
ASSESSMENT OF THE PATTERN AND PATRONAGE OF RESTAURANTS/EATERIES IN ILORIN EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the respondent's ratings of the quality of food, environment, services rendered by staff, types of customers that visit the restaurant, and their socio-economic status. The sample frame was the 28 selected restaurants, while five respondents were randomly selected from each restaurant to get a sample size of 140 respondents. The data generated were analyzed through the Arc-GIS tool, percentages, and graphs. The study revealed that 39.3% of the respondents earned below N30,000, while 12.9% earned above N90,000. Varieties of food were sold in the restaurants comprising Nigerian dishes (46.4%), local dishes/ Yoruba, 25%, International dishes, 17.9%, and Nigerian and International dishes, 10.7%. The level of patronage shows that 35.1% of the modern restaurants had between 21 and 30 customers daily, while 43% of the traditional restaurants had between 31 and 40 customers daily. The major customers of the restaurants were 46% (working class), 29% students, and 13% locals. The rating by respondents on the quality of food, restaurant environment, service rendered by staff, and level of customer satisfaction showed that 58.6%, 67.9%, and 89.3% rated them as excellent, very good, and sound, respectively. The distributional pattern of the restaurants showed that they are clustered together along major roads. This pattern may be attributed to the fact that restaurants prefer locations that are easily accessible to their customers. The study concluded that the various indices of customer assessment should be maintained and improved upon by the operators of restaurants in the study area.

Keywords: Pattern, Restaurants, Eateries, Customer, Dishes

INTRODUCTION

Food is the most basic necessity of life, and without it, no living thing can survive. It is one of the crucial components influencing life quality (Jeong & Seo, 2013). Food helps to nourish the body for proper growth and good health and to promote socio-psychological satisfaction. One of the significant sources of food for individuals and groups is restaurants. A place where people are served food at a given price is known as a restaurant (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2021). The restaurant industry plays an essential role in both the local and national economies as it is a significant source of employment and income for a vast number of people, Rheinländer, T., Olsen, M., Bakang, J., Takyi, H., Konradsen, F. And Samuelsen, H. (2008) and revenue for local government. Restaurants can be categorized into fast-food restaurants and traditional restaurants. Fast-food restaurants are modern restaurants that provide convenient and quick food services to customers. Most foods prepared are pastries, snacks, intercontinental dishes, and traditional cuisines. This class of restaurants is further characterized by large-scale production, employment of literate workers, home delivery, and takeaway services. They are found in strategic locations to attract the literate class both within and outside their vicinities. Traditional restaurants existed before modern fast-food restaurants. They are often found on almost every street and along significant road axes in every city. Traditional restaurants are known for serving local dishes at a

cheaper cost than fast-food restaurants. They operate on a small scale, and most of their employees are women with little or no formal education (Fraikue & Osman, 2016)

Over the last few years, the rapid rate of urbanization has exposed many urban cities in Nigeria, including Ilorin City, to a rapid shift in food consumption patterns from homemade eating patterns to fast food and quick restaurant outlets in the communities. This shift has led to a fast rate of growth in the number of restaurants, most especially within the dense economic and educational zones of the city, where marketing is booming for both local and foreign cuisines.

Ilorin City is one of the fast-growing urban centers in the North-Central zone of Nigeria. The city is characterized by a highly economically active population that is always busy with work. This condition, alongside an increase in incomes, changes in consumption patterns, household composition, and the time pressures created by dual-working families (Nwokah & Keneeth-Aiele, 2018), favors the proliferation of both modern and traditional restaurants in all parts of the city. Restaurants' physical environment greatly influences financial performance, customers' satisfaction and patronage, and the quality of service rendered and food (Ha & Jang, 2012; Vijayvargy, 2014; Alao, Akinola & Akinbobola, 2020; Olise, Okoli, & Ekeke, 2015). Environment in this context refers to factors that may adversely impact human health or the ecological balances essential to long-term human health and environmental quality. Such factors include but are not limited to air, food, and water contamination, disease vectors, and safety hazards. It includes restaurant hall function space, interior and exterior design, and fittings, color, and lightning (Kukoyi, Oseni, & Afolami, 2022).

