

ISMC 2017
13th International Strategic Management Conference

**WHICH PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT DIMENSIONS REALLY
AFFECT PEOPLE IN RESTAURANTS?**

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Abstract

Physical environment is an important subject in the literature to analyze restaurant visiting behaviors of consumers. There are different studies, descriptions, scales, and different dimensions and items of these scales to understand how physical environment influences consumers' behaviors. In the present study, two of these scales, named SERVICESCAPE and DINESCAPE, were used with a holistic view and correct dimensions and items of them were determined. This holistic questionnaire was applied to 204 people from Istanbul and Kocaeli, Turkey, who dine out in these cities. The data gathered from these surveys in April, 2017 was analyzed through the SPSS statistical packaged software. Exploratory Factor Analysis, Reliability Analysis and Regression Analysis were carried out in this process. Results show that facility aesthetics, ambient conditions and layout from the physical environment dimensions are positively related to revisit intention; electronic equipment and facility aesthetics, on the other hand, are not positively related to revisit intention. Managerial implications and suggestions for future researches were given.

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Keywords: SERVICESCAPE, DINESCAPE, Physical Environment, Revisit Intention.

1. Introduction

Based on current data from Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, there are 14794 restaurants and other firms to serve foods and beverages (ITO, 2017). Hence, it can be said that there are so many options for customers to dine out and spend their time in. In such a competitive environment, choices of customers will be strategically important for the managers of the restaurants. Beyond the dynamics of growth of the

restaurants, it is a critical subject for marketers to understand the underlying mechanism of customer's decision of choosing a restaurant and how to utilize the information gleaned from customer provide managers to gain strategically competitive advantage and develop marketing programs, effective campaigns etc. regarding their restaurant offerings (Ford et al., 1999)

It can be seen that physical environment has been an important factor to influence behavioral intention of customers in the literature for a long time. The common feature of these studies is highlighting the importance of physical environment, on one hand (Kotler, 1973; Baker, 1987; Bitner, 1992; Baker et. al., 1994; Berman and Evans, 1995; Turley and Milliman, 2000; Raajpoot, 2002; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996; Ryu and Jang, 2008a; Kim and Moon, 2009). On the other hand, all these authors explain physical evidence with different dimensions. Although some dimensions are common in some researches, it can be seen that dimensions differentiate from country to country, sample to sample, so, research to research. This led us to make a research to find which dimensions are important for our sample and country.

The present study aims to find right physical environment dimensions to influence revisit intention behaviors of customers for restaurants in Istanbul and Kocaeli, Turkey. In order to find right dimensions, two different scales which have different dimensions were used, namely SERVICESCAPE and DINESCAPE. Within this scope, the study will begin with a literature review of revisit intention and then, physical environment. Secondly, developed hypotheses will be explained. Research methodology will be showed in another section. Lastly, research findings and related issues like discussion of findings, managerial implications for restaurants will be presented.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1. Revisit Intention

Consumers experience products or services, and then the process doesn't end; it goes on. Based on their experiences, consumers make evaluations about the product or services, that is named the post-purchase evaluation step in the consumer decision making process (Solomon, 2014). In this phase, they generally make a judgement about the product or services. This judgement refers to a stable like or dislike of a product or service (Oliver, 1997). As a result, consumers develop behavioural intentions regarding that product or service (Oliver, 1997).

Behavioural intention is defined as the degree to which a person has formulated conscious plans to perform or not to perform some specified future behaviour (Ajzen, and Fishbein, 1980). The authors emphasize that behavioural intentions are related to actual behaviours of consumers. On the other hand, Quellette, and Wood (1998) support that behavioural intentions can be a tool to predict future behaviours of consumers. Consumers may generate different behavioural intentions, in light of their experiences. For instance, consumers say positive things about the company, recommend the product or service to friends and family, and become loyal by repeating purchase when they have a favourable behavioural intention (Zeithalm et. al., 1996). According to the authors, service quality is a determinant in the creation of behavioural intentions of customers, and therefore saying positive things about a product or service, recommending it and being a loyal customer are only possible when perceived quality is high.

