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**Happy customers means more business - a comparative study
of a global food chain in COVID-19 endemic era**

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Happy customers means more business – a comparative study of a global food chain in COVID-19 endemic era

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to explore the factors influencing the happiness of customers of two global coffee food chains through qualitative research in the post pandemic era. It is a qualitative research employing sentiment analysis through ‘Sprinkler Software’ to assess the sentiment of customers of Starbucks and Barista followed by focus interviews through the same customers who have visited both Starbucks and Barista. The results showed that most important factors which motivate customers and make them happy to go for ‘Starbucks’ or ‘Barista’ are ambience, store location, quality of product offerings and service quality. Value for money, quality of products and service quality are the top three variables affecting the customers. This research contributes to better understanding the effects of different marketing strategies adopted by coffee chain stores and can provide direction to Barista and other coffee chains through application of SOR model.

Keywords: happiness; ambience; coffee chain; Starbucks; barista; quality of service; variety of products; quality of products; location.

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Biographical notes: R.K. Srivastava has over 30 years of managerial experience in the Pharma industry. He has organised over ten national and international conferences. He was rated by DNA Newspaper and Star as an Innovative Professor of year 2013, Marketing Innovation Award for 2014 by ABPNews and Best Prof in Marketing in 2017 Top 100 dedicated prof at world education congress.

1 Introduction

In globalised economy, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has a significant influence on businesses and marketing strategies across the globe (Lombardi et al., 2021). Consumers in the post-COVID-19 era also choose to focus on the safety and reliability of products and services according to environmental changes, the change in food chain has accelerated commercialisation in

response to the pandemic (Zeng et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2021). The term perceived value refers to a customer's assessment of the value of the product attributes or service performance provided by the service contact point as a cognitive evaluation of the value they directly experience during service contact (Mathwick et al., 2002). In fact this "value is an important factor that positively affects customer happiness" [Chiang, (2018), p.11] since it "measure enjoyment and various emotional values" [Hung et al., (2019), p.44].

Due to anxiety and depression, the happiness level has decreased during COVID-19 (Srivastava, 2020). The happiness level of consumers visiting the restaurant is crucial for repeat visits (Kim et al., 2021). Hence, the study was conducted to determine the happiness level of consumers visiting the restaurant during COVID endemic era as the Government announced that COVID-19 is no longer a pandemic (Thacker, 2022). The study will therefore provide insight into the existing happiness level of consumers who visit global retail coffee shops. By conducting this study, coffee chain stores will be able to fill the gap on the happiness level of consumers visiting their stores and improve their strategies on customer retention.

Therefore, in COVID endemic era, the happiness of customers means more business. Customers' expectations are changing from global food chains. It is therefore important to study the changing needs of customers from their perspective so that the global food chain can meet their expectations. It also means that the happiness level of the same customers who have visited both the coffee chains, are more with Starbucks compared to Barista.

Coffee consumption is going up in emerging markets as reported by studies of Öztopçu (2017) and Hye and Jeon (2020). By examining the customer happiness levels of two global food chains in the coffee segment, the others will be able to understand what factors contribute to increased customer happiness. Covid-19 era has seen "changes in the behaviour of consumers" [Srivastava and Bhanot, (2022), p.2]. Will there be changes on happiness level among customers of two global food coffee chains in COVID-19 endemic? (Research question 1). Inflation is a problem for emerging markets due to the oil crisis. When inflation is high, how a challenger brand should provide value for money through good service to improve the happiness level of customers when competing with the leader? (Research question 2).

Due to Covid-19, services have gained attention in the current endemic scenario (Thacker, 2022). Keeping customers happy means more business. Despite their significance in this situation, empirical research has paid little attention to comparative study in the coffee shop market. In this study, we examine the factors that influence the formation of customer's happiness and their acceptance intention toward two coffee food chains in the endemic era of COVID-19. Past literature has suggested that the Mehrabian and Russell effect model (Vieira, 2013; Srivastava, 2022) can be adopted to understand the effect of environments on customer behaviour.

