

Music Can Create Ambience/Atmosphere in a Restaurant Environment

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the role of music in creating ambience/atmosphere in a restaurant environment. The method used is qualitative with interviews with 15 restaurant patrons in Bandung. The results showed that the role of music in the restaurant area has a significant influence in building the desired ambience. Restaurant visitors feel happier when visiting a place that plays music in the area, because this gives a special impression to visitors and increases their satisfaction when enjoying food. Music creates a relaxing and engaging atmosphere, making diners feel entertained and comfortable. In contrast, restaurants without music are boring, focusing only on the food without any unique impressions. This research provides a deeper understanding of the important role music plays in creating ambience/atmosphere in a restaurant environment. The implications of this research can be used by restaurant owners to enhance the diner experience and expand their customer base. In addition, this study can also serve as a foundation for further research in understanding the influence of music in other environmental contexts.

Keywords: Music; Atmosphere; Restaurant; Consumer Behavior

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INTRODUCTION

Music is a necessity or lifestyle for the community, no wonder many people always listen to music every day whether intentionally or unintentionally such as in vehicles, in shopping places, tourist attractions and so on. this can happen because music has become an important component in everyday life. When talking about music and tourism, it is not uncommon for the tourism sector such as hotels and restaurants to always play music in the area, the type of music played also varies depending on the concept or atmosphere that the tourist actor wants to create. With this phenomenon, it is not surprising to say that music is one of the supporters in a tourism industry.

Research on music and human psychology is abundant, in fact, music can even be used as a supporting medium for learning. This is because music is very instrumental in the formation of human psychology, where music is one of the most powerful triggers for the emergence of intensive emotions (Gabrielsson, 1991). which can encourage a variety of basic and complex emotions (Juslin et al., 2008). These emotions can shape a person's behavior and feelings towards a situation they



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experience. Subcortical activation, namely limbic and paralimbic activity in the human brain can be triggered when listeners experience an intensive emotional response through music (Blood & Zatorre, 2001).

Apart from emotional control, music can also make consumers more relaxed and clear their minds. Listening to music will help people to relax and take their minds away from the stress of life. In addition, music can play a role in changing moods well and reducing anxiety or arousing their emotions (Eka Saputra, 2017). Therefore, the role of music can be a necessary aspect to build an atmosphere in order to form an emotion and behavior based on what music is heard. In this case music can provide an atmosphere that can provide more experience for tourists, and generate interest in visiting a restaurant that plays music in the area, because of the unique concept and a sense of comfort when in the restaurant area.

When connected between music and an eating place or restaurant, the close relationship between music in a restaurant industry will be very important, because the decision maker to choose a restaurant and the desire to buy a product is also influenced by the design or atmosphere presented by the restaurant. A number of studies have shown that music has the potential to influence product choice. (Alpert and Alpert, 1990, Areni and Kim, 1993). This purchase is strongly influenced by the design of a restaurant or place to eat, based on research many consumers will look for a place to eat more than just filling the stomach, these consumers prefer the uniqueness of a restaurant and an atmosphere that is as comfortable as possible (Rachmawati, 2009).

The type of music will also affect the level of visitation and comfort of customers, a loud rock genre will certainly be different from a slow and mellow classical or jazz genre. Based on the type, different genres of music will have different effects on the perceived atmosphere and the number of customers. Classical, jazz and pop music are categorized as the genres that make customers spend the most money on main courses (Wilson, 1998). This may be because customers are comfortable with the ambience of the dining venue and are accompanied by music they like such as jazz and pop so that many customers return to order food. Therefore, the choice of music can also create a different feeling for the listeners.

Music and the restaurant industry are certainly very related, it is not uncommon for restaurants with certain concepts to place music as a medium in their design. for example, Sundanese restaurants or places to eat will definitely play Sundanese songs or arrangements, restaurants with a rock & roll concept will play rock songs. If we change, for example, a Sundanese restaurant plays rock music and a rock & roll concept restaurant plays Sundanese music, it will certainly feel strange, this is because the music played does not match the design or concept of a restaurant itself. This certainly shows that music is an important part in order to create an atmosphere or atmosphere in a restaurant.

