The Effects of Hedonic and Utilitarian Values on Consumer Intention to Return to Ethnic Restaurants

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ABSTRACT

Ethnic restaurants play a crucial role in introducing non-ethnic clients to ethnic foods. Understanding the physical and psychological aspects that influence customer satisfaction and revisiting intention would benefit restaurateurs and contribute to the promotion of a nation’s culinary history. This study examines the relationship between dining atmospherics, hedonic and utilitarian values on customer satisfaction and revisits intention in the ethnic fine dining restaurant context. 215 respondents were surveyed at 15 ethnic fine-dining establishments in Kuala Lumpur. The analysis found that restaurant ambiance and hedonic values are substantial predictors of customer satisfaction and propensity to return. Surprisingly, this is not true of utilitarian values. This paper presents implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

1. Introduction

Value is an essential predictor of consumer behaviour. Like hotel guests, restaurant consumers are highly influenced by distinctive tangible and non-tangible components that affect their overall evaluation (Dedeoglu et al., 2018). This is especially true in fine dining restaurants, where consumers typically spend more extended time and are more exposed to the restaurant’s aesthetics and environment. Consumer experience is a vital precursor of behavioural outcomes such as satisfaction, revisit intention, and word of
mouth (Gentile et al., 2007; Zhang & Buhalis, 2018). Pine and Gilmore (2011) have long established that the service economy is being eclipsed by the experience economy, which focuses on creating memorable customer experiences.

The intangible nature of service has motivated researchers to identify factors that affect consumers in service-intensive industries. In 1981, Booms and Bitner (1982) proposed a servicescape model to illustrate the effects of environmental dimensions on consumers. Servicescape was defined as the environment where the service exchange occurs with the presence of tangible commodities that facilitate the service transaction (Booms & Bitner, 1982). Although compressed in a single price, consumer experience comprises tangible and intangible attributes that influence their value perceptions (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Research on values is mainly fixated on price-value relationships. Focusing solely on the economic aspect of consumption is inadequate to fully explain consumer behaviour (Bigné et al., 2008). This is especially true in the upscale dining context, where guests are expected to splurge in exchange for an exquisite dining experience.

Babin et al. (1994) suggest two types of consumer behaviour values: hedonic and utilitarian. Hedonic values are regarded as more experiential and affective (Bigné et al., 2008; Holbrook, 2005; 2006; Park, 2004; Wu & Liang, 2009; Ryu et al., 2010), more subjective, personal and are a result from fun rather than task completion (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). The utilitarian value is cognitive, emphasizes economic transactions (Park, 2004; Ryu et al., 2010), and has been described as rational and task-related (Batra & Ahola, 1991). Although these values are seen and evaluated on different constructs, equal attention should be placed on both values as consumers who value the hedonic aspect of consumption would also have their inherent utilitarian values (Ryu et al., 2010).

Studies have found that consumers’ reactions to the physical environment are essential, mainly when hedonic consumption is highly involved (Bitner, 1992; Ryu & Jang, 2007; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994; Ryu & Han, 2011). While the consumption of ready-to-eat food is driven primarily by functional purposes, the consumption of upscale dining is driven mainly by hedonic values (Lin, 2004; Ryu & Jang, 2007; Tang et al., 2001; Ryu & Han, 2011). There is little doubt that the dining experience can intrigue utilitarian and hedonic values. As such, understanding how consumers’ perceived values vary with different magnitudes across different service contexts will allow a holistic knowledge of the attributes that influence consumer responses, such as satisfaction and repeat patronage, particularly in the upscale restaurant context.

