another person, or material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

Hotel guests search for servicescape cues to determine the quality of hotel services and the ability of the service providers to deliver value. This study generally aimed at exploring the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi. Specific objectives included; measuring the influence of physical designs, hotel interiors and ambient factors on the satisfaction of customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi. Descriptive research design was employed for the study and questionnaire was the main data collection instrument used. Questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 400 customers of the hotel who were selected through convenience non-probability sampling method. Out of the 400 distributed questionnaires, 320 of them were correctly filled and collected which indicates 80% response rate. The study found that servicescape has an influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest with architectural designs of the hotel, internal layouts of the hotel, cleanliness of the hotel environment, cleanliness of the washrooms, the lighting in the lobby and the lighting in the restaurant being the key servicescape factors that have the highest influence on the satisfaction of the guests of Golden Tulip Kumasi. The study recommended to Golden Tulip to invest in the beautification of the hotels environment with well combined lighting system around and inside the hotel. Suggestion was also made to hotels to give much attention to the cleanliness of the hotels' floor, washroom and guest room and the entire environment. Entrepreneurs and investors who desire to enter into the hotel industry were recommended to have a nice and modern architectural design of their buildings and beautiful and meaningful internal layouts in order to attract and maintain customers.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my lovely friend Abigail Agyemang Badu for the enormous support and encouragement.

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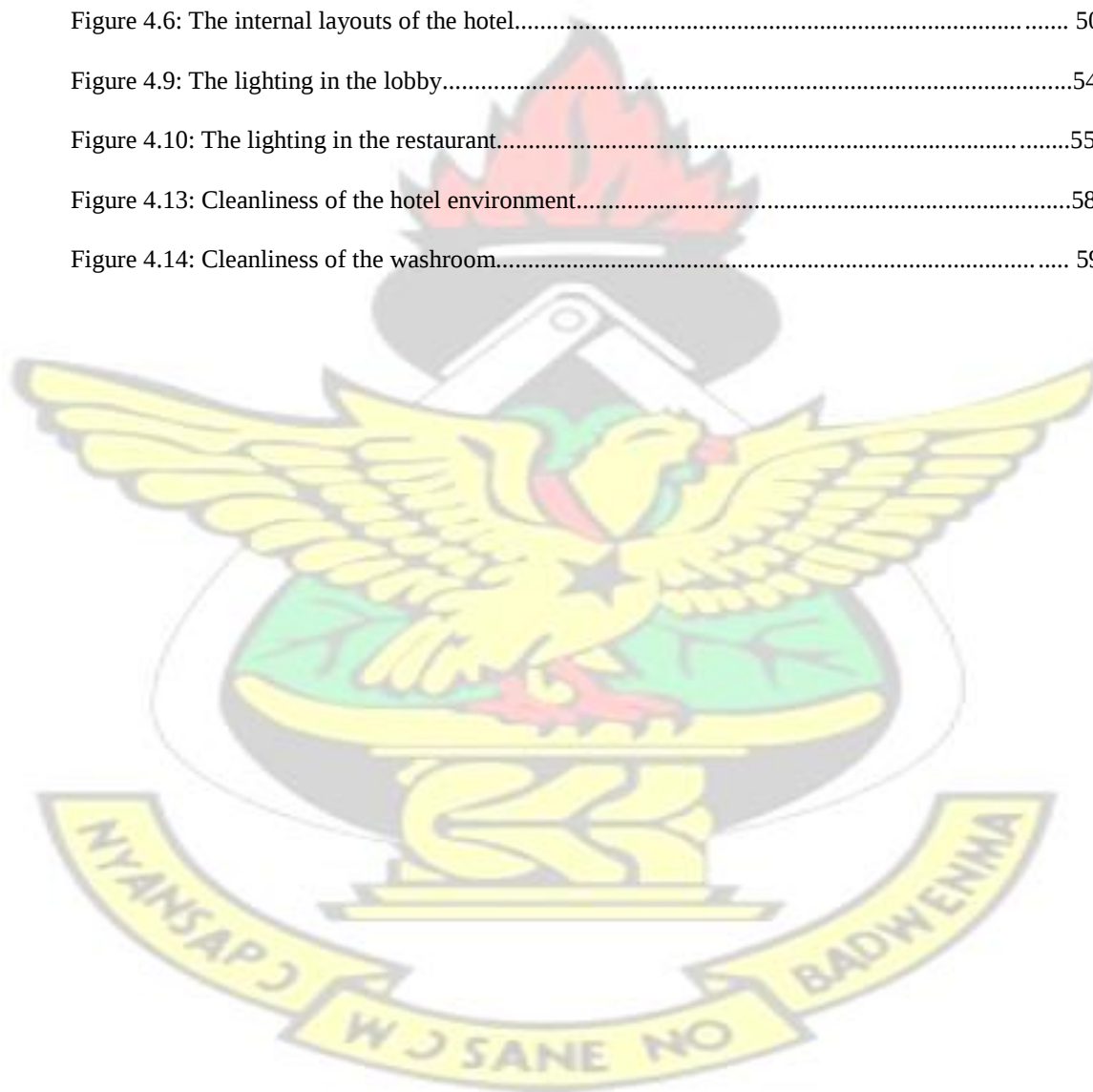
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The service sector has grown to become one of the dominant drivers of economic growth of many countries in the world including Ghana. The service industry in Ghana is considered to be the fastest growing industry and for that matter the industry has received much attention. Many scholars including Zeithaml (2000) and Rust and Zahorik (1993) have given reasons why decision and policy makers need to give attention to the service sector particularly customers evaluation of the physical environment in which the service take place and their satisfaction. According to Zeithaml (2000) the profitability and market share of service providers is dependent on the providers' ability to understand consumers' evaluative processes of the nature of service provided. From a social viewpoint, however, service providers have the opportunity to contribute to a client's wellbeing as their service is likely to impact on a client's quality of life (Sirgy 1996 and Sirgy and Lee 1996).

The hotel industry is one of the fastest growing service industries in Ghana. According to Poku et al (2013) then the discovery of oil in Ghana has increased the demand for hotel services which call for the provision of standardise service in order to meet the expectations of customers. Kelly (2015) reported that the number of registered hotels in Ghana keeps of increasing year after. As at September 2015, Ghana has registered one thousand and eight hundred and thirty eight (1,838) hotels. However, most of the hotels are not delivering up to standard especially the hotels with low class. According to Kelly (2015) most of the hotels lack infrastructure and modern hotel facilities.

The increased number of registered hotels in Ghana is an indication that there is competition in the hotel industry where hotels are competing for customers. Hence,

understanding of customers' expectations is a fundamental tool for attracting, satisfying and retaining customers. According to Geronikolas (2012) the physical environment in which service is produced and consumed greatly influence the satisfaction of customers in the hotel sector. Hence, the service scape of hotels must be designed in line with the needs of customers. Bitner (1992) coined the term "servicescape" to denote a physical setting in which a service is performed, delivered and consumed within a service organization. According to Bitner (1992), service scape plays a key role in impression making and affects the overall experience of customers and the experience could be either positive or negative.

This thesis is focused on the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi. Understanding of how service scape influence the satisfaction of customers has a number of benefits to hotels according to Bloise, et al. (2005). The scholars believe that consumer reactions to the service scape can result in a number of positive benefits to service providers. Some of the benefits include; attraction of new customers, higher customer retention rates, successful cross-sell and up-sell opportunities by service providers, increase market share of service providers, improvements in staff morale and productivity, a decrease in staff turnover, reduction of operating costs and improved financial performance of service providers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The service scape has an important role in affecting both customers and employees of service organisation according to Bitner (1992). However, the importance of recognizing the influence of service scape on the satisfaction of customers of service firms has not been given much attention. Most service providers give much attention to pricing, promotional

campaigns and other similar marketing activities ignoring the service scape. As a result, most service organisations have not benefited from the service scape thereby losing customers, incurring high cost of operation and eventually decreased profit. Meanwhile research has shown that potential customers prior to purchase search for apparent physical cues to determine the quality of the service and the ability of the service provider to deliver value. Besides, Kelly (2015) reported that most of the hotels in Ghana face the challenge of inadequate infrastructure which has partly resulted in the low patronize of hotel services in the country. This infrastructure and facility problem have also resulted in low room occupancy with the 5 and 4 star hotels recording occupancy of about 40 to 45 percent whilst their counterparts in the 2 stars class are recording 20 percent occupancy. This also support that service scape is a challenge in the hotel industry and for that matter the findings of the study will help Golden Tulip to design suitable service scape in order to influence customers to patronize the services of the hotel.

1.3 Research Objectives

Generally, the study is aimed at exploring the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi. However, specific objectives include

1. To measure the influence of physical structure designs on the satisfaction of Golden Tulip customers.
2. To find out the extent to which hotel interiors influence the satisfaction of Golden Tulip customers.
3. To examine the influence of ambient factors on the satisfaction of Golden Tulip customers

1.4 Research Questions

1. To what extent do the physical structure designs of Golden Tulip influence the satisfaction of customers?
2. To what extent do the hotel interiors of Golden Tulip influence the satisfaction of customers?
3. To what extent do the ambient factors of Golden Tulip influence the satisfaction of customers?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research investigated the influence of service scape on the satisfaction of the customers of Golden Tulip. Hence, the research will provide a wider understanding of consumers' responses to physical environmental cues of hotels.

This research will make contribution to literature, specifically relating to service scape and its influence on customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. This will help close the gap in literature.

The findings of the research can serve as a guiding document for hotels in Ghana when designing service scape in which the services are delivered and consumed. Understanding of the factors that influence customers' choice of hotel will also help hotel managers to design strategies to meet the expectation of their customers in order to make them satisfied.

1.6 Brief Research Methodology

This research employs both qualitative and quantitative research approach to assess the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi.

Questionnaires and interviews are employed as the main data collection instruments for the study. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. The population of the study is made up of all the customers of Golden Tulip in Kumasi.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi. Hence, the study relied on the customers as the main source of data. Again, data concerning customers' perception of the service scape of the hotel, their satisfaction with the service scape and the factors that influence their choice of hotel were the main data collected from the customers.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The researcher encountered a number of problems during the research. Among them is time factor. As the researcher is also a worker the time frame for the research was seen to be short. Some of the respondents were reluctant in filling the questionnaires since they perceive they wouldn't earn anything from the research.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The research has been orderly arranged in Five Chapters. The Chapter One dealt with the introduction of the research, Chapter Two concentrated on review of existing literature on the topic while Chapter Three dealt with the methodology employed for the design, collection and analysis of data. Chapter Four presented the research findings, analysis and discussions while Chapter Five dealt with summary of findings, conclusions and makes recommendations based on the salient issues emerging from the research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the review of related literature. The literature reviewed provides information about previous studies on the topic and helps to compare the findings of this research with the existing ones. Major literature reviewed included hotel as a service, definition services service, service scape dimensions, customer satisfaction and so forth.

2.2 Hotel Business in the Service Sector

The service sector plays a crucial role in the world's economy growth and it's expected to continue this way in the medium to long term. In both developed and developing countries, the service industry has made a significant contribution to the labour force and gross domestic products. A service is defined by Hinson (2006) as an activity or series of activities which is more or less intangible in nature that normally take place in interactions between a service provider and a service consumer. Kotler (2006) on the other hand defines a service as any act or performance offered by one party (service provider) to another (consumer) that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Examples of services include the offerings of hospitals, hotels, banks, transports, educational institutions and so forth. It is worth mentioning that services are produced not only by service businesses such as those just described but are also integral to the offerings of many manufactured goods procedures. For example, car manufacturers offer warranties and repair services for their cars; Computer manufacturers offer warranties, maintenance contracts and training. All of these services are examples of services offered by manufacturing companies. Most scholars including

Kotler and Keller (2009), Hinson (2006) and Zeitham and Bitner, (2000) have agreed on four main characteristics of services that help differentiate services from manufactured goods. These characteristics of services are intangibility, inseparability, perishability and variability.

Hotels are considered as service organisations because their activities are in line with the four main characteristics of services mentioned above. The services offered by hotels are intangible which means the services cannot be seen or touch. A hotel guest cannot predict if the hotel may offer a comfortable relaxing environment, serves the meals on time and provide prompt and courteous service at all times. According to Verma (2002), prospective hotel guest will therefore draw conclusions about the quality of service to be offered by the hotel from the physical environment (service scape) of the hotel. A study by Antony et al. (2004) revealed that most hotel guest are influenced by the service scape of hotels in attempt to purchase the services of a hotel for the first time. Most important service scape elements that mostly influence the perception of hotel guest include hotels facilities, proper lighting, furniture and the décor of the hotel. These elements of service scape also influence the satisfaction of consumers according to Antony et al. (2004).

Hotel services are also not separated from the service provider. This means that the employees of hotels play an important role in meeting the needs of customers in order to make them satisfied. In a study, Vassiliadis (2008) revealed that the appearance of the employees of hotels affect the perception of hotel guest. Hotel employees who appear in uniform create a positive perception in the minds of hotel guest.

2.3 Classification of Hotels in Ghana

Different classification of hotels exists across the world. Each continent or nation has its set of criteria for grouping hotels. One of the common criteria used in classifying hotels is the hotel size which is normally defined according to the number of rooms in the hotel. Others include the target market for the hotel (business hotel, suite hotel, resort hotel etc), the level of service provided by the hotel (world class service, middle range service, limited service) and ownership and affiliation of the hotel (Barsky and Nash 2003, Dube & Renngan, 2000).

In Ghana, similar criteria have been used to classify the hotels in the country. Ghana adopted the criteria developed by the Economic Community of West Africa State and classified hotels into five main categories. Hence, there are five main classes of hotels and resorts in Ghana. The classifications are one star hotel, two star hotel, three star hotel, four star hotel and five star hotel. The classifications above are alternatively grouped as fourth class hotel, third class hotel, second class hotel, first class hotel and luxury respectively. Various standards or criteria have been used in classifying the hotels. Some of them are number of rooms, furnishing, facilities like pool, conference rooms etc, meals served, the caliber of staff firefighting equipment, electrical installations, maintenance of hygienic conditions and pest control measures as well as safety measures and access to good road (Ghana Standards Board, 2005, Poku, Zakari & Soali, 2013).