Previous research suggests that the style of music played tends to significantly influence the mindset and decisions of customers (Bruner, 1990), the selection of music can have an impact on emotions in everyday situations (Thoma et al., 2012), and tourist emotions or behavior can be triggered by tourism design oriented to tourist emotions (Volo, 2021). However, there are not many studies that discuss how music can create ambience in a restaurant environment.

Understanding music in the restaurant industry is important, given its enormous influence in terms of psychology, emotion building, and behavior formation. These

emotions can be generated by the music that accompanies and can be enjoyed by consumers. In choosing a restaurant, consumers will usually put the type of food and food quality as the main variables. After that, the design and atmosphere in the restaurant will be the determining factor whether consumers will choose a restaurant or not (Auty, 2006). Therefore, this research was conducted to further understand the role of music that can create an atmosphere that provides a sense of comfort for consumers in a restaurant environment in order to get good benefits for the tourism industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Music and Human Emotions

The style or genre of music played will influence significantly different mindsets and decisions for each customer (Bruner, 1990). Different music can cause different feelings for the listeners, when looking from the point of view of restaurants or places to eat, there are various kinds of atmosphere-building concepts that are presented using music as a medium, usually in restaurants that are considered quite luxurious often play jazz genre music, while in Sundanese restaurants definitely play music with Sundanese strains, and customers who come to a Sundanese restaurant will definitely feel strange if they hear rock genre music. This is proof that music can influence the mindset and decisions of customers.

In the context of daily life, music selection can have an impact on emotions in everyday situations (Thoma et al., 2012). This can happen because music is the most powerful trigger that can have an impact on emotions, besides that music can also have an effect on the nervous system that leads to human psychology. Therefore, a study concluded that listening to music can be considered a very suitable tool for investigating emotions (Juslin & Sloboda, 2010). This is very influential on the atmosphere that will be created in a restaurant, as it is known that customers who come to a restaurant want to get the most comfortable atmosphere possible and music can be an option that can build a comfortable atmosphere in the restaurant.

Sound is a powerful manipulation tool. There are many studies on how music affects human behavior and the results are fascinating. In one article, after conducting a comprehensive experiment (Kemp, Williams, Min and Chen, 2019) proved that the harmony between human emotions and music really exists. According to them, people will judge the quality of products and services better when they are exposed to music. In addition, people who are not exposed to music will not try to feel better about people who are exposed to music. All that can happen due to the different psychological impacts of sound on consumer experience and decision-making. Sound is a wave that has its own amplitude and frequency. Once the waves reach the human ear, they travel as nerve impulses through the brain, carrying information to the auditory cortex, from where it interacts with all other parts of the brain (Zatorre, 2005).

Music in the business world

Tourist emotions or behaviors can be triggered by tourism design that is oriented towards tourists' emotions (Volo, 2021). Design in a tourism destination is very important to stimulate the travel experience of tourists. The science of tourism design can benefit from a deeper understanding of emotions and their interaction with experiences (Volo, 2017). Music in a restaurant can be used as a medium that can support a restaurant design that can create a sense of comfort and emotional

development for visitors. Different music will also have different effects on visitors, different types of music have different effects on the perceived atmosphere and the amount customers are ready to spend (Wilson, 1998).

Music is a good tool to control how long customers will stay. Any kind of music is better than no music at all, if you want to keep customers in one place (Sullivan, 2002). The compatibility of music and a supportive environment will encourage customers to stay longer (Milliman, 1982). However, people will eat much faster when high-tempo music is playing (Milliman, 1986), which is also useful if your venue is small and you want a quick turnover of guests. The statement is very important, considering that the owner of a restaurant or eatery has to choose what music he will play according to the needs of the restaurant.

According to (Senko, 2021), many places such as hotels, bars, and cafes that provide live music can strengthen their brand recognition and improve overall sales performance. In addition, if a restaurant plays live music with a famous group or singer, it will increase the reasons for consumers to come to the restaurant. According to (Putri & Nurhidayat, 2019), the most dominant driving factor in encouraging tourists to attend a place that plays live music is the comfort factor of the place and the performers.

