

CHAPTER-7

Interplay between Ethnic Music and Ethnic Cuisines

This chapter offers the reader with a brief understand of ethnic music and ethnic cuisines with special reference to Assam. It covers the experiment carried out to uncover the relationship between ethnic music and ethnic food.

7.1. Introduction

The following section tries to throw some light on the role of ethnic music in ethnic restaurants. Ethnic food is acknowledged as a symbol of traditional culture and as an indicator of ethnicity (Verbeke and López, 2005; Lu & Fine, 1995). A meal is considered ethnic if it comes from an ethnic group and is prepared using their knowledge of the local plants, herbs and/or animals (Kwon, 2015). Restaurants with ethnic themes showcase specific cultures, and ethnic cuisine is offered in these settings (Ebster and Guist, 2004). Ethnic restaurants are popular because they offer the chance to sample different flavours and immerse oneself in authentic culture of a particular community (Liu and Mattila, 2015). The selection of ethnic restaurants by diners may be influenced by factors other than the authenticity of the food. According to Oakes (2000), and Ebster and Guist (2005), physical surroundings that contribute to a cultural experience are also significant. For this reason, ethnic restaurant operators strive to create unique dining experiences by highlighting authentic atmospherics like interior design, decorations, or music for memorable dining and entertaining experiences (Robinson et al., 2018). According to Lili Gai (2014), the restaurant industry has realized the value of authenticity, and the trend is to go towards "authentic" ethnic cuisine, which delivers both the genuine cuisine of a particular culture and an authentic dining experience, complete with décor and background music. Having good taste or a reasonable price is not as important to customers as having a great overall dining experience. These results suggest that the phenomenon of customers' food choices, particularly their selection of ethnic restaurants, is multifaceted (Liu & Jang, 2009; Roseman, Kim, & Zhang, 2013). Perceived food authenticity (Ha & Jang, 2010) and perceived ambient authenticity (Jang et al., 2012; Liu & Jang, 2009) are the two dimensions of authenticity that have been covered in the literature on ethnic restaurant authenticity. As previously said in the methodology chapter, this experiment's main goal is to determine how ethnic music affects diners' experiences (Refer to Section 4.4, Chapter 4). The role of atmospherics in creating ethnic experiences has been studied by scholars in different geographical parts of the world with vivid research design (e.g., Jang et al., 2012; Jang et al., 2011; Ryu & Jang, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Wood & Munoz, 2007). Therefore, it is decided to determine how diners' experiences are related to ethnic music in ethnic restaurants with the help of an experiment. As stated in the methodology section, the data are collected from two sets- Intervention Group and Control Group. The intervention groups termed as

‘Ethnomusicological Group’ (EG) are exposed to instrumental music excerpts representing "Assamese," "Bodo," "Naga," and "Bengali" music, and the control groups were exposed to Bollywood instrumental music. Traditional cuisines that are connected to a particular country, area, or community and represent their history, customs, and preferences are referred to as ethnic food. In order to preserve culinary practices and cultural history, these recipes frequently make use of locally produced ingredients and distinctive cooking methods (Pearce & Lee, 2005). By keeping in mind, the socio-cultural background of different communities of Assam and the criteria laid down for this study, the restaurants serving Assamese cuisine, Bodo cuisine, Naga cuisine and Bengali cuisine have been considered (Refer to Table 4.5, Chapter 4). Initially, it was tried to find out the trend of the responses of the diners of the ethnic restaurants for both the Intervention and Control groups. Sincere attempt has been made to check the statements individually. The diners were asked to rate few statements on 6-point scale starting from 0-5 (0 being not agreeing, 1 being least agreeing to the statement and 5 denoting highly agreeing) and few statements in 7-point scale where denotes least agreement and 7 implies highest agreement of the statement