Intention to repeat purchase is actually called revisit intention in some service sectors like hospitality. Revisit intention is strategically important in these sectors, because, those who repeat their visits constitute a desirable market segment for the businesses operating in these sectors (Mattila, 2006). Moreover, keeping a customer on hand costs less than gaining a new customer (Bitran and Mondschein, 1997). Previous researches show that the most important factors that contributes to revisit intention are service quality, customer value and satisfaction in telecommunication industry (Wang et. al., 2004), perceived attractiveness, perceived value for money, previous visits, in addition to customer satisfaction and perceived quality of service in tourism sector (Um et. al., 2006; Alegre and Cladera, 2009). Customer satisfaction draws attention as the common determinant in most researches (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Zeithalm et. al., 1996; Um et. al, 2006; Alegra and Cladera, 2009).

When it comes to restaurants, which constitute an important field in the hospitality sector, determinants of revisit intention are accepted as perceived quality and satisfaction with servicescape (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994), consumption emotions, customer satisfaction and switching barriers (Han et. al., 2009), customer's pleasure feeling emotion (Kim and Moon, 2009), food quality, service quality, atmosphere, price and value with customer satisfaction (Yan et. al., 2015). All these and some different factors will affect evaluations of customers and shape revisit intentions of them. Revisit intentions of customers, which can be gained or increased with some above mentioned factors, is an important indicator for restaurant businesses to analyse their visitors perceptibly. Because, there are so many restaurants for customer to choose and dine out and this rate increases year by year (ITO, 2017). In this competitive environment, revisits of customers to a restaurant and becoming a loyal customer will be a strong win for a restaurant.

2.2. Physical Environment

Physical environment is described by Kotler (1973) as creating such surroundings that make specific emotional effects on consumers to influence their buying behaviours. The author also emphasize that consumers make purchase decisions not only according to tangible product or services (Kotler, 1973). Previous researchers use different terms to explain physical environment with, such as servicescape, atmospheric etc. in the literature. Bitner (1992) use the term "servicescape" and describe it as a manmade, physical environment, not a social or natural environment. Different terms used by previous researchers to explain physical environment are atmospherics (Baker, 1987; Berman and Evans, 1995; Turley and Milliman, 2000), store atmospherics (Baker et. al., 1994), DINESERV (Stevens et. al., 1995), SERVICESCAPE (Bitner, 1992; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996; Kim and Moon, 2009), tangible service factors (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1999), TANGSERV (Raajpoot, 2002), DINESCAPE (Ryu and Jang, 2008a). In addition to these different terms used, those and some other authors also find different physical environment dimensions. These different dimensions are ambient factors, design factors, social factors (Baker, 1987; Baker et. al.,1994); ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, sign, symbol and artifacts (Bitner, 1992); external variables, general interior variables, layout and design variables, point of purchase and decoration variables (Berman and Evans, 1995); reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, tangibles (Stevens et. al., 1995); layout accessibility, facility aesthetics, seating comfort, electronic equipment/displays, facility cleanness (Wakefield and Blodgett,

1996); building design and décor, equipment, ambience (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1999); human variables in addition to the same variables in the study of Berman and Evans (1995) (Turley and Milliman, 2000); ambient factors, design factors, product/service factors (Raajpoot, 2002); layout navigation, cleanliness, seating comfort, interior décor, ambience (Lucas, 2003); facility aesthetics, lighting, ambience, layout, dining equipment (Ryu and Jang, 2007); space, way-findings (Newman, 2007); facility aesthetics, ambience, lighting, table setting, layout, service staff (Ryu and Jang, 2008a). All these researchers try to find important influencing factors of physical environment. The reason behind this may be its strategic importance in consumer responses, customer emotions, customer service evaluations, satisfaction, perceived service quality and behavioural intentions (Bitner, 1990; Bitner, 1992; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994; Arnould et. al., 1998; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1999; Chang, 2000; Turley and Milliman, 2000; Hoffman and Turley, 2002; Ryu and Jung, 2008a; Ryu and Jung, 2008b). Physical environment is especially important in the sectors, in which there is hedonic consumption behaviours of consumers who spend a lot of time in this specific atmosphere like upscale restaurants, resorts etc. (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994; Ryu and Jang, 2007). Moreover, the physical environment has an important impact particularly in the restaurant industry as it is very effective by creating and enhancing an image and influence consumers and their behaviours (Robson, 1999).

