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IMPACT OF SERVICESCAPE AND SERVICE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER BANKING EXPERIENCE AND LOYALTY IN INDIAN BANKING INDUSTRY: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

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Abstract

Services are intangible and inseparable in nature. Quality perception of services is determined by a number of factors including the surroundings in which services are rendered, known as Servicescape. Servicescape comprises of ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, signs, symbols and artifacts and social servicescape. Service quality is the overall perception of service as appraised by the consumer. This is comprised of five elements namely Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy. Servicescape and Service quality impact the sensory, affective, behavioural and intellectual assessment about a particular service. This overall experience of the consumer about a particular service is termed as Customer Brand Experience. Customer brand experience determines the behavioural intention of the customer in future in the form of brand loyalty. Present study is about the empirical investigation of effect of servicescape and service quality on Customer banking experience and resultant loyalty in Indian banking industry. Findings of the study suggest that different elements of servicescape and service quality impact the customer banking experience and subsequent loyalty of the customers.

Keywords: Banking Servicescape, Customer Experience, Service Quality, Loyalty.

1. INTRODUCTION

Services are at the center of all economic activities in both developing and developed economies of the world. Service industry has direct relation and impacts on almost every individual on this planet. Availability and the provision of efficient services are critical to enhance the capabilities of people, organizations and society. Services, in contrast to physical produces, are not tangible. These are inseparable in nature in the sense that provider and receiver of the services are at the same place. The quality perception of services is determined by not only the quality of services rendered but also by the surroundings in which the service is rendered. In marketing-mix criteria we have Product, Price, Promotion and Place as different components. Since services are intangible in nature, the importance of the place i.e. the environment in which the services are provided gains a lot of importance. This physical setting communicates with and influences not only the customers but also the employees of the organization and has been identified as Servicescape. Service quality is a focused evaluation that reflects the customer's perception of elements of service such as interaction quality, physical environment quality, and outcome quality. Parsuraman et al. (1988) define "service quality as the difference between customer expectations of the service to be received and perceptions of the actual service received. Perceived service quality the result of comprehensive evaluation of product and services consumed by the customers". Customer Brand experience is conceptualized as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments (Brakus et al., 2009). In the present era, banking services are an important contributor to the economy of every country, and an understanding of the factors which contribute to the loyalty of customers in the banking industry is of paramount importance in the current scenario. Present empirical study, regarding

the impact of servicescape and service quality on customer banking experience and resultant loyalty in Indian banking industry is first attempt to make some contribution in this direction.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

2.1. Impact of Servicescape on Customer Banking Experience

In service industry, the place where the service transaction takes place is experienced by both the service provider and consumer of the service. Kotler (1973) introduced the term "Atmospherics" to define the effect of physical stimuli of the environment on consumer. Mehrabian and Russel (1974) on the basis of environmental psychology concluded that physical environment sends stimuli to the people (organism) who process these stimuli inside them in the form of emotions and produce their responses in the form of behavior i.e., satisfaction and loyalty. Bitner (1992) coined the term Servicescape which is the manmade, physical surroundings as opposed to the natural or social environment (Bitner, 1992, p.58). Three dimensions of the servicescape given by the Bitner (1992) include ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionalities, and signs symbols and artifacts. Ambient conditions are the factors that affects perceptions of and human responses to the environment (Baker, Berry, and Parsuraman, 1988). Ambient conditions effect the five senses, and include lighting, temperature, noise, colour, odour, and air quality. Spatial layout refers to the ways in which machinery, equipment, and furnishings are arranged, the size and shape of those items, and spatial relationship among them. Functionality refers to the ability of the same items to facilitate performance and the accomplishment of the goals. Signs, symbols, and artifacts are the items in physical environment which serve as explicit or implicit signals that communicate about the place to its users. This includes ambience, décor at the entrance and inside, furnishings and visual appeal of facilities etc. Tombs and McColl-Kennedy (2003) introduced the conceptual term 'Social Servicescape' which takes into consideration the social aspects of the service environment. Thus, social servicescape is a service setting in which other customers are present and the purchase occasion also has a role to play in influencing the likely behaviour of the individual customer and other customers present in the service area. It was also proposed that purchase occasion will influence the behaviour of customer through the social density and the emotions of other customers.