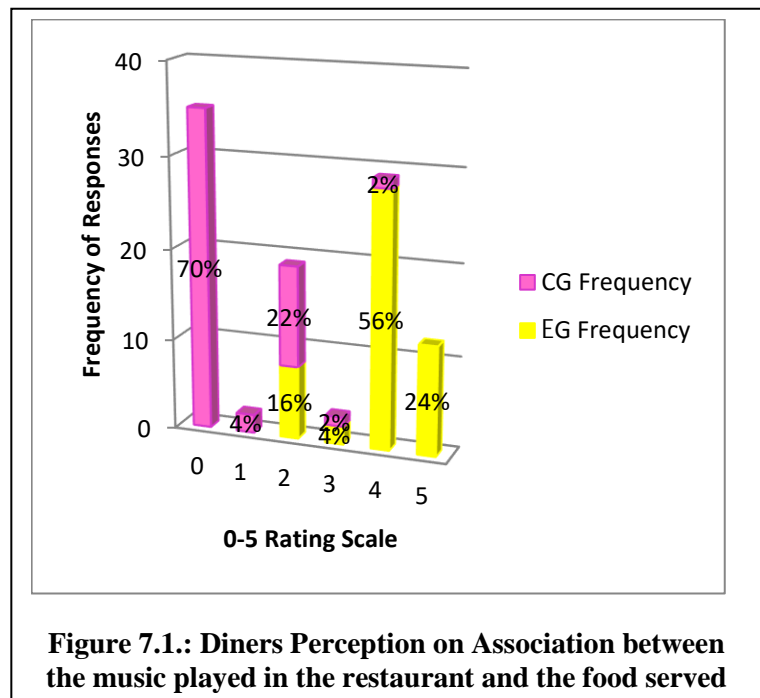
7.2. Diners Perception on association between the music played in the restaurant and the food served

There is a statement to capture the perception of the diners that the music played in the restaurant is associated with the food served. It is worth repeating that only restaurants that served ethnic food were selected for the experiment, and the Control Group(CG) was exposed to Bollywood instrumental music while the Ethnomusicological Group’ (EG) was made to listen to ethnic music instrumental music excerpts representing "Assamese," "Bodo," "Naga," and "Bengali" music. The results of the experiment on this variable are shown in Table 7.1. Paired samples t test is performed and the results of the paired t test on perception of diners on association between the music played in the restaurant and the food served shows a significant difference in the perception of diners in both intervention group and control group. Here, the null hypothesis is rejected ($p=0.000$). Subjects show a significantly higher perception on association between the music played in the restaurant and the food served when exposed to ethnic music in EG over the music exposed to diners in CG.

Table 7.1.: Diners Perception on Association between the music played in the restaurant and the food served

Rating Scale	Frequency of Responses of Ethnomusicological Group' (EG)	Frequency of Responses of Control Group(CG)		
0	Nil	35 (70%)		
1	Nil	02 (4%)		
2	08 (16%)	11 (22%)		
3	02 (4%)	01 (2%)		
4	28 (56%)	01 (2%)		
5	12 (24%)	Nil		
Average Rating	Ethnomusicological Group (max- min)	Control Group (max-min)	T value	P value
	3.8	.62	18.08	.00

It can be seen from Table 7.1 that when diners are exposed to ethnic music (Assamese music in restaurant serving Assamese ethnic food, Bodo music in restaurant serving Bodo cuisine, Naga music in restaurant serving Naga cuisine and Bengali music in restaurant serving Bengali food) in the EG maximum responses accounted for 56% in 4 and 12 % in 5 in the given rating scale when they we asked about whether they can associate between the



music played in the restaurant and the food served thereon. The situation is different in the case of the CG where Bollywood instrumental music was played, 70% reported that they were unable to associate (perceive at "0") the music playing in the ethnic restaurant with the cuisine they were eating. This is followed by 22% in point 2 and the highest score of 5 accounts for no response from the participants. This implies that diners can easily associate the ethnic music played in the respective ethnic restaurant with the food served there. The graphical presentation makes it clear that for control group the pink

coloured line shot up at “0” and yellow coloured line representing intervention group shows consistently rising upwards.

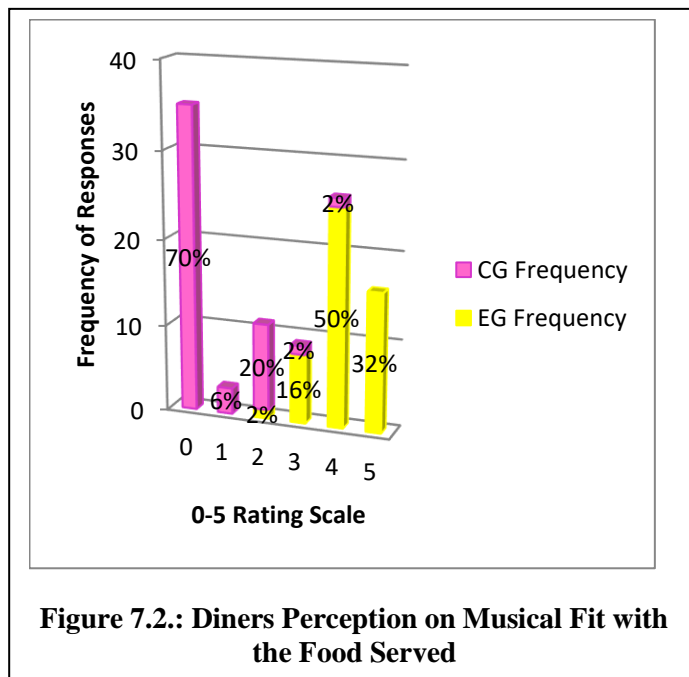
7.3. Diners Perception on Musical Fit with the Food Served