2.4 The Concept of Service Marketing Mix

Service marketing mix is considered to be an extension of the traditional marketing mix (4Ps) developed by McCarthy (1978). McCarthy was the first person who offered the term marketing mix which is also known as the four P's (Product, Price, Place and Promotion).

Later, scholars like, Grönroos (1994) and Booms and Bitner (1981) criticised the traditional 4Ps and modified it. Their main reason was that the traditional 4Ps were not suitable for service organisations. As a result, Booms and Bitner (1981) introduced an extension of the 4Ps framework to include process, physical evidence and people which is now popularly called the service marketing mix or 7Ps extended marketing mix for services.

Service marketing mix is defined by Kotler and Armstrong (2007) as the tactical, controllable marketing variables service firms combine to offer their services in order to achieve the organisational goals. The service marketing mix therefore consists of seven marketing tools, “7Ps”: ‘product, price, place, promotion, processes, people and physical facilities/evidence. , The service marketing mix puts the services offered by hotels into a number of component parts and arranges them into manageable subject areas for making strategic decisions.

2.4.1 Product

Product is defined by Kotler and Armstrong (2007) as anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. According to Hirankitti et al (2009) the product offered in respect of services can be explained based on two components; the core service which represents the core benefit and the secondary services which represent both the tangible and augmented product levels. For a hotel, some of the core services are restaurant, guest rooms, conference halls and facilities for entertainment. Secondary services include availability of gym, pool, internet access and so forth.

2.4.2 Price

Price is another element of the service marketing mix model. Kotler *et al* (2008), defined price as the amount of money charged for a product or service, or the total values that consumers exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service of a company. Kotler and Keller (2009) indicated that some consumers associate high price with quality and are willing to pay more in anticipation to enjoy high quality. However, Hsu & Powers (2002) stated that in a highly competitive market, businesses usually adopt price reduction strategy in order to secure a larger size of the market. Reid et al. (2006) explained that in the general perspective the prices of hotel services are fixed base on the class or the category of the hotel. Room rate for instance is fixed for each four star hotel and for that matter the influence of price on hotel guest choice decision is insignificant.

2.4.3 Place

Place is another element of the marketing mix model. It is sometimes referred to as channel of distribution. Kotler and Keller (2009) recall that place in marketing mix of services is to make the service accessible and available. He defined accessibility as the ease and convenience with which services can be bought, used or received whilst availability was defined as the extent, to which services are obtainable or capable of being purchased, used or received. Hence, the places where the banks are located are important marketing strategy for banks. Kotler and Keller (2009) also suggest that the 'place' of an institution includes the institution's Website.

According to Hsu & Powers, (2002) the location of hotels is a major marketing tool in the industry. They revealed that locations that have received well patronized hotels include

those that are downtown, serving the growing number of business-oriented destinations such as office parks and company headquarters.

2.4.4 Promotion

Promotion in marketing is also known as marketing communication (Kotler and Keller 2009). Marketing communications are the means by which firms attempt to inform, persuade and remind consumers directly or indirectly about the products and brands they sell. According to Zeitham and Bitner (2000) promotion strategies for services consists of both personal and impersonal devices. Personal device is purely subjective in nature and it differs from person to person. Impersonal promotion can be through advertising, sponsorship, publicity and sales promotion. Personal selling is the responsibility of the hotel staff. Chan and Wong (2005) discovered that Asian travellers placed a higher value on the factor of 'hotel advertising on TV and travel magazines' than their Western counterparts. Advertising on the websites became an alternative important source of information for both business travellers and leisure travellers in hotel industry according to Adams, (2001).

2.4.5 People

People in service marketing mix represent every individual or group who is involved in the provision and delivery of the service (Hinson, 2006). Each employee of the hotel irrespective of his position in the hotel hierarchy is both a recipient and provider of service. Unless each employee extends support to his colleagues and also receives support from each other, workflow will get obstructed and the victim will be the customer. Hence, to create satisfied customers the behaviour and attitude of hotel staff play a key role (Reid et al. (2006). Hinson, (2006) have argued that people in service marketing should not be

limited to only the employees of the organisation. According to them, customers themselves are important part of the final quality of the service since customers also contribute to their own services. They define that there are three levels of customer participation (low, moderate and high). Ryu and Jang (2007) found in their study that the encounter between service providers and customers affect the emotional states of the customers. They further suggest that pleasure influences a consumer's approach behavior intentions, such as recommendation and patronage. Hence, a good communication skill is required from service providers specially front line staff in order to influence the decisions of customers to patronize the services of the organisation.

2.4.6 Process

Processes refer to the way an institution does business, and this relates to the whole administrative system (Kotler *et al.*, 2008). That is processes are how things happen at the hotel, such as the process of booking, ordering food and securing particular service. Hinson (2006) recalls that customers judge a service by the operational flow of the service and the actual delivery steps experienced. Therefore, hotels that desire to attract and maintain customers must design service processes that are perceived by the customers as being relevant and value-laden. The process is crucial to the hotel marketing strategy. It gives value to the guests and an element of uniqueness to the service being offered. It is very significant because it provides competitive advantage to the hotel. According to Hsu & Powers (2002), process in hotel marketing strategy is based on value chain concept. The concept basically stresses close attention to all the organisational activities which go into the final service to the guests. Lovelock and Wirtz (2007) mention that the process through which a service is delivered affects customers' perception about the quality of service being delivered thereby influencing the satisfaction of the customer.

2.4.7 Physical Evidence

The environment in which the service is delivered is referred to as physical evidence (Hinson, 2006). Such facilities include buildings, interior and exterior decorations, offices, colour schemes for indoors and outdoors. Physical evidence cues provide an excellent opportunity for hotels to send out consistent and strong messages regarding the hotel's purpose and the nature of the services offered. Zeithaml et al. (2009) remark that hotel guests evaluate service quality before and after purchase by relying on physical evidence which include facility exterior, facility interior and air quality and temperature, business cards, employee dress, hotel building, car parking space etc. Physical evidence focuses mainly on the initial first impression customers get from a hotel and their expected service delivery. The influence of physical evidence on the satisfaction of hotel guest is the main focus of this study. Hence, the subsequent sections discuss relevant issues concerning physical evidence.

2.5 Service Scape Model

Bitner (1992) coined the term “servicescape” to denote a physical setting in which a service is performed, delivered and consumed within a service organization. A service scape is considered to contain physical factors that can influence consumers' and employees' approach or avoidance behavior related to an organisation. In explanation, Bitner (1992) explained service scape as the physical things made by man as opposed the social or the natural environment in which services take place. Hence, the service scape serves as the packaging for the service. According to Bitner (1992), service scape plays a key role in impression making and affects the overall experience of service encounter leading to either positive or negative experience. Bitner (1992), grouped the service scape dimensions of

every organisation into three different environmental dimensions namely surrounding or ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality and signs.

Pizam (2005) defined service scape in relation to a hotel certain. According to Pizam (2005) the service scape of a hotel is the material surroundings of a hotel that is designed with the aim of affecting behaviour. Pizam (2005) revealed the major service scape elements of a hotel to include the location of the hotel, architectural design of the hotel buildings, swimming pool, décor elements, colour combination, lighting system, temperature, noise, furniture and so forth.

Most of the service scape framework used by researchers is geared towards the fact that service scape influences the internal responses and external behaviors of consumers as well as the employees of service organisations. Countryman & Jang, (2006) mention that service scape is a major tool used to influence hotel guests psychology. It affects their emotion, cognition and behaviour. It worth mentioning that service scape has also been termed as the physical environment or the tangible of services. Hence, this study used the terms interchangeably.

2.5.1 Dimensions of Service Scape

There are three main dimensions of service scape visible in every organisation according to Bitner (1992). These dimensions are ambient condition, spatial layout and functionality and signs, symbols and artifacts. The section below throws more light on the service scape dimensions mentioned above.

2.5.1.1 Ambient Condition

The ambient dimension of a service scape is simply referred to as those elements within the service environment that are affected by human senses (Lovelock and Wirtz 2007). That is the characteristics within the service environment that affect customers' taste, vision, smell, and touch. Some of the specific elements of the ambient condition of hotels include colour combinations, lighting system, temperature, music, noise and scent. According to Bitner (1992) the noticeability of each ambient condition factor is dependent on the extreme used of each factor. For instance, music is noticed when it is loud. Dube & Renngan, (2000) revealed that each of the listed ambient condition is capable of influencing the perception of hotel guest. However, Bitner (1992) mentioned that the various ambient condition factors can be perceived either separately or holistically. This means that it is better to give each factor an attention while ensuring that the various factors complement each other.

Researchers have revealed the influence of certain ambient conditions on the perception and satisfaction of customers. Researchers like Jain and Bagdare (2011) and Ryu and Jang (2007) have revealed the influence of music on the perception of customers. Specifically, Ryu and Jang (2007) undertook a research in the hospitality industry and discovered that music has the highest influence on the perception of hotel guest and was followed by employees.

Another study that revealed the relevance of ambient condition in the hotel industry is the work of Wakefield & Blodgett, (1996). According to the researchers, importance element of the ambient condition that influence hotel guests include wall covering and colours, comfortable seats and overall facility attractiveness of the hotel. The perception of the

customers regarding the seating comfortability is crucial in the hotel sector since customers sit for long periods of time before being served.

2.5.1.2 Spatial Layout and Functionality

Another important dimension of service scape is the spatial layout and functionality. Spatial layout is defined by Bitner, (1992) as the way in which the equipment, building, machinery, furniture and other facilities of the service organisation are arranged including their sizes and shape. Functionality on the other hand is referred to as the ability of using the listed items to facilitate the services being offered to the customers. Hence, the spatial layout and functionality dimension of the service scape enable service providers to efficiently respond to the needs of customers there by satisfying them. Lovelock and Wirtz (2007) mention that well design spatial layout and functionality affects customers' perception about the quality of service being delivered. This intends affect customer satisfaction. According to Zeithaml et al. (2006), spatial layout and functionality affect service organisations in three main ways. First, they influence the efficiency of the service delivery process. Second, they enhance user friendliness. Third, spatial layout and functionality shape customers' experience and perception.

2.5.1.3 Signs, Symbols, and Artifacts

Signs, symbols and artifacts are the third dimension of service scape developed by Bitner (1992). Signs, symbols and artifacts dimension of the service scape are referred to as those materials, elements or characteristics used to communicate to the consumers of the service. Alternatively, they are described as useful communication materials or tools used by service providers to create suitable atmosphere and direct consumers during the service encounter. According to Dube and Renaghan (2000) the signs, symbols and the artifacts

can be used to communicate explicitly or implicitly about places, directions and events to customers. They can also be used to describe the expected and acceptable behaviour from customers. In hotels, there are signs and symbols used to show entrances and exits, no smoking, gent, ladies, switching off mobile phones and so forth. Symbols and artifacts such as artworks, photograph and certificates are also useful in influencing the perception of customers according to Bitner (1992).

2.6 Hotel Interior Design

An important aspect of service scape that has been revealed by various studies to have influenced the satisfaction of hotel guest is the interior décor of the hotel. According to Countryman & Jang, (2006) one of the determinant of the quality of a hotel service is the interior design of the hotel. The nature and style of interior décor of an organisation speak about the nature of the organisation, its activities, its goals, images and the nature of product and services offered by that organisation. It also helps to communicate the target market of the organisation. Hence, creating and designing attractive and meaning interior design is significant in the marketing of an organisation (Lucas, 2012 and Grimley & Love, 2007).

The nature of interior designs of a building is such that they must be well planned in order to achieve the purpose for their existence. According to Lin, (2004) the interior décor of a building and its premises is defined by functions performed by the décor. As a result any attempt to design interior décor must consider the functions to be performed by the décor so that the combination of the interior design elements would be balanced to achieve the purpose. Hence, lighting, colour, furnishing and layout are expected to match with the

main task for the designer balanced interior design elements helped to communicate the general style of the interior décor of a building.

West & Purvis, (1992) provided a list of some of the most important hotel interiors that affect the satisfaction of guest and they include decoration in the guest room, hotel lobby, the hotel colours, the lighting system and the furniture. These elements of the hotel interiors do not work in isolation rather they must be well design to complement each other. For instance, the size of the area must be able to accommodate the size of the furniture and the colours must match with the lighting system. The colour of architectural surfaces is associated with the colour of the furniture while the colour of the furniture should fit the colour of the textiles (West & Purvis, 1992).

One component of interior decoration that has influenced the satisfaction of hotel guest is lighting. According to Sternke, (2000) suitable hotel lighting system plays a key role in creating satisfied hotel guest. In his study, Sternke, (2000) discovered that proper lighting is needed in almost all the services of a hotel. Lighting is useful in the hotel guest room, at the restaurant and within the hotel lobby. In the restaurant of a hotel, proper lighting helps hotel guest to view the food in its best possible light. The colour temperature of the lighting helps guest to accurately see the colour of the food. It is therefore important for hotel managers to give attention to the lighting system at the hotel because improper lighting affects the effectiveness of interior décor (Sternke, 2000). Baraban and Durocher (1992) recorded that the presence of suitable lighting system performs a number of functions that lead to guest convenience and happiness. Lighting can make the spaces within hotel lobbies look like expanded. It can create an exciting, friendly and quit environment. On the other hand it can create a hostile, subdue and intimate environment. According to Nam-

Kyu and Farr (2007) “People are phototropic and are drawn to the light in a space more than any other feature. As a result, the perception of hotel guests is being influenced by the colour, brightness, and shape of the light in the rooms, restaurant, lobbies and the entire environment.