2. Literature Review

Satisfaction is often described as consumers’ post-choice evaluative judgment concerning a specific product selection (Churchill & Suprenant, 1982; Oliver, 1980). One of the most accepted theories explaining customer satisfaction is the expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Lewin, 1938). This theory suggests that consumers formulate expectations about a product or service before consumption, and as the exchange or consumption takes place, they would compare it against their actual consumption. If consumers’ perception falls below their expectations, they will experience negative disconfirmation and, consequently, dissatisfaction with the products or services rendered (Lewin, 1983). Perceptions that exceed expectations will result in a state of satisfaction and a positive attitude toward the product or service, thus leading to positive future behavioural intentions (Carpenter, 2008; Tse & Wilton, 1988).
Previous research suggested that satisfaction with the quality of food served in a restaurant plays a pivotal role in dining satisfaction (Ladki & Nomani, 1996; Qu, 1997; Pattijohn, Pettijohn & Luke, 1997). Other factors that also contribute to dining satisfaction include service quality (Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal & Voss, 2002; Pettijohn, Pettijohn & Luke, 1997), price and convenience (Branco & Salay, 2001), cleanliness, and ambience (Stevens, Nutson & Patton, 1995). Additionally, a restaurant’s physical setting, such as interior design and décor, good music, subdued lighting, agreeable ambient odours, spacious layout, and lovely service staff, should determine to a large extent the degree of overall customer satisfaction and loyalty resulting from the restaurant visit (Han & Ryu, 2009; Kim & Moon, 2009; Sulek & Hensley, 2004; Turley & Milliman, 2000).

When dining out, consumers evaluate values based on the quality of food, service and the feeling they get from that particular experience. Consumers have different dining-out motivations: to satisfy hunger, convenience, entertainment, social interaction and also mood transformation (Park, 2004). According to the multiple-attribute value theory (MAVT) (Kirkwood, 1997), different attributes will be evaluated according to different objectives. Therefore, a consumer’s objective will be essential in restaurant evaluation and selection. For consumers who seek to satisfy functional purposes such as convenience and price, utilitarian value will play a significant role in restaurant evaluation and selection. As such, attributes such as speed of service, price, location and cleanliness will be more critical than hedonic attributes such as employee service, ambience, variation of the menu, and the restaurant’s interior design. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the study.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1a: Restaurant atmospherics influences customer satisfaction
H1b: Restaurant atmospherics influences consumers’ revisit intention

Researchers view eating as an experiential activity combining the majority of human senses, such as touch, taste, smell and sight. Since food consumption is one of the most basic behaviours, it is hard to perceive such a task as experiential. As such, one of the best places to gauge experiential experiences is where sight, taste and smell can be derived from the meals. If the restaurant ambience is also included, the sense of hearing (restaurant background music) will be an additional factor. Touch could also be a factor.
since upscale dining will use the best linen wear for their customers. Therefore, we postulate that:

H2: Restaurant atmospherics is positively related to hedonic values
H3a: Hedonic values mediate the relationship between restaurant atmospherics and customer satisfaction
H3b: Hedonic values mediate the relationship between restaurant atmospherics and revisit intention

Prior research has demonstrated that customer satisfaction is a precursor for future behavioural intentions (Oliver, 1980; Jones et al., 2006; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). As such, it is posited that:

H4: Customer satisfaction influences revisit intention.

Since customer satisfaction is seen as a precursor to future behavioural intention, it is also hypothesized that:

H5: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between restaurant atmospherics and revisit intention.

Westbrook (1987) argued that satisfaction should include an evaluation of the emotions elicited by product usage or service consumption. Oliver (1996) proposed that satisfaction is a “fulfilment response” or the degree to which the level of fulfilment is pleasant or unpleasant, suggesting that satisfaction is a reflection of the product or service performance on customers’ emotional state (Rosenberg, 1960). In further understanding customer satisfaction, researchers have examined perceived values as one of the antecedents of customer satisfaction (Babin et al., 1994; Day & Crask, 2000; Jones et al., 2006; McDougall & Levesque, 2000). These researchers have identified a strong linkage between hedonic and utilitarian values and satisfaction, suggesting that both values positively affect customer satisfaction (Babin et al., 1994; Jones et al., 2006).