The aim of this study are as follows: First, the study will explore the main factors influencing the happiness of customers of two global coffee food chains through qualitative research. Secondly, unlike existing studies, this study will compare and analyse the differences between two global coffee food chains so that others can improve their strategies to be more competitive. Finally, the study will suggest an effective marketing strategy for coffee shops and provide basic data to revitalise future research on coffee marketing based on its findings.

2 Literature review

Studies have shown that consumers who encounter a high level of innovativeness are more likely to purchase a new service or product and form an emotional connection (Taylor et al., 2018; Joshi and Garg, 2020). This is dependent on the “overall consumption experience and is an important aspect of consumer value perception” [Keng et al., (2007), p.350] in the service industry (Taylor et al., 2018; Hye and Jeon, 2020). Holbrook (1999, p.23) defines consumer values as “interactive and relative preference experience”, which emphasises the transaction between users and the products from which the values are derived (Wu and Liang, 2009; Hye and Jeon, 2020; Suryadi et al., 2021). Therefore, the concept of experiential value refers to the relative preference perceived by customers vis-à-vis the product attributes or service performance they are provided with in service encounters (Mathwick et al. 2002). This could be due to ambience (Srivastava et al., 2021), quality of the products (Joshi and Garg, 2020); service quality (Wu and Liang, 2009; Chiang, 2018; Joshi and Garg, 2020). However, the happiness level affected by these variables during COVID-19 endemic scenario could be different as expectations of customers may be different. This gap motivated the researcher to conduct this study.

2.1 Customers’ perceived level of happiness

Perceived happiness refers to the “degree of enjoyment perceived while patronising the food chain due to various variables like quality of service, ambience” [Srivastava and Bhanot, (2021), p.11]. But the study did not cover location, variety of products offering and value for money. Zhong et al. (2020) presented perceived enjoyment as a new element that reflects a user’s intrinsic belief due to service quality (Kim et al., 2021) but other variables ambience and location were not covered. Ambience increases perception of quality of services and products offering (Srivastava and Bhanot, 2021; Lombardi et al., 2021). If compared with two global food chains in the coffee segment, challenger brands face a challenging task of combining ambience and quality of service with a variety of product mix to provide value for money. Satisfaction and happiness will definitely get affected by these variables.

2.2 Satisfaction and happiness on frequency of visits and purchase

Marketing studies have provided empirical evidence that satisfaction is a powerful [Olsen and Johnson, (2003), p.185] indicator of “repeated visits, purchases and recommendations of products or services” due to happiness (Hidayat et al., (2019), p.132]. Moreover, satisfaction is a prerequisite for brand loyalty (Drennan et al., 2015), and an increase in satisfaction leads to an increase in brand loyalty (Cuong, 2020) and thus happiness level. However, satisfaction does not mean happiness level (Srivastava et al., 2021). Variables like ambience, quality of service, variety and quality of products added with the right location could improve happiness level as reflected in repeat visits and purchases. A happy customer means more business [Olsen and Johnson, (2003), p.186] due to loyalty [Wu and Liang, (2009), p586; Hung et al., 2019; Trivedi and Sama, (2020), p.749]. Table 1 contains important variables related to the coffee segment.

Table 1 Summary of variables studied under coffee segment of recent studies

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Authors studied</i>
Service quality	Chiang (2018), Zhong et al. (2021), Joshi and Garg (2020), Lombardi et al. (2021), Kim et al. (2021)
Quality of products	Joshi and Garg (2020)
Variety of products offering	Missing gaps
Value for money	Missing gaps
Ambience	Srivastava et al. (2021)
Satisfaction	Hidayat et al. (2019), Trivedi and Sama (2020), Cuong (2020)
Loyalty	Olsen and Johnson (2003), Wu and Liang (2009), Drennan et al. (2015), Hung et al. (2019), Trivedi and Sama (2020), Cuong (2020)
Happiness	Missing gaps
Location of store	Missing gaps
Frequency of visits	Missing gaps