Colour is another component of hotel interior décor that has the capacity of influencing guest experience and satisfaction. The colour of hotel includes the painting of the wall, the hotel buildings, guest rooms, floors, lobbies and the paints of plastic, plasterboard and ceramic (Portillo, 2010). According to Robson, (1999) bright colours lead to pleasant feelings, it helps people to find their ways within a building and attract customers. Robson (1999) discovered that appropriate colour combination influence the perception of hotel guests concerning the interior design of the hotel. Hence, a well combine colour of hotel is capable of creating satisfied hotel guests. However, deciding suitable colours for hotel buildings, walls, interiors and guest rooms is not easy. According to Portillo (2010) deciding the colours to be used for a hotel and it environment depends on a number of factors including the architectural design of the building, natural condition of the hotel environment, the targeted guest, the culture of the people and the purpose of the colouring such as for hygiene, attraction and danger.

2.7 Physical Structural Design

The physical structural design is described by Johnson & Mayer, (2003) as the architectural design of hotel buildings and it environment and physical placement of furnishings for the purpose of influencing social interactions. According to Johnson &

Mayer, (2003) the nature of social interaction that hotel guest encounter depends on the structural configuration of the hotel architectural design. Key elements such as hotel walls, lobbies, corridors and entryways affect the guest's level of social encounter.

In a study, Heide and Grønhaug (2009) discovered that photographs on hotel walls and the architectural designs of hotel buildings as well as the furnishing styles are the most appealing physical structural designs that influence the satisfaction of hotel guest. Such elements help communicate information regarding the class of the hotel and the people who work in it. Heide and Grønhaug (2009) explained that enticing and attractive physical environment of hotels has been given much attention as a tool for creating and maintaining satisfied guest because of the extended length of time guest spend within the hotel environment.

The Layout of hotels is one of the elements of physical structural design that affect the perception of hotel guests. According to Caro, (2001) the layout of hotel architectural design easily communicates the professionalism of the hotel environment. Sometimes the mistakes made in the design of the hotel buildings are seen in the wrong location of the reception of the hotel which gives a negative impression about the hotel from guests view. Poor layout results in overcrowding of hotel guest. Hence, hotel layouts must be designed in such a way that crowding would be minimised in order to create a favourable impression among the hotel guests.

Geographical location of hotels is also linked to the physical structural design aspect of the servicescape of hotels. Studies that have revealed the influence of location on the satisfaction of hotel guest include Hsu & Powers, (2002), Reid, Bojanic & David, (2006),

Williams (2002) and Lewis and Chambers (1989). According to Hsu & Powers, (2002) locations that have received well patronized hotels include those that are downtown, serving the growing number of business-oriented destinations such as office parks and company headquarters. According to Lewis and Chambers (1989) the location of hotels is the most important factor that influence the satisfaction of hotel guest. According to them business travelers are highly influenced by location because they choose hotels in relation to their purpose of visits. Again, guests consider hotels located in the prime locations which had easy access to business areas, shopping centers and embassies in order to serve the needs of business travelers. In general, location of the service providers and their accessibility are very important selling point in hospitality industry (Armstrong & Kotler, 2003).

2.8 Definition of Customer Satisfaction

The nature of competition in today's service environment makes customer satisfaction an important tool for customer retention and loyalty. Early attempt to define customer satisfaction related the term to post purchase behaviour where consumers evaluate and judge the product or service purchased (Churchill and Sauprenant 1992 and Oliver, 1980). Most researchers agree that satisfaction is an attitude or evaluation that is formed by customers by comparing what they expect to receive to their subjective perceptions of the performance they actually get (Oliver, 1980). Several authors have defined customer satisfaction in various ways. According to Kotler (2000), customer satisfaction is a customer's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectation. Gaither (1994) also defined customer satisfaction as the situation where customers' requirements are

determined and suitable product and services are offered to meet those requirements of customers.

Inferring from the above definitions, it could be concluded that customers can only be satisfied if and only their expectations are met. In service quality literature, customer expectations are understood as desires or wants of consumers (Zeithaml, et al 1993) or “what they feel the service provider should offer rather than would offer”. Customer expectations are sometimes unrealistic, unreasonable high and too difficult to evaluate. However, satisfaction is still a function of the customer’s belief that he or she was treated fairly.

2.8.1 Determinants of Customer Satisfaction

The numerous definitions of customer satisfaction indicate that customer satisfaction is affected by a number of factors. The section discusses some of the factors that determine the satisfaction of customers.

2.8.1.1 Service Quality

Service quality focuses on the dimensions of service and its component of customer satisfaction. It is a focused evaluation that reflects the customer perception of reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy. Measuring service quality is usually not easy due to the intangible nature of services. Usually, the perception of consumers is used as the measuring tool for service quality. Service quality perception is the customer’s attitude resulting from their judgment on the service. Therefore service quality is the judgment resulted from a comparison of consumers' perception of delivered services by the supplier and the customers' expectation (Kangis and Voukelatos, 1997).

Studying service quality in the hotel industry in Ghana, Poku, Zakari & Soali, (2013) discovered that responsiveness dimension of service quality has the highest influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty. This was followed by “empathy” and “assurance” variables of the service quality model. According to Dube and Renaghan (2000) the most important component of service quality in the hotel industry include security, place for relaxation, cleanliness, suitable design and decor and the reputation of the hotel.

2.8.1.2 Price/ Service Charge

Price is considered to be another factor that affects customer satisfaction. The influence of price on the satisfaction of customers is very high in the industry where customers are very price sensitive. Verki and Colgate (2001) indicate that price has a crucial impact on the customer satisfaction as customers are shown to be price sensitive. According to Verki and Colgate (2001) customers’ perception on price has a strong effect on their satisfaction and it determines customers re-purchase decision.

A study by Barsky and Nash (2003) in the hotel industry revealed numerous factors that affect hotel guest satisfaction of which price was considered as one of the several factors that affect the satisfaction of hotel guest. However, Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000) found price to be the highest factor that influence hotel guest satisfaction.

2.8.1.3 Firm’s Reputation

Another customer satisfaction dimension identified by Zeithaml et al. (2009) is the reputation of the firm. Walsh and Dinnie (2006) consider the reputation of a firm to be the total perception of all concerned stakeholder experiences. Reputation is the outcome of

legitimate processes built on the idea that is socially constructed. The reputation of a hotel can serve as a source of competitive advantage to the hotel. According to Hall (1993), the reputation of a firm is considered as an intangible asset of the firm. It provides value to the firm, it is distinctive, non-substitutable, not duplicable and above all a source of sustainable competitive advantage.

In a competitive environment, corporate reputation is acknowledged as affecting customer satisfaction, retention and loyalty. It plays a significant role in influencing the buying and repurchasing decisions of customers. Barsky and Nash (2003) mention that reputation is particularly important in the service industry due to the fact that the quality of the service cannot be evaluated tangibly before purchasing decisions are made. Hence, hotel management must inculcate the building of reputation as an important marketing exercise to influence customer satisfaction. According to Barsky and Nash (2003) the reputation of a hotel is dependent on the history of the hotel.

2.8.1.4 Convenience

Additionally, customer satisfaction is affected by convenience. According to Zikiene and Bakanauskas (2009) convenience is observed when customers are served quickly without waiting in a queue, when they are served within convenient working hours and a proper location of the service firm. Hence, the speed with which hotel staff serve guest affect the satisfaction of the guest.

Proper location is one of the means of creating convenient working environment for customers in order to influence their satisfaction. It has shown that accessibility and convenience of location are crucial benefits that the customer looks for which improve

customer satisfaction levels. Accessibility considers the ability of customers to access the firm and transact business with the firm. In the hotel industry, location is one of the major determinants of convenience which affect hotel guest satisfaction (Dube & Renngan, 2000).

In a study, Hammington and King (2000) discovered that the location of a hotel is advantageous to the hotel guest and other firms that interact with the hotel. According to the researchers, hotel guest search for hotels that are located at places of quietness and few vehicular movements.

2.8.1.5 Firm's Employees

A friendly employee or staff therefore adds to customer satisfaction and helps to promote the image of the organization in the eyes of the customer and the general public. However, some employees will do a better job of satisfying customers than others regardless of the quality of training, reward, and recognition programs afforded them (Hinson, 2006). The service delivery process also plays a key role in customer satisfaction. When the process of service delivery is too long, it lengthens customer waiting time and this makes customers dissatisfied. It is therefore expected from service providers to explain why service delays in order to reduce the level of dissatisfaction of the customer.

People factor in service firms is crucial in service marketing because it is the most significant factor that affects tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy. Again, people factor is considered to be the most silent in determining overall satisfaction of customers and affects their post purchase decisions. The intangible nature of hotel services makes social interaction a key to success. Usually, the bond between the

hotel representative and the guest is more heavily weighed when the guest makes a satisfaction judgment than when the guest makes no such judgment. Numerous studies have revealed the role played by quality relationship between hotel guest and employees of the hotel. They all conclude that a good interpersonal relation determines customer satisfaction and loyalty (Choi and Reymaod 2001, Baker and Crompton 2000).

2.9 The influence of Service scape on Customer Satisfaction

In a service environment, servicescape is considered as a tool used to influence the satisfaction of customers. According to Lovelock and Wirtz (2007) service scape serve as a tool for communicating the position of service providers, influence the performance of employees and serve as a useful aid for customers through the service delivery system. Various studies have been done on the influence of service scape on customer satisfaction across different service industries.

In the retail sector, Turley and Milliman (2000) conducted a research on how service scape affects the satisfaction of customers. The main focus of their study was to ascertain the influence of atmospheric variables on the behaviour of consumers including their satisfaction. Some of the dependent variable in the study included, interior decor and colours, music, comfortable spacing and overall facility attractiveness. The study found music to be the most powerful stimulus in shaping the retail experience. Specifically, music was found to attract the attention of customers, for identification and association.

In a similar study, Jain & Bagdare, (2011) revealed that music has a positive relationship with the satisfaction of customers and the performance of retail stores. On the part of customers, music was found to influence the affection of customers such as, pleasure, emotion, mood and arousal. Again, it also affects the attitude and perception of customers

including customers liking, loyalty and overall service quality. The firm also gets financial returns since customers are influenced to stay longer in the store and buy more items.

Cleanliness is another important aspect of the physical environment of service organisation which affects the scent in the environment. Scent is an element of the ambient condition dimension of service scape. Kim (1999) found in his study that most customers have a strong tendency to relate service quality to the cleanliness of the physical service environment. According to the study the cleanliness of service environment affect the perception of customers which leads to either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Studying in a hotel, Kim (1999) found that the cleanliness of washrooms, restrooms, floors and the uniform of service providers influences the satisfaction of hotel guests.

In another study conducted in the airline industry, Kim (2008) employed four main elements of physical environment cues as dependent variables access the impact of the physical service environment on the satisfaction and loyalty of customers in addition to relationship quality. The in-flight physical environment components were amenity, aesthetics, cabin crew appearance and seating arrangement. The study concluded that amenity has the highest influence on the satisfaction and loyalty of the customers and for that matter in-flight physical environment has significant positive impact on service trust and customer satisfaction for airlines. Therefore, efforts must be made to make customers have favourable attitudes for re-visit by improving trust and maximizing customer satisfaction.

A study conducted by Lucas (2003) also confirms that service scape has an influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. Lucas (2003) used the casino department of the hotel as a

case study and adopted five main physical environment components namely layout and design, seat comfortability, cooperation condition, cleanliness and interior decoration. The study discovered that the cleanliness of the service environment has the highest influence on the satisfaction of the customers. This was followed by the layout and designs of the hotel. The study concluded that the behavioral intention of customers would increase with a higher level of satisfaction regarding the physical environment of the hotel.

The research of Harris and Ezeh (2008) has also contributed to the effect of service scape on the satisfaction of customers. Using a restaurant Harris and Ezeh (2008) identified that the physical environment of service organisations has a positive impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty with the ambient factors having the highest impact and followed by design factors. According to the study, all efforts to meet the satisfaction of customers must begin with a thorough understanding of customers' needs. Hotels which are able to understand and satisfy customers' needs and wishes, are more profitable than other hotels in which management do not pay enough attention to the customers' expectations (Harris and Ezeh 2008 and Barsky & Nash 2003).

Raymond and Choi (2001) undertook a study in hotels in Hong Kong. The study focused on the satisfaction level of hotel guests and the possibility of their returning to purchase the services of the hotel. Seven factors were identified in the study as the main determinants of hotel guest satisfaction. The seven factors were staff quality, general amenities, value, security, room qualities, availability of international direct dial (IDD) and facilities business services. Among the seven factors, staff quality, room qualities and value were the three most influential factors in determining the overall satisfaction of hotel

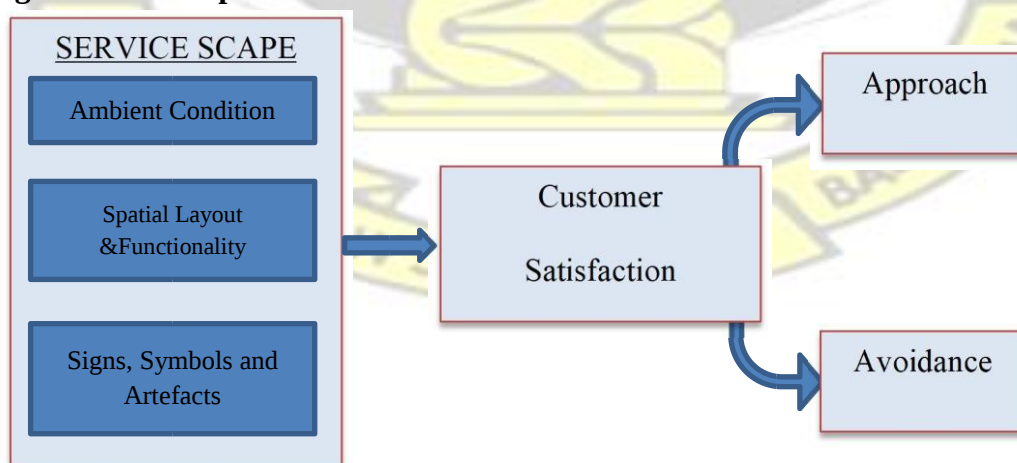
guests. The second determining factor (room quality) is related to the ambient condition of the servicescape dimension (Raymond and Choi (2001)).

