**Restaurant Atmospherics: How does live music & interior aesthetic influence emotions and social interaction?**

Sydney Ulrich  
Faculty Advisor: Professor Susan Ray-Degges  
North Dakota State University  
Department of Apparel, Design and Hospitality Management

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to examine restaurant atmospherics, specifically the influence of ambience and aesthetic on customer and employee emotions and social interaction. It explores the use of live music in restaurant settings to improve ambiance. The connection between music genre and style aesthetic created in an interior is studied to enhance emotions. The combination of these two elements creates a common interest and sense of community, influencing social interaction.

**Background**

- Atmospherics: The designing of a physical environment to influence the emotional effects of customers and enhance their likeliness to purchase a product or service (Heung, & Gu, 2012; Jang, & Namkung, 2009; Liu, & Jang, 2009).  
- Ambience conditions are connected to the intangible background features that do not pertain to visual senses of a setting including, temperature, sound or music, and scent, lighting is also included even though it is visual (Ariffin, Bibon, & Abdullah, 2012; Heung, & Gu, 2012; Kim, & Moon, 2009; Liu, & Jang, 2009; Ryu, & Han, 2011; Ryu, & Jang, 2007).
  - Aesthetics are connected to the design of the architecture, interior, and decor that contribute to the overall attractiveness of a setting (Heung, & Gu, 2012; Liu, & Jang, 2009; Ryu, & Han, 2011; Ryu, & Jang, 2007).

**Hypothesis**

- **Hypothesis 1a:** Listening to music while dining creates positive emotions in customers.  
- **Hypothesis 1b:** Listening to unfamiliar music while dining creates social interaction in customers.  
- **Hypothesis 1c:** Listening to live music while working creates positive emotions in employees.  
- **Hypothesis 2a:** Observing live music while dining creates positive emotions in customers.  
- **Hypothesis 2b:** Observing live music while working creates positive emotions in employees.  
- **Hypothesis 2c:** Utilizing aesthetics relevant to the music genre style creates positive emotions in customers and employees.

**Methods**

A survey was created to gather information focused on general information of the participants, environments and areas guests enjoy dining in, materials and textures they enjoy, and music genre preferences. A majority of the survey questions were Likert scales ranking the participants likes and dislikes. Using convenience sampling techniques, participants were anonymously contacted through North Dakota State University's email list serve and links through social media.

**Conclusion**

- **When given options of which area to sit, 79% of guests prefer to sit in a dining setting**.  
- **55% of guests enjoy listening to music while dining which can lead to longer stays**.  
- **69% of guests enjoy watching television when dining**.  
- **A traditional style interior was ranked the most attractive aesthetic**.  
- **An industrial style interior created the best social environment**.  
- **An industrial style interior created the highest levels of happiness**.  
- **Soft textures were ranked the most comfortable for sitting, viewing, and touching**.

Music creates a common enjoyment among guests and employees which increases social interaction. Links can be made from the genre of music to style of aesthetic, specifically country relating to an industrial style and classical relating to a traditional style. Links can also be made from the genre of music to visual texture preference, specifically classical relating to soft, warm, and smooth textures.

**Results**

**PREPARED AREAS FOR DINING**

- Dining Setting 18%  
- lounge Setting 25%  
- Bar Setting 5%  
- Other 5%  
- Not Sure 79%

**LISTENING TO LIVE MUSIC WHILE DINING**

- Yes 20%  
- No 8%  
- Not Sure 56%

**MUSIC GENRES ENJOYED LISTENING TO WHILE DINING**

- Rock 20%  
- Jazz 18%  
- R&B 16%  
- Pop 13%  
- Alternative 11%  
- Reggae 10%  
- Classical 8%  
- Blues 6%  
- Rap 6%  
- Country 5%  
- Hip Hop 5%  
- Electronic 4%  
- Not Sure 69%

**ACTIVITIES ENJOYED AT A RESTAURANT**

- Good Social Environment 20%  
- Interior Evoking Happiness 15%  
- Aesthetic Attractiveness 15%  
- Most Social and Behavioral Studies 6%  
- Enjoy Viewing/Touching 5%  
- Comfortably Sit 5%  
- Warm 4%  
- Soft 4%  
- Not Sure 68%

**Textures**

- Least  
- Most  
- Smooth  
- Rough  
- Hard  
- Soft  
- Warm  
- Cool  
- Not Sure  
- Freedom  
- Industrial  
- Traditional  
- Contemporary  
- Eclectic  
- Minimalistic  
- Natural  
- Not Sure

**References**