The Affect Model of Mehrabian and Russell (1974) conceptualize that the relationship between environment factors and responses of people to these factors. Based on this model, people perceive the environmental factors in light of their emotional states and then behaviour occurs. On the other hand, approach and avoidance are responses of people to the environment, by way of their emotional states. Approach behaviour can actualise by desiring to stay in the environment, looking around, exploring the environment etc. and the avoidance behaviour occur oppositely. Moreover, Social Cognitive Theory explains behavioural changes arising from personal sense of control (Bandura, 2001). According to the theory, people make a decision to achieve something, and then the process shapes around the decision. With the light of these theories, in this study, the environmental factors (aesthetics, ambience conditions, layout, electric equipment, lighting) behave as a cognitive drivers of the action and shape the approach behavior of individuals, namely, revisit intention.

Facility aesthetic is the common dimension of physical environment in some researches (Wakefield and Blodget, 1996; Ryu and Jung, 2008a; Kim and Moon, 2009) and the dimension which evokes almost similar factors, is found as design/design factors/building design in some previous studies (Baker, 1987; Baker et. al., 1994; Berman and Evans, 1995; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1999; Turley and Milliman, 2000; Raajpoot, 2002). Facility aesthetic refers to architectural and design, décor and wall décor, paintings/pictures, plants/flowers, furniture and colour (Ryu and Jang, 2008a). The authors highlight that these elements create an image or atmosphere in a restaurant. Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) suggest that architectural design, interior design and décor increase the attractiveness of the restaurant. On the other hand, Ryu and Jang (2008a) describe factors like furniture, wall décor, pictures/paintings, plants/flowers as a part of interior design and emphasize that these elements increase perceived quality of surroundings, creates emotions and influence behavioural intention of consumers to a restaurant. Facility aesthetic is also important for a restaurant to catch people and enhance revisit intentions of them (Cobe, 2007). Hence, it is proposed that:

H1: Facility aesthetics is positively related to revisit intention.

Layout can be seen in some studies as a dimension of physical environment (Bitner, 1992; Berman and Evans, 1995; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996; Turley and Milliman, 2000; Lucas, 2003; Ryu and Jang, 2008a; Kim and Moon, 2009). Layout refers to seating arrangement and the array of all objects in the dining environment and it affects people psychologically and physically (Ryu and Jang, 2008a; Ryu and Jang, 2008b). Besides, hedonic and pleasure needs of customers are met through a well-established layout (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994). Consumers level of excitements and perceived quality are affected by layout decisions, directly and revisit intentions, indirectly (Ryu and Han, 2011). For example, music can increase sales or scent can change consumers' moods or feelings etc. Hence, it is proposed that:

H2: Layout is positively related to revisit intention.

Electronic Equipment is mentioned as one of dimensions of physical environment in few researches (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1999; Kim and Moon, 2009). The dimension refers to signs, symbols, artifacts, audio/video machines in these different researches. Electronic equipment is an important element in the waiting periods and transform these moments to more pleasurable times (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996). Moreover, the dimension is used as a significant servisscape element in the relationship between pleasure-feeling and perceived service quality, and revisit intention (Kim and Moon, 2009). Hence, it is proposed that:

H3: Electronic Equipment is positively related to revisit intention.

Ambient conditions are another dimension of physical environment and can be found in the studies of Baker (1987), Bitner (1992), Baker et. al. (1994), Wakefield and Blodgett (1999), Raajpoot (2002), Lucas (2003), Ryu and Jang (2008a), Kim and Moon (2009). Ambience include some different elements like music, temperature, aroma, noise, scent etc. in different studies and non-visual senses are affected by these elements (Baker, 1987). The author also support that ambient conditions create a sense of pleasure on consumers (Baker, 1987). On the other hand, different elements of the dimension "ambience" may lead creating different effects on consumers (Ryu and Jang, 2008a). Hence, it is proposed that:

H4: Ambient conditions are positively related to revisit intention.