From the following statement regarding the musical fit with the food served applied to assess the perception of diners among both the groups. The results of the experiment for this variable are presented in the Table 7.2 and Figure 7.2

Table 7.2.: Diners Perception on Musical Fit with the Food Served

Rating Scale	Frequency of Responses of Ethnomusicological Group’ (EG)		Frequency of Responses of Control Group(CG)	
0	Nil		35 (70%)	
1	Nil		03 (6%)	
2	01 (2%)		10 (20%)	
3	08 (16%)		01 (2%)	
4	25 (50%)		01 (2%)	
5	16 (32%)		Nil	
Average Rating	EG (max-min)	CG (max-min)	T value	P value
	4.12	.60	22.404	.00

The results of the paired samples t test on perception of diners on musical fit with the food served shows a significant difference in the perception of diners in both EG and CG. Here, the null hypothesis is rejected ($p=0.000$). Subjects show a significantly higher perception on musical fit with the food served when exposed to ethnic music in intervention group (EG) over the music exposed to the control group. The above table reveals that in the EG 50% respondents rated 4 point and 32% in 5 point of the given scale when it comes to evaluate how well the cuisine and music match. In this variable also, the diners did not made any



response for ‘0’ and ‘1’. In case of Control Group, the trend is quite similar with the responses of the previous variable where 70% perceived that the music does not fit with the food served at ‘0’ point. Very negligible percentage (2%) of respondents opted for ‘3’ and ‘4’ points and no one rated for point 5 which was being the highest in the scale. This means that the diners perceive that the choice of ethnic music (Assamese, Bodo, Naga and Bengali) being played in the Ethnomusicological Group strongly fits with Assamese cuisine, Bodo cuisine, Naga cuisine and Bengali cuisine respectively. It is understood that people prefer ethnic music with ethnic food. There is high congruency effect of ethnic music with ethnic food.

7.4. Diners Perception on Importance of Ethnic Music in Enhancing Dining Experience

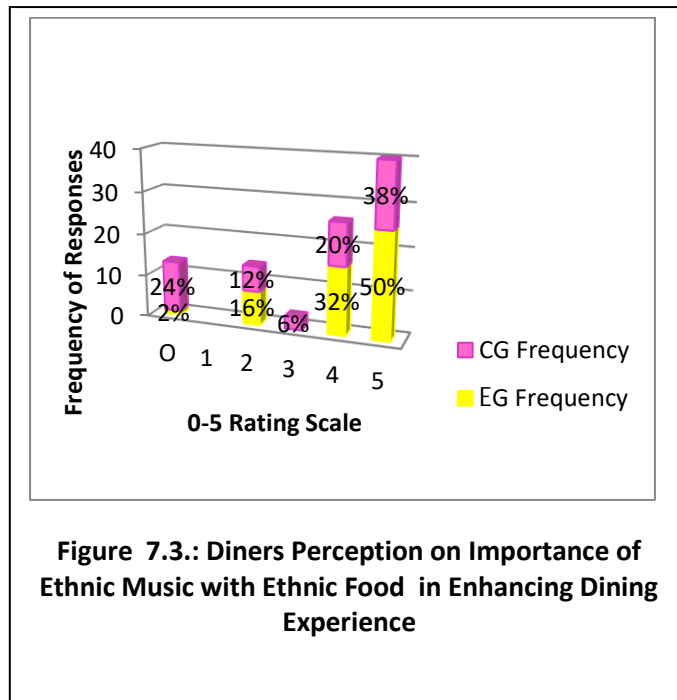
Another important variable on importance of ethnic music in enhancing dining experience while consuming ethnic food in a restaurant was recorded for both the groups. The results obtained from conducting the experiment are reflected in the Table 7.3 below:

Table 7.3.: Diners Perception on Importance of Ethnic Music with Ethnic Food in Enhancing Dining Experience

