

# The effect of other customer perception and need for uniqueness on service experience and revisit intention

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**Abstract:** *Service marketing focuses on service encounter stimuli, such as the servicescape, employee interactions, the core service, and other customers. The studies that have focused on other customers' role as a social component of the service environment have led to the development of a comprehensive measure of other customer perception. Thus, based on the social impact theory, attraction theory and the theory of uniqueness, the study analysed the effect of Other Customer Perception (OCP), Need for Uniqueness (NFU and their interaction on service experience and revisit intention by employing a scenario-based quasi-experimental research design with a sample of 127 job holder postgraduate management students using convenient sampling technique. The study employed MANOVA GLM model and concludes that while the impact of consumers' perceptions of other customers' similarity does influence service experience of the customers, demonstrating that not only the restaurant itself, but also the entities in the surrounding network such as other customers have an impact on service experience and their revisit intention. Therefore, other customer effect, which works as a basis for service experience and revisit intention, should not be neglected when designing the surroundings in restaurant settings.*

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**Key words:** OCP, NFU, interaction, service experience, revisit intention, MANOVA.

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## **I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Over the past few decades, services have witnessed a global shift from merely delivering services to an experience economy focusing on staging experiences (Gilmore, 2003). Business pioneers accept customer experience is key to firm competitiveness (McCall, 2015) and marketing researchers consider it the major reason for marketing management (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Accenture (2015) detailed that improving the client experience got the main rankings when administrators were approached about their first concerns for the next 12 months. Different firms, for example, Amazon and Google currently have chief customer experience officers liable for making and dealing with the experience of their customers. Schmitt (1999) was one of the principal scholars to accentuate the significance of customer experience, and Pine and Gilmore (1998) specifically addressed the importance of experiences in today's society and the opportunities for firms to benefit by making solid and enduring customer experiences.

## **II. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The existing research on other customers sharing a service environment has been divided into two streams: customer-to-customer interactions and passive role of other customer (Tombs & McColl-Kennedy, 2003). The more common research stream, referred to as customer-to-customer interactions or observable oral participations, concerns how interactions with other customers influence a consumer (McGrath & Otnes, 1995, and Moore, Moore, & Capella, 2005). These interactions are known to influence a customer's loyalty to the firm, positive word of mouth (Moore, Moore, & Capella, 2005), and voluntary performances (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2007).

The scholars in view of the later stream argued that the presence of other customers could affect a customer in a service environment even without direct interactions (Eroglu & Machleit, 1990; Hui & Bateson, 1991; Martin, 1996, and Grove & Fisk 1997). Building on these notions, the effects of some aspects of other customer influence on increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty have been demonstrated by (Martin & Pranter, 1989, and Bitner, Faranda, Hubbert, & Zeithaml, 1997). Argo, Dahl, and Manchanda (2005) came up with the finding that in some individuals, similarity with others may heighten the sense of proximity which in turn would increase their self-consciousness and self-presentation behaviour. Jang, Ro, and Kim (2015) found that other customers sharing the same service environment also influence how guests form the image of a restaurant and their revisit intention. Thus, the present study focuses on the passive effects of other customers, or the mere presence of others who share the same service environment in a restaurant context and their need for uniqueness.

## **III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The major objective of the study was to determine the determinants of consumer service experience and their revisit intention in restaurant settings. The two specific

objectives were as:

- To analyse the relationship between other customers' perception, need for uniqueness and their interaction with the service experience and revisit intention of the focal customers in restaurant settings; and
- To examine the roles of other customers' perception, need for uniqueness and their interaction on the service experience and revisit intention of the focal customers in restaurant settings

#### IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the theoretical foundations of this study is social impact theory developed by Latane (1981), which characterized social effect as any influence on individual sentiments, thoughts or conduct created from the real, implied or envisioned presence or activities of others. Drawing on the social impact theory, Argo, Dahl, and Manchanda (2005) investigated the non-interactive effects of various social forces such as social size and proximity on retail consumer's emotions and self-presentation behaviours. Similarly, Cialdini and Goldstein (2004) explained how social influence causes changes in behaviour, attitudes and beliefs of individuals because of their interaction with others. These applications of social impact theory in understanding the change in the behaviour of focal customers amid other customers justifies the use of this theory in the study.

Likewise, the study also extracted the elements of the attraction theory postulated by Byrne (1971). Attraction theory attempts to explain and predict interpersonal liking by asserting that people are attracted to others who are similar rather than dissimilar to themselves. In addition to people's inclinations to be attracted to those who share similar attitudes, people are also attracted to others who manifest personality characteristics (e.g., optimism, self-esteem, shyness, conscientiousness) that are similar to their own. In fact, people may choose to associate with certain others because they have similar personalities.

Though attraction theory explains many cases of interpersonal attraction, it may not accurately predict all attraction outcomes (Singh & Ho, 2000). In some cases, avoidance of dissimilar others may better explain certain patterns of human liking (Rosenbaum, 1986). Attitudinal dissimilarity, rather than attitudinal similarity, drives the similarity-liking link i.e., people's motivation to avoid social interactions with dissimilar others is stronger than, or at least as strong as, people's desire to affiliate with like-minded others (Rosenbaum, 1986). Singh and Ho (2000) revealed that, under certain circumstances, the influence of attitudinal similarity and dissimilarity may exert equivalent and opposite effects on liking i.e., dissimilar attitudes may have a stronger influence on interpersonal attraction than similar attitudes

Theory of uniqueness by Snyder and Fromkin (1977) postulated that individuals are in a constant drive to evaluate the degree of similarity and dissimilarity with others and their behaviour is a reaction to these evaluations. Individuals, who have a high NFU perceive high levels of similarity as a threat to their identity, hence try to increase those

activities that elicit their uniqueness (Xu, Shen, & Wyer, 2012). As per the theory, not every customer might be equally sensitive to other customers; one may assess the presence of other customers in a service environment either as more favourable or unfavourable because of individual's need for uniqueness (NFU). Such a difference can weaken or strengthen the service experience of the focal customers amid other customers. This justification motivates to apply the theory of uniqueness in the current study.