Lighting is only mentioned in the DINESCAPE which is developed by Ryu and Jang (2008a) as a direct dimension. In some other studies, it is mentioned as a factor of some dimensions like interior décor, ambient conditions etc. (Lucas, 2003; Kim and Moon, 2009). Lighting refers to the illumination in the dining environment and different lighting decisions which are about types or levels of it. Different types and levels of lightning may create different associations, emotions etc. Besides, some other physical, emotional or psychological judgements occur or change the existing ones, and also behavioural intentions of consumers through lighting decisions (Kurtich, and Eakin, 1993). Hence, it is proposed that:

H5: Lighting is positively related to revisit intention.

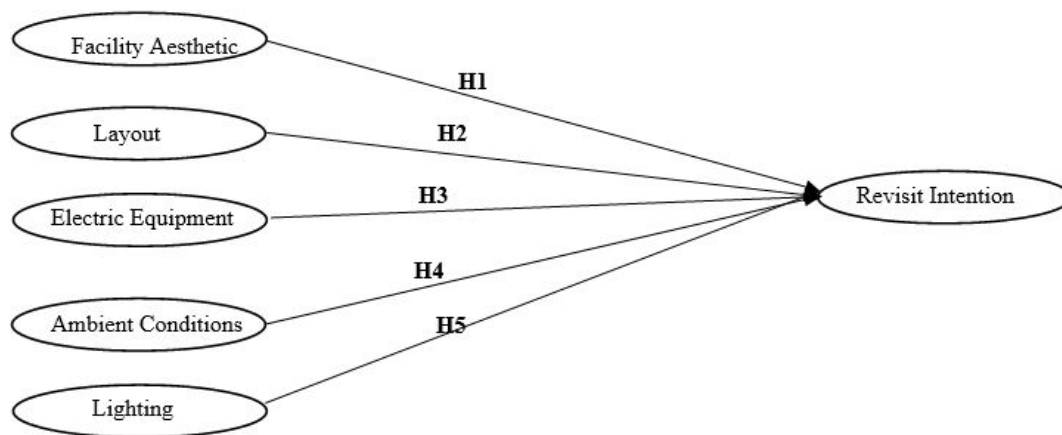


Figure 01. Conceptual Model

3. Research Design

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

The survey was conducted from two hundred four people, who live in Istanbul and Kocaeli, Turkey and dine out restaurants in these cities. Because of the largeness of the population in question, non-probability convenience sampling technique of Krathwohl (1997) was used in the research. This technique helps researchers worked in the field of consumer behavior and marketing to gain properly findings about all of the population.

A questionnaire was designed to measure the relationship between physical environment dimensions and revisit intention, based on two different scales, namely SERVICESCAPE and DINESCAPE. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: demographic questions, physical environment items, which is the combination of facility aesthetics, ambience conditions, layout, electric equipment, lighting and revisit intention items. After creating questionnaire, it was implemented to 15 restaurant visitors to test the psychometric characteristics of the scales. The final version of the questionnaire, which consists of 30 items, occurred, based on this pilot test. Then, respondents were surveyed with face-to-face methods. They were wanted to answer the items for their last visited restaurants. The data gathered from two hundred four surveys with a response rate of nearly 90% was analyzed through SPSS.

3.2. Analyses

In order to measure the relationship between physical environment and revisit intention, both servicescape and dinescape dimensions were used as independent variables. For the servicescape, 21 items, which measure ambient conditions, facility aesthetics, layout, and electric equipment dimensions, were adopted from Kim and Moon (2009). On the other hand, 21 dinescape items, which are about facility aesthetics, ambience, lighting, and layout, were adopted from Ryu and Jang (2008a). Revisit intention was measured with 6 items from the studies of Ryu, Han, and Kim (2008); Kim and Moon (2009); and Ryu, Lee and Gon Kim (2012). All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1: Strongly disagree, ..., 5: Strongly agree).

4. Findings

Based on demographic questions of the present study, the information was gathered about the gender, age, education level and restaurant visiting frequency of respondents. According to this information, a great majority of our respondents are female, aged between 18-24, have college or university degree, and dine out once a week in a restaurant, with the rank of 56,4%, 46,6%, 51,5% and 41,2% respectively, as it is showed in the Table 1.