Rating Scale	Frequency of Responses of Ethnomusicological Group' (EG)	Frequency of Responses of Control Group (CG)		
0	01 (2%)	12 (24%)		
1	Nil	Nil		
2	08 (16%)	06 (12%)		
3	Nil	03 (6%)		
4	16 (32%)	10 (20%)		
5	25 (50%)	19 (38%)		
Average Rating	EG (max- min)	CG (max- min)	T value	P value
	4.10	3.12	18.08	.00

For both the groups, a significant variable about the importance of ethnic music in elevating the dining experience was captured. The results of the paired t test on perception of diners on importance of ethnic music with ethnic restaurant in enhancing dining experience shows a significant difference in the perception of diners in both intervention group and control group. Here, the null hypothesis is rejected ($p=0.000$). Subjects in EG show a significantly higher perception on importance of ethnic music

with ethnic restaurant in enhancing dining experience than the perception of subjects in control group. It is to note in case of EG that 50% respondents reveal highest score (perceived at '5'), followed by 32% in point 4, 16% rated in point 2 and 2% (a single) respondent perceived the test variable at '0' (meaning not at all important). This single response may be considered as outlier as more than 80% feels the importance of ethnic music with ethnic food in enhancing dining experience. With respect to the records of Control Group, a mixed set of responses can be seen. 24% responses perceived at '0' which



means given variable of ethnic music with ethnic food in enhancing dining experience is not at all important. 12% said they perceive the importance at 2 point, followed by 6% at '3' point, 20% at '4' point and 38% records highest at '5' point, which is the highest rating score in the given scale. It can be concluded that in both the groups, diners' perception towards the importance of ethnic music while consuming ethnic food in a restaurant enhances the dining experience is very strong. Respondents from both the groups felt the importance of this variable irrespective of the music being played in the restaurant. It is also evident from the figure that the trend is forward moving in case of both the groups. Diners consider playing Assamese music with Assamese cuisine, Bodo music with Bodo cuisine, Naga music with Naga ethnic food and Bengali music with Bengali cuisine is very important to enhance the overall dining experience.

As the preliminary results are noteworthy and showing a positive sign towards a positive relationship between ethnic music and ethnic food, it is then decided to go into a detailed exploration of these variables statistically. For detailed statistical analyses of the data further paired sample t tests are used. To analyze the data collected, the following relationship is hypothesized in the experimental research with the following constructs on authenticity, enhances liking for food, appealing sound, overall satisfaction from the

restaurant experience, welcoming ambiance of the restaurant, willingness to pay and average experience.

7.5. Authenticity of the Experience

Authenticity can be considered as something which is real or genuine (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Jang et al., 2011, Ram, Bjork, & Weidenfeld, 2016; Paulauskaite, 2017). It depends on the opinions of the customers, which are conveyed by the experience provider (Pine & Gilmore, 2013; Jugård & Modig, 2009; Carroll, 2015; Home et al., 2020). The world is exposed to full of purposeful and sensational experiences; customers are increasingly basing their purchasing decisions on how authentic they believe a product is? Being a relational construct, authenticity of experience is based on the interaction between expectations and experienced reality. Most definitions of authenticity are inherently based on the consumer's perceptions, which suggest that the experience provider has either directly or indirectly communicated the expectation. Carroll (2015) proposes that in order to maximize impact, authenticity must be expressed clearly and explicitly. Additionally, authenticity must be "tightly and visibly integrated into the structure of an organisation." Jugård and Modig (2009) support this notion by stating that authenticity is defined as being truthful to what is expressed to others, allowing for the perception of one's own passions and interests and so that their perception meets the expectation. A question was incorporated in the experiment where diners' experience of the authenticity of the experience was measured. We tried to test how ethnic music helps in creating a positive perception of authentic experience. So, in order to see if the ethnic music actually plays a positive role in this, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

$$H_0: \mu_T = \mu_C$$

$$H_1: \mu_T \neq \mu_C \quad \text{where;}$$

μ_T = Average perception on authenticity of experience for the EG

μ_C = Average perception on authenticity of experience for the CG

Table 7.4.: Paired Samples t test on Perception on Authenticity of Experience

Group	Average (max- min)	p value	Remarks
<i>Ethnomusicological Group</i> <i>Defines authenticity</i>	5.54	0.00	<i>Hypothesis Rejected at $\alpha=0.05$</i>
<i>Control Group</i> <i>Defines authenticity</i>	1.82		