In addition, customers' satisfaction is greatly affected by the room design and amenities through the evaluation of perceived quality. Moreover, the attributes of the hotels may contribute to the customers' determination of purchase decision (Dube & Renaghan, 2000). The physical environment is another factor that is related to the image of the facility includes extrinsic cues which influence the customer's perception and satisfaction of the service

2.10 Conceptual Framework for the Study

Generally, the study is aimed at exploring the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers in the Ghanaian hospitality industry. Based on previous studies and the information gathered from the literature, the figure below was used as the conceptual framework for the study. The conceptual framework is necessary because it helps to provide a better overview of the study.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework



Source: Bitner (1992).

A conceptual framework is a visual display or written item which provides either graphical or narrative information about the main things being studied. The conceptual frame work entails the key concepts, variables and factors being studied and shows the relation among them (Miles and Huberman 1994).

In this study, the hotel's service scape and its dimensions serve as the independent variables that affect the perception of customers to be either satisfied or dissatisfied. If the service scape influence customers to be satisfied, approach behaviour would be the response of customer. This means that customers will continue to purchase the services of the hotel and even recommend the hotel to other. On the other hand, if customers are dissatisfied with the service scape of the hotel, they would put up avoidance behaviour by seizing to purchase the services of the hotel and send negative comments about the hotel when of the customers.

2.11 Factors that influence Customers' Choice of Hotel

Understanding the factors that influence customers' choice of hotel in Ghana is important because it will serve as a tool for the marketing of hotels in Ghana. The marketing concept states that in order to be successful, a company must identify the needs and wants of specific target markets and deliver the desired satisfactions better than competitors (Schiffman et al 2010). By application, hotels must identify the needs and wants of guests in respect to the motivation factors that influence guest choice of hotel in Ghana. Various studies have revealed numerous factors that influence customers' choice of hotel and the section below discusses some of their findings.

2.11.1 Location of the Hotel

The location of a hotel is an important marketing tool that affects the marketing of hotel to influence the decisions of hotel guest (Armstrong & Kotler, 2003). Location is captured under the place component of the service marketing mix which emphasized that hotel services must be available and accessible in terms of time and physio-geographical distribution. Hence, hotel guest must be able to access the hotel at the right place and at the right time without any inhibitions to the guest.

Studies that have revealed the influence of location on the choice of hotel include Hsu & Powers, (2002), Reid, Bojanic & David, (2006), Williams (2002) and Lewis and Chambers (1989). According to Hsu & Powers, (2002) locations that have received well patronized hotels include those that are downtown, serving the growing number of business-oriented destinations such as office parks and company headquarters. According to Lewis and Chambers (1989) the location of hotels is the most important factor that influence hotel guest choice selection. According to them business travelers are highly influenced by location because they choose hotels in relation to their purpose of visits. Again, guests consider hotels located in the prime locations which had easy access to business areas, shopping centers and embassies in order to serve the needs of business travelers. In general, location of the service providers and their accessibility are very important selling point in hospitality industry (Armstrong & Kotler, 2003).

2.11.2 Variety of Facilities

The facilities available at a hotel are also considered as an important factor that influences the decisions of guest. There are various hotel facilities offered to hotel guest to influence their choice decisions. Some of the facilities include restaurant, hotel lobby, pool, life band,

rest rooms, wash room, internet access, gym, conference hall and so forth (Ariffin, Nameghi, & Zakaria, 2013). In a study, Verma (2002) revealed that more than 50% of business travelers are influenced by the facilities available at hotel. Among the various facilities, gym has the highest influenced on the choice of hotels for business travelers. However, it was found that the female business travelers preferred hotel room amenities among the facilities of hotel. Specific room amenities included makeup mirrors, skirt hangers and hair dryers etc. Internet access is an alternative facility of a hotel that influence the choice of hotel guest. Adams, (2001) stated that making it possible for customers to have access to the internet in their rooms are more likely to influence customers who are looking for a hotel to lodge. Hotel facilities are major factors that influence guest choice of hotels and must not be underestimated.

2.11.3 Encounter with service providers

Due to the intangible nature of services, the interaction between service providers and customers is considered as a powerful tool for customers choice decisions. In the hotel industry there is always an interaction between hotel guest and the front line staff of the hotel. The interaction can be face-t-face, online and/or through the telephone. Choi & Chu, (2001) found that the service provided by the employees of hotels determine whether guest will re-purchase the hotel services or not. This indicates that the encounter between service providers determine hotel guests choice of hotels.

Ryu and Jang (2007) revealed that the behaviour of employees influences the choice decisions made by customers. According to them, the interaction between consumers and service employees is an important factor that influences consumers' approach or avoidance behavior. Ryu and Jang (2007) found in their study that the encounter between service

providers and customers affect the emotional states of the customers. They further suggest that pleasure influences a consumer's approach behavior intentions, such as recommendation and patronage. Hence, a good communication skill is required from service providers specially front line staff in order to influence the decisions of customers to patronize the services of the organisation.

2.11.4 Price/ Service Charge/ Fees

Price is an alternative factor that appears to influence customer's choice for a particular service like hotel. Price is defined by Kotler and Keller (2009) as the value of money expressed in monetary term. They further explained certain factors that influence the pricing of goods and services such as business objectives, cost, marketing mix strategy, competitors cost, price and offers, consumers perception about price, government regulation etc.

However, Reid et al. (2006) discovered that price reduction strategy in the hotel industry does not influence customers' choice for a hotel. Rather, improvement in the quality of service offered by hotels makes the difference. Reid et al. (2006) explained that in the general perspective the prices of hotel services are fixed base on the class or the category of the hotel. Room rate for instance is fixed for each four star hotel and for that matter the influence of price on hotel guest choice decision is insignificant. On the other hand, Verma (2002) found price to be a major factor that influence business travelers' choice for a hotel. This means that the influence of price on the choice of hotel is subjective.

2.11.5 Hotel Advertising

Adverting is considered as one of the promotion tools employed by organisations to communicate with its target market. Advertising serves as an impersonal paid form of

communication through which companies convey their messages to inform, persuade and remind consumers directly or indirectly about the products and brands they sell (Kotler and Keller (2009). Various forms of advertising are used by hotels to attract guest. They include radio, television, magazines, billboard, fliers, web-advertising etc. in a study, Chan and Wong (2005) discovered that Asian travelers placed a higher value on the factor of 'hotel advertising on TV and travel magazines' than their Western counterparts. Advertising on the websites became an alternative important source of information for both business travelers and leisure travelers in hotel industry according to Adams, (2001).

2.11.6 Referrals

Recommendation by friends, colleagues, families etc. also influence hotel guests' choice of hotel. Consumers interact with various kinds of people and the interaction has influence on the type of hotel consumers patronize (Williams, 2002). When considering hospitality consumption, recommendations from others become significant. This is maybe because in general we consume hospitality as part of a social group. Especially in accommodation industry, company's recommendations play a vital role because business travelers are always traveling and staying in accommodations due to company assignments. However, recommendations from friends are also important as Assael (1995) suggested that reference groups influence customer behavior in several ways by influencing aspiration levels and playing a part in producing satisfaction or frustration.

2.11.7 Demography of Hotel Guests

It has also been recognized that the demographic characteristics of hotel guests influence their choice of hotel. The demographic characteristics of consumers have been adopted as a major factor that influence the choice for a service through the use of demographic

segmentation variables such as age, gender, income, occupation, social class, religion, level of education, family size and so forth (Kotler and Keller, 2009).

In the hospitality industry, three main demographic characteristics have been identified to influence guest choice of hotel. These demographic characteristics include age, level of income and educational level. A study by Chan and Wong (2005) found that the age groups of hotel guests influence their choice of hotel accommodation. In their study, it was discovered that hotel guest between the ages of 26-55 were highly influenced by their companies in their choice of hotel. The reason given was that people within the age group of 26-55 are mostly employees of companies and their movements are usually determined by their companies. In the same way, the work of Chan and Wong (2005) revealed that the income level of hotel guests influence their selection decision for hotel.

In the study, Chan and Wong (2005) found that the income level of hotel guest travelling to Hong Kong affected their choice of hotel. Guest with high income level preferred hotel brands and incentive programmes while guest with low income level were influence by hotel charges. Hence, the demographic characteristics of hotel guest affect the choice of hotels.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the methodology employed in the collection of data for the research. Specifically the chapter covered the research design, the data types gathered, sampling technique employed, analysis tool used and the procedure used in collecting and analyzing the data as well as the profile of the study organisation.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is considered as the basic plan for conducting the data collection and analysis phase. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornbill (2009) every research generally falls into the following three categories: Descriptive, Explanatory (causal), and Exploratory. The current research sought to reveal the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers in the Ghanaian hospitality industry while some aspects of the study focused on the factors that influence customers' choice of hotel. Hence, a descriptive research designs was employed for this thesis. Robson (1993) defined descriptive research design as a form of research which presents a picture of the specific detail of a situation, social setting, or relationship. This matches with this study since the study seeks to identify how service scape influences the satisfaction of customers.

3.3 Sources of Data

Basically, there are two main sources of research data namely; primary and secondary data. This study employed only primary data and the data was collected from the customers of the hotel.

3.4 Unit of Analysis

The study sought to discover the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers of Golden Tulip in Kumasi. Hence, the unit of analysis for this research is individuals. Specifically, it is the customers of Golden Tulip in Kumasi who form the unit of analysis for this study.

3.5 Research Population

Saunders, Lewis and Thornbill (2009) have defined research population as the full set of cases from which a sample is taken. The population of the study constituted all the customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi. Therefore the total population from which a sample size was chosen for the study is 20,000 customers of the hotel.

3.6 Sampling Size and Sampling Technique

In order to have a representation of the population, a sample size of 400 respondents were selected for the study. A sample size of 400 respondents were chosen based on the calculation of Taro Yamane's formula of sample size in order to obtain reliable data (at 95% confidence level and a 5% error level) (Yamane, 1967).

The formula is represented as $n = N / [1 + N (e)^2]$

Where 'n' represents sample size (400)

“ 'N' represents research population (20,000)

“ 'e' represents sampling error (5%)

$$n = \frac{20,000}{1 + 20,000(0.05)^2}$$

$$1 + 20,000(0.05)^2$$

$n= 400$

Convenience non-probability sampling method was used to select the respondents. In the selection of the respondents the researcher visited the hotel three times each day throughout the week from Monday to Sunday to select participants who were willing to respond to the research questionnaire. This enabled the researcher to have access to the various customers who visit the hotel at different times. Hence, the study captured customers who have their breakfast, lunch and supper at the hotel, those who have meetings and those who attend week end programmes at the hotel.

3.7. Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire is the main data collection technique used in the collection of the primary data from the research respondents. Questionnaires were used because they make it easy to collect data from such a large number of respondents (Saunders, Lewis and Thornbill, 2009). 400 questionnaires were distributed and were self-administered. It took the researcher four weeks in the administration and collection of the questionnaires and the conducting of the interviews.

The questionnaires for the study were classified into four main sections; A, B, C and D. Section A of the questionnaire concentrated on questions relating to the demographic data of the respondents. The demographic data of the respondents were useful in the analysis of the data.

Sections B, C and D of the questionnaire contained information about the main objectives of the research. Both sections B, C and D of the questionnaire utilises mainly 5-points

semantic differential scale on which the respondents were required to indicate their opinions between 1-5 choices.

3.8 Pilot Testing

Before the actual survey, the questionnaire was piloted. 10 MBA students and 5 undergraduate students of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Business School who have had hotel experience were given the questionnaires to respond to them. Choosing to conduct the pilot questionnaire with students from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology was a matter of convenience. Through the pilot test, the researcher learned from the respondents that it takes more than 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire and this seemed overwhelming looking at the deadline for the submission of the project and the number of respondents involved. As a result, the researcher dropped all the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. The researcher also learnt that some of the questions were unclear to the respondents and therefore such questions were modified (Saunders, Lewis and Thornbill 2009).

3.9 Data Analysis

The data from the surveys was analyzed through a comparison of mean and standard deviation of the findings. Subsequently, correlation analysis was also performed to find out the existence of any positive or negative relationship between servicescape and hotel customer satisfaction. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used in performing these analyses (Saunders, Lewis and Thornbill 2009).

3.10 Profile of Golden Tulip

Golden Tulip Kumasi was inaugurated by former president John Agyekum Kuffour in

2008 as a first class Africa business hotel. The hotel is owned by Ghana Lybia Arab Hotels Company (GLAHCO) that has a various business portfolios across the world. Golden Tulip Kumasi is located at Ridge, a suburb in Kumasi. The hotel is prestigiously located around the Ashanti Royal Golf Course and opposite to the Kumasi Rattery Park (Golden Tulip 2014).

Golden Tulip Kumasi is rich in facilities that meet international standards and also consistent with the rich Ashanti culture. The hotel has One Hundred and Sixty (160) guest rooms with each room air-conditioned. Each of the 160 rooms is categorised under the five broad categories of rooms of the hotel namely Executive room, Standard, Superior, Family and Apartment. Each category serves a segment of the market and has unique facilities that attract the segment it serves. The Executive rooms for instance, are located at the top most floors of the hotel buildings. The rooms are occupied with king size beds, separate dressing area, complimentary mini-bar etc. The apartments on the other hand are meant for families who are on holidays or guests intending to stay at the hotel for longer weeks/months. The apartments are fully equipped with kitchen, dining room, spacious living room and so forth (Golden Tulip 2014).

Golden Tulip offers various hotel services including guest rooms, restaurant, bar, local gastronomy, well equipped gym, pool, conference rooms, forex bureau, kids club, golf and tennis course, live band music and a banqueting facilities for wedding receptions, anniversaries, birthday parties and other social gatherings. Additionally, the hotel guests are fascinated with modern and stylish décor, modern furnishing, well planned architectural designs, well views overlooking environment, beautiful garden and various relaxation areas (Golden Tulip 2014).

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the presentation of the main findings and discussions of the study. The chapter begins with the demographic data of the respondents and followed by the three main objectives of the study. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and 270 of them were correctly filled and collected which indicates a 90% response rate. Interpretation and discussion of the data was done per the factors that constituted the framework for the research. Considering the audience and users of the thesis, frequency tables and charts were used for the presentation of the survey results.