In Kwara State, the responsibility of regulating and monitoring food hygiene and safety lies in the statutory jurisdiction of the local government. The local health officers ensure that catering establishments, food vendors, and restaurants adhere strictly to the provisions of both local bylaws and other food and safety regulations. However, the efforts of the local health officers to ensure foods served by Nigerian restaurants are produced in a clean environment are impeded by a lack of awareness of the socioeconomic importance of food safety, a lack of understanding of food safety and environmental quality standards, inability to enforce compliance with international standards on global best practices, inadequate infrastructure and resources to support scientific risk analysis and upgrading of food safety regulatory systems, insufficient food supply chain, and poor traceability system (Ibrahim, 2021).

Although restaurants in Ilorin City provide cheap foods that do not need further processing by consumers, most foods sold are at a high risk of contamination due to poor levels of handlers' personal hygiene and poor environmental conditions. Many of these restaurants lack approval from the Ministry of Health and are located in unhygienic environments, posing a danger to the safety of consumers. Foods are neither prepared nor served under hygienic conditions; dining spaces are too small and overcrowded many times due to small space. Also, waste generated is not correctly disposed of, and dining and kitchen utensils and cooking environments are poorly managed, characterized by flies, dirt, and offensive odors from stagnant drainage and undisposed waste that has been lying in the environment for many days. Many of these restaurants are deficient in environmental hygiene practices such as appropriate washing of utensils, using insecticides, proper waste disposal systems, sanitation of the dining and cooking areas, and providing restrooms for customers. Workers are poorly educated and untrained in food safety. These conditions put most of

the foods produced at risk of contamination and consumers at high risk of consuming poisonous foods.

Food prepared in an unsafe environment creates a vicious cycle of disease, diarrhea, and malnutrition, which significantly impedes public health and socioeconomic development (Iwu et al., 2017). According to the US (Food and Drug Administration Report, 2009), the top three factors contributing to foodborne illnesses are poor personal/environmental hygiene, cross-contamination, and time/temperature control. Ogbumbada and Pronakie (2021) found a significant level of poor health standards occasioned by poor food handling practices, such as the use of unsafe water, unhealthy food exposure, and underage service personnel, predispose restaurants' food to contamination in Obio/Akpor LGAs of Rivers State. Globally, food contamination is one of the leading causes of health challenges.

On a daily basis, millions of people get infected (Tessema, Gelaye, & Chercos, 2014), and thousands die from consuming contaminated food. Researchers (World Bank, 2007 as cited in Ababio and Loyatt, 2015) found that an estimated one in forty Ghanaians suffers from severe food-borne disease resulting from consuming foods that were prepared under poor sanitary conditions. Every year, over 200,000 Nigerians die from food poisoning. This is because a large quantity of food was prepared in unpleasant conditions ensuing from poor handling, inadequate storage practices, inefficient processing, high ambient tropical temperature, and humidity conditions that promote rapid bacterial decomposition, fungal contamination, and insect infestation (Ihenkuronye, 2020). The annual report of the Ministry of Health (2007) linked 75% of sickness admitted in hospitals to unhealthy food, and the majority of these foods were served in the canteens and restaurants within the country. Food-borne diseases not only adversely affect people's health and well-being but also have negative socioeconomic consequences for individuals, families, communities, businesses, and countries (Medeiros, Hillers, Kdandal, & Mason, 2001). This study aimed to examine the pattern and patronage of the restaurants in Ilorin East Local Government Areas.

STUDY AREA

Ilorin East Local Government Area is one of the sixteen Local Government Areas in Kwara State, Nigeria. It is located at latitude 805'N and longitude 4043'E (figure 1), and it is situated in the north-central zone of Nigeria. It has an area of 486 km² and a population projection of 204,310 in 2022. The Local Government was created in October 1991 and has two districts, namely Iponrin and Gambari; it also has twelve (12) political wards. The Local Government shares boundaries with Ilorin South, Ilorin West, Moro, and Ifelodun Local Government Areas.