The table presents the results of a paired samples t-test comparing the perceived authenticity of the experience between the ‘Ethnomusicological Group’ (EG) and the Control Group (CG) in the ethnic restaurant setting. The high mean score (5.54) indicates that the intervention group perceives a high level of authenticity in the experience when ethnic music is played in the restaurant. The mean score is *much* less (1.82) in the control group where modern music was played during dining. The resultant *p* value of 0.000 confirms that the difference in mean scores between the EG and CG is statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis (no difference between groups) is rejected. The comparison with the EG shows a significant difference, reinforcing that the intervention (the presence of ethnic music of Assamese, Bodo, Naga and Bengali) significantly impacts the perception of authenticity. When compared to the CG, the EG believes their experience to be far more genuine. This implies that a significant factor in determining the authenticity of the experience can be created by the use of ethnic music in the establishment. Thus, our research finding is supported by the study conducted in Sweden on authenticity in the year 2009. Findings of the study, “The meaning of authenticity in the experience industry -an exploratory study of Swedish concept restaurants by (Jugård & Modig, 2009), reveal that companies need to maintain close ties with their passions and personal interests in order to convey their authenticity. Accordingly, our presumption, in order to create an experience that people will remember, authenticity needs to be taken into account. Restaurants that want to participate in the rapidly expanding experience sector must provide authenticity and go above and beyond simply serving food and routine amenities.

7.6. Music played enhances liking towards ethnic food leading to pleasant dining experience

Background music has been closely and universally associated with eating, evoking certain emotional reactions in listener (Szakál et al., 2023). There is evidence of a strong ethnic congruency impact between food preferences and music in many cultures (Peng-Li et al., 2020a, b). Peng-Li et al. studied a cross cultural comparison between Danish and Chinese consumers on ethnic congruence of music. When listening to Western music, people tend to choose Western food more, and when listening to Eastern music, people favored Eastern food. Both explicit (conscious) and implicit (unconscious) consumer behaviours can be significantly influenced by music (Braunstein et al., 2017). Prior studies indicate that cuisine preferences in a specific country are influenced by music particular to that nation. Customers in a University (USA) dining hall chose far more paella (Spanish seafood) than chicken parmesan (Italian food) when Spanish music was played as opposed to Italian music (Zellner et al., 2017). Studies have shown that there are differences in cultural acceptability when it comes to matching ethnic music with meals. Assam, a land of different culture and subcultures exhibits their own perception and behavior when it comes to product or service choice. Therefore, we also tried to determine whether or not the music complemented the cuisine that was being served. Several ethnic community-themed restaurants in Assam are taken into consideration and measured as part of the study to see if the diners exhibit the similar characteristics as Chinese, Danish, German, French, and so on as stated by the scholars. (North et al., 1999; Szakál et al., 2023; Peng-Li et al., 2020a, b).

$H_0: \mu_{\text{Tenhances liking for food}} = \mu_{\text{Cenhances liking for food}}$

$H_1: \mu_{\text{Tenhances liking for food}} \neq \mu_{\text{Cenhances liking for food}} \quad \text{where;}$

$\mu_{\text{Tenhances liking for food}} = \text{Average of music played in the restaurant enhances liking towards food leading to pleasant dining experience in EG.}$

$\mu_{\text{Cenhances liking for food}} = \text{Average of music played in the restaurant enhances liking towards food leading to pleasant dining experience in CG}$

The Ethnomusicological Group's high mean score (5.740) and Control Group's low mean score (1.960) suggest that the ethnic music they listened throughout their dining has significantly improved the Ethnomusicological Group's enjoyment of the meal enhancing overall dining experience than that of Control group who are exposed to

Bollywood music. The statistical importance of this difference is shown by the significance value of 0.00 which suggested rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 7.5.: Paired Samples t test between Ethnomusicological Group and Control Group on music played enhances liking towards food leading to pleasant dining experience

Groups	Average (max- min)	p value	Remarks
Ethnomusicological Group <i>Music played enhances liking towards food leading to pleasant dining experience</i>	5.74	0.000	<i>Hypothesis Rejected at $\alpha=0.05$</i>
Control Group <i>Music played enhances liking towards food leading to pleasant dining experience</i>	1.96		

According to the results of the Paired samples t test, there is a noteworthy distinction in how the intervention group and the control group perceive their eating experience with respective music. This implies that one of the most important factors in improving the overall dining experience at a restaurant is the music selection. The findings demonstrate that, the dining experience is influenced by the restaurant's music selection