Previous studies have examined hedonic and utilitarian values in different settings, such as online and offline retailing and the restaurant industry (Jones et al., 2006; Overby & Lee, 2006; Park, 2004). A restaurant is where customers can satisfy their hunger and experience excitement, pleasure, and a sense of personal well-being (Finkelstein, 1989). Park (2004) examined the relationships between perceived values of dining out and attributes of fast food restaurants and found that consumers’ perception of values is as per their evaluation of functional or economic benefits, as well as emotional and affective factors. As such, it is hypothesized that:

H6a: Utilitarian values are positively related to customer satisfaction
H6b: Utilitarian values are positively related to revisit intention
H7a: Hedonic values are positively related to customer satisfaction
H7b: Hedonic values are positively related to revisit intention
H8: Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between hedonic values and revisit intention
3. Methodology

The target population for this study was guests who had dined at an upscale ethnic restaurant in Malaysia. The self-administered survey was conducted through face-to-face interactions with guests at 15 upscale ethnic restaurants in Kuala Lumpur through convenient sampling. The questionnaire was distributed to guests during lunch and dinner over two months. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to allow for any attrition that might take place. In total, 251 completed questionnaires were used for the data analysis.

The questionnaire comprised several sections that measure restaurant atmospherics, hedonic values, utilitarian values, customer satisfaction, revisit intention and demographics. All measures used for this study were adapted from established scales and were measured on a seven-point Likert scale.

4. Result

Descriptive statistics were conducted using SPSS 22.0 to provide an overview of respondents' demographic profiles. Hypotheses were tested using structural equation modelling to analyze measurement and structural model. SmartPLS (Ringle et al., 2005) was used to conduct a partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).

A causal model was developed around perceived value and customer satisfaction in the restaurant. In this model, utilitarian and hedonic values, customer satisfaction and revisit intention were measured using reflective indicators. Dining atmospherics is a higher-order structure that is also measured using reflective indicators. The model was analyzed using PLS-SEM. This technique aims to predict variables, maximizing their explained variance. It requires minimum assumptions for the measurement scales, specification of the measurement models (reflective or formative indicators), sample size and data distribution (Chin, Marcolin, & Newsted, 2003). Therefore, the theoretical model proposed in this study is better suited to the conditions and applications of the PLS technique. Moreover, PLS also provides robust estimations of models with a smaller sample size (Barroso, Cepeda, & Roldan, 2010; Chin & Newsted, 1999).

Research models analyzed using PLS needs to be evaluated in two distinct steps. The first step is the assessment of the measurement (outer) model. This step deals with the evaluation of the characteristics of the latent variables and the indicators that represent them. The second step is an assessment of the structural (inner) model. This step evaluates the relationships between the latent variables specified in the research model.

4.1. Descriptive analysis

Of 251 respondents, 149 are females, representing almost 60% of the total respondents, while male respondents represent 40.6%. Most respondents earn between RM3001 – RM6000, representing 40.2% out of the total respondents. 91 (36.3%) respondents earn below RM3000, and 30 (12.0%) respondents earn a monthly household income of between RM6001 to RM9000. On the other hand, 29 respondents or 11.6% of the total respondents, earn a monthly household income of more than RM9001.

More than half of the respondents (55.8%) frequent the restaurant during dinner, and 44.2% eat at restaurants during lunchtime. Leisure with family and friends recorded the
highest response of 61.4%, with responses from 154 respondents. 17.1%, or 43 respondents, frequent restaurants for business purposes, and 9.6% (24) of the respondents indicated their visits are for special occasions. 12% out of the total respondents visit restaurants for other purposes.

4.2. Measurement model

According to Hair et al. (2013), assessing constructs with reflective measures involves determining indicator reliability, internal consistency (composite reliability), convergent validity (average variance extracted) and discriminant validity.