Although the primary function of the restaurant is to provide food and beverage, however customers today want to enhance their quality of life and enjoy comfortable dining space, thus improvement of food quality alone is not sufficient to make customers have quality dining experience (Horng, Chou, Liu, & Tsai, 2013). Due to customers demand for a better dining environment, these motivated fast-food marketers keep on upgrading the restaurant environments to enhance consumers' quality dining experience thus will lead to desired consumer a higher willingness to visit (Xu, 2007). The pleasing environment has a potential to stimulate customers buying habit and produce more profit (Turley & Milliman, 2000). Besides, Chen and Hsieh (2011) study showed that pleasure and arousal environment will stimulate customers to spend approximately 12 percent more.

Many studies indicated that making the atmosphere more pleasant and innovative is essential for a firm's success (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996, and Reimer & Kuehn, 2005). Kokko (2005) suggested that atmosphere in a restaurant is often perceived by customers as the single most positive characteristic of the establishment, and even more important than food served. This is because the surrounding will create an expectation of dining experience even before the customer is served (Young, Clark, & McIntyre, 2007). Customers will read the environment and choose which restaurant to dine (Kwun & Oh, 2006).

Hospitality literature also identified other customers as one of the factors influencing the emotional experience of people during service delivery (Miao & Mattila, 2013, and Ryu & Jang, 2008). For example, the number of people in a restaurant (Hwang, Yoon, & Bendle, 2012), the appearance of customers (Choi & Mattila, 2016), and behaviour of other customers affect consumers' evaluation of service (Miao, Mattila, & Mount, 2011). Therefore, sharing the same environment during service delivery influences customer satisfaction based on emotional experience in the restaurant industry (Wu and Liang, 2009). Moreover, other customers in a service setting have been found to influence customers' image and behavioural intentions (Jang, Ro, & Kim, 2015).

Zhang (2005) study in the restaurant and airline service contexts showed that appearance e.g., similarity and displayed emotions and displayed behaviours of other customers influence the focal customer's service experience e.g., comfort and desire to leave the service premise. Similarly, Brocato, Vorhees, and Baker (2012) concluded other customers who conform to the norms of the service are likely to affect service perception positively and those who disrupt the service experience may induce negative service perceptions (Grove & Fisk, 1997). Consequently, Wu, Yeh, and Woodside (2014) in this regard found that different dimensions of customer-to-customer interaction impact individual's evaluation of the fellow customers, and this evaluation would in turn influence individual's satisfaction with the overall service experiences.

In the context of the restaurant industry, customers' service experience is about their perception of restaurant characteristics (Jeong & Jang, 2011). Based on these perceptions, customers form their expectations and image and develop a relation with restaurants. Specifically, for the restaurant industry, studies have advocated that dining experience is positively associated with loyalty and future behavioural intentions (Jang, Ro, & Kim, 2015, and Ryu, Lee, & Kim, 2012). Hyun (2010) further argued that a positive restaurant experience also influences trust of restaurant guests. Similarly, Jin, Line, & Merkebu (2015) have provided additional support for the positive effect of experiential quality on trust and satisfaction of full-service restaurant customers. Also, customers' positive experience with restaurant attributes not only affects satisfaction and trust but also helps to develop positive image (Line, Hanks, & Kim, 2016).

In addition to customer experience, revisit intention is commonly mentioned in literature as a significant behavioural intention (Han & Ryu, 2009; Han & Kim, 2009; and Jani & Han, 2011). In context of restaurants, behavioural intentions can be described as the expressed willingness to engage in repeat patronage of the restaurant and share positive comments about the restaurant with family, friends and others in the future (Ryu, Han, & Jang, 2010). Essentially, revisit is related to the decision of customers to continue engagement with the service provider in the future (Hume, Mort, & Winzar, 2007). A favourable revisit intention certainly represents one of the key managerial objectives. In fact, revisit intention is one of the key components of loyalty. Customers that are prepared to visit the restaurant again, as well as to share positive word-of-mouth, represent a crucial source of generating long-term profitability (Hume, Mort, & Winzar, 2007, and Ryu, Han, & Jang, 2010).

## V. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE VARIABLES

Literature review has advocated that dining experience is positively associated with loyalty and future behavioural intentions specifically for the restaurant industry. Further, based on customers' service experience, customers form their expectations and image and develop a relation with restaurants. Thus, the study proposes the research framework (*Figure 1*). The explanatory variables of the study are other customers' perception (OCP), need for uniqueness (NFU) and the interaction of OCP \* NFU. Likewise, the study has multivariate outcome variables namely: service experience and revisit intention. The study proposes to determine the univariate and multivariate effect of OCP, NFU and OCP \* NFU on service experience and revisit intention.

**Other Customer Perception (OCP).** The study has defined OCP as individual's perception of other customers simultaneously present in restaurant service setting in terms of his/her degree of identification or perceived similarity with them, perception of their physical appearances, and the perceived appropriateness of their behaviour. This variable has been measured in categorical scale in two different scenarios as in Appendix 1 as per the suggestions of Brocato, Vorhees, & Baker (2012).