Mehrabian and Russel (1974) presented Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model on environmental psychology, according to which physical environment sends stimuli (S) to the people (O) in the organization, who in turn respond (R) to these stimuli in the form of emotions. Environmental psychologists have expressed the view that people respond to the environmental stimuli in a holistic manner, i.e., though the stimuli are perceived discreetly by the individuals, their response to these environmental stimuli is determined by the total configuration of the stimuli (Bell et. al., 1978). Baker et. al., (1992) found that physical and social elements of servicescape positively influenced the customer experiences in the form of emotions. Babin et. al., (2004) found that physical elements of servicescape influence consumer experience and emotions about the service. Ryu and Jong (2007) found that aesthetics and ambience significantly influenced customer experiences and emotions. Similarly, Hyun and Kong (2014) in their research found that décor and artifacts, spatial layout and ambient conditions affected customer emotions and experiences. Ladhari et. al., (2017) have concluded that the atmosphere (scent and lighting) and layout (location and access) influence customer emotional experience. Lin et al. (2010) in his research on restaurants service encounters concluded that interaction between customers and staff influenced the experience about pleasure and satisfaction. Similarly, Uhrich et. al., (2012) in their study on sporting events found that favourable perception of other customers exerts a strong positive influence on affective responses of the

customers. Tombs et. al., (2010) in their study on other customers inside the servicescape found that presence of other customers influences the behavioural response about duration of stay of the customers in servicescape. Jani and Han (2014) affirmed that social comparison with other guests significantly influences the emotional experience of customers in hotels. Line et al. (2018) concluded that the mere presence of others can affect the sensory feeling of customers. Tenga et al., (2019) in their study on banking sector concluded that banks should design physical spaces with an atmosphere that will have a positive impact on customers and pay particular attention to interaction with contact personnel and other customers present. As per above discussion, Ambient condition, Layout and Functionality, Signs, symbols and artifacts and Social Servicescape are independent variables and Customer Banking Experience is a dependent variable. On the basis of above discussion following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: There is a significant impact of Ambient conditions (AC) of servicescape on Customer Banking Experience.

H2: There is a significant impact of Layout and Functionality (LF) of servicescape on Customer Banking Experience.

H3: There is a significant impact of Signs, symbols and artifacts (SA) of servicescape on Customer Banking Experience.

H4: There is a significant impact of Social Servicescape (SS) on Customer Banking Experience.

2.2. Impact of Service Quality on Customer Banking experience

Service quality is the consumer's appraisal of overall quality of service delivery. It is the result of the comparison that consumers make between their expectations about a service and their perception of the way the service has been performed or delivered (Bitner and Hubbert 1994, Rust and Oliver, 1994). This appraisal typically is formed from disconfirmation of expectations of service performance (Parasuraman et al., 1988) or through the assessment performance measures (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). Differences between expectations and evaluations denote perceived service quality (Zeithaml et al., 1996). Service quality is sufficient when perceptions equal or exceed expectations. Based on disconfirmation, Parasuraman et al., (1988), developed SERVQUAL, an instrument of items representing five service quality dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy to measure service quality. Studies found satisfactory loading of the scale items when using SERVQUAL to measure service quality across industries including banking and telecommunications (Caruana, 2002). Basically, these dimensions represent the consumer's criteria of judging service quality.

Reliability represents the service provider's ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. This is achieved through keeping promises to do something, providing right service, consistency of performance and dependability, service is performed right at the first time, the company keeps its promises in accuracy in billing and keeping records correctly and error-free sales transactions and records. **Tangibility** relates to the physical aspects or evidence of a service. Physical aspects of retailer include appearance of equipment and fixtures, physical facilities, materials associated with the service, appearance of personnel and communication materials, Convenience of physical facilities and layouts. Bitner (1992) proposed that the physical setting of the place of service, including not only visual aspects such as color and texture, but also noise, odors, and temperature is of particular importance and capable of altering customer expectations and strongly influencing consumer experience and satisfaction. **Assurance** consists of competence, possession of the required skills and knowledge to perform the service, courtesy, credibility of the employees and their ability to