The area is underlain by pre-Cambrian igneous-metamorphic rock from the basement complex rock. A large part of the land is covered by ferruginous tropical soil, which is prone to erosion. This type of soil possesses good potential for a large variety of crop production. The climate of the area is characterized by wet and dry seasons. The dry season spans from November to April, and the rainy season from May to October. The annual rainfall fluctuates between 1250mm and 1350mm, and the average temperature is about 21.10 C. Majority of the people in the area engage in the production of crops like melon, groundnuts, beans, pepper, cassava, yams, soya bean, maize, and locust bean. Other activities include small-scale and large-scale enterprises such as cloth weaving (Aso-Oke), pottery making, and a variety of restaurants.

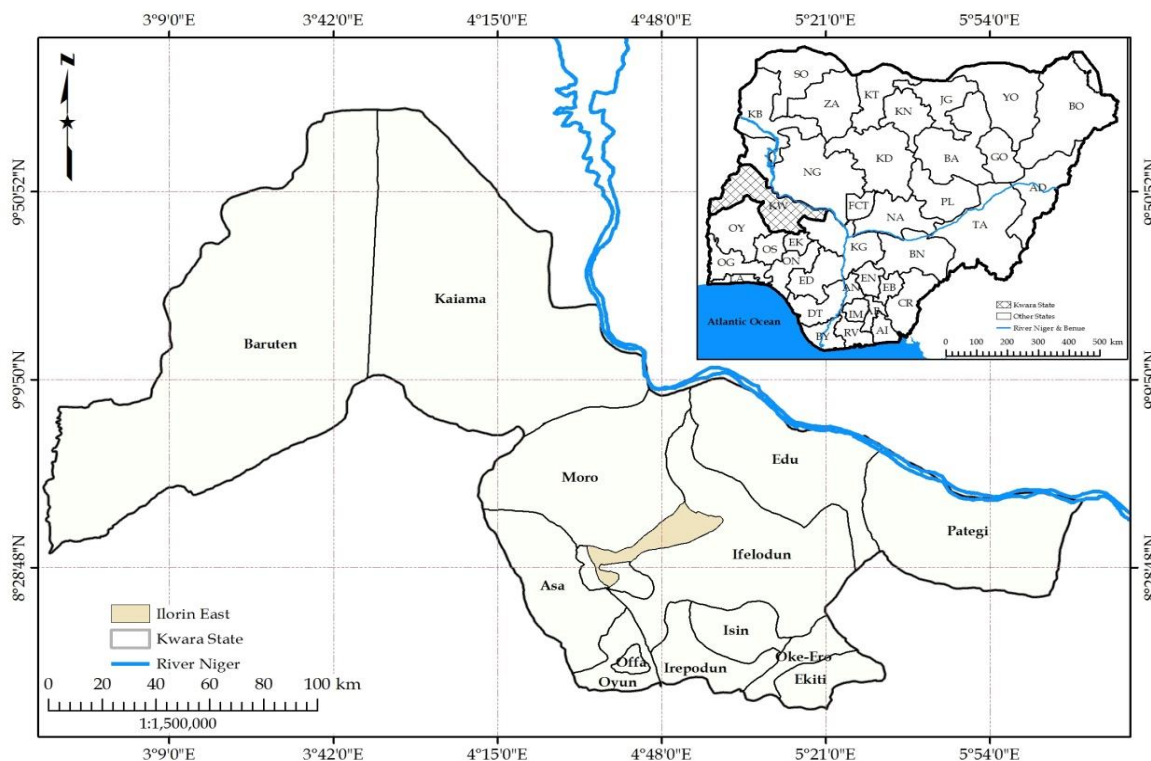


Figure I: Ilorin East Local Government Area; Inset: Nigeria showing Ilorin East
Source: Office of the Surveyor-General, Kwara State, 2022

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data required for the study include types of food in the selected restaurants, the operations of the restaurants, the level of satisfaction of the customers, the level of patronage, and the environmental condition of the restaurants. The data were sourced from primary and secondary sources, including direct observation, coordinates of the selected restaurants, questionnaire administration, relevant government agencies, textbooks, and journals. Random sampling techniques were used to select twenty-eight (28) restaurants comprising modern and traditional. In each of the restaurants, five (5) respondents (customers of the restaurant) at the point of questionnaire administration were purposively selected, making a total of 140 sample sizes. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including tables, percentages, and graphs. Arc-GIS tool was used to map the pattern of restaurants and eateries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic characteristics of the Respondents

The sex characteristics of the sampled respondents revealed that 96(68%) were males while 44 (32%) were females. The lower number of females that visit the restaurants may be attributed to the fact that females tend to cook their meals than males. The age characteristics, as shown in Table 1, revealed that 90 (64.3%) of the respondents fall within the age groups of 15 to 34 years. This large percentage may be due to the fact that young people are more likely to eat outside than older ones.