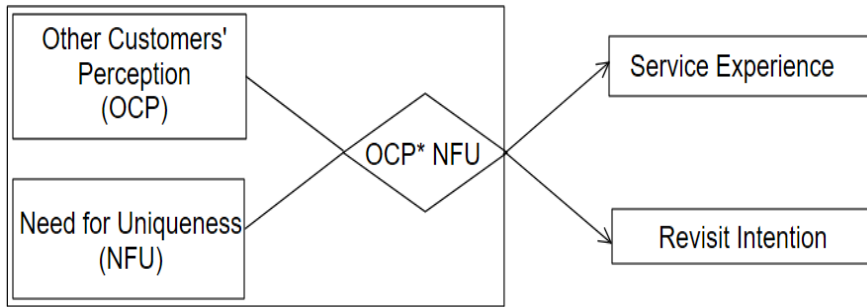


Figure 1. *Research framework of the study*

**Need for Uniqueness (NFU).** Consumers' need for uniqueness is defined as an individual's pursuit of differentness relative to others that is achieved through the acquisition, utilization, and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of developing and enhancing one's personal and social identity. The study employed the highest preferred five items out of 31 from the CFNU construct by Tian, Bearden, & Hunter (2001) to measure the NFU in a five-point Likert scale and later converted into the categorical variable with two levels: Low need for uniqueness (LNFU) and high need for uniqueness (HNFU) based on the average value of summated five NFU items.

**Service experience.** Service experience is defined as the end-to-end set of customer experiences that add value to a service. In this study, service experience is typically viewed from the customer perspective as a journey whereby a customer discovers, the overall experience based on perception of other customers during the focal customer's dining at the restaurant. Service experience was measured using four items adopted by Wan, Chan, and Su (2011), and Gaur, Xu, Quazi, and Nandi (2011).

**Revisit intention.** Revisit intention is defined as the degree to which a person has formulated conscious plans to perform or not perform some specified future behaviour. In this study, revisit intention means the likelihood that visitors are coming back to the restaurant in the future. Likewise, revisit intention was measured using the four items developed by Kim and Lee (2011), and Bolkan, Goodboy, and Bachman (2012) respectively.

## VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bitner (1990) suggested the suitability of the experimental research design in this type of study with the intention of capturing the effect of levels of the categorical variables. However, due to the difficulty in COVID-19 period and more expensiveness of this design, the study employed scenario-based quasi-experimental research design as per the suggestion of Chan and Wan (2008). The study developed two scenarios to describe the other customers in the restaurant settings as per the measure of OCP (Brocato, Vorhees, & Baker, 2012). The samples were divided into two homogeneous groups in terms of their engagement in the job during their studies and were requested to fill the questionnaire under two scenarios. The two scenarios are presented in *Appendix 1*.

The jobholder students of different gender in different postgraduate management colleges of Kathmandu were the population of the study to minimize the variation in the data for the purpose of generalization. The rationale behind selecting jobholder students is the assumption that they frequently visit the restaurants. Further, the motivations of availing the restaurant as the sample sector is that this sector is more experiential in nature than other service sector (Geuens, Vantomme, & Brengman, 2004) and because they are expected to capture the effects of other customers well and are one of the largest and fastest-growing industries (Andaleeb & Conway, 2006). The study determined 127 respondents as the sample. The study had only three parameters to be estimated and the sample size of 127 is adequate and higher than the recommendation ( $50+8k = 74$  or  $104+k = 107$ , whichever is greater) by Green (1991), where  $k$  is the number of parameters to be estimated.

At the first stage of sampling, the study identified 10 colleges offering postgraduate degree in Kathmandu using convenient sampling techniques due to possibility of ignorance by the college administration and the students amid COVID-19 virus pandemic. The study identified the jobholder students in the colleges, met them personally a day prior to the survey, and requested them to participate in the survey the next day to be followed with breakfast. In every college, the study assigned the jobholder students to two quasi-experimental scenarios conveniently with eight students in each scenario.

Before being exposed to the scenario i.e., in first stage each respondent from each group responded to the scale items of NFU adopted from Tian, Bearden, & Hunter (2001). In second stage, the researcher briefed the respondents about the scenario and requested them to fill the questionnaire on various dimensions of OCP, service experience and revisit intention in the assumed restaurant in the assumed scenario. The number of respondents from each scenario from each college is in *Appendix 2*.

The study was primarily based on primary data. The scales used to measure the constructs in our conceptual framework has been adapted from the existing literature with minor wording modifications to suit the restaurant services capes. The study extracted the items on OCP developed by Brocato, Vorhees, and Baker (2012) including six items under three dimensions namely similarity, physical appearance and suitable behaviour. Similarly, the highest preferred five items out of 31 from the CFNU construct by Tian, Bearden, and Hunter (2001) has been included in the construct NFU. The study has two dependent constructs: service experience and revisit intention. Service experience was measured using four items adopted by Wan, Chan, and Su (2011), and Gaur, Xu, Quazi, and Nandi (2011). Likewise, revisit intention was measured using the four items developed by Kim and Lee (2011), and Bolkan, Goodboy, and Bachman (2012) respectively. The study used the five-point Likert scales with anchoring "1" as strongly disagree and "5" as strongly agree.

The study has employed the MANOVA GLM model for analysing the proposed causal relationships. The explanatory variable OCP was measured using the two scenarios: Conforming other customers perception (COCP) and Non-conforming other customers perception (NCOCP). Likewise, NFU first have been measured in five-point Likert scale and then converted into dichotomous variables based on mean value for all samples:

Low need for uniqueness (LNFU) and High need for uniqueness (HNFU). The mean value of the focal customer for NFU greater or equal to 3.39 is considered to have high need for uniqueness (coded as 1) and vice versa (coded as 0). The variable OCP\*NFU was derived as the product of OCP and NFU to determine the interaction effect on service experience and revisit intention at univariate and multivariate level.