4.2 Demographics

Data was collected relating to the respondents' gender, age, number of times they have visited the hotel, and their nationality. The results were presented in the sub sections below. The size of the response across available response categories is indicated in percentage (%).

4.2.1 Gender Distribution of Respondents

The details of the gender distribution of the respondents were obtained and the responses are displayed on figure 4.1 below.

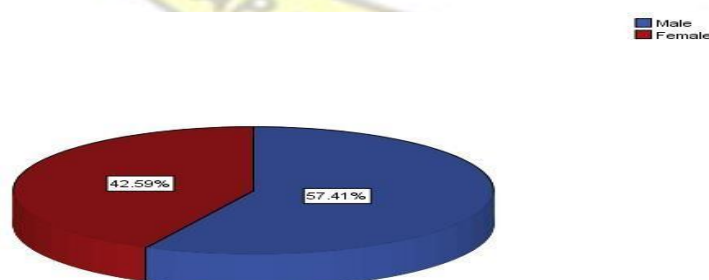


Figure 4.1: Gender distribution

Source: Field data, (2016)

Majority of the respondents were males with 57.41%, whereas the least of them are females with 41.59% as per illustration. This indicates that the hotel (Golden Tulip) has more male guest than females and it's in accordance with the notion that male guests visit hotels than their female counterparts. Also, both males and females are captured in the study to help mitigate gender bias.

4.2.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

The respondents who are also the customers of the hotel provided their age details. The findings are graphically displayed on figure 4.2 below.

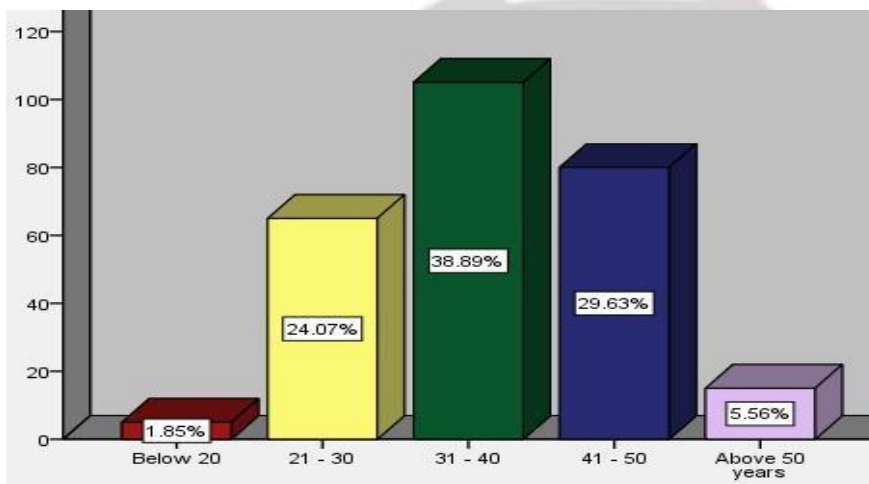


Figure 4.2: Age distribution

Source: Field data, (2016)

The results from the figure show that there are five main age categories of the respondents. From this age categories, majority of the respondents (38.89%) fall between the age group of 31 – 40 years. This was followed by 29.63% of the respondents who fall between the age group of 41 – 50 years. 24.07% of the respondents fall between the age group of 21 – 30 years. Moreover, those who fall below 20 years and above 50 years are in the orders of

1.85% and 5.56% respectively. This finding shows that the study captured respondents from diverse age group in order to eliminate any bias that might arise from respondents' age.

4.2.3 Number of times of visiting Golden Tulip

The number of times the customers have visited the hotel is very important as it helps to determine if the respondents really have information relating to the servicescape of the hotel. Figure 4.3 below therefore displays the results.



Figure 4.3: Number of times of visiting Golden Tulip

Source: Field data, (2016)

As reflected on the figure, more than half (61.11%) of the respondents have visited the hotel on several occasions. 37.04% and 1.85% of the respondents have visited the hotel on 2 – 5 times and only once respectively. Since most of the customers have visited the hotel on several times, they are likely to have enough information on the servicescape of the hotel and their satisfaction.

4.2.4 Nationality of Respondents

Details about the nationality of the respondents were obtained and displayed on figure 4.4 below.

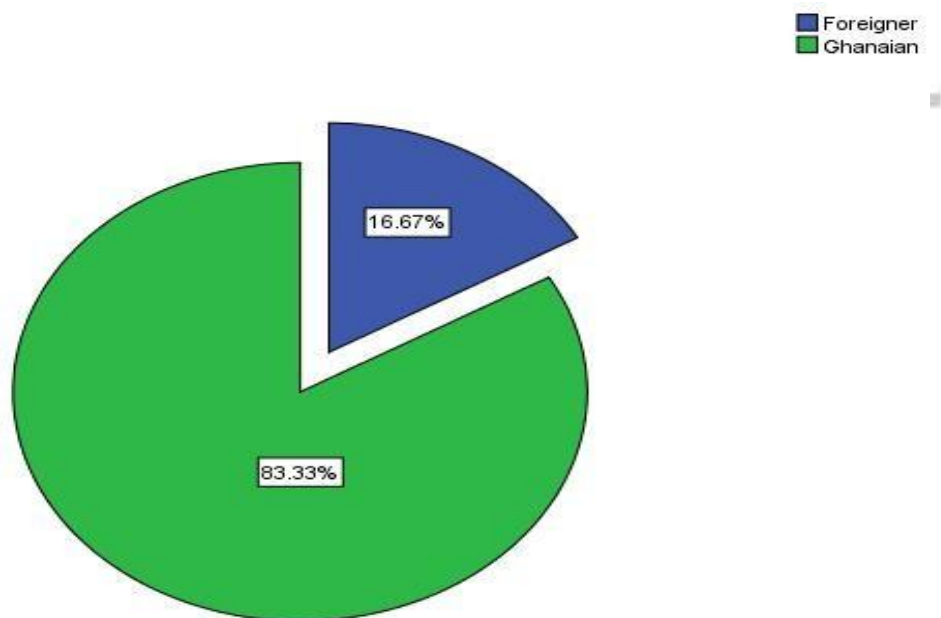


Figure 4.4: Nationality

Source: Field data, (2016)

It is clear from the figure that not only Ghanaians visit the hotel. Even though majority (83.33%) of the hotel guests are Ghanaians, 16.67% are foreigners. This means that the data obtained from this study represents the opinion of both Ghanaian and foreign guests of the hotel and for that matter the findings could be generalised.

4.3 The Influence of Physical Designs on Customer Satisfaction

One of the objectives was to identify the influence of physical designs on the satisfaction of the hotel guests. The respondents ranked the statement concerning how the physical design of the servicescape influences their satisfaction on a five point likert scale and the mean and standard deviations were used for the interpretation of the results as represented by table 4.1 below;

Table 4.1: The Influence of Physical Designs on Customer Satisfaction

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Architectural design of the hotel	320	2.00	5.00	4.3469	.69141
The internal layouts of the hotel	320	2.00	5.00	4.2156	.74304
The location of the hotel	320	2.00	5.00	4.1719	.82201
Location of the hotel services, pool, restaurant, casino etc	320	2.00	5.00	4.0625	.95141
Large packing space of the hotel	320	2.00	5.00	3.9750	.90245
Artworks at the hotel	320	1.00	5.00	3.8469	1.04970
The furnishing of the hotel buildings	320	1.00	5.00	3.6813	1.16840
Spacious seating arrangements	320	1.00	5.00	3.6719	1.16176
The plants and gardens of the hotel	320	1.00	5.00	3.6250	1.36572
Comfortable seats	320	1.00	5.00	3.4344	1.03636
Valid N (listwise)	320				

Source: Field data, (2016)

The analysis from the table reveals ten main factors with regards to the influence of physical designs on the customers' satisfaction. According to the table, Architectural design of the hotel, internal layouts of the hotel, the location of the hotel and the location of the hotel services; pool, restaurant, casino etc have the highest influence on the customers' satisfaction. The respondents rated these four factors on a scale of 4.35, 4.22, 4.17 and 4.06 which lies between the moderate and the high influence scale of 4 and 5. However, standard deviations of 0.69, 0.74, 0.82 and 0.95 respectively associated with these findings reveal some level of variability in the responses.

Large packing space of the hotel, artworks at the hotel, the furnishing of the hotel buildings, spacious seating arrangements and the plants and gardens of the hotel were noted by the respondents to have moderate influence on their satisfaction. These physical design factors had mean values of 3.98, 3.85, 3.68, 3.67 and 3.62 respectively which tend toward scale 4

signifying moderate influence. However, the corresponding standard deviations of 0.90, 1.05, 1.17, 1.16 and 1.37 testify that there were differences in their opinions to these statements.

Others mention that comfortable seats at the hotel slightly influenced their satisfaction with the hotel services. This is confirmed by the respondents stating mean values of 3.43 to this fact. This mean value of this statement tends towards below the moderate influence scale but towards the neutral scale of 3. This shows that it is not as important factor as compared to the other statements above. The corresponding high standard deviations of 1.04 associated with the finding shows that the respondents have high difference in responses to this statement.

In conclusion, it is observed from the mean table that all the physical design factors of the servicescape of the hotel have influence on the satisfaction of the customers but it is worth noting that some of them are very influential than others. From the table, architectural design of the hotel, the internal layouts of the hotel, the location of the hotel and location of the hotel services, pool, restaurant, casino etc have the highest influence on the satisfaction of the customers of Golden Tulip in Kumasi. Hence, these statements are used for further analysis as presented below.

4.3.1 Architectural Design of the Hotel

The architectural design of the hotel is the most influential design factor of the servicescape that affect the customers' satisfaction. The responses for this confirmation are displayed on figure 4.5 below.

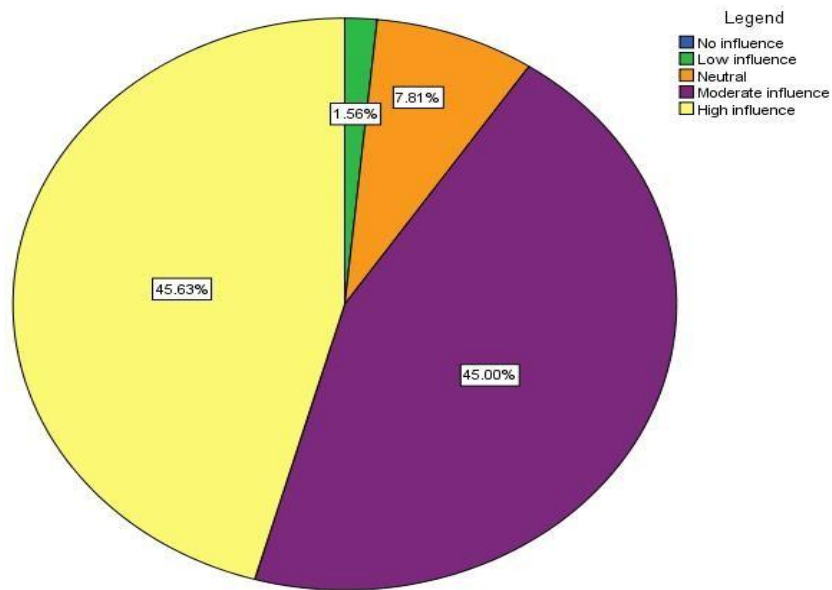


Figure 4.5: Architectural design of the hotel

Source: Field data, (2016)

Majority of the respondents which represents 45.63% claimed that the architectural design of the buildings highly influence their satisfaction, 45.00% stated that it has moderate influence, 7.81% were indecisive while 1.56% claimed that it has low influence. Golden Tulip has beautiful buildings with nice well-arranged landscape that attract tourists and guest who visit the hotel. The entrance of the hotel is well designed which affects the first impression of guests.

4.3.2 The Internal Layouts of the Hotel

Figure 4.6 shows the responses regarding the internal layouts of the hotel as the second most influential physical design factor that affect customers' satisfaction.

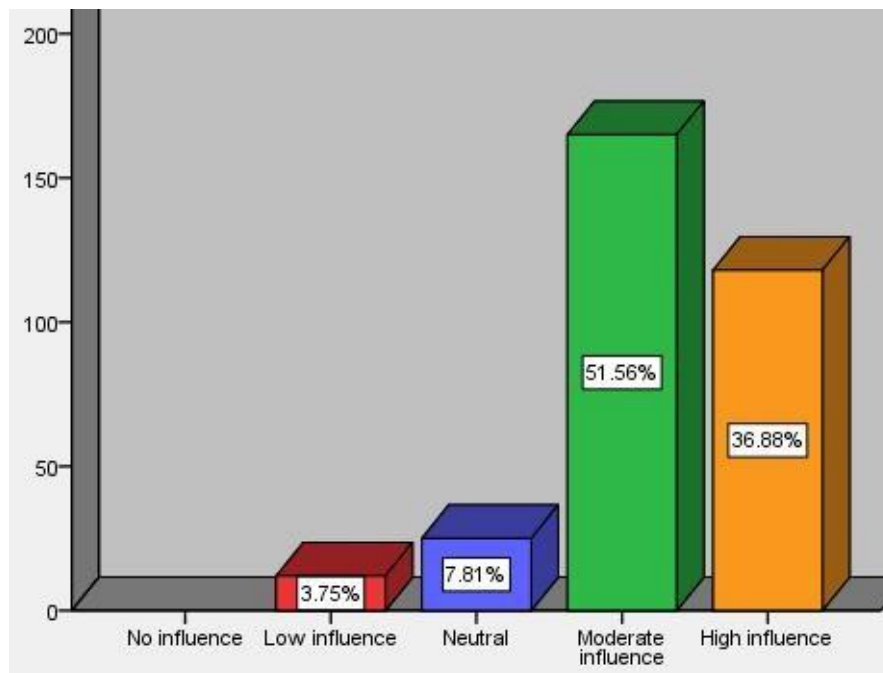


Figure 4.6: The internal layouts of the hotel

Source: Field data, (2016)

More than half (51.56%) of the customers noted that the internal layouts of the hotel moderately influence their satisfaction, 36.88% said it highly influences them, 7.81% were indecisive and 3.75% stated it has a low influence on their satisfaction. Overall, the findings show that the internal layout of hotels has influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. Layouts help to ease human congestions and enhance easy movement within the hotel.