The other reason may be attributed to the fact that most of these age categories are yet to be married. This corroborates the study of Nwokah and Keneth-Ajele (2018) that an active population with increased income favors the proliferation of restaurants. Furthermore, 3 (9.3%) of the respondents were above 65 years. This figure may be connected to the fact that some people at this age may be living alone due to the loss of a spouse(s), and most children have left to start their own families. The education status revealed that 44 (31.4%), 27 (19.3%) and 38 (27.1%) had primary, secondary and tertiary education respectively. (see Table 1).

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	96	68
Female	44	32
Age		
15-24	53	37.9
25-34	37	26.4
35-44	24	17.1
45-54	6	4.3
55-64	7	5
Above 65	13	9.3
Education		
No formal	31	22.1
Primary	44	31.4
Secondary	27	19.3
Tertiary	38	27.1
Employment Type		
Unemployed	15	10.7
Student	53	37.9
Self-employed	13	9.3
Civil Servant	39	27.9
Retired	20	14.3
Monthly Income		
Below N30,000	55	39.3
N30,000-N49,000	39	27.9
N50,000-69,000	17	12.1
N70,000-N89,000	11	7.9
Above N90,000	18	12.9

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

The monthly income of the respondents showed that 39.3% of them earn below N30,000 monthly, while 12.9% earn above N90,000. This figure may be connected to the fact that 10.7% and 37.9% of the respondents sampled were unemployed and students who rely on income from parents or relatives for their monthly expenses (see Table 1)

Pattern of Restaurants in the Study Area

The coordinates of the restaurants taken were mapped as shown in Tables 2a and 2b and Figure 2, respectively. The coordinates of both modern and traditional restaurants were taken. The pattern of the restaurants showed that they are clustered along the major roads. This clustering may be expected so that customers can easily access the services provided by the different restaurants. The pattern may also result from giving customers a wide range of choices of food and quality of service, among other things.

Table 2a: List of Modern Restaurants/Eateries in the Study Area

S/N	Names of Restaurants or Eatery	Coordinates	
1	Chicken Republic	8° 29' 29.958" N	4° 32' 40.708" E
2	2s Restaurant	8° 29' 44.545" N	4° 33' 22.59" E
3	Cinderella Restaurants	8° 28' 58.613" N	4° 33' 13.025" E
4	Tantalizers	8° 28' 58.613" N	4° 33' 13.025" E
5	KFC	8° 29' 57.149" N	4° 35' 12.214" E
6	A&B Unique Restaurants	8° 27' 45.176" N	4° 33' 6.484" E
7	Captain Cook	8° 28' 10.373" N	4° 33' 37.649" E
8	Oyindamola Restaurant	8° 28' 47.798" N	4° 33' 42.224" E
9	Hatlab Restaurant	8° 29' 54.46" N	4° 35' 8.815" E
10	Royals Eatery	8° 28' 55.448" N	4° 34' 13.375" E
11	Iya Yusuf	8° 29' 2.234" N	4° 36' 6.188" E
12	T&K Restaurant	8° 29' 3.26" N	4° 36' 3.611" E
13	Madam 'B' Restaurant	8° 27' 22.14" N	4° 34' 47.147" E
14	3BS Restaurant	8° 28' 40.656" N	4° 34' 28.024" E

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 2b: List of Traditional Restaurants/Eateries in the Study Area