The two dependent measures service experience and revisit intention were also measured in five-point Likert scale and averaged with the number of items in each construct. These two measures in the study were in interval scale. Thus, the full model of between-subject MANOVA has been tested comprehensively to understand how OCP, NFU and OCP\*NFU influence service experience and revisit intention of the focal customers. The study then employed separate univariate test on each dependent variable separately through two-way ANOVA to confirm the MANOVA results.

## VII. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The study has employed MANOVA GLM model in the study with two outcome variables: service experience and revisit intention. Service experience was measured using four items adopted by Wan, Chan, and Su (2011), and Gaur, Xu, Quazi, and Nandi (2011). Whereas, revisit intention was measured using the four items developed by Kim and Lee (2011) and Bolkan, Goodboy, and Bachman (2012) respectively. Further, the study employed three explanatory variables: OCP, NFU and interaction variable of OCP and NFU. The OCP was measured as categorical variable: those two homogenous groups of respondents who participated in survey under two different scenarios of services capes as conforming and non-conforming OCP. Similarly, the variable NFU was also measured as categorical variable. Initially, the highest preferred five items out of 31 from the CFNU construct by Tian, Bearden, and Hunter (2001) has been included in the construct NFU. In later stage, the mean value of NFU (3.397) was then used as the threshold to categorize the total sample into two groups: High NFU and Low NFU. The third exogenous variable was the interaction variable of OCP and NFU.

The construct items of NFU, service experience and revisit intention were extracted from the already validated questionnaires, the study assumes research instrument fulfils the validity. Likewise, the study has tested the internal consistency of the research instruments using Cronbach's alpha. The internal consistency of the variables under study is presented in *Table 1*.

Table 1  
Test of internal consistency

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Variance	Cronbach's Alpha
Need for uniqueness	5	16.984	4.976	24.762	0.911
Service experience	4	12.842	4.5398	20.61	0.912
Revisit intention	4	14.126	3.575	12.778	0.77

Note. Field survey, 2021



The Cronbach's alpha value for the construct NFU was 0.911 with retention of all the five items. The mean, standard deviation and variance of the scale NFU were 16.984, 4.976 and 24.762 respectively. Likewise, the Cronbach's alpha values for the constructs service experience and revisit intention were 0.912 and 0.770, indicating the existence of internal consistency of the research instruments. Thus, the study fulfils the reliability of the constructs under study as the Cronbach's alpha values were greater than 0.7 (acceptable reliability) as suggested by (Taber, 2018).

### VIII. DATA ANALYSIS

The study collected data from 127 jobholder graduate management from 10 different colleges stationed in Kathmandu. The *Appendix 2* depicts the sample characteristics of the study in terms of gender, which includes 58 male students (45.7 per cent) and 69 female students (54.3). Likewise, *Appendix 3* exhibits the sample characteristics in terms of age group. The sample includes 72 and 55 students of age group less than 25 and 25 plus, which is 45 per cent and 55 per cent respectively. *Appendix 4* highlights the motivating factors of the respondents for dining in the restaurant. Most of the respondents responded entertainment as the major motivation to dine in the restaurant (31.5 per cent) followed by the close to campus/place (30.7 per cent). Likewise, 19.7 per cent of the respondents opined of visiting the restaurant during special occasion and finally 18.1 per cent of the respondents preferred to visit restaurant for time saving purpose.

The study also segregated the sample on the base of frequency of visit to the restaurants. *Appendix 5* depicts 28.3 per cent of the sample visits the restaurant on a regular basis, 19.7 per cent, 9.4 per cent, 16.5 per cent and 26 per cent visit restaurant 1-2 times per week, 1-2 times per fortnight, 1-2 times per month and occasionally respectively. Finally, the study stratified the sample on the basis of their stay. *Appendix 6* exhibits the 38.6 per cent of the sample respondents were staying alone during their studies and work in Kathmandu. The sample had 28.3 per cent and 33.1 per cent of the students living with their family/relatives and in the hostel.

Table 2  
Correlation analysis between outcome variables

Variables		Service experience	Revisit intention
Service experience	Pearson Correlation	1	.715**
Revisit intention			1

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

Note. Field survey, 2021

To employ the MANOVA GLM model, the outcome variables measured in continuous scales need to correlate with each other. The study measured the outcome variables service experience and revisit intention in five-point Likert scale and then finally averaged with the number of retained items after the reliability analysis. Thus, the *Table 2* depicts the correlation analysis between service experience and revisit intention. The correlation coefficient between the variables is positive and significant with the coefficient of 0.715

and significant value  $<0.001$ . Thus, the study fulfils the requirement for employing the MANOVA GLM model.

The multivariate Pillai's trace test in *Table 3* supports there are significant main effect of OCP ( $P=0.001$ ), NFU ( $P=0.001$ ) and OCP\*NFU ( $P=0.010$ ) on the multivariate outcomes of service experience and revisit intention. The effect size was the highest for the variable OCP, NFU and OCP\*NFU with the partial eta square value of 0.542. 0.188 and 0.073 respectively.