Composite reliability (CR) is preferred over Cronbach's alpha for PLS-SEM (e.g. Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2011; Henseler, Ringle & Sinkovic, 2009; Garson, 2012). As illustrated in Table 1, all the measures indicated a reasonably high CR that ranges from 0.82 to 0.89, which exceeds the threshold of 0.70 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 1: Measurement Model Attributes with Reflective Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>Composite Reliability</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Values</td>
<td>HED1</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HED2</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HED3</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HED4</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HED5</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HED6</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Values</td>
<td>UTI1</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UTI4</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UTI5</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UTI6</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmospherics (Second Order)</td>
<td>Interior Design</td>
<td>ID</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ambiance</td>
<td>AMB</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spatial Layout</td>
<td>SLYT</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human Elements</td>
<td>HE</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Satisfaction</td>
<td>CUS1</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CUS2</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CUS3</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CUS4</td>
<td>0.74</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CUS5</td>
<td>0.73</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CUS6</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CUS7</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisit Intention</td>
<td>REV1</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REV2</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REV3</td>
<td>0.72</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REV4</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REV5</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the loadings exceeded the threshold of 0.60 (Chin, 1998) except for two items from the utilitarian construct (UTI2, UTI3). Due to low loadings, UTI2 were dropped, and the model was reanalysed. Since UTI3 still indicated low loadings after dropping UTI2, it was also dropped, and the model was reanalysed for the second time. The average variance
extracted indicated values of 0.53 to 0.69, which is well above the threshold of 0.50 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981), confirming convergent validity.

Discriminant validity was assessed with the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larker, 1981), which assesses if a construct is more strongly related to its measures than any other construct. The validity is evaluated by examining the variance overlap by comparing each construct’s AVE with the squared correlations among constructs (Chin, 2010). Table 2 shows the correlations between constructs. The diagonal elements are the square roots of the AVE that exceed all corresponding elements. As reported in the table, each construct shares more variance with its block of indicators than with another latent variable (Henseler et al., 2009), supporting the discriminant validity of the scale. Table 3 illustrates the effect sizes for each variable.

Table 2: Inter-construct Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>AMB</th>
<th>SLYT</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>HED</th>
<th>UTI</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>REV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>0.819</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMB</td>
<td>0.749</td>
<td>0.79</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLYT</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>0.721</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HED</td>
<td>0.648</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.615</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTI</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.043</td>
<td>-0.071</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
<td>-0.112</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td>0.711</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>-0.191</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REV</td>
<td>0.679</td>
<td>0.728</td>
<td>0.737</td>
<td>0.736</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>-0.092</td>
<td>0.711</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Bold values represent the square roots of the AVE.

Table 3: Inter-construct Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Dining Atmospherics</th>
<th>Hedonic</th>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>Revisit Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMB</td>
<td>533.182</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>533.182</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>766.628</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SLYT</td>
<td>346.598</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining Atmospherics</td>
<td>0.983</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hedonic Values</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Values</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: >0.02 Small; >0.15 Medium; >0.35 Large (Cohen, 1992).

4.3. Structural model

As the outer model demonstrated reliability and validity, the inner model estimates were evaluated to assess the hypothesized relationships among the constructs in the model. The standardized path coefficients and significance level provide evidence of the inner model’s quality (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2012). Figure 2 shows the results of the structural model, including the estimated coefficient and t-values resulting from applying the bootstrap resampling procedure to 500 subsamples of identical dimensions to the sample size.

The first hypothesis predicted that restaurant atmospherics have a positive relationship with customer satisfaction ($\beta = .78, p< .000$) and revisit intention ($\beta = .62, p< .000$) was
supported. The second hypothesis that predicts restaurant atmospherics influence hedonic values positively was also supported ($\beta = 0.71, p<.000$).

**Figure 2: Structural Model**

The third hypothesis predicts that hedonic values mediate the influence of restaurant atmospherics on customer satisfaction ($\beta = .53, p<.000$) and revisit intention ($\beta = .62, p<.000$). The mediation effect was tested using the Sobel test and revealed that hedonic partially mediates the effect of restaurant atmospherics on customer satisfaction (Sobel test statistics = 3.8, $p < .000$). However, hedonic values do not mediate the effect of restaurant atmospherics on revisit intention. As such, H3b is not supported.