inspire trust and confidence. This includes employees having knowledge to answer questions, inspiring confidence, providing prompt service, willing to respond to customer's requests, giving customers individual attention, showing consistent courtesy with customers and even treat customers properly on the phone. The assurance attributes are all very much about the extent to which a consumer trusts a provider and whether or not they have the confidence in an organization to provide a service securely and competently. **Responsiveness** is the determinant that defines the willingness to help customers and to provide prompt services. It is the desire and willingness to assist customers and deliver prompt service. It involves features such as the opening hours of the service provider, the politeness of the employees and the time the customer has to wait in order to get the service. In other words, it describes how quickly and affective the response to the customer is. Willingness to help customers is likely to have an important and positive effect on customer's banking experience, and customer satisfaction and loyalty. **Empathy** is the caring and personalized attention; the organization provides to its customers. It is reflected in the service provider's provision of access, communication and understanding the customer. Individual attention, convenient operating hours, understanding of the staff when a problem occurs and the knowledge the employees have of the customers' needs were the primary elements included in the evaluation of empathy. **Gentile et al., (2007)** in their study found that overall service quality has positive impact on banking experience in the physical banking transactions. **Loureiro and Sarmento (2018)** in their research on banking sector found that executive excellence and staff engagement are most relevant indicators for bank experience. Perceived service quality can promote positive emotional experience and satisfaction (He et al, 2020). Inan et al, (2023) found that service quality has a direct effect on customer experience and satisfaction in mobile banking. Based on the above discussion following hypotheses are proposed:

H5: There is a significant impact of Tangibility element (TAN) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking Experience.

H6: There is a significant impact of Reliability element (REL) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking Experience.

H7: There is a significant impact of Responsiveness element (RESP) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking Experience.

H8: There is a significant impact of Assurance element (ASSU) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking Experience.

H9: There is a significant impact of Empathy element (EMP) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking Experience.

2.3 Loyalty

Customer loyalty is a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive purchasing of the same brand, despite situational influences and marketing efforts. Gremler and Brown (1996) define it as "the degree to which a customer exhibits repeat purchasing behavior from a service provider, possesses a positive attitudinal disposition toward the provider, and considers using this provider when a need for this service arises. Loyalty is therefore an attitude or behavior that customers explicitly vocalize or exhibit. Loyalty has both behavioral and attitudinal dimensions. The behavioral dimension consists of repeated purchase of product while attitudinal loyalty refers to attitudinal commitment or favorable attitude toward a product resulting in repeat purchasing behavior. It is a biased purchase response resulting from an evaluative attitude favoring the purchase. Loyalty is thus viewed as the customer's

demonstration of faithful adherence to an organization despite its occasional error or indifferent services. Dick and Basu (1994) conceptualize loyalty as the strength between repeat patronage and relative attitude which results from comparing a particular brand with competing brands. Customer loyalty is strong when a high relative attitude leads to repeat buying. Loyalty in service businesses refers to the customer's commitment to do business with a particular organization, purchasing their products repeatedly and recommending others to the organization's products.

2.4 Impact of Customer Banking Experience on Loyalty

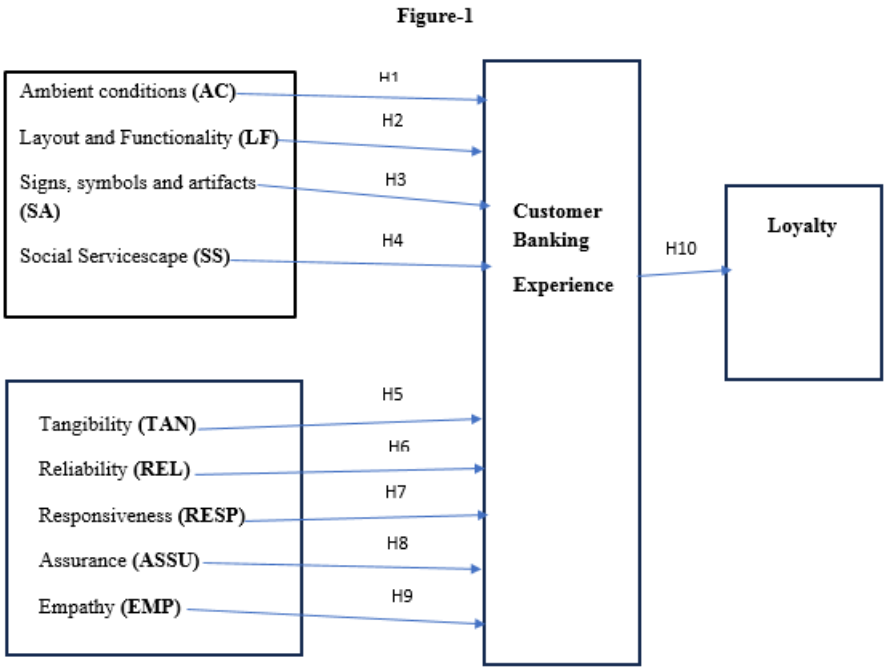
Customer experience in a banking transaction is similar to brand experience. This is conceptualized as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses evoked by the experience-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments (Brakus et al., 2009). According to Alloza (2008), brand experience can be defined as the perception of the consumers, at every moment of contact they have with the brand, whether it is in the brand images projected in advertising, during the first personal contact, or the level of quality concerning the personal treatment they receive. Service experience is created when customers use the service; talk to others about the service; seek out information, promotions, and events, and so on (Ambler et al., 2002). Customer experience has become crucial for the organizations in present era. Experiences are considered as equally important economic offering like commodities, goods and services for the organizations (Pine and Gilmore, 1998; Garg et al.,2014) as it impacts customer satisfaction and loyalty. Iglesias et al, (2011) studied the direct and indirect effect of brand experience in three product categories- cars, laptops and sneakers and found that brand experience impacts loyalty. Wu and Wang (2014) in their research found that brand attitude significantly correlates purchase intentions. In his research on Coffee-house brands Choi et al., (2017) concluded that brand experience and brand personality had a direct effect on attitudinal loyalty. Ong et al, (2018) in a study on casual dining restaurants found that sensory, affective, behavioural and intellectual experiences lead to customer brand loyalty. In a survey of 732 hotel customers in ten major Chinese cities Guan et al., (2021) found that there is a chain effect from customer experience to brand trust, and to brand affect and then to brand loyalty. Rita and Alvaro (2021) on study on 317 Nespresso Coffee consumers found that sensory and affective brand experience showed a positive influence on brand loyalty. Gao and Shen (2024) conducted a survey of 304 customers on Chinese on-line platform Sojump and concluded that sensory brand experience positively affects brand loyalty. On the basis of above discussion, following hypothesis is proposed:

H10: There is a significant relationship between Customer Banking Experience (CBE) and Customer Loyalty.

3. PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Impact of Servicescape and Service Quality on Customer Banking Experience and Loyalty

Figure:1



4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Measurement Instrument

A questionnaire (Annexure-1) was designed and the items selected therein were taken from the past studies conducted in the area of Servicescape, Service quality, Customer brand experience and Loyalty. The number of items in each construct and their authors are given below:

Table:1

Construct	Number of items	Author
Servicescape	23	Reimer and Kuhen,2005, Hightover,2002
Service quality	22	Parsuraman et al., 1988
Customer Banking experience	8	Brakus et al., 2009
Loyalty	4	Villarijo-Ramos and Sanchez Franco,2005

All multi-scale items were assessed on 7-point Likert scale with 1 as completely disagree to 7 as completely agree (Alwin, 1997).

4.2 Data was collected from 660 customers of Public, Private and Foreign sector banks regarding their assessment of servicescape, service quality, customer banking experience and loyalty.

4.3 Demographic Profile:

The demographic profile of the respondents is given below:

Table:2

Demographic Characteristics	Count	Percentage
Total Sample Size	**660**	**100**
Gender		
Male	429	65.0
Female	231	35.0
Age		
Up to 25 years	234	33.9
Above 25 years	426	66.1
Education		
Up to Graduation	442	67.0
Above Graduation	204	30.9
Others	14	2.1
Annual Income		
Up to 5 Lakhs	184	27.9
5 to 10 Lakhs	273	41.3
Greater than 10 Lakhs	203	30.8
Experience with current Bank		
Up to 5 years	357	54.1
Above 5 years	243	45.9
Bank Type		
Public Sector Bank	365	55.3
Indian Private Bank	185	28.0
Foreign Bank	110	16.7

4.4. Common Method Variance

Common method variance is a systematic error variance that stems from a common method used to measure the constructs of the study (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Richardson et al., 2009). Common method bias may occur when both the independent and dependent variables are measured within one survey using the same response technique. This can affect the reliability and validity of the empirical results (Baumgartner and Steenkamp, 2001; Mackenzie and Podsakoff, 2012). In the present study while Servicescape and Service quality are independent variables, Customer brand experience and loyalty are dependent variables which have been measured through a single questionnaire. Harman's single factor test presents the most widely used technique in detecting common method bias (Fuller et al., 2016; Podsakoff et al., 2003). The total variance on a single factor of all the items is only 48.044% which is less than 50%. This indicates that no common method bias is present in the data.