**Table 3**  
Multivariate Pillai's trace test

Effect	np2	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	0.970	1992.2b	2	122	0.001
OCP	0.542	72.2b	2	122	0.001
NFU	0.188	14.1b	2	122	0.001
OCP * NFU	0.073	4.8b	2	122	0.010

a Design: Intercept + OCP + NFU + OCP \* NFU

b Exact statistic

Note. Field survey, 2021

Since the main effects and interaction effects are significant in multivariate Pillai's trace test, the *Table 4* displays the test of between subject effects for univariate response variables: service experience and revisit intention. The table delineates the significant effect of OCP on service experience and revisit intention ( $P=0.001$  and  $0.001$ ). The partial eta square values of 0.528 and 0.352 supports the higher effect size of OCP on service experience compared to revisit intention.

**Table 4**  
Between subject effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	np2
Corrected Model	Service experience	94.522a	3	31.507	57.175	0.001	0.582
	Revisit intention	52.662b	3	17.554	45.018	0.001	0.523
Intercept	Service experience	1140.097	1	1140.097	2068.899	0.001	0.944
	Revisit intention	1432.037	1	1432.037	3672.504	0.001	0.968
OCP	Service experience	75.701	1	75.701	137.373	0.001	0.528
	Revisit intention	26.008	1	26.008	66.698	0.001	0.352
NFU	Service experience	0.898	1	0.898	1.63	0.204	0.013
	Revisit intention	10.341	1	10.341	26.519	0.001	0.177
OCP * NFU	Service experience	2.738	1	2.738	4.969	0.028	0.039
	Revisit intention	0.268	1	0.268	0.688	0.408	0.006
Error	Service experience	67.781	123	0.551			
	Revisit intention	47.962	123	0.39			

<sup>a</sup> R Squared = .582 (Adjusted R Squared = .572) <sup>b</sup> R Squared = .523 (Adjusted R Squared = .512)

Note. Field survey, 2021

The table also depicts the significant effect of NFU on revisit intention ( $P=0.001$ ) with moderate effect size 0.177. However, the effect of NFU was observed to be insignificant

on service experience. Likewise, the study observed the significant interaction effect of OCP\*NFU on service experience ( $P=0.028$ ) with the weak effect size of 0.039. On the other hand, the interaction effect of OCP and NFU on revisit intention was observed to be insignificant.

Table 5  
Estimated marginal means of service experience

OCP/NFU levels	LNFU	HNFU	Total
NCOCP	2.4167	2.2841	2.3711
COCP	3.7381	4.2262	4.0635
Total	2.8571	3.5586	3.2106

Note. Field survey, 2021

Figure 2 shows the interaction effect of OCP\*NFU on service experience. To illustrate this interaction effect, figure 2 unveils the marginal mean response for each factor, adjusted for other variables in the model. The estimated marginal means for NCOCP with LNFU was 2.4167, and it was 3.7381 for COCP with LNFU. Likewise, the estimated marginal means for NCOCP with HNFU was 2.2841, and it was 4.2262 for COCP with HNFU. The Figure 2 affirms the existence of interaction effect of OCP and NFU on service experience. The calculated estimated marginal means of service experience is depicted in Table 5.

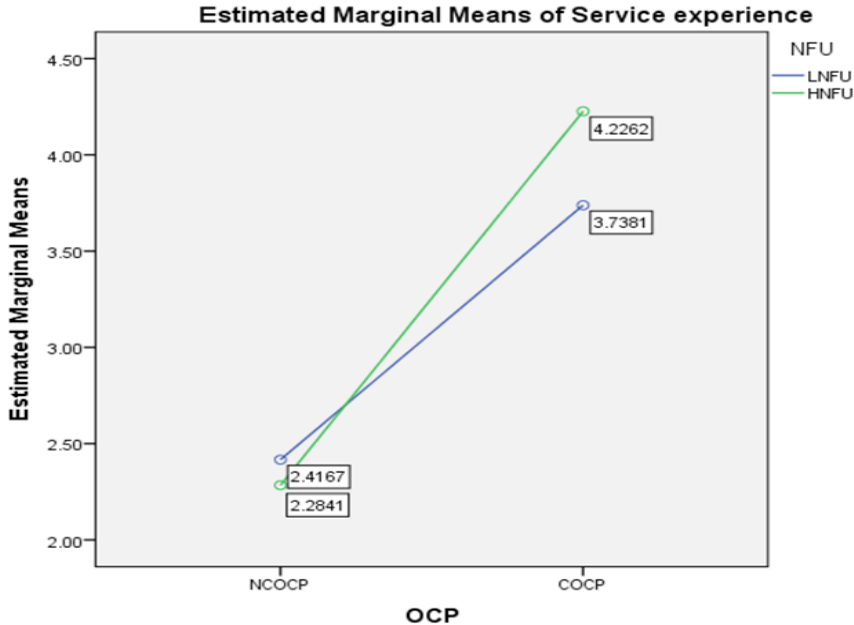


Figure 2. Estimated marginal means: Service experience

Note. Field survey, 2021

Figure 3 unveils the insignificant interaction effect of OCP and NFU on revisit intention, as two slopes do not intersect to each other i.e., the two slopes are to some

extent parallel. However, the Figure also delineates, the HNFU customers have higher revisit intention and the customers with LNFU have lower revisit intention. The estimated marginal means for NCOCP with LNFU was 2.7202, and it was 3.7738 for COCP with LNFU with the difference of (3.7738 - 2.7202 = 1.0536). Likewise, the estimated marginal means for NCOCP with HNFU was 3.4205, and it was 4.2798 for COCP with HNFU with the difference of (4.2798 – 3.4205 = 0.8593). The *Figure 3* affirms the non-existence of interaction effect of OCP and NFU on revisit intention. The calculated estimated marginal means of revisit intention is depicted in *Table 6*.