4.3.3 The Location of the Hotel

The location of the hotel was discovered to be the third physical design factor that affects the satisfaction of the hotel guest. From the mean table above, the location of the hotel was assigned mean value of 4.17 which shows that the respondents agree that the location of the hotel contribute to their satisfaction. Golden Tulip is strategically located few distances from the centre business area in Kumasi. The road to the hotel is linked to

major roads thereby easing customers from traffic. Directing hotel guest to Golden Tulip is very easy and simple due to its strategic location.

4.3.4 Location of the Hotel Services

The locations of the hotel services; restaurant, pool, casino, guest room etc is considered to be the fourth physical design factor of the servicescape element that has influence on the satisfaction of the customers. The mean value of 4.06 assigned to this factor is an indication that customers of Golden Tulip agree that the locations of the hotel services; restaurant, pool, casino, guest room contribute to their satisfaction. The arrangement of hotel services enhances service chain of the hotel which leads to efficiency and the avoidance of unnecessary delays. No wonder it influences the satisfaction of hotel guest.

4.4 The Influence of Hotel Interiors on Customer Satisfaction

The study also aimed at revealing the influence of hotel interiors of the service scape on the satisfaction of the hotel guest. On a five point likert scale, the customers were made to rank how some elements of the hotel interiors influence their satisfaction. The mean and standard deviation values were used for the interpretation of the results. Table 4.2 presents the responses.

Table 4.2: The Influence of Hotel Interiors on Customer Satisfaction

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The lighting in the lobby	320	2.00	5.00	4.1563	.85315
The lighting in the restaurant	320	1.00	5.00	4.1375	1.00461
The style of decoration in the lobby	320	1.00	5.00	4.1250	.96165
The colours in the guest room	320	1.00	5.00	4.0063	1.10568
The furnishings in the guest room	320	1.00	5.00	3.8281	1.08502

The colours in the hotel lobby	320	1.00	5.00	3.7188	1.12633
The style of decoration in the guest room	320	1.00	5.00	3.7188	1.18068
The style of decoration in the restaurant	320	1.00	5.00	3.6344	1.17740
The furnishings in the lobby	320	1.00	5.00	3.5313	1.26403
The furnishings in the restaurant	320	1.00	5.00	3.4438	1.29502
The lighting in the guest room	320	1.00	5.00	3.4281	1.25489
The colours in the restaurant	320	1.00	5.00	3.0469	1.38769
Valid N (listwise)	320				

Source: Field data, (2016)

According to the table, the lighting in the lobby, lighting in the restaurant, style of decoration in the lobby and the colours in the guest room have the greatest influence on their satisfaction by rating these statements on the mean scale of 4.16, 4.14, 4.13, and 4.01 respectively. These mean values fall approximately on the scale 4 of the likert scale which represents moderate influence. However, the standard deviation values of 0.85, 1.00, 0.96 and 1.11 respectively to these statements show variability in their views.

Moreover, the furnishings in the guest room, the colours in the hotel lobby, style of decoration in the guest room and style of decoration in the restaurant were revealed by the customers as interior factors that also influence their satisfaction. The respondents assigned respective mean values mean values of 3.83, 3.72, 3.72 and 3.63 to these statements. These mean values fall slightly below the scale 4 of the likert scale which represents moderate influence. The differences in their opinions are reflected by standard deviation values of 1.09, 1.13, 1.18, and 1.18 respectively.

Some of the respondents also mentioned that they are slightly influenced by the furnishings in the lobby, the furnishings in the restaurant and the lighting in the guest room by giving mean values of 3.53, 3.44, and 3.43 respectively to these statements. Nevertheless, the

standard deviation values of 1.26, 1.30, and 1.25 indicate associated to the findings are indication that that the respondents have varied responses to the findings. On the other hand, the respondents were indecisive whether the colours in the restaurant have influenced on their satisfaction. This was witnessed by the respondents assigning mean value of 3.05 to it. This mean value approximately falls on the rater scale 3 which represents neutral or indecisive. However, the respondents were having different views concerning the influence of this interior factor by assigning a standard deviation value of 1.39 to it.

It can be inferred from the mean table that, the lighting in the lobby, lighting in the restaurant, style of decoration in the lobby and the colours in the guest room are the first four most influential interior factors of the hotel service scale that affect guest satisfaction. These four interior décor factors are used for further analysis.

4.4.1 The Lighting in the Lobby

From the mean table above, lighting in the hotel lobby has the highest mean value and this shows that it has the highest influence on the satisfaction of the hotel guest. The responses with respect to the lighting in the lobby are displayed on figure 4.9 below.

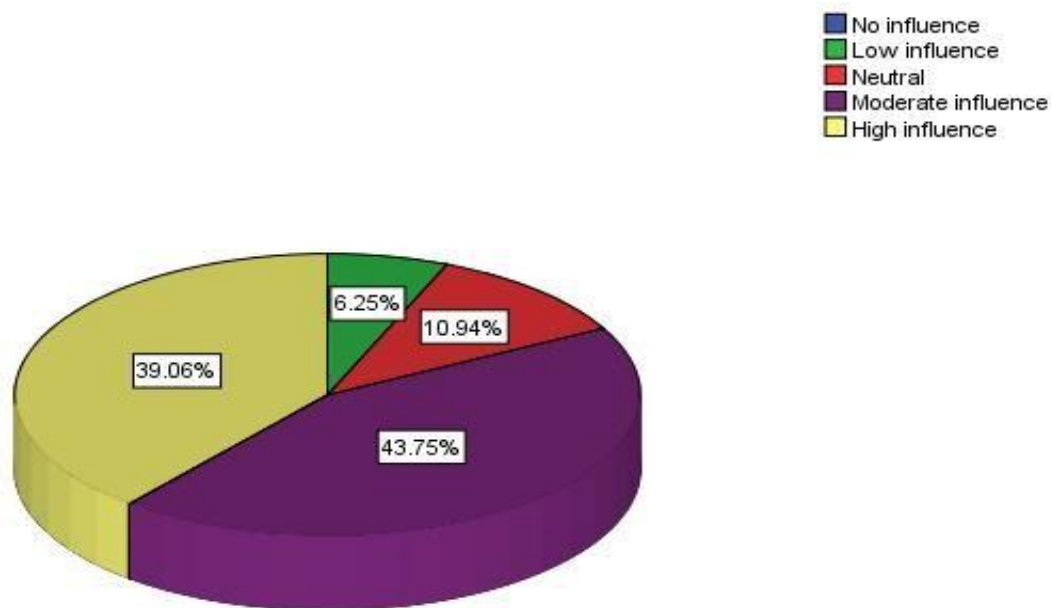


Figure 4.9: The lighting in the lobby

Source: Field data, (2016)

The illustration from the figure shows that 43.75% of the respondents posit that the lightning in the lobby, have moderate influence on their satisfaction, 39.06% stated that it has high influence on their satisfaction, 10.94% were indecisive and 6.25% said it has low influence on their satisfaction. Overall, the finding shows that lighting at the hotel lobby has influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. Lighting helps to show direction and contribute to the beautification of an environment. Hence, a good lighting system makes hotel lobby very attractive and that contributes to customer satisfaction.

4.4.2 The Lighting in the Restaurant

Another interior factor that has contributed to the satisfaction of hotel guest in this study is the lighting in the restaurant as revealed by the mean table above. The percentages of their responses are displayed on figure 4.10 below.

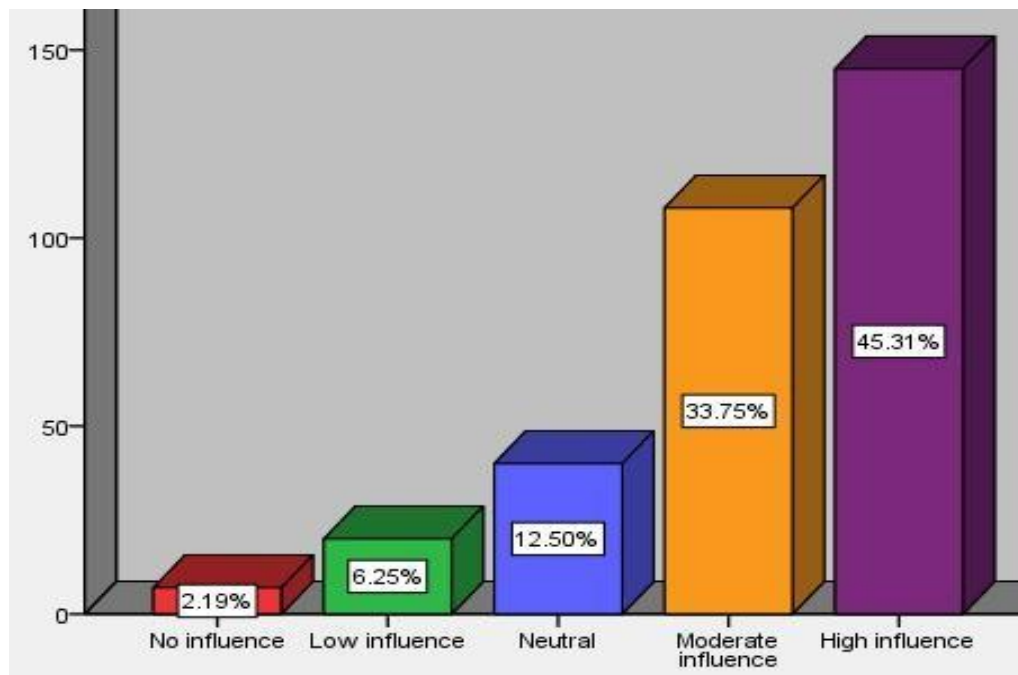


Figure 4.10: The lighting in the restaurant

Source: Field data, (2016)

Majority of the respondents which represents 45.31% claimed that the lighting in the restaurant highly influences their satisfaction. This was followed by 33.75% who said it moderately influences their satisfaction, and 12.50% were indecisive. However, 6.25% of the respondents mentioned that the lighting in the restaurant has low influence on their satisfaction while 2.19% stated that it has no influence on their satisfaction. The finding is an indication that lighting is needed to keep hotel guest and make them satisfied.

4.4.3 The Style of Decoration in the Lobby

The mean table above shows that the style of decoration in the lobby is the third influential interior factor affecting the hotel guest customers' satisfaction. This is confirmed by the mean value of 4.12 assigned to it by the respondents. Inferring from the findings, it can be mentioned that style of decoration in the lobby has influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. Decoration in the lobby gives impression about the kind of service to be received

by hotel guest. It also influences the behaviour of guest to either stay longer in the hotel or leave earlier.

4.5 The influence of Ambient Factors on Customer Satisfaction

Ambient factors constitute major component of the servicescape dimensions developed by Bitner (1992). Hence, the study sought to discover the influence of ambient factors on the satisfaction of hotel guest. Mean and standard deviations were used to analyse the collected data and the findings were presented by table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: The influence of Ambient Factors on Customer Satisfaction

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cleanliness of the hotel environment	320	2.00	5.00	4.2844	.76997
Cleanliness of the washroom	320	2.00	5.00	4.2156	.81160
The pleasant scent in the hotel environment	320	1.00	5.00	4.0094	.99996
Background music at the reception	320	2.00	5.00	3.9969	.97137
Slower music tempo	320	2.00	5.00	3.9844	.87623
Scent in the wash room	320	2.00	5.00	3.9219	.94196
Noise within the hotel	320	2.00	5.00	3.5438	1.12452
Aroma scent in the hotel restaurant	320	1.00	5.00	3.2781	1.02668
The pleasant scent in the guest room	320	1.00	5.00	3.2188	1.18068
Loudness of the music at the hotel	320	1.00	5.00	3.1563	1.22945
Noise outside the hotels	320	1.00	5.00	3.0625	1.13197
Valid N (listwise)	320				

Source: Field data, (2016)

The results from the table shows that, cleanliness of the hotel environment, cleanliness of the washroom and the pleasant scent in the hotel environment have a great influence on the satisfaction of the customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi. The respondents confirmed it by

assigning mean values of 4.28, 4.22, and 4.01 respectively to these factors. The mean values allocated to these factors fall slightly above the rater 4 on the scale which represents moderate influence indication that hotel guest are being influenced by the interior factors mentioned. The variability in their responses is accounted for by the standard deviation values of 0.77, 0.81, and 0.99 respectively.

Some of the respondents also perceived that background music at the reception, slower music tempo and scent in the wash room influence their satisfaction. They agreed to this by assigning mean values of 3.99, 3.98, and 3.92 respectively to them. These mean values are close to 4 which represent moderate influence on the rater scale. The differences in their opinion were revealed by the standard deviation values of 0.97, 0.87, and 0.94 respectively.

With respective mean values of 3.54, 3.28, and 3.23, the respondents' appeared to be slightly satisfied with the noise within the hotel, aroma scent in the hotel restaurant and the pleasant scent in the guest room. These mean values fall between the moderate and the neutral scale of 3-4. However, the respondents differ in their opinion by assigning respective standard deviation values of 1.12, 1.03, and 1.18 to these statements.

The respondents were indecisive to the influence of loudness of the music at the hotel and noise outside the hotels on their satisfaction by assigning mean values of 3.16, and 3.06 respectively to these ambient factors. The respective standard deviation values 1.23 and 1.13 given by the same respondents reveal differences in their views to these statements.

From the analysis it is confirmed that cleanliness of the hotel environment, cleanliness of the washroom, the pleasant scent in the hotel environment, and background music at the reception have high influences on the customers' satisfaction. Hence these factors are used for further analysis.

4.5.1 Cleanliness of the Hotel Environment

Figure 4.13, shows the responses to cleanliness of the hotel environment as the first ambient factor that influences customers' satisfaction.