“Ambience can be a factor that reduces the difference between expectations and performance” [Tsai and Wang, (2017), p.36] and “improves both customer satisfaction and loyalty” [Ryu and Han, (2011), p.599]. This will lead to better happiness and which means more business due to repeat visits. Location of the food chain added with a variety of products offered would have enhanced value for money. The behaviour of customers under COVID-19 endemic era is explained through application of Mehrabian and Russell Model as per study of Di Crosta et al. (2021) as past literatures have suggested that SOR Model can be adopted to understand the effect of environment on customer behaviour (Vieira, 2013; Srivastava and Bhanot, 2021). Mehrabian and Russell’s (1974) “environmental psychology theory states that human emotional responses result from variations in pleasure, arousal, and dominance” [Bakker et al., (2014), p.405]. Responses are due to ambience factors in coffee retail stores of global brands. The next section relates to development of theoretical framework and application of theory with respect to SOR model.

3 Development of theoretical framework to explain customers’ behaviour in COVID-19 endemic era and application of theory

3.1 Application of theory

The service experience of customers has certainly changed over the past years. Retailers may be prompted to enhance their retailing stimulus by these changes. “Past literature has suggested that Mehrabian and Russell (SOR model) affect models” [Vieira, (2013), p.142]. The service experience of customers has certainly changed over the past years. Retailers may be prompted to enhance their retailing stimulus by these changes. “Past literature has suggested that Mehrabian and Russell (SOR model) affect models” [Vieira, (2013), p.1420; Bakker et al., (2014), Srivastava, 2022] can be “adopted to understand the effect of environments on customer behaviour” (Dad and Abdul Rehman, (2016), p.2016; Lombardi et al., (2021), p.178]. “SOR model consists of stimulus as an

independent variable” [Rasool et al., (2021), p.2294]; organism as mediator, and response as the dependent variable (Turley and Milliman, 2000; Vieira, 2013; Srivastava, 2022). The model indicated that the environment like ambience, service quality created (S – stimulus) can influence the customer mood (O – organism) through value for money that evokes behaviour response (R – response) for purchase of a variety of products (Huang et al., 2017) offered in the global food chain coffee restaurant.

Although a lot of research has “adopted the SOR model in retailing, the results are inconsistent” [Buckley, (1991), p.491; Ma, (2020), p.39; Lombardi et al., (2021), p.178]. Past literature has suggested that customers who experience the environments might provide varied responses to the environment due to demographic variables like age and gender (Srivastava, 2016), and image (Srivastava, 2015). Bonnin and Goudey (2012) indicated that very little has been published about the effects of the environment on customers in the service industry. Most of the past literature had reviewed the full SOR model as a conceptual paper [Arora, (1982), p505; Fiore and Kim, 2007; Lin, 2004; Walsh et al., 2011; Ma, 2020) but its application in qualitative or quantitative research is limited (Ma, 2020; Srivastava, 2022). This study investigates whether the global coffee chain offering differs in emerging markets in terms of stimulus, organism, and response.

To assist service providers with clients from different cultural backgrounds, a unique SOR model may be needed (Srivastava, 2022). Besides, the SOR model might contribute to deeper knowledge on why and how consumers select, satisfied and happy a coffee house when both are global brands. Based on Walsh et al. (2011), Ma (2020) and Srivastava (2022), suggestions, this study aims to fill the gap to investigate a full SOR model that focuses on a specific service industry.

3.2 Developing theoretical framework

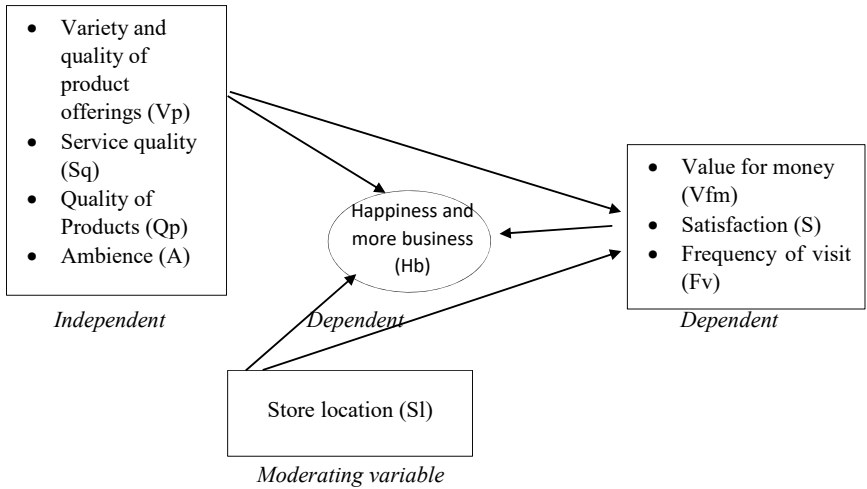
Based on the variables identified through literature review, variables are grouped under independent, dependent and moderating variables. Theoretical construct is given in Figure 1.