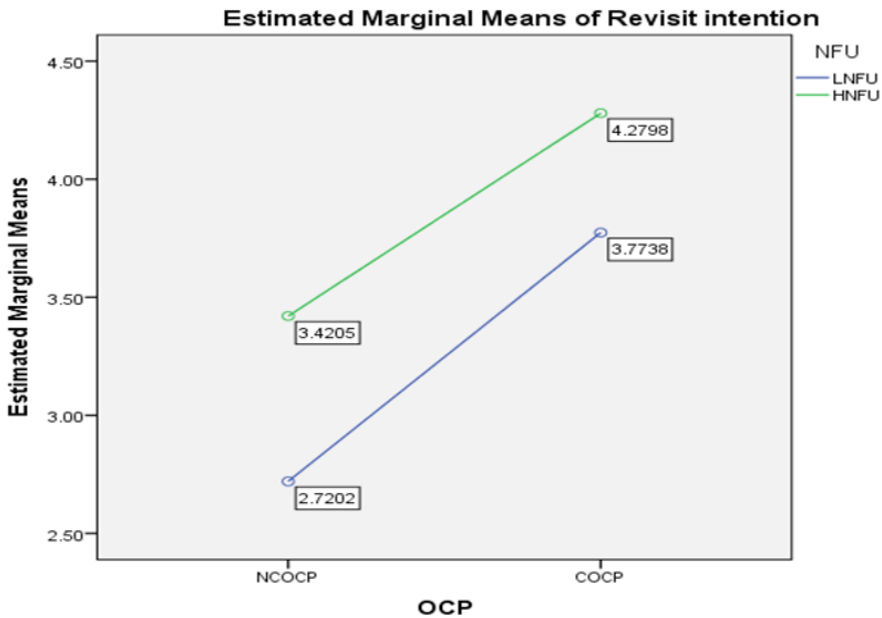


Figure 3. *Estimated marginal means: Revisit intention*  
 Note. Field survey, 2021

The *Table 6* portrays the raw values of the estimated marginal means across the level of OCP and NFU. Likewise, it also exhibits the total mean values of revisit intention for each level of OCP (2.9609 and 4.1111), NFU (3.0714 and 3.9844), and grand mean value (3.5315)

Table 6  
 Estimated marginal means of revisit intention

OCP/NFU levels	LNFU	HNFU	Total
NCOCP	2.7202	3.4205	2.9609
COCP	3.7738	4.2798	4.1111
Total	3.0714	3.9844	3.5315

Note: Field survey, 2021

## IX. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results reveal those assessments of a customer experience and revisit intention, that simply focus on aspects of a firm's performance may be incomplete in contexts where customers share the service facility. Thus, the study concludes that consumers in a restaurant setting evaluate others based on behaviours expected of those people in their role as customer and focal customers' NFU. The study suggests that while the impact of consumers' perceptions of other customers' similarity does influence service experience of the customers, demonstrating that not only the restaurant itself, but also the entities in the surrounding network such as other customers have an impact on service experience and their revisit intention. Therefore, other customer effect, which works as a basis for service experience and revisit intention, should not be neglected when designing the surroundings in restaurant settings.

In other words, this study stresses that consumers' interactions with other customers are a source of similarity evaluation and other customer effect is one of the underlying mechanisms that trigger the focal customers to experience the service and reach to overall impression about restaurants and plan the future revisit intention. Thus, the study also emphasized the fact that restaurants should engage in activities that make their identities more appealing for potential and existing customers through managing their current portfolio of customers. This result further concludes it is important for restaurants to create a general notion among the existing and new customers about their restaurants as being similar to their requirements and this may serve as an emotionally appealing point for consumers to revisit the restaurants.

Extant research has shown that customers make inferences about the unknown by drawing inferences from cues in the physical environment and employees that are available to them. This study suggests that consumers in a restaurant setting evaluate others based on behaviours expected of those people in their role as customer and focal customers' NFU. The results reveal those assessments of a customer experience and revisit intention, that simply focus on aspects of a firm's performance may be incomplete in contexts where customers share the service facility. This study extends the researchers' knowledge of cue utilization to include other customers perception and need for uniqueness in the service setting. To capture a more complete picture of the influence of the physical and service environment on consumers, researchers should include OCP and NFU in future studies.

The findings of this research have marketing implications for restaurant businesses as well. The results of this study may provide actionable guidelines for practitioners in better managing customer-to-customer experiences and hence implications for developing marketing strategies. First and foremost, this study shows that customers' evaluations of other customers of an organization should be monitored by restaurants to create a unique service experience and revisit intention of the customers in their restaurants through managing customer-related social influences. Even though management of organizations may think that interactions among customers is beyond their control, a couple of areas can be focused on by managers. The study also suggests that restaurants should engage in activities that

make their identities more appealing for potential and existing customers through managing their current portfolio of customers. While segmenting and targeting customers, they should focus on similarities in areas such as age, lifestyle, education, etc., to have homogenous groups. Furthermore, customer service experience and revisit intention can be enhanced by managing the social norms expected by their targeted customers.

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### Conflict of interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest in the research work.



## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### *Scenarios of other customer perception*

##### *Scenario 1-Conforming OCP*

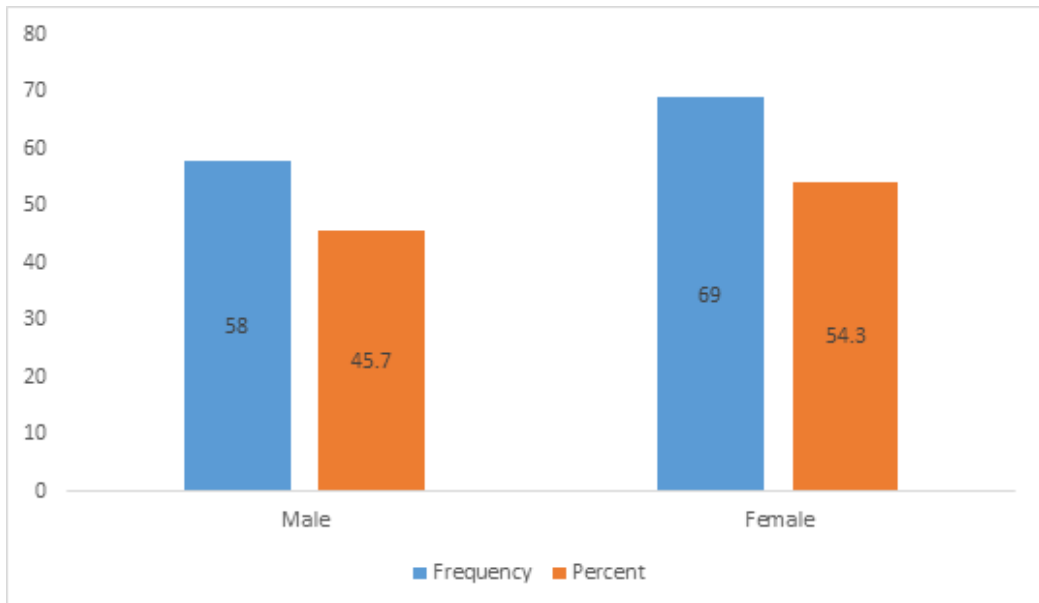
While having your meal in the restaurant, you see other customers with whom you can relate to. Most of them are of your age and you find them to be dressed suitably for the place. You observe that they are enjoying their food with their companions and seem to acknowledge your presence around them.

##### *Scenario 2-Non-conforming OCP*

While having your dinner in the restaurant, you see other customers with whom you are unable to relate to. Most of them are of other age to you and you find them to be dressed a bit shabbily. You observe that they are speaking too loudly with their companions and seem to be unaware of your presence around them.