S/N	Names of Restaurants or Eatery	Coordinates	
1	Titilayo canteen	8° 29' 11.316" N	4° 33' 12.16" E
2	Momola Restaurants	8° 28' 51.132" N	4° 36' 52.722" E
3	Executive Moinmoin	8° 29' 8.316" N	4° 36' 1.11" E
4	Pelumi Oluwa	8° 28' 4.33" N	4° 33' 13.226" E
5	Sister biggs	8° 28' 51.208" N	4° 40' 14.239" E
6	Wumite Grill Girl	8° 29' 4.24" N	4° 36' 9.241"
7	TFC canteen	8° 28' 49.57" N	4° 35' 6.63" E
8	Atolagbe	8° 27' 57.841" N	4° 35' 34.084" E
9	Iya Tunde canteen	8° 28' 3.419" N	4° 33' 13.226" E
10	Joco Palace	8° 29' 5.29" N	4° 35' 19.122" E
11	Calabar Resturant	8° 29' 6.709" N	4° 35' 21.286" E
12	Bisi Joint	8° 29' 5.219" N	4° 35' 21.46" E
13	Lick Fingers	8° 28' 14.851" N	4° 34' 23.092" E
14	Omooba	8° 26' 4.211" N	4° 3' 35.154" E

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

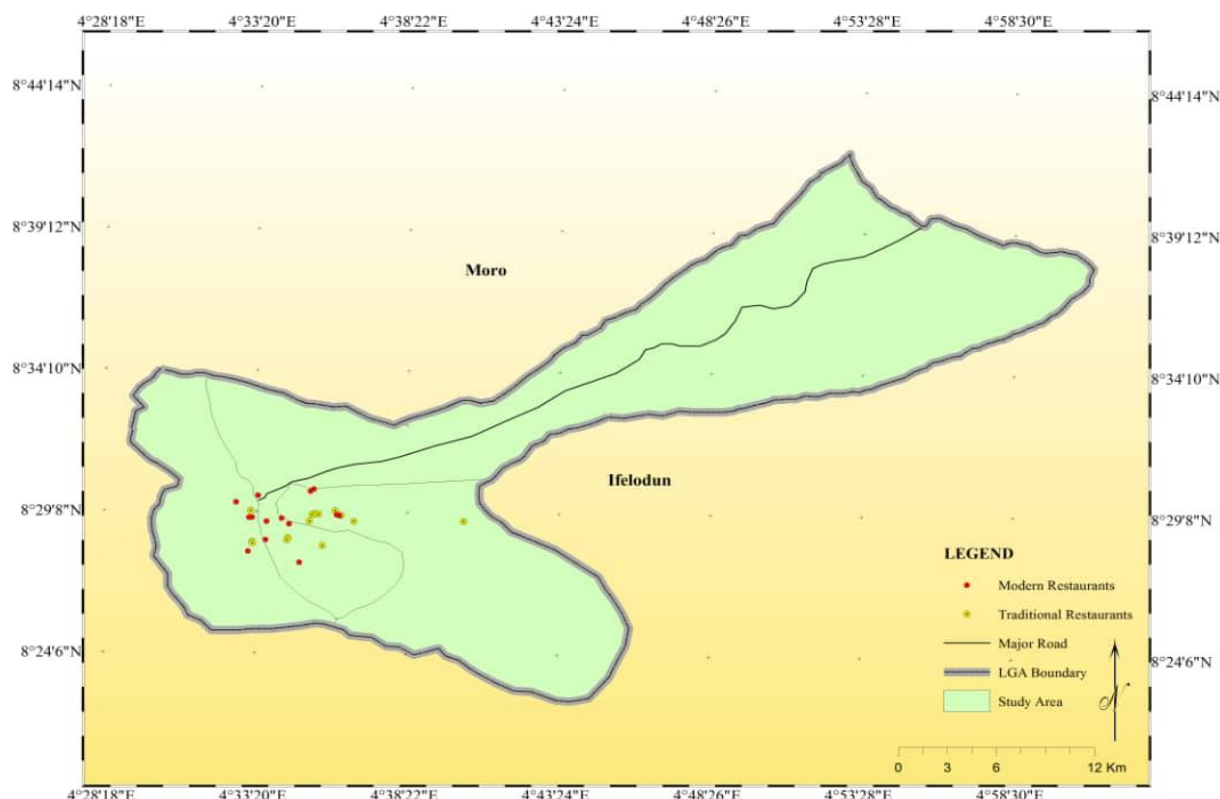


Figure 2: Pattern of Restaurants In the Study Area
Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Types of Food Sold in the Selected Restaurants/Eateries

The type of dishes and food sold in the restaurants found in the study area showed that the majority of the restaurants (46.4%) sold Nigerian dishes while 17.9% sold dishes related to other foreign residents who are not Nigerians (See Table 3). Furthermore, 25% of the restaurants sold purely dishes of the Yoruba tribe, 10.7% sold both Nigerian and International dishes, and 12.5% sold other dishes.