These additional variables in the present study, which extend the Mehrabian and Russell (1974) model to explain the consumer purchase behaviour. Thus, keeping these variables the following theoretical framework is studied:

$$Hb \propto V_{fm} + S + Fv \sum V_p + S_q + Q_p + A + Sl$$

- Hb happiness means more business
- V_{fm} value for money
- S satisfaction
- V_p variety of products
- S_q service quality
- Q_p quality of products;
- A ambience
- F_v frequency of visits
- Sl store location.

Figure 1 Theoretical construct based on variables for coffee customers



Although a number of studies have examined the adaptation of the SOR model in the service industry, little research has been conducted on a specific coffee industry. SOR model consists of stimulus as an independent variable, organism as mediator, and response as the dependent variable (Turley and Milliman, 2000; Vieira, 2013; Lombardi et al., 2021; Srivastava, 2022). Store ambience creates an impulsive behaviour among visiting consumers (Vieira, 2013; Lombardi et al., 2021; Srivastava, 2022). Music and fragrance as an ambience factor added with variety and quality of product offerings; service quality; quality of products are stimulative (S) leads to better organism and analysis of the consumers (O) affecting the response in terms of business leading to more business; happiness (R). Vieira (2013) claimed that a lot of findings related to stimuli are insufficient to provide a detailed understanding of which are the atmospheres’ cue effects on shopping behaviour. Therefore, additional variables in the present study will enhance the stimulant effect leading to customers to analyse on value for money and satisfaction of purchase by justification. This leads to happiness and more business and taking action (R). Barista is a challenger brand compared to Starbucks. A comparative study of Barista with Starbucks will give a direction to challenger brands in the coffee segment as how a challenger brand should fight the leader to improve the happiness level of customers when inflation too is high (research question 2). There is likely to be changes on happiness level among customers of two global food coffee chains in COVID-19 endemic due to their different approach adopted by global coffee stores (research question 1), SOR approach will be useful to explain the differences between two global chain coffee stores.

4 Research design

Coffee retailers are trying to improve both their products and services and to increase their market share (Öztopçu, 2017). This is due to increased changing drinking habits towards coffee consumption in emerging markets. This has resulted in greater interest of global food chains like Starbucks and Barista in these markets.

The aim of this study is to determine the happiness level of customers of two global food chains due to their competitive strategies in the coffee retailing. For this purpose, firstly, a literature review was done to find out the variables which will affect the happiness level of customers of two retail food chain stores – Starbucks and Barista as these two are growing faster in emerging markets compared to developed markets. Starbucks is the world's largest coffeehouse company with a presence in 65 countries around the globe. Starbucks is operating through Tata-franchising arrangement with multiple chains. Starbucks has been popular with consumers because of its 'third space' positioning outside of home and office (Ma, 2020). As coffee shops were nearing saturation in the US and Europe, Starbucks identified the potential for expanding in emerging markets like China and India (Rajasekaran, 2015). Lavazza, the Italian coffee retailer, entered India in 2007 by acquiring the Barista coffee shop chain. It aims to offer a truly Italian café experience to Indian consumers. Barista had a pan-India presence, and due to Barista's brand equity, it was not difficult for Lavazza to fortify its position in the market. The visibility gained by Barista Lavazza is mainly by word of mouth. Additionally, it is associated with various events organised by top educational institutions and corporations. The upper- and middle-class segments were spending more money in coffeehouses in emerging markets. A comparative study of two global brands in coffee chain will give insight information during COVID-19 endemic era and give direction to improve the happiness level of customers as more happy customers mean more business.