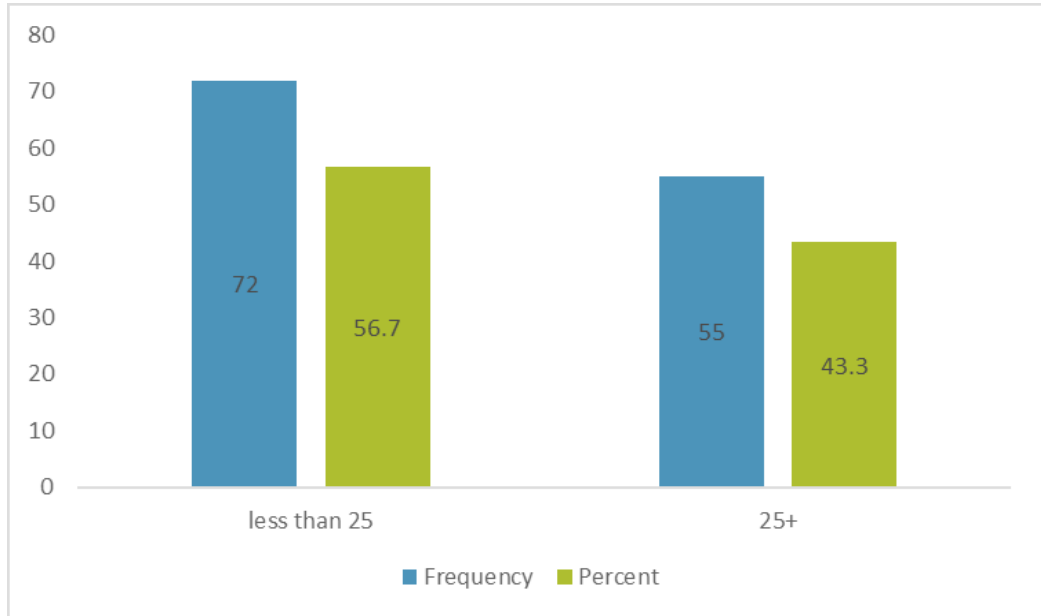
### Appendix 2

#### *Gender of the respondents*



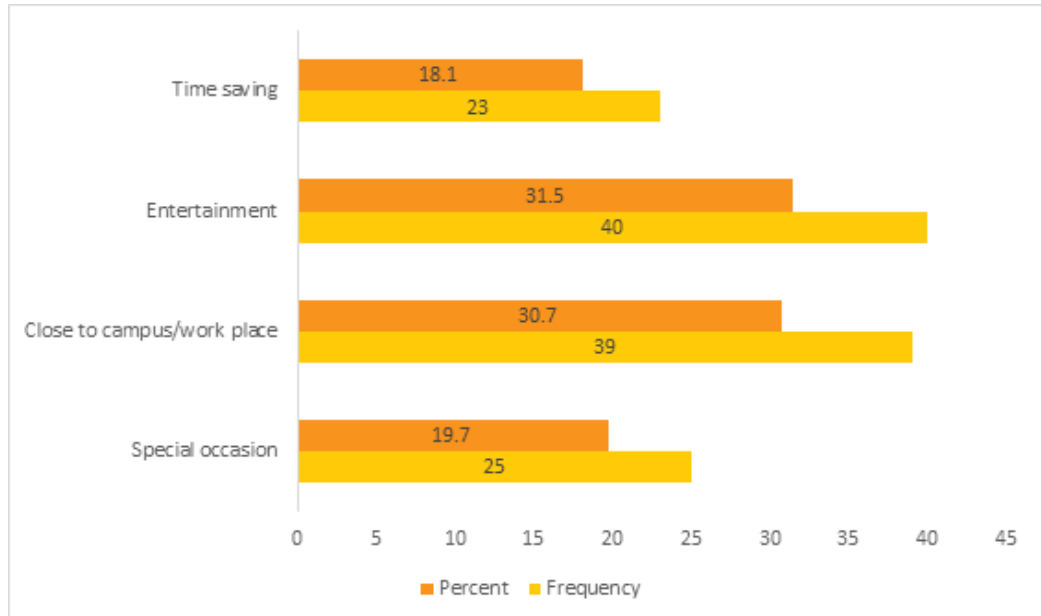
### Appendix 3

#### *Age group of the respondents*



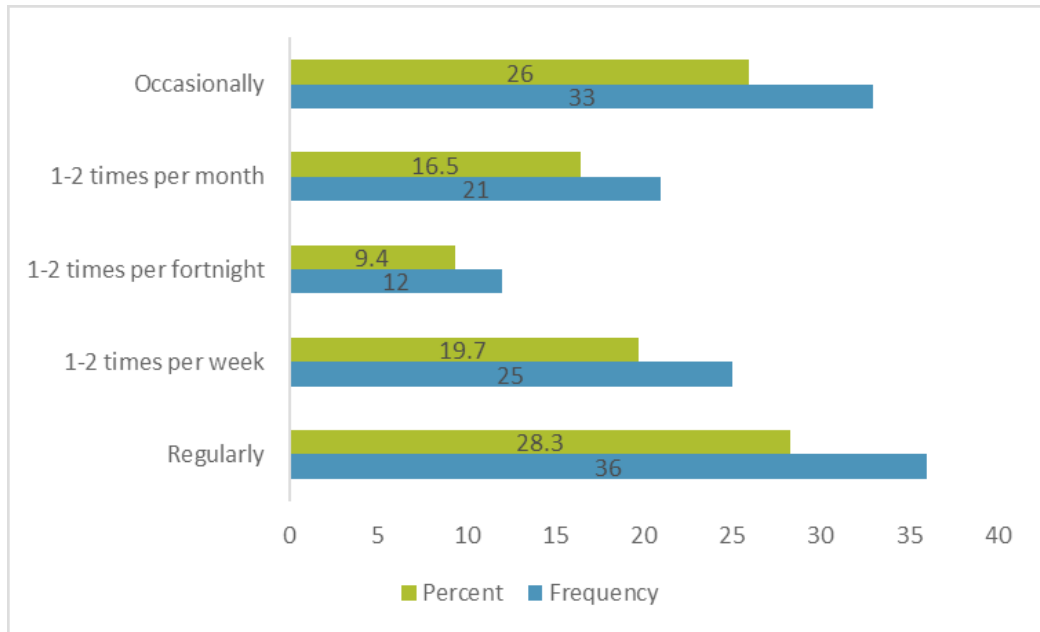
### Appendix 4

#### *Motivation to visit restaurant*



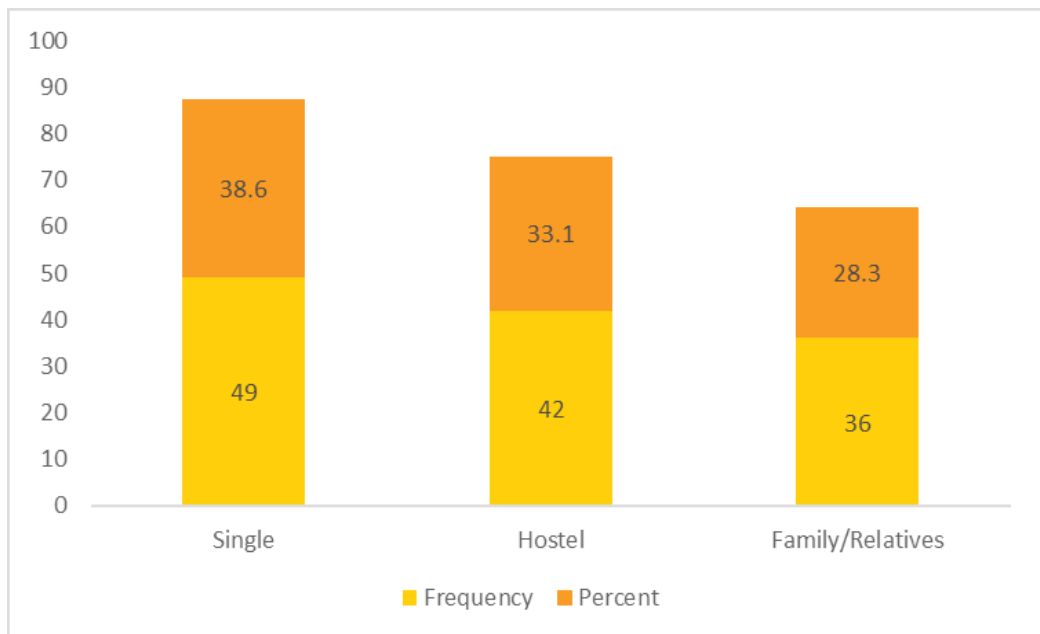
Appendix 5

*Frequency of visit to restaurant*



Appendix 6

*Living status of the respondents*



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***Conflict of Interest***

The authors claim that they have no conflict of interest in the research work.

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