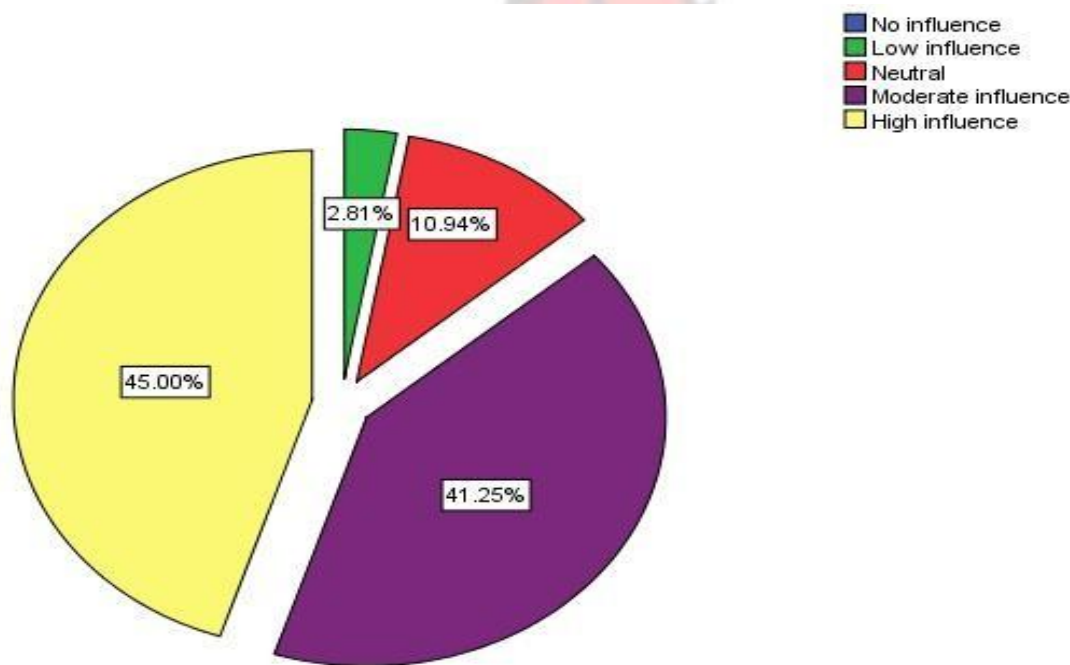


Figure 4.13: Cleanliness of the hotel environment

Source: Field data, (2016)

Majority of the respondents which represents 45% and 41.25% respectively indicated that their satisfaction level is highly and moderately influenced by the cleanliness of the hotel environment, 10.94% were indecisive and 2.81% attributed low influence to it.

This means that the environmental tidiness is influential to the customers' satisfaction. A clean hotel environment positively appeals to most of the customers and contribute to the beautification of the hotels environment.

4.5.2 Cleanliness of the Washroom

The responses to the cleanliness of the washroom are graphically displayed on figure 4.14 below.

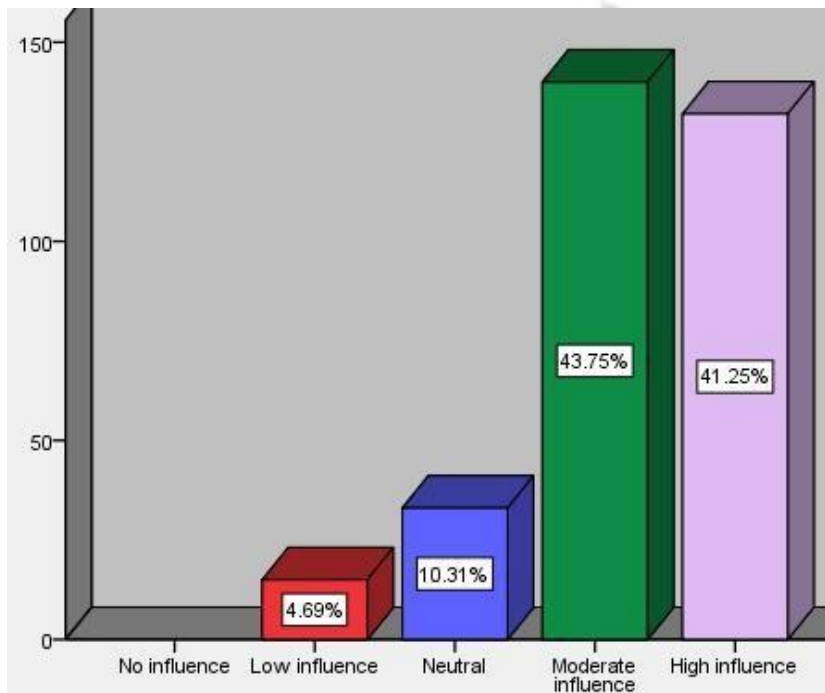


Figure 4.14: Cleanliness of the washroom

Source: Field data, (2016)

From the figure, majority (43.75%) of the respondents opined that they are moderately influenced by cleanliness in the washroom, 41.25% are highly influenced by it and 10.31% were indecisive. However, 4.69% said it cleanliness of hotel washroom has a low influence on their satisfaction. The findings show that the washroom cleanliness is a contributing ambient factor to the customers' satisfaction. A clean washroom provides pleasant scent which makes guest comfortable when they visit the place.

4.5.3 The Pleasant Scent in the Hotel Environment

From the mean table above, it is observed that pleasant scent in the hotel environment is the third ambient factor that influences the satisfaction of the customers of Golden Tulip. This ambient factor was assigned a mean value of 4.01 which implied that the hotel guests agreed that pleasant scent in the hotel environment contribute to their satisfaction. The findings imply that the pleasant scent in the hotel environment affect the satisfaction of the hotel guest. Pleasant environment helps to keep customer for a longer period at the hotel. Bad scent put customers off and denies them from staying longer in the hotel.

4.5.4 Background Music at the Reception

The responses to background music at the reception was rated the fourth influential ambient factors affecting customers' satisfaction. Being assigned a mean value of 4.00 is an indication that music is important in hotel environment. Music is connected to each of the service centre at the hotel and the type of music played at the hotel is depends on the season, time and the weather. This makes the music played attract the attention of the hotel guest and influence their satisfaction.

Based on the findings from the three mean tables, it could be said that architectural designs of the hotel, internal layouts of the hotel, cleanliness of the hotel environment, cleanliness of the washroom, the lighting in the lobby and the lighting in the restaurant are the key servicescape factors that have the highest influence on the satisfaction of the guests of Golden Tulip Kumasi.

4.6 Correlation between the Servicescape and Customer Satisfaction

This section tries to investigate if there is any positive or negative relationship between servicescape and hotel customer satisfaction. The correlation analysis was therefore employed in this analysis. This provides correlation coefficients which indicated the strength and direction of linear relationship. The p-value indicated the probability of the relationship being significant or insignificant. If the p-value is less than 0.05 the relationship is considered significant or otherwise. Correlation coefficient is a number between +1 and -1 which demonstrates the strength of the relationship between quantifiable variables. The closer the coefficient to +1 indicates perfect positive correlation, and vice versa. Coefficient between -1 and +1 indicates weaker negative and weaker positive correlations respectively (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). Coefficients less than 0.5 represents a weak relationship, coefficients greater than 0.5, but less than 0.8, represents a moderate relationship and coefficients greater than 0.8 represents a strong relationship. Table 4.4 therefore shows the correlation between servicescape and customer satisfaction.

Table 4.4: Relationship between service scape factors and satisfaction

	Physical structural design	Hotel interior	Ambient factor
Satisfaction	0.812** (p = 0.000)	0.820** (p = 0.000)	0.844** (p = 0.000)

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field data, (2016)

From the Table it is noted that;

There is a strong positive (0.812) and significant relationship, p-value equal to 0.000 between physical structural design and satisfaction. Hence, it could be concluded that

physical structural design of the servicescape has a positive influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. This indicates that any attempt to improve the physical structural design of the servicescape of the hotel will lead to improvement in the satisfaction of the hotel guest.

Again, there is a strong positive (0.820) and significant relationship, p-value equal to 0.000 between hotel interior and satisfaction. The study therefore confirmed that hotel interiors of the servicescape has a positive influence on the satisfaction of hotel guests and for that matter any effort by hotel management to improve the interiors will lead to the creation of satisfied guests.

There is also a strong positive (0.844) and significant relationship, p-value equal to 0.000 between ambient factors and satisfaction. This leads to the confirmation that hotel ambient factors of the servicescape and the satisfaction of guest are positively related which means that any improvement in the ambient factors will increase guest satisfaction.

In all, the study has revealed that servicescape has influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest and that when the physical design, the hotel interior and ambient factors of hotels are improved, guest satisfaction is likely to increase.

4.7 Discussion of the Key Findings

This section of the research concentrated on the discussion of the main findings of the study. In this section the findings were compared with previous studies to examine the extent to which the findings agree and disagree with literature.

4.7.1 Influence of Physical structural Design of Servicescape on customer satisfaction

The study discovered that architectural design of the hotel, the internal layouts of the hotel, the location of the hotel and location of the hotel services, pool, restaurant, casino etc are the physical design factors of the hotel servicescape that have the highest influence on the satisfaction of the customers of Golden Tulip in Kumasi. Comparatively, the findings are consistent with some previous studies. The architectural design of

Golden Tulips buildings, the internal layout and locations of the hotel services (restaurant, pool, and casino) are part of the spatial layout and functionality condition of the servicescape element according to the servicescape model developed by Bitner (1992). This confirmed that the spatial layout and functionality condition of the servicescape are still needed to create satisfied hotel guest.

The works of Lucas (2003) support the influence of architectural designs and service arrangement and layout on the satisfaction of hotel guests. Lucas (2003) found service layout and architectural designs to be the second and third service scape elements that affect the satisfaction of the guest of Las Vegas hotels. In this study, architectural design and service layout were respectively found to be the first and fourth physical design of the servicescape elements that influence the satisfaction the guests of Golden Tulip Kumasi.

Hsu & Powers, (2002) supports the influence of hotel location on the satisfaction of customers. Hsu & Powers, (2002) revealed that hotels that are located at the prime areas that have easy access to business areas, shopping centers and are linked to major roads like that of the location of Golden Tulip influence the satisfaction of their guest.

4.7.2 Influence of Hotel Interiors of Servicescape on the Satisfaction of Customers.

Hotel interiors are considered as major component of servicescape model developed by Lucas (2003) and Lam et al. (2011). In this study it was discovered that the lighting in the lobby, lighting in the restaurant, style of decoration in the lobby and the colours in the guest room have the highest influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. The findings reflect the findings of many studies on the influence of hotel interiors on the satisfaction of guest. For instance, the finding is in line with the work of Sternke (2000) who specifically studied the influence of lighting on the satisfaction of guest. In his study, Sternke, (2000) discovered that proper lighting is needed in almost all the services of a hotel especially in the restaurant since proper lighting helps hotel guest to view the food in its best possible light.

Nam-Kyu and Farr (2007) has also found that lighting in the hotel lobby affect the first impression guests have about a hotel which eventually affect their satisfaction. Hence, the brightness of the lighting in the hotel lobby creates satisfied customers and this support the study findings. The work of Lin (2004) supports the findings of this study regarding the influences of style of decoration in the hotel lobby on the satisfaction of guest. Lin (2004) revealed that the style of interior décor of hotel lobby create satisfied hotel guest. The influence of colours on the satisfaction of hotel guest is supported by researchers like Robson (1999) and Portillo (2010). Robson, (1999) in particular revealed that bright colours in hotel rooms lead to pleasant feelings and help guest to find their ways within the room. Hence, a well combine colour of hotel creates satisfied hotel guests.

4.7.3 Influence of Ambient Factors of the Servicescape on the Satisfaction of Customers

The study has also discovered that hotel ambient factors of the servicescape have influenced on the satisfaction of guest with cleanliness of the hotel environment, cleanliness of the washroom, pleasant scent in the hotel environment, and background music at the reception having the highest influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. The findings support the fact that servicescape affects the satisfaction of customers and are consistent with many previous studies such as Lucas (2003), Ryu and Jang (2007), Dube and Renaghan (2000) and Raymond and Choi (2001). The cleanliness of the hotel environment and the washrooms have the highest influence on the satisfaction of the guest of Golden Tulip. Cleanliness was captured under the ambient condition of servicescape element according to the servicescape model developed by Bitner (1992). Cleanliness affects smell and helps to avoid bad scent. Researchers like Lucas (2003) and Kim (1999) found in their respective studies that the cleanliness of the hotel guestroom, restrooms and floors and the entire hotel environment has the highest influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest and this matches with the findings of this study. According to Kim (1999) the cleanliness of hotel environment affects the perception of guest which leads to either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This is in line with this study. Since Golden Tulip has a clean environment it has led to the satisfaction of its customers. Back ground music is another ambient condition element of the servicescape that affects the satisfaction of the guest of Golden Tulip and the finding is supported by numerous studies such as Jain and Bagdare (2011) and Ryu and Jang (2007). Ryu and Jang (2007) for instance, undertook a study in a restaurant environment and discovered that music affect the perception of guest and has the highest influence on the satisfaction of guest. Consistent with this study, Jain and Bagdare (2011) revealed that

music influence the affection of customers such as, pleasure, emotion, mood and arousal when it is played on a low sound. Pleasant scent within hotel environment is also considered to have influenced the satisfaction of the hotel guest in this study. This finding is supported by Lucas (2003) who discovered that pleasant scent in hotel environment guest satisfaction and influences them to stay in the hotel for longer hours, days, weeks and months.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is the final chapter of the study. It comprises of the summary of the main findings of the study, conclusion and recommendations made.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This section of the study provides a summary of the main research findings. The section has been arranged according to the main objectives for the study.

5.2.1 Influence of Physical Structure Designs on the Satisfaction of Customers

One of the objectives of the study was to reveal the influence of physical structure design of the servicescape on the satisfaction of the guest of Golden Tulip Kumasi. The study found that hotel guests are influenced by many components of the physical structural design of the servicescape. However, the architectural design of the hotel, the internal layouts of the hotel, the location of the hotel and location of the hotel services, pool, restaurant, casino etc were the physical design factors of the hotel servicescape that have the highest influence on the satisfaction of the customers of Golden Tulip in Kumasi.