7.7. Sound in the Restaurant is Appealing

Sound in restaurants comes from varied sources. Some sound sources are pleasing and appealing and some are annoying and considered as noise. Sound and noise both matters for critical evaluation of a restaurant (Lang, 2014). In every constructed environment committed to consumption, sound is a crucial design component (Sterne, 1997). A physical space's auditory characteristics alter how one perceives it in addition to how one uses sound to comprehend tangible items and surfaces and how people interact with it (Blessner & Salter 2009; Shafer 1994; Lang, 2014). However, it is to be noted here that sound environment consists of different sounds, and music played therein is one of them. Therefore, we tried to find out the overall sound in the ambience of the ethnic restaurant appeal the diners or not.

$$H_0: \mu_{T\text{appealing sound}} = \mu_{C\text{appealing sound}}$$

$$H_1: \mu_{T\text{appealing sound}} \neq \mu_{C\text{appealing sound}} \quad \text{where;}$$

$\mu_{T\text{appealing sound}}$ = Average perception of diners on appealing sound in the restaurant of EG.

$\mu_{\text{Appealing sound}}$ = Average perception of diners on appealing sound in the restaurant of CG

Table 7.6.: Paired Samples t-test among Ethnomusicological and Control Groups on Restaurant Sound is Appealing to the diners

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Average (max-min)</i>	<i>p value</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Ethnomusicological Group Sound in the restaurant is appealing	5.72	0.00	Hypothesis Rejected at $\alpha=0.05$
Control Group Sound in the restaurant is appealing	2.20		

The EG considers the sound in the ethnic restaurant to be very appealing, as indicated by the high mean score of 5.72. In comparison to the intervention group, the control group seemed to find the sound in the ethnic restaurant less appealing, as indicated by the lower mean score (2.20). This notable distinction emphasizes how sound affects the intervention group's diners' perceptions and levels of enjoyment. The information shows that the EG and CGs' assessments of sound attractiveness differed significantly and statistically too. Compared to the control group, the intervention group, finds the sound at ethnic restaurants to be significantly more pleasant. This implies that an important factor in improving consumers' overall experience in ethnic restaurants is the acoustic environment. The acoustic environment is built by different sound sources. In case of the Ethnomusicological Group, as ethnic music was only factor which was altered and all the other sound factors remained the same in case of both EG and CG. This may be due to the fact that ethnicity of the Assamese, Bodo, Naga and Bengali music worked as a catalytic agent and making the overall sound much more appealing in case of Ethnomusicological Group.

In a nutshell the findings demonstrate that, when compared to the CG, the EG's dining experience at ethnic restaurants is much improved by pleasing sound of ethnic music.

7.8. Overall Satisfied Experience

Customer satisfaction is becoming more and more important in gauging the quality of a business and projecting future earnings. As per the marketing literature, customer satisfaction may be characterized as their total evaluation about the purchase and

consumption of a product (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). It relates to the last phase of the purchasing process for consumers and occurs when they are assessing the advantages of their purchase (Oliver, 2014). "A person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment that result from comparing a product or service's perceived performance (or outcome) to expectations" is how Kotler & Keller (2016) defined customer satisfaction. Pleasure and well-being are components of satisfied customers. Getting what the consumer expects from the service leads to increased customer satisfaction. A consumer's comprehensive assessment of an experience is what is construed as customer satisfaction. Meeting the needs of the consumer results in satisfied customers. Increased intent to recommend and recurrent or repeat purchase behaviour are brought about by satisfied customers (Rajput & Gahfoor, 2020; Prayag et al., 2017). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

$$H_0: \mu_{Tsatisfaction} = \mu_{Csatisfaction}$$

$$H_1: \mu_{Tsatisfaction} \neq \mu_{Csatisfaction} \text{ where;}$$

$\mu_{Tsatisfaction}$ = Average perception of diners on overall satisfaction from the restaurant experience in EG.

$\mu_{Csatisfaction}$ = Average perception of diners on overall satisfaction from the restaurant experience diners in CG

Table 7.7.: Paired t test among Ethnomusicological and Control Groups on Overall Satisfaction from the Restaurant Experience

Groups	Average (max- min)	p value	Remarks
Ethnomusicological Group Overall satisfaction from the restaurant experience	5.84	0.00	Hypothesis <i>Rejected at</i> $\alpha=0.05$
Control Group Overall satisfaction from the restaurant experience	2.46		

Given in the above table, the high mean score of 5.84, it can be inferred that the intervention group's diners are quite satisfied with their dining experience. The significant difference is shown by the α value of 0.00. As such the respondents in the control group report a much lower degree of pleasure with their dining experience (2.46). The impact of the elements being investigated, the presence of music on overall

satisfaction is shown by the significant difference in mean scores between the intervention and control groups.