Based on the background previously described, the purpose of this study is to analyze whether music can create an ambience in a restaurant environment as formulated into the following 4 questions including (1) Is it fun to come to a restaurant that plays music in the area?; (2) What is the difference when coming to a restaurant with music and no music?; (3) Prefer to come to a restaurant that plays live music or mp3 music?; (4) What music is most suitable when you are in a restaurant.

METHOD

This study explores whether music can create ambience in a restaurant environment. The best approach that allowed the authors to generate a detailed and in-depth picture was to use qualitative methods (Flick, 2014). The sampling criterion was that the participant must be a visitor or someone who has come to a restaurant or eatery that plays music on the premises in order to have a high understanding of everything that will be researched. The informants consisted of 15 visitors who were selected by purposive sampling method in which the researcher deliberately chose them with the belief that they knew the problems being studied so that they could provide in-depth answers about central issues (Welch & Patton, 1992).

The duration of each traveler's interview was between 30 and 60 minutes and then used an audio recorder (Jacob & Furgerson, 2015) in order to get a complete picture of the information from informants and facilitate the author in conducting qualitative data analysis. The main focus of the research interview is related to the 4 questions that have been prepared. The interview questions that will be asked to the informants include (1) Is it fun to come to a restaurant that plays music in the area?; (2) What is the difference when coming to a restaurant with music and without?; (3) Prefer to come to a restaurant that plays live music or mp3 music?; (4) What music is most suitable when you are in a restaurant.

The analysis technique used to achieve the research objectives consists of two steps, namely thematic analysis and continued with qualitative descriptive analysis. Data validity was verified using data source triangulation techniques, namely

comparing the results of interviews with the results of field observations and literature studies.

RESULTS

It's Fun to Go to a Restaurant That Plays Music in the Area

A restaurant or eating place will of course try to make delicious dishes to be liked by visitors, but apart from the taste of food, an atmosphere in the restaurant area is also a special concern for visitors, one of which is whether the restaurant plays music or not. The availability of music in a restaurant can contribute to various changes in customer actions. Scientific studies show that the use of music as a background can influence aspects such as the tendency to tip, emotional response, level of satisfaction, loyalty, perception of atmosphere, and the desire to make a purchase (Beer & Greitemeyer, 2019). In the results of interviews that have been conducted reveal that it is fun when coming to a restaurant or eating place that plays music in the arena because it will give a special impression to visitors and can enjoy food accompanied by a song that characterizes the area.

In addition, eating while accompanied by music can change the mood and make food and drink more palatable. This is in accordance with the psychological concept that has been explained that music can build an emotion that will control a person's behavior. Changes in tempo in music can also have a significant impact on purchasing decisions and the duration of visitors' stay in the restaurant (Milliman, 1986). But it turns out that the volume of music also needs to be considered, in this case visitors prefer a volume that is not too noisy so as not to disturb when eating and when talking with friends.

The Difference When Coming to a Restaurant That Plays Music and Doesn't Play Music in the Area

In the design of a restaurant there will be a lot of factors to consider, if it has been previously explained that visitors prefer restaurants that provide music in the area, and of course there will be a big difference when a restaurant does not play music in the area. One of the visitors explained that if they visit a restaurant that plays music, they seem to be able to enjoy the food more relaxed and seem less hurried, whereas if they visit a restaurant that does not play music, it will make the atmosphere a little bored and only focus on eating and after that it does not give the impression of anything relatively unique besides the taste of the restaurant's food. This can happen if the music played is a type of relaxing music such as pop or jazz, but it will be different if what is played is music that has a fast tempo such as Rnb music, rock music and so on, because visitors who eat will indirectly follow the tempo of the music listened to in their behavior.

The next difference is that visitors feel that if there is no music playing in a cafe or restaurant it feels quiet so it doesn't feel fun when visiting the cafe or restaurant. The restaurant will feel like it has no added value being sold because visitors will tend to focus on the food so that it feels monotonous, and when the food is not to taste it will feel very bad. It is different if there is more selling value, namely music that is played loudly and favored by the majority of visitors, then visitors will feel a more comfortable atmosphere and will not focus too much on the taste of food but on the atmosphere felt.