Therefore, research in this area will not only help the retail food industry in general but will also help their competitiveness in the market. This in turn will improve customers perception and overall patronage due to enhanced happiness of customers. For this purpose, the emails and their mobile numbers of customers who have visited both Starbucks and Barista are collected for study. During the COVID-19 era, 2,550 customers were identified from the list available from the service provider by a team of experts (N = 3). For qualitative study, 35 were selected for a focussed group. The participants were selected because they had visited both coffee shops since they had to declare in the form whether they had visited both coffee shops, and those who had not visited both were removed. This method is commonly used for a comparative study as respondents are familiar with two brands.

5 Results

In the first phase, sentiment analysis was done using 'Sprinkler Software' to assess the sentiment of customers of Starbucks and Barista. It is used by many companies doing research. Data analysis revealed the variables that were used for focus interviews. The following data provided insight into qualitative analysis.

The above information gave variables which were further used during focus interviews. Ambiance and location emerged as additional points for Starbucks compared to Barista. On sentiment analysis Starbucks scores over Barista. However, a further clarity was obtained through focus interview in phase 2.

Phase 2: Keeping the variables identified through literature review and data from sentiment analysis gave a better insight to factors which are helping these coffee stores. Focus interviews were done through Zoom link as per format suggested by Neacşu (2020) and Hye and Jeon (2020). Random list of 35 respondents from 2,550 customers list who have visited both Starbucks and Barista were selected for focus interviews using

a qualitative approach. Questionnaire as a tool was used to collect the data with both open ended and close ended questions using rank scale for measurement were used. The qualitative study using focus interviews was conducted in a step wise manner.

Step 1 First, 35 respondents were invited on Google meet to find out the reasons why they like to visit Starbucks and Barista. Out of these 35 respondents, 30 respondents joined the meet.

Focus group discussion was conducted for half an hour in which the respondents were asked about their experience with Barista and Starbucks and what motivated them to visit Barista and Starbucks. This was a qualitative approach of understanding their purchase behaviour.

They came out with various reasons like ambience (in the form of interiors, fragrance, music), service quality, quality of product offerings, variety of product offerings, store location and value for money. They also mentioned that they feel happy if these variables are offered. It was mentioned by them that happiness level is different from satisfaction as satisfaction does not mean happiness. This difference was also reported by study of Srivastava and Pradhan (2022).

Table 2 Barista vs. Starbucks – sentiment analysis

<i>Barista vs. Starbucks – using Sprinkler software</i>	
Keywords	Barista, Starbucks
Duration	15th January-30th January, 2022
Total mentions:	8280
Starbucks share of mentions (90.5%)	Starbucks Positive sentiment 15.83% Negative Sentiment 15.09% Neutral sentiment 69.07%
Barista share of mentions (9.49%)	785 Barista Positive sentiment 25.43% Negative Sentiment 12.71% Neutral sentiment 61.86%
Key positives for Star Buck:	Preferred brand, cold coffees, teas also liked along with coffees, multiple locations and ease of access; service quality; Quality of product; Value for money; Ambiance; Variety of product offering
Key positives for Barista Cafes	Baristas, Aroma, filter Coffee, latte service quality; Quality of product; Value for money; Variety of product offering

5.1 Measurement

Using a Google Forms link, they circulated a structured questionnaire in which they ranked the variables from 1 to 5, where 1 signifies highest preference and 5 signifies least preference. The questionnaire was prepared by reviewing previous studies; ambience (Neacşu, 2020), store location-findability (Hye and Jeon, 2020), quality and types of product offerings (Öztopçu, 2017) and service quality (Rajasekaran, 2015), value for money – happiness level (Srivastava and Pradhan, 2021) are measured. Data from Google form link was downloaded as an excel file and the data was then transferred to an SPSS file.

Step 2 After rankings were obtained from the respondents, Friedman's test was used in SPSS to analyse the rankings given for Barista and Starbucks, for the various parameters.