Therefore, a combination of interesting music, improved ambiance and aesthetics, authentic and aesthetically pleasing food, cultural resonance, and better alignment with diners' expectations may be responsible for the EG's increased overall satisfaction.

7.9. Welcoming Ambience of the Restaurant

Ambience refers to the perceived quality of the surrounding place by patrons (Jang & Liu, 2008). Kotler (1974) contends that deliberate spatial design triggers particular emotional responses in consumers increases the likelihood that they will make a purchase. A variety of components, including lighting, music, aroma, and colour, combine to create ambience. Studies conducted in the field of environmental psychology have indicated that the ambience can significantly influence the attitudes, emotions, and behaviour of patrons (Kement et al., 2021). Customers might not come to the restaurant for the food alone (Farooq, 2019; Najhan et al., 2022). The atmosphere, design, and level of service also influence how the consumer feels about their eating experience. In order to test this belief, the following hypothesis has been formulated.

$$H_0: \mu_{Twelcoming\ ambience} = \mu_{Cwelcoming\ ambience}$$

$$H_1: \mu_{Twelcoming\ ambience} \neq \mu_{Cwelcoming\ ambience} \quad \text{where;}$$

$\mu_{Twelcoming\ ambience}$ = Average perception of diners on welcoming restaurant ambience of EG.

$\mu_{Cwelcoming\ ambience}$ = Average perception of diners on welcoming restaurant ambience of CG

Table 7.8.: Paired t test among Ethnomusicological and Control Groups on Welcoming Ambience of the Restaurant

Groups	Average (max- min)	p value	Remarks
Ethnomusicological Group Welcoming restaurant ambience	5.88	0.00	Hypothesis Rejected at $\alpha=0.05$
Control Group Welcoming restaurant ambience	2.22		

The intervention group's respondents found the restaurant's ambience to be highly pleasant, as seen by the high mean score of 5.88. In comparison to the EG, respondents

in the CG felt the atmosphere to be less welcoming, as evidenced by the lower mean score (2.22). The statistical importance of this difference is shown by the significance value of 0.00. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the groups is rejected. In comparison to the control group, the intervention group's higher mean score shows the absence of ethnic music in the ethnic restaurant could be the reason for the low mean in Control group. The ethnic music of different ethnicity over Bollywood instrumental music played in the restaurant may be one of the reasons for diners to feel a welcoming ambiance of the restaurant in case of EG.

7.10. Willingness to pay more for Ambience

According to Agnihotri et al. (2019), willingness to pay (WTP) extra is defined as the highest amount a customer will spend on the product and a measurement of the value that the individual determines as a result of his or her usage or consuming experience. Approach and avoidance are thought to have an impact on behaviours like buying, using, having the willingness to pay more, and returning or revisiting (Chang, 2000; Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996). In the event of a bad restaurant service encounter, customer WTP is significantly predicted by factors such as quality, ambience, and value (Sukhu et al., 2017). Additionally, studies indicate a robust positive correlation between willingness to pay and customer happiness. According to Homburg, Koschate, and Hoyer, there is a higher WTP for such experiences as customer satisfaction advances based on uniqueness or improved quality. Customers' willingness to pay increases over longer time periods when they have more positive experiences (Homburg, Koschate, & Hoyer, 2005; Dutta et al. 2017). Koschate-Fischer et al. (2012), found in their study that Country of Origin (COO) plays a positive role in willingness to pay more for the brand and product. People are willing to pay more if they get positive encounters and positive moment of truth. That is why this is hypothesized to validate in ethnic restaurants too.

$$H_0: \mu_{\text{Willingness_to_pay}} = \mu_{\text{C willingness_to_pay}}$$

$$H_1: \mu_{\text{Welcoming ambience}} \neq \mu_{\text{C welcoming ambience}} \quad \text{where;}$$

$$\mu_{\text{Willingness_to_pay}} = \text{Average perception of diners on willingness to pay of EG.}$$

$$\mu_{\text{C welcoming ambience}} = \text{Average perception of diners on willingness to pay of CG}$$

Table 7.9.: Paired t test among Ethnomusicological and Control Groups on Willingness to pay more for Ambience

Groups	Average (max-min)	p value	Remarks
Ethnomusicological Group Willingness to pay more for ambience	5.62	0.00	Hypothesis Rejected at $\alpha=0.05$
Control Group Willingness to pay more for ambience	2.00		

The table shows a substantial difference between the intervention and control groups' willingness to spend extra as a result of the ambience. With a mean score of 5.62, the EG is significantly more willing to pay higher costs due to the ambience than the CG, which has a mean score of 2.00. This indicates that customers' perceived worth and desire to spend more are greatly increased by the ambience in the EG, which is enhanced by features such as enticing music while the decor, and general environment remained static for both the groups. The statistical importance of this difference is shown by the significance value of 0.00. As a result, the null hypothesis which states that there is no difference in the two groups' willingness to pay more for ambience is rejected.