Customer satisfaction also positively influenced revisit intention ($\beta = .43, p<.000$), thus supporting hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 5 predicts customer satisfaction as a mediator between restaurant atmospherics and revisit intention ($\beta = .40, p<.000$). The Sobel test statistics (test statistics = 4.5, $p<.000$) reported a significant mediation effect and the changes in beta weights from $\beta = .62 (p<.000)$ to $\beta = .40 (p<.000)$ indicated partial mediation. Thus hypothesis 5 is supported.

The empirical findings rejected H6a, which hypothesizes utilitarian values to have a positive effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = -.12, p<.000$). The negative effect that utilitarian values have on customer satisfaction indicates that consumers are more concerned about the hedonic properties mainly in the upscale dining context. H6b, which predicts utilitarian values to influence revisit intention positively, was also rejected ($\beta = .021, p = 0.527$).

On the other hand, findings indicate that hedonic values are positively related to customer satisfaction ($\beta = .35, p<.000$) and revisit intention ($\beta = .25, p<.000$), supporting both H7a and H7b. Finally, customer satisfaction was tested as a mediator between hedonic values and revisit intention. The Sobel test indicates a significant mediation effect (Sobel test statistics = 2.9, $p < .000$). The change from a significant beta
of $\beta = .35 \ (p<.000)$ to $\beta = .093 \ (p = 123)$ indicates complete mediation. Thus hypothesis 8 is supported.

Upon completion of hypotheses testing through the structural coefficients, the final stage is to evaluate the predictive capacity of the proposed research model. According to Hair et al. (2014), one of the most commonly used measures is the coefficient of determination ($R^2$ values), which measures the model’s predictive accuracy by calculating the squared correlation between a specific endogenous construct’s actual and predicted values. Higher $R^2$ values indicate a higher level of predictive accuracy. The primary dependent variables for the model are customer satisfaction, with an $R^2$ value of .71 and revisit intention, with an $R^2$ value of .73, indicating that the theoretical model explains a substantial amount of variance of that construct. It should be noted that in the consumer behaviour discipline, several researchers consider $R^2$ values of more than .20 to be high (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2012).

5. Implications, limitations and future research

The empirical findings of the PLS-SEM supported 6 of the proposed hypotheses, while H3, H6a and H6b were rejected. The results suggested that restaurant atmospherics and hedonic values are essential precursors to customer satisfaction and revisit intention in the upscale restaurant setting. On the other hand, utilitarian values do not have a positive or significant impact on customer satisfaction and intention to revisit the restaurant in the future. Utilitarian values are manifested with attributes such as convenience, economics, and fast service, which is certainly not the case in any upscale restaurants. Although one would argue that dining out combines both functional and experiential value, there might be other options in the upscale dining context.

In contrast with utilitarian attributes, hedonic values focus on emotions and experience. Customers frequent upscale restaurants to celebrate special occasions. In the upscale dining context, customers are no longer focused on only having a decent meal; instead, they are paying for the wholesome experience with their family and friends. Since hedonic values are more emotional and subjective, a restaurant’s atmospherics will evoke customers' feelings of enjoyment. This is because restaurant atmospherics touches all five human senses: touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing.

The findings of this study provide insights for hospitality researchers and practitioners by enhancing their understanding of how different values influence satisfaction and revisit intention. By understanding what triggers customer satisfaction, restaurateurs can design layouts that will please their target audience, retain customers, and remain profitable. This study also enriches the literature on customer satisfaction and food service management by extending the understanding of how different concepts of values (hedonic and utilitarian) influence customer evaluation of their dining experience, thus, influencing future purchase intentions.

As with other research projects, this study has its limitations. Firstly, the data was collected using convenience sampling in upscale restaurants in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Therefore, any generalization of the findings should be made with caution. Replication of this study using probability sampling across different countries would provide a more comprehensive finding. Since this study only focuses on the upscale dining context, future research could also incorporate restaurant types as moderators since other
similar studies have been done in different settings (Nejati & Parakhodi Mokhaddam, 2013) reported contrasting findings.

**Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate**

Approval was obtained by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). Informed consent was obtained from all participants as per UiTM’s REC requirements.

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**Conflict of Interests**

The authors declare no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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