The Friedman test is a non-parametric statistical test developed by Milton Friedman. Similar to the parametric repeated measures ANOVA, it is used to detect differences in treatments across multiple test attempts.

The Friedman test is used for one-way repeated measures analysis of variance by ranks. In its use of ranks, it is similar to the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks.

The Friedman test is widely supported by many statistical software packages, including SPSS.

Table 3 gives the rank test in terms of importance.

Table 3 Rank test in terms of importance for different parameters of rating Starbuck and Barista

<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Mean rank</i>
Rate service quality Starbucks	1.78
Rate service quality Barista	1.22
Rate quality of product offerings Starbucks	1.78
Rate quality of product offerings Barista	1.22
Rate value for money Starbucks	1.63
Rate value for money Barista	1.37
Rate interiors (ambience) Starbucks	1.9
Rate interiors (ambience) Barista	1.1
Rate music (ambience) Starbucks	1.8
Rate music (ambience) Barista	1.2
Rate fragrance (ambience) Starbucks	1.78
Rate fragrance (ambience) Barista	1.22
Rate variety of product offerings Starbucks	1.82
Rate variety of product offerings Barista	1.18
Rate store location (findability) Starbucks	1.85
Rate store location (findability) Barista	1.15

Lower the average rank, higher is the preference by the customer as per Friedman test.

Hence, preference wise, the factors for Barista are as under:

- 1 store location
- 2 ambience
- 3 variety of product offerings
- 4 service quality
- 5 quality of product offerings
- 6 value for money.

Surprisingly, during sentiment analysis location and ambience were not mentioned for Barista. Value for money came last for Barista. This could be the reason for low sentiment for Barista. It also means that the happiness level of the same customers who have visited both the coffee chains, are more with Starbucks compared to Barista.

The factors for Starbucks are in terms of ranking are given below:

- 1 value for money
- 2 quality of product offerings
- 3 service quality
- 4 variety of product offerings
- 5 ambience
- 6 store location.

Value for money, quality of products and service quality are the top three variables affecting the customers and have rated Starbucks better than Barista. Therefore, a further comparison was made between Barista and Starbucks who have visited both the coffee restaurants. They are selected as they will be unbiased and their opinion can help to understand the differentiation better. It will be more unbiased to compare the two (Barista and Starbucks) with the same respondents who have experienced both (Hair et al., 2010; Srivastava, 2016). Ranks 1 and 2 were combined for the factors which affects their happiness level and satisfaction are given in Table 4.

Table 4 Rank test of Barista and Starbucks

<i>Sr. no.</i>	<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Rank 1 or Rank 2 (by Barista customers)</i>	<i>Rank 1 or Rank 2 (by Starbucks customers)</i>
1	Service quality	10%	36.7%
2	Quality of product offerings	16.6%	36.7%
3	Value for money	36.7%	60%
4	Ambience	40%	30%
5	Variety of product offerings	10%	30%
6	Store location	33.4%	26.6%

Hence, the most important factors which motivate customers and make them happy to go for 'Starbucks' or 'Barista' are Ambience, Store location, Quality of product offerings and Service Quality. These variables can be further used for primary study to compare the two-restaurant offering coffee. Öztopçu (2017) and Kim et al. (2021) reported that coffee retailers are focussing to give a variety of products and services to improve footfalls. This data can be extended to undertake primary research to get more significance as the data gives direction only for strategic action.

A further analysis using the t-test is used to compare the two coffee chains. T test is commonly used when the sample size is less than 35 (Hair et al., 2010; Srivastava, 2016). Rating on scale of 1–5 based on earlier questionnaire design were analysed as given in Table 5.