In summary, the intervention group's increased willingness to pay more for ambience is likely to be influenced by the choice of music. As the music is the only component in the ambience that was manipulated between the control and intervention group.

7.11. Average Experience

For empirically analyzing diners' experience further, the average score across the three experience items (*To what extent the music in the restaurant defines the authenticity of the experience in the restaurant*, *The choice of music played in the restaurant enhances my liking towards the food which leads to a pleasant dining experience* and *Overall, I am satisfied with my restaurant experience*) was computed for each respondent for both the Ethnomusicological Group and the Control Group. The calculated average score of experience provides a useful summary measure of overall diners' experience, combining responses from multiple related items in a 7-point scale. We tried to find out how the ethnic music of Assam influences the average experience of the diner. In order to check if ethnic music plays a positive role in influencing the average experience of the diner, we have tested the following hypothesis:

$$H_0: \mu_{Tavg_exp} = \mu_{Cavg_exp}$$

$H_1: \mu_{Tavg_exp} \neq \mu_{Cavg_exp}$ where;

μ_{Tavg_exp} = Mean of Average Experience for the EG

μ_{Cavg_exp} = Mean of Average Experience for the CG

Table 7.10.: Paired Samples t test of Average Experience

Groups	Average (max-min)	p value	Remarks
<i>Ethnomusicological Group</i> Average experience	5.70	0.00	<i>Hypothesis Rejected at $\alpha=0.05$</i>
<i>Control Group</i> Average experience	2.08		

The table presents the results of a paired samples t-test comparing the average experience between the EG and the CG in the ethnic restaurant setting. The high mean score (5.70) indicates that the EG perceives a high level of experience when ethnic music is played in the restaurant. The mean score is much less (2.08) in the CG where modern music was played during dining. The resultant p value of 0.00 confirms that the difference in mean scores between the intervention and control groups is statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that ethnic music plays an important role in determining the experiences of the diners. By playing ethnic music while ethnic food is served, diners have a more positive overall experience. It can be said that if ethnic music is played when ethnic food is served, the diners are satisfied and return delighted for having a cultural resonance. Therefore, being authentic in all the possible spheres will make the experience a best one to cherish.

In conclusion, the above analysis supports the idea that music plays a crucial role in shaping diners' overall experience, emphasizing the importance of a well-thought-out auditory environment in restaurants. In fact, the totality of the soundscape plays a crucial role in determining the diners' experience. To sum up, the relationship between ethnic cuisine and music is a diverse and complex phenomenon that exemplifies the immense diversity of human perception. The interplay of ethnic music and ethnic food can significantly enhance the dining experience, leading to increased satisfaction and delight among diners. The study highlighted that when cultural elements such as music and cuisine are harmoniously combined, they create a richer, more immersive experience that resonates with diners on an emotional and cultural level. It has been seen that if the music is familiar like in the Control Group (Hindi Bollywood music) diners does not return dissatisfied but the experience becomes much more favourable if they can relate

the music with the food. This makes the things more authentic and it is observed that while promoting the ethnic restaurants, the service providers use different terminology and words to define authenticity. So, if they play ethnic music with ethnic food, the experience becomes more authentic. These days, customers do not hesitate to pay a little extra if they are getting a wholesome experience. In order to provide a seamless sensory experience, ethnic music establishes the mood and ambience while complementing the culinary theme. Research on sensory marketing indicates that sounds, as music, have a significant effect on human behaviour, emotion, and perception. Thus, listening to ethnic music increases the overall enjoyment of the meal by evoking a sense of authenticity and cultural immersion. Positive reactions from diners to this combination point to a more profound psychological bond. A key concept is cultural resonance, which is the idea that people feel more connected to their cultural heritage through sensory experiences. Ethnic music that is familiar to customers can evoke feelings and memories linked to their cultural upbringing, adding to the significance and enjoyment of their eating experience.