Consumers Prefer to Go to a Restaurant That Plays Live Music Compared to Playback Music

In choosing the media to play music, the restaurant manager will choose to play music with the concept of playback using mp3, or with music played directly in the area, when determining this, the restaurant will calculate the expenses and income that might occur, because by playing music directly, the restaurant must prepare wages to be given to the band players, so that it will cause considerable expenses. So most restaurants tend to hold live music on certain days such as weekends or other big days.

The advantage that will be felt when playing live music is that there will be good interaction between the band and the visitors, then the visitors can participate in contributing songs or can ask what songs the band wants to play. Another positive side, when a restaurant has been known for its interesting live music, it will further increase the interest of visitors to come to the restaurant, besides that if the band chosen by the restaurant is a famous figure, of course it will attract more visitors to come, and can even generate more feedback than usual.

Music played in accordance with the concept of the restaurant will be more enjoyed by visitors

The genre of music that restaurant visitors want to listen to is of course diverse, because everyone's musical tastes are not necessarily the same, this will be more consideration for the restaurant or eatery to ensure the type of song that is suitable to be played in the area, the selection of this genre tends to depend on the concept that will be presented by the restaurant itself, because it will be strange if a restaurant plays music that contradicts the concept presented.

Most visitors will feel comfortable when eating while listening to the strains of jazz music or pop music and blues because it has a relaxed song line and can be relatively enjoyed by various groups, besides the music genres that have been mentioned can make visitors feel fun and comfortable listening to it so it is very suitable when it becomes a musical accompaniment to eating. In addition, there are also many visitors who want to listen to music according to the concept, for example a burger restaurant with a rock n roll concept, when visiting a restaurant with such a concept, visitors prefer music with a rock n roll flow so that the atmosphere will be built according to the experience they want to feel in the restaurant.

DISCUSSION

The role of music in the restaurant area in order to build an atmosphere or ambience is very important to be applied. Visitors will feel happier if they come to a restaurant or eating place that plays music in the arena because it will give a special impression to visitors and can enjoy food accompanied by a song that characterizes the area. In addition, visitors can also enjoy food more relaxed and seem not in a hurry, whereas if you visit a restaurant that does not play music, it will make the atmosphere a little bored and only focus on eating and after that it does not give the impression of anything relatively unique besides the taste of the restaurant's food.

In the selection of music played, visitors prefer to come to an eating place that plays live music, because there will be good interaction between the band and visitors, then visitors can participate in contributing songs or can ask what songs the band

wants to play. Most diners will feel comfortable when eating while listening to jazz music or pop and blues music because it has a relaxed flow of songs and can be relatively enjoyed by various groups, besides the music genres that have been mentioned can make diners feel fun and comfortable listening to it so it is very suitable when it becomes a musical accompaniment to eating. But it must be re-adjusted to the concept presented by the restaurant itself, the more harmonious it will create a different atmosphere and a pleasant experience for visitors.

Especially for future researchers, the research on music can create ambience / atmosphere in this restaurant can be developed. Because there are still a few academics and practitioners out there who have not maximized and understood the benefits that will be felt when playing music in a tourist area, so there needs to be broader studies related to this topic.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results above, this study emphasizes the pivotal role of music in the restaurant setting for crafting a distinctive atmosphere that significantly influences diners' overall experience. The presence of music, particularly live performances, contributes to a more enjoyable and relaxed dining environment, fostering a sense of uniqueness beyond the taste of the food. The interaction between the band and diners, coupled with the opportunity for patrons to engage in song selection, enhances the overall ambiance. Jazz, pop, and blues emerge as preferred genres, known for their soothing and versatile qualities, catering to a diverse audience. The findings underscore the importance of aligning the musical selection with the restaurant's concept, emphasizing the potential for harmonious integration to create a memorable and pleasant dining experience for visitors.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We certify that there is no actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to this article.

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