Table 5 Analysis of parameters for comparison of Starbuck and Barista in emerging markets- paired t-test

<i>Sr. no.</i>	<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Average rating: Starbucks</i>	<i>Average rating: Barista</i>	<i>Test used</i>	<i>Sig. value</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
1	Service quality	3.18	2.26	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	There is a significant difference in the average ratings given by respondents to the two café joints
2	Quality of product offerings	3.11	2.28	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	A significant difference in the average ratings between two
3	Value for money	2.55	2.14	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	Difference is significant given by respondents to the two café joints
4	Interiors (ambience)	3.38	2.28	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	There is a significant difference between the two café joints
5	Music (ambience)	3.03	2.21	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	There is a significant difference
6	Fragrance (ambience)	3.25	2.34	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	A significant difference in the average ratings between two
7	Variety of product offerings	3.12	2.28	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	Difference is significant
8	Store location (findability)	3.32	2.16	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	There is a significant difference in the average ratings given by respondents to the two café joints
9	Frequency of visits	2.18	1.59	Paired t-test	0.000 < 0.05	Difference is significant

Starbucks scores over Barista on all parameters significantly in emerging markets like India. This is also confirmed by sentiment analysis. Starbucks is more preferred due to parameters like service quality (Sq), product quality (Qp), variety of products (Vp) offering. Ambiance (A); ease of finding the location (L) led to value for money (Vim) and greater satisfaction (S) thus leading to more frequency of visit as customers are happy to visit often. As a result, happy customers will be more likely to return to Starbucks than to Barista, which will lead to more business. Satisfaction is reflected in terms of frequency of visit and value for money. Therefore, the mathematically the theoretical construct is validated after using as follows:

$$Hb\alpha Vfm(p - 0.000) + Rv(p - 000) + S \sum Vp(p - 000) + Sq(p - 000) + Qp(p - 000) + A(p - 000) + L(p - 000)$$

Similarly, graphically the model is validated. Quantitative research can be used to further investigate the model.

5.2 *Theoretical implication and discussion*

Ambiance factors like music and fragrance are better for Starbucks compared to Barista. Thus, ambience was augmented with product variety and quality; service quality contributed to more stimulant factors (S). This results in better organism and analysis of customers (O) and increased frequency of visits to Starbucks and increased happiness (R). More happy customers mean more frequent visits and a perception of value for money (R).

There is a difference between Starbucks and Barista on repeat visits of customers due to their different strategies. Barista has to relook at their strategy wherein they can improve the ambience, variety of products accompanied by service quality. Stimulants factors of barista need to be relooked so that organism and analysis of the customers can lead to frequency of visits and improve value for money (R). Music and fragrance (ambience) combined with variety and quality of products and services (S) lead to improved organisms and analysis of customers (O), and more business and happiness (R). This is what a challenger brand like Barista should learn as per present study (Rq2). Gen Z,'s behaviour has changed post COVID-19 (Srivastava and Bhanot, 2022).

In light of the current study and the different approach adopted by global coffee stores, it is suggested to re-evaluate Barista (Rqn.1), SOR is helpful for explaining the differences between global chains of coffee shops.

6 **Conclusions**

Most important factors which motivate customers and make them happy to go for 'Starbucks' or 'Barista' are ambience, store location, quality of product offerings and service quality. Starbucks is rated higher than Barista on value for money, quality of products, and service quality by its customers. Using these variables, a primary study can be conducted to compare two coffee-serving restaurants. Combined sentiment analysis and focus interviews can assist Barista and other coffee chains to increase footfalls and customer satisfaction. More happy customers mean more business as they are satisfied by the services offered resulting in repeat visits.

The present study indicates that Starbucks is superior to Barista due to its ambience, product quality, and quality, as it contributes to more stimulant factors (S), which result in improved organisms and customer analysis (O), as well as increased visits to Starbucks and happiness (R). Customers who are happy are more likely to return and perceive the value for money as higher.

This research contributes to better understanding the effects of different marketing strategies adopted by coffee chain stores and can provide direction to Barista and other coffee chains. SOR model in coffee chain store application is an additional contribution to existing knowledge.

7 **Scope for further study**

Study can further be extended in primary research based on the variables identified and a comparison between the two coffee chains will enable us to understand the strategies adopted by them. This will help other coffee chain stores to improve their performance in

emerging markets like India. Study can be extended to demographics as responses may vary. A comparison of eastern and western culture to different strategies adopted by the coffee chain will be another interesting study due to cultural differences.

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