5.2.2 Influence of Hotel Interiors on the Satisfaction of Customers

The study was also aimed at revealing the influence of hotel interiors of the service scape on the satisfaction of Golden Tulip customers. A lot of interior factors were found to have influenced the satisfaction of the hotel guest with the lighting in the lobby, lighting in the

restaurant, style of decoration in the lobby and the colours in the guest room having the highest influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest.

5.2.3 Influence of Ambient Factors on the Satisfaction of Customers

The ambient factors of the servicescape were also found to have influenced the satisfaction of the guests of Golden Tulip Kumasi. In this study, a lot of ambient factors were discovered but the key ones that have influence of the satisfaction of the hotel guest included cleanliness of the hotel environment, cleanliness of the washroom, pleasant scent in the hotel environment, and background music at the reception.

5.3 Conclusion

Understanding how service scape influences the satisfaction of hotel guests is a powerful marketing tool available to hotel managers. According to literature, consumer reactions to the service scape results in a number of positive benefits to service providers. Some of the benefits include; attraction of new customers, higher customer retention rates, successful cross-sell and up-sell opportunities by service providers, increase market share of service providers, improvements in staff morale and productivity, a decrease in staff turnover, reduction of operating costs and improved financial performance of service providers.

This study generally aimed at exploring the influences of service scape on the satisfaction of customers of Golden Tulip Kumasi and this has been achieved. It is therefore being concluded that servicescape has a positive influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. All the servicescape components; physical designs, interiors and ambient factors used in the study have positive influence on the satisfaction of hotel guest. However, the study concludes that the architectural designs of the hotel, internal layouts of the hotel,

cleanliness of the hotel environment, cleanliness of the wash room, the lighting in the lobby and the lighting in the restaurant are the key six servicescape factors that have the highest influence on the satisfaction of the guest of Golden Tulip Kumasi.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made.

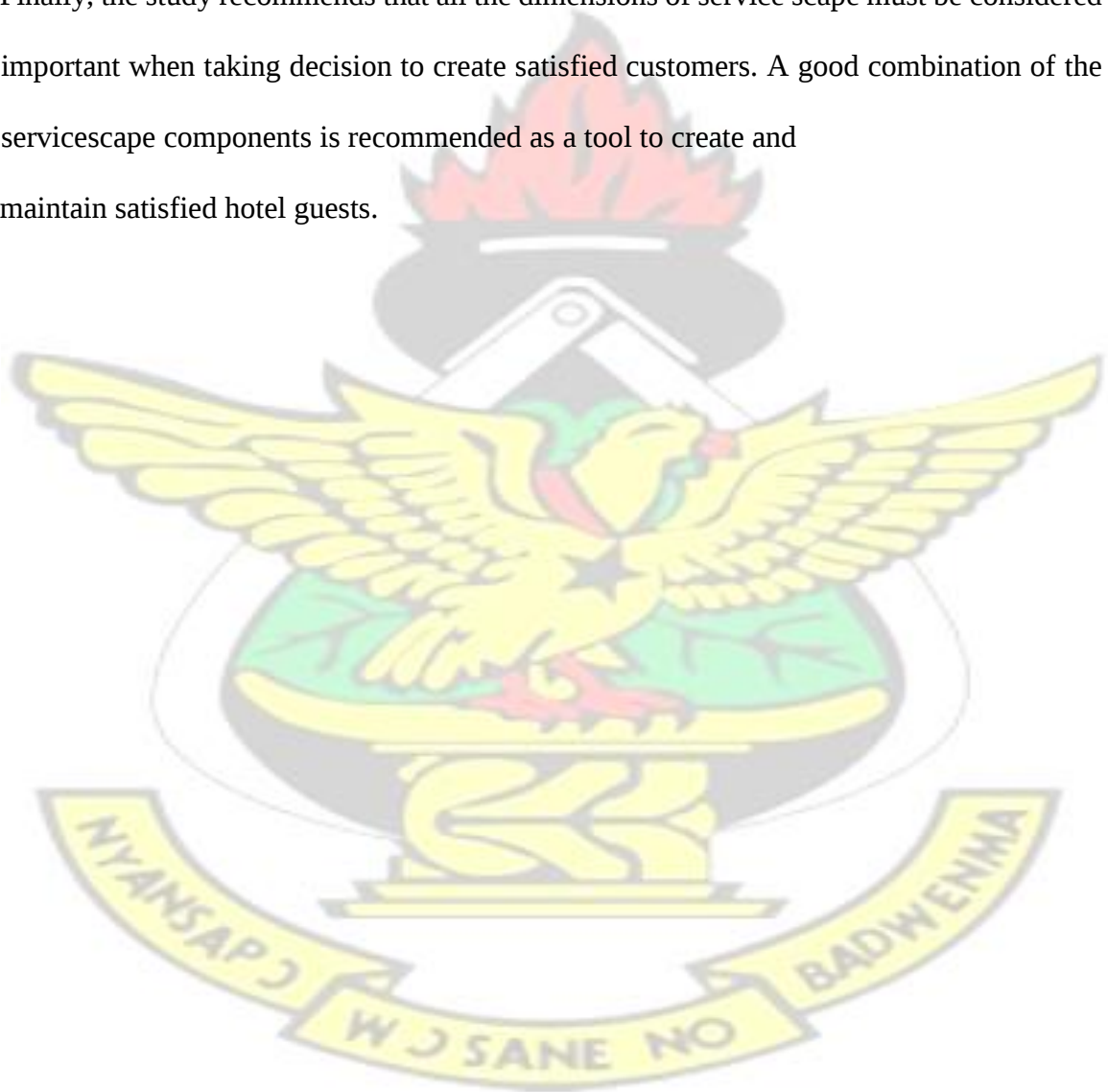
Suggestion is made to hotels to give much attention to the cleanliness of the hotels' floor, washroom and guest room and the entire environment since cleanliness has the highest influenced on the satisfaction of the guests. Timetable must be made with the cleaning company to frequently clean the hotel with good scent detergents in order to avoid bad scent. This must be monitored daily and plans must be made to fumigate the hotel occasionally.

The study also recommends that in order to attract new customers hotels must invest in the beautification of the hotel's environment with well combined lighting system around and inside the hotel. Importantly, the lighting in the hotel restaurant and the lobbies must be attractive and meet customers' expectations.

Entrepreneurs and investors who desire to enter into the hotel industry are also recommended to have a nice and modern architectural design of their buildings and beautiful and meaningful internal layouts in order to attract and maintain customers. Meaningful layouts ease human traffic in the hotel and contribute to customer convenience and satisfaction.

Additionally, the study recommends to hotels to use background music to influence the satisfaction of the guests. However, music can have a negative effect on the perception of customers if the sound is very high. Hence, it is recommended that a low sound should be used and effort must be made to discover the kind of music guests want to listen and the times they expect to listen to the music.

Finally, the study recommends that all the dimensions of service scape must be considered important when taking decision to create satisfied customers. A good combination of the servicescape components is recommended as a tool to create and maintain satisfied hotel guests.



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APPENDIX

MBA THESIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

I am pursuing my Masters Degree at KNUST Business School and I am undertaking a thesis work entitled “**Exploring the influence of service scape on customer satisfaction in the Ghanaian hospitality industry: A case study of Golden Tulip Kumasi.** I am therefore by this questionnaire requesting you to share your experience with me to help complete my thesis. Be informed the content of your response would be treated confidently and your identity is not required.

Section A: Background of Respondents

Kindly tick (☐) to indicate your response to the question where applicable and provide your own response where necessary.

1. Indicate your Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Indicate your Age: Below 20 ☐ 21 – 30 ☐ 31 – 40 ☐ 41 – 50 ☐ Above 50 years ☐
3. How many times have you visited Golden Tulip: Once ☐ 2-5 times ☐ Many times ☐
4. Please indicate your purpose for visiting Golden Tulip

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OBJECTIVES

1. To measure the influence of physical structure designs on the satisfaction of Golden Tulip customers.

2. To find out the extent to which hotel interiors influence the satisfaction of Golden Tulip customers.
3. To examine the influence of ambient factors on the satisfaction of Golden Tulip customers

Objective 1: The Influence of Physical Designs on Customer Satisfaction

6. To what extent do the physical structural design factors in the table below influence your satisfaction with the hotel services? Using a scale of (1) no influence to (5) high influence

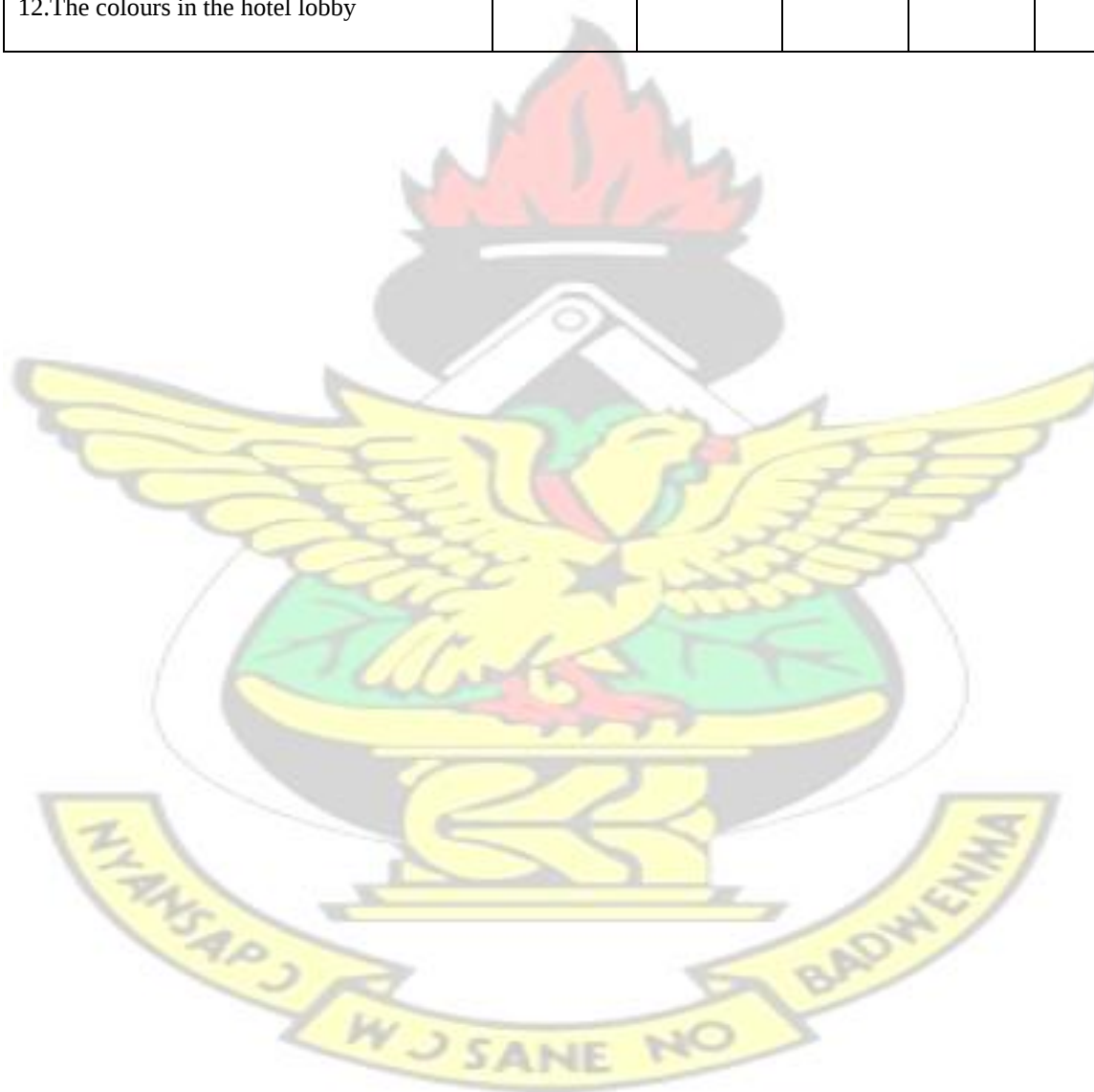
Physical Structural Designs	1. No Influence	2 Low Influence	3 Neutral	4 Moderate Influence	5 High Influence
1. The location of the hotel					
2. Architectural design of the hotel					
3. The furnishing of the hotel buildings					
4. Comfortable seats					
5. Spacious seating arrangements					
6. Large packing space of the hotel					
7. The plants and gardens of the hotel					
8. The internal layouts of the hotel					
9. Location of the hotel services, pool, restaurant, casino etc					
10. Artworks at the hotel					

Objective 2: The Influence of Hotel Interiors on Customer Satisfaction

To what extent do the hotel interior factors in the table below influence your satisfaction with the hotel services? Using a scale of (1) no influence to (5) high influence

Hotel Interiors	1. No Influence	2 Low Influence	3 Neutral	4 Moderate Influence	5 High Influence
1. The style of decoration in the restaurant					
2. The style of decoration in the guest room					
3. The style of decoration in the lobby					
4. The furnishings in the lobby					

5.The furnishings in the guest room					
6. The furnishings in the restaurant					
7.The lighting in the guest room					
8. The lighting in the lobby					
9. The lighting in the restaurant					
10. The colours in the guest room					
11. The colours in the restaurant					
12.The colours in the hotel lobby					



Objective 3: The influence of Ambient Factors on Customer Satisfaction

To what extent do the ambient factors in the table below influence your satisfaction with the hotel services? Using a scale of (1) no influence to (5) high influence

Ambient Factors	1. No Influence	2 Low Influence	3 Neutral	4 Moderate Influence	5 High Influence
1. Background music at the reception					
2. Loudness of the music at the hotel					
3. Slower music tempo					
4.Aroma scent in the hotel restaurant					
5. The pleasant scent in the guest room					
6. Scent in the wash room					
7.The peasant scent in the hotel environment					
8. Noise within the hotel					
9. Noise outside the hotels					
10. Cleanliness of the hotel environment					
11. Cleanliness of the washroom					