Table 01. Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Characteristics		N	%
Gender	Female	115	56,4
	Male	89	43,6
Age	18-24	95	46,6
	25-30	67	32,8
	31-40	41	20,1
	More than 40	11	0,5
Education Level	~High school	71	34,8
	College & University	105	51,5
	Postgraduate	28	13,7
Visiting Frequency	Once a week	84	41,2
	Once a month	38	18,6
	More than once a month	56	27,5
	Once a year	8	3,9
	Others	18	8,8

KMO (0,910) and significant value (0,000) allowed us to make hypothesis analyses. Exploratory factor analysis was used to see common factors of physical environment. After the elimination insignificant, single in the groups and unsuitable placed items one by one, 30 items and 6 factors remained in the data, named facility aesthetics, ambient conditions, layout, electronic equipment, lighting, and revisit intention, as it can be seen in the table 2. Cronbach α values show that all factors are reliable, because of the rates above 0,70. Besides, independent variables, such as facility aesthetics, layout, electronic equipment, ambient conditions, lighting explained 64,159 % of the variance and this rate increases to 73,745 % for the dependent variable, revisit intention. This high ratio shows that our dimensions and their items explained total variance in a significant way.

Table 02. Factor Loadings of the Independent and Dependent Variable: Facility Aesthetics, Ambient conditions, Layout, Lighting, Electronic Equipment and Revisit Intention

Dimensions	Items	Cronbach's α	Components' Factor Loadings				
			Facility Aesthetics	Layout	Electronic Equipment	Ambient Conditions	Lighting
Facility Aesthetics	The interior décor of this restaurant is attractive.	0,919	0,760				
	This restaurant is decorated in an attractive fashion.		0,746				
	Paintings/pictures are attractive.		0,739				
	Wall décor is visually appealing.		0,694				
	Colors used create a warm atmosphere.		0,693				
	This restaurant's architecture gives it an attractive character.		0,667				
	Furniture (e.g., dining table, chair) is of high quality.		0,645				
	The use of color in the décor scheme adds excitement to this restaurant environment.		0,621				
	Plants/flowers make me feel happy.		0,618				
	This is an attractive restaurant.		0,602				
Layout	In this restaurant, the aisles between the tables are wide enough to pass through easily.	0,928		0,876			
	Layout makes it easy for me to move around.			0,856			
	Seating arrangement gives me enough space.			0,821			
	Seating arrangement makes me feel crowded.			0,814			
	The number of tables does not make this restaurant environment difficult to navigate.			0,800			
Electronic Equipment	The audio/video machines add excitement to the place.	0,928			0,892		
	The audio/video machines are entertaining to watch.				0,871		
	The audio/video machines make this restaurant interesting.				0,807		
	This restaurant has high quality audio/video machines.				0,774		
Ambient Conditions	The aroma in this restaurant is pleasant.	0,789				0,751	
	Aroma is enticing.					0,721	
	The temperature in this restaurant is comfortable.					0,610	
Lighting	Lighting makes me feel welcome.	0,863					0,829
	Lighting creates a comfortable atmosphere.						0,742
Variance explanation ratios			42,247	7,801	6,409	4,135	3,567
		Cronbach's α	Components' Factor Loadings				
Revisit Intention	I would like to come back to this restaurant in the future.	0,926			0,837		
	I would consider revisiting this restaurant in the future.				0,829		
	This restaurant would be my first choice over other restaurants.				0,779		
	I would like to revisit this restaurant in the near future.				0,778		
	I have a strong intention to bring my family and friends to visit this restaurant again.				0,755		
	I would more frequently visit the restaurant.				0,679		
Variance explanation ratios			73,745				

Total Variance Explained of Independent Variables: 64,159 %

Total Variance Explained of Dependent Variable: 73,745 %

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

KMO: 0,910

Correlation analysis indicates that all variables are correlated each other. Table 3 presents mean and standard deviation values, in addition to correlation coefficients

Table 03. Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficients

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>St. Deviation</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
1-Facility Aesthetics	3,8235	0,75851	1					
2-Layout	3,6804	0,8959	0,404**	1				
3-Electronic Equipment	3,3197	1,06905	0,521**	0,343**	1			
4-Ambient Conditions	3,8467	0,79029	0,581**	0,460**	0,460**	1		
5-Lighting	4,0319	0,83058	0,589**	0,424**	0,424**	0,451**	1	
6-Revisit Intention	4,002	0,84486	0,616**	0,446**	0,427**	0,518**	0,438**	1