Table 3: Types of Food Sold in the Selected Restaurants

S/N		Frequency	Percentage
1	Local dishes (Yoruba)	7	25
2	Nigerian dishes	13	46.4
3	International dishes	5	17.9
4	Nigerian and International dishes	3	10.7
	Total	28	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Thus, different kinds of dishes can be found in both modern and traditional restaurants. They sell Local Yoruba Dishes, Nigerian Dishes, and international dishes, which appeal to their clients.

The operations of the selected Restaurants

When asked how often inspection was carried out in the different restaurants, as seen in Figure 4.2, 45.8% were inspected daily, 25% were inspected weekly, 8.3% had their inspection monthly, 8.3% were inspected quarterly, and 12.5% had yearly inspections.

Level of Patronage in Both Traditional and Modern Restaurants/Eateries in the Study Area

The level of patronage of the restaurants as responded to by the operators of the restaurants, as seen in Table 4, shows that the patronage level varies significantly between modern and traditional restaurants. For instance, while 28.6% of traditional restaurants received more than 40 customers daily, it was 21.4% of modern restaurants did. In addition, 43% of the traditional restaurants received between 31 and 40 customers compared to 28.6% for the modern restaurants. This significant difference may be likened to the cost of buying different dishes at these restaurants.

Table 4. Level of Patronage

Level of Patronage	Modern	Traditional
10-20 customers daily	2 (14.3%)	1 (7.1%)
21-30 customers daily	5 (35.7%)	3 (21.4%)
31-40 customers daily	4 (28.6%)	6 (43%)
Above 40 customers daily	3 (21.4%)	4 (28.6%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Figure 3 further shows the major customers at the restaurants, while Figure 4 indicates the individual patronage of the different restaurants as rated by the customers.