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level
 **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
 *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Lastly, five hypotheses about the relationship between physical environment dimensions and revisit intention behavior were tested with the regression analysis. First hypothesis predicted that facility aesthetic is positively related to revisit intention. Findings (β : 0,392, sig.: 0,000) show that this relationship is strategically significant and H1 was supported. Hypothesis 2, which foresees the relationship between layout and revisit intention, was supported with the results (β : 0,172, sig.: 0,006). Third hypothesis estimated the positive relationship between electronic equipment and revisit intention. Because of insignificant values (β : 0,075, sig.: 0,246), this relationship was not found significant. Therefore, H3 was not supported. Fourth hypothesis predicted that ambient conditions are positively related to revisit intention. Results (β : 0,150, sig.: 0,035) confirm this prediction. Hence, H4 was supported. The last hypothesis, which focuses on the relationship between lighting and revisit intention, was not in parallel with the findings (β : 0,048, sig.: 0,474) and so, H5 was rejected.

Table 04. Regression analysis of H1, H2, H3, H4, H5

	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Standardized Beta Coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>VIF</i>
H1 (supported)	Facility Aesthetics_RI	0,392	5,191	0,000***	2,052
H2 (supported)	Layout_RI	0,172	2,778	0,006**	1,378
H3 (rejected)	Electronic Equipment_RI	0,075	1,163	0,246	1,486
H4 (supported)	Ambient Conditions_RI	0,150	2,126	0,035*	1,787
H5 (rejected)	Lighting_RI	0,048	0,718	0,474	1,616
		R ²	0,449		
		F	32,282	0,000***	
		Durbin-Watson	2,042		

Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention
 *p<0,05
 **p<0,01
 ***p<0,001

5. Conclusion and Discussions

The present study analyzed the relationship between physical environment dimensions in SERVICESCAPE and DINESCAPE and revisit intention. Different SERVICESCAPE and DINESCAPE dimensions were handled on this study with a holistic view and found that for our sample and country, all dimensions are not significant. Facility aesthetics, whose items are about the interior décor, paintings/pictures, wall décor, colors, architecture, furniture (e.g. dining table, chair), and plants/flowers; ambient conditions, whose items are about the aroma and temperature; and layout, whose dimensions are about the aisles between the tables, seating arrangement and number of tables, are positively related to revisit intention in our study as they are common dimensions for both scales. In parallel with the utilized researches (Ryu and Jang, 2008a; Kim and Moon, 2009), these three dimensions are significant for our sample and country. In addition to main researches which lead us with their scales, the findings also support another related researches while handling the subject with these three dimensions (Baker, 1987; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994; Cobe, 2007; Ryu, and Jang, 2007; Ryu and Han, 2011). Based on our research, electronic equipment, which is a dimension of servicescape, is not related to revisit intention, contrarily to Kim and Moon (2009). Electronic equipment may differ from restaurant to restaurant or some restaurants are insufficient with the hardware of electronic equipment. Because of this, people may not perceive these equipment and items, too. This leads to rejection of the hypothesis. Another contrariness of the study is about the dimension lighting. Lighting, which is a dimension of dinescape, is not related to revisit intention, oppositely to Ryu and Jang (2008a). To gain more properly findings about consequences' of restaurants' lightings, the research should be implemented in the restaurant environment, as people perceive it more clearly (Baker et al. 1992). The reason behind rejection of our hypothesis may be from our implementing environment.

Findings of the research can help both academicians and restaurant owners. For the academicians, Turkey can be a research field to handle for restaurants and determine the place of physical environment in their choosing with other subjects like taste, location, prices. The most important factor can be determined and a ranking can be made. Restaurant owners, on the other hand, should give importance to facility aesthetics, ambient conditions of their restaurants and layout decisions in their area. In this way, revisit intentions of their customers may increase and they may be ahead of their competitors, other restaurants. In addition to above mentioned benefits, the research has also a limitation. The research was not applied in the restaurant environment. Applying in restaurants can be beneficial for the research. Because, it is important to get the date in retailer environment to test facility aesthetics and other internal issues (Eroglu et. al., 2005).

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