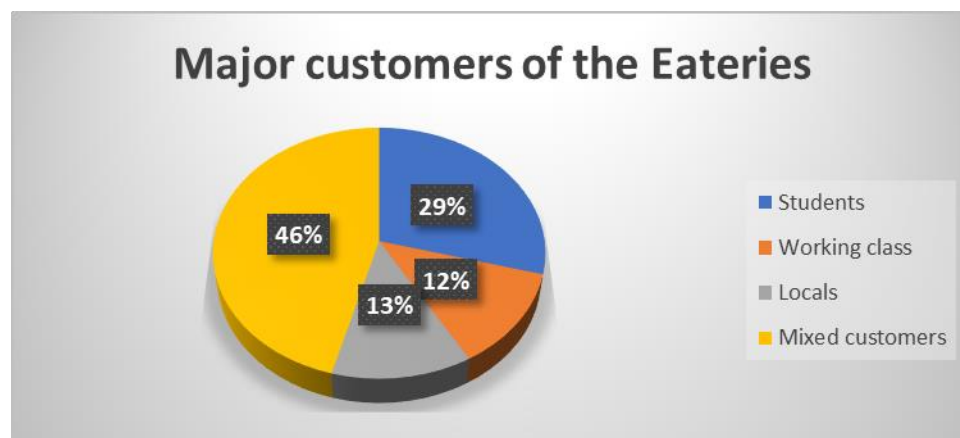


Figure 3: Major Customers of the restaurants

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

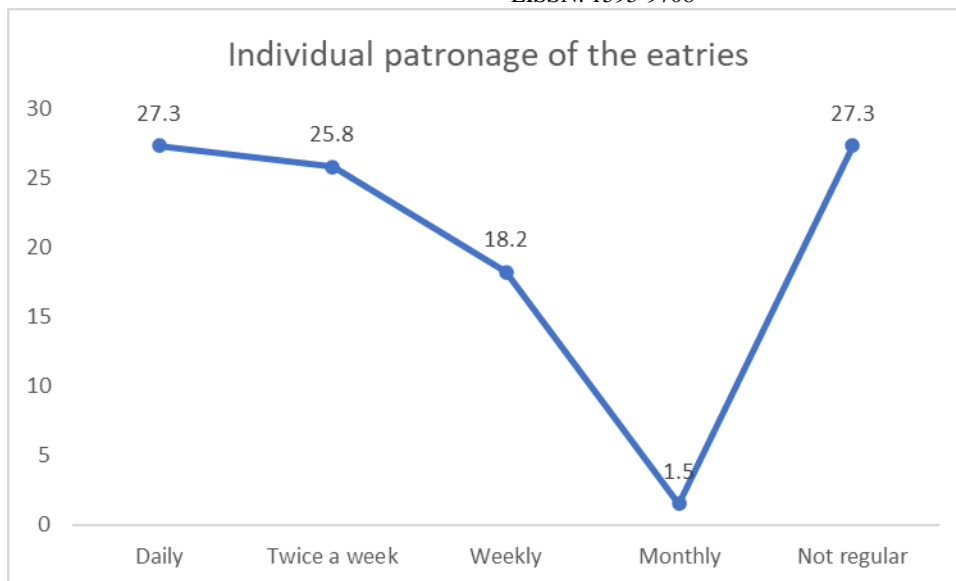


Figure 4: Individual Patronage of the Eateries

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

As seen in Figure 3, 29% of the customers who patronize the restaurants are students, while 12% of the customers are working class. Furthermore, 13% of the customers are locals, while the highest percentage, 46%, is mixed customers from different tribes, employment among others. Figure 4 further reveals the frequency of visits to these restaurants. The results showed that 27.3% of the respondents patronize on a daily basis, while 25.8% patronize it twice a week. Others include 18.2% of these customers who patronize these restaurants on a weekly basis, while 1.5% only patronize monthly, and 27.3% of the customers' level of patronage is not regular.

Level of Satisfaction of Customers in both Traditional and Modern Restaurants in the Study Area

To rate the level of satisfaction of customers in traditional and modern restaurants, I asked the customers to rate the quality of the food sold in the restaurants, the restaurant environment, the service rendered by the staff, and their overall satisfaction with the restaurant.

Quality of the Food

The customers sampled were asked to rate the quality of food sold to them in both modern and traditional restaurants. The ratings showed that 12.9%, 16.4%, and 29.3% of the respondents rated it as being excellent, very good, and sound, respectively (see Table 5). However, a significant 10.7 % still rated the quality as bad. This might be attributed to so many factors related to the findings of Ajao and Atere (2009), who investigated the state of hygiene standards and bacteriological quality of foods prepared by six food canteens at Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. High hygiene quality indices were found for the cleanliness of restaurants' plates, walls, tables, and serving counters. However, low hygiene quality indices were found for the cleanliness of restaurants' floors, hand towels, aprons, money, and hand swabs.

Table 5: Quality of Foods in the Study Area

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	18	12.9
Very Good	23	16.4
Good	41	29.3
Fair	43	30.7
Bad	15	10.7

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Restaurant Environment

The environment of a place makes an individual want to visit the area, and as such, this applies to the environment of the place where an individual takes their meals. Table 6 gives a detailed representation of the way customers feel about the environment of the restaurants/eateries they eat from. 16.4%, 13.6%, and 37.9 % of the customers rated the environment as excellent, very good, and sound, respectively. However, a significant 14.3% rated the environment as bad. This supports the earlier work of Kika, Ikezam, and Uchenna-Ogbodo (2022) that investigated the public perception of the environmental conditions of eight hundred and seventy restaurants in Port Harcourt Metropolis, River State, Nigeria. The study revealed high variation in the environmental conditions of the surveyed restaurants. The noise level was found to be higher inside than outside the restaurants. It was concluded that the general environmental quality condition of the restaurants was bearable except for the noise. Furthermore, Ha and Jang (2012) were of the view that the physical environment of the restaurant dramatically influences customers' satisfaction with the quality of food and the service rendered by the staff of the restaurant. Liu and Jang (2009) also emphasized that the restaurant environment has a significant effect on customers' positive emotions and negative and perceived value.

Table 6: Respondents' Rating of Restaurant Environment

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	23	16.4
Very Good	19	13.6
Good	53	37.9
Fair	25	17.9
Bad	20	14.3

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Service Rendered by the Staff of the Restaurants

The rating by respondents on the services of the staff of the restaurants revealed that 30.3% of customers rated the services rendered by the staff as excellent, and 34.8% rated the services as very good (see Figure 5). Furthermore, 24.2% of the customers rated the services rendered as good, while 9.1% rated the services provided by the staff as fair, and a total of 1.5% of the customers did not rate the services rendered by the restaurant staff. This is in line with the view of Alao et al.

(2020) that the quality of service rendered is an essential factor that attracts customers to a restaurant.

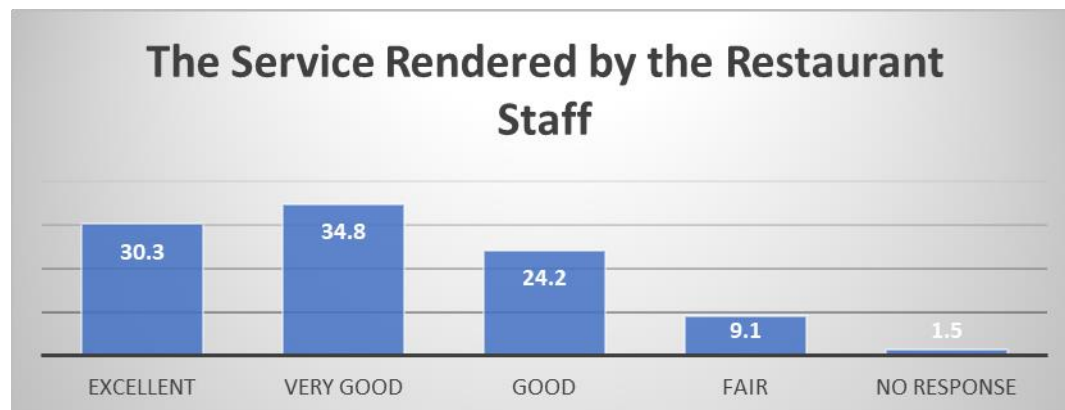


Figure 5: The Service Rendered by the Restaurant Staff
Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Level of Customer's Satisfaction

The level of satisfaction enjoyed at a restaurant makes an individual want to have such an experience again. The satisfaction rating may be attributed to the quality of food and the services rendered by staff, among other things. The results in Table 7 revealed that most respondents claimed to be very satisfied, satisfied, and reasonably satisfied, representing 22.1%, 30.7%, and 28.6%, respectively.

Table 7: Level of Customer Satisfaction

Level of Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	31	22.1
Satisfied	43	30.7
Fairly satisfied	40	28.6
Not satisfied	26	18.6

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

This rating may be connected to the findings of the study of Odipe, Raimi, Nimisingha, Abdulraheem, Okolosi-Petainnocent, Habeeb, and Fadeyibi (2019) on environmental sanitation, food safety knowledge, handling practice among food handlers of Bukateria complexes in Iju Town, Akure North of Ondo. The study revealed that educated food vendors had better knowledge about food hygiene. Also, less than half of the vendors that used aprons were neat. The majority of the sampled bukateria had facilities for the safe storage of cooked food and had neat kitchens and stores. Less than half of them were adequately ventilated and had access to means of adequate sewage disposal. In comparison, more than half of the restaurants had access to potable water supply and refuse disposal. The presence of rodents such as rats and flies was found in more than one-quarter of the restaurants, putting food produced at risk of contamination.

CONCLUSION

The pattern of restaurants in the study area showed that they are clustered along major roads. This has facilitated easy accessibility for customers to patronize. The quality of food, services rendered by staff, and restaurant environment all played significant roles in the patronage of the restaurants. The study recommends that appropriate government agencies should ensure that the quality of food and environment of these restaurants meet the best standards found in other parts of Nigeria and beyond.

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