4.5 Normality Test

The normal distribution of data is fundamental assumption for statistical analysis. According to Hair et al., (2010), normality refers to the shape of distribution of data for individual metric variable and its correspondence to the normal distribution of the benchmark statistical method. To check the normality, statistical method of skewness and kurtosis was applied (Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2011). Acceptable values skewness should fall between -2 to +2 and for kurtosis it should be between -10 to +10 (Collier, 2020). Values of skewness and kurtosis for constructs and individual indicators are as follows:

Normality Test

Table:3

Construct/Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Ambient conditions (AC)			4.85	1.223	-.580	-.244
AC1	**1**	**7**	**4.92**	**1.587**	**-0.425**	**-0.676**
AC2	**1**	**7**	**4.92**	**1.479**	**-0.548**	**-0.300**
AC3	**1**	**7**	**4.87**	**1.381**	**-0.380**	**-0.363**
AC4	**1**	**7**	**5.08**	**1.293**	**-0.552**	**-0.281**
AC5	**1**	**7**	**4.89**	**1.295**	**-0.265**	**-0.882**
AC6	**1**	**7**	**4.63**	**1.313**	**-0.258**	**-0.519**
AC7	**1**	**7**	**4.81**	**1.222**	**-0.421**	**-0.295**
AC8	**1**	**7**	**4.88**	**1.269**	**-0.253**	**-0.376**
Layout and Functionality (LF)			4.89	0.980	-0.171	-0.541
LF1	**1**	**7**	**5.02**	**1.143**	**-0.149**	**-0.272**
LF2	**1**	**7**	**5.03**	**1.116**	**-0.092**	**-0.115**
LF3	**1**	**7**	**4.92**	**1.107**	**-0.164**	**-0.313**
LF4	**1**	**7**	**4.80**	**1.118**	**-0.129**	**-0.292**
LF5			**4.81**	**1.132**	**-0.190**	**-0.020**
LF6	**1**	**7**	**4.83**	**1.235**	**-0.411**	**0.147**
Signs, Symbols, and Artifacts (SA)			4.51	0.979	-0.001	-0.781
SA1	**1**	**7**	**4.34**	**1.157**	**-0.178**	**-0.435**
SA2	**1**	**7**	**4.38**	**1.12**	**-0.096**	**-0.009**
SA3	**1**	**7**	**4.57**	**1.103**	**0.051**	**-0.583**
SA4	**1**	**7**	**4.7**	**1.111**	**-0.167**	**-0.748**
SA5	**1**	**7**	**4.62**	**1.146**	**0.131**	**-0.139**
Social Servicescape (SS)			4.85	1.063	-0.012	-0.125
EC1	**1**	**7**	**4.85**	**1.171**	**-0.161**	**0.235**
EC2	**1**	**7**	**4.81**	**1.203**	**-0.309**	**0.641**
EC3	**1**	**7**	**4.83**	**1.155**	**-0.101**	**-0.069**
CC1	**1**	**7**	**4.93**	**1.162**	**-0.158**	**-0.287**
Customer Brand Experience (CEB)			5.33	0.861	-0.545	0.231
CEB1	**1**	**7**	**5.52**	**0.974**	**-0.211**	**-0.074**
CEB2	**1**	**7**	**5.37**	**1.091**	**-0.920**	**2.344**
CEB3			**5.18**	**1.169**	**-0.814**	**1.139**
CEB4			**5.36**	**1.078**	**-0.879**	**1.748**
CEB5			**5.25**	**1.039**	**-0.956**	**1.909**
CEB6			**5.23**	**1.096**	**-1.258**	**2.638**
CEB7			**5.27**	**1.121**	**-0.575**	**0.457**
CEB8			**5.50**	**1.080**	**-0.877**	**1.251**
Tangibility (TANG)			5.09	1.039	0.044	-0.257
TANG1	**1**	**7**	**5.24**	**1.177**	**-0.434**	**0.163**
TANG2	**1**	**7**	**5.05**	**1.164**	**-0.011**	**-0.197**
TANG3			**5.09**	**1.203**	**-0.003**	**-0.560**
TANG4			**4.99**	**1.060**	**0.096**	**-0.120**
Reliability (REL)			4.94	0.953	-0.371	0.258
REL1	**1**	**7**	**4.91**	**1.151**	**-0.469**	**0.097**
REL2	**1**	**7**	**4.88**	**1.114**	**-0.437**	**0.631**
REL3			**4.96**	**1.121**	**-0.480**	**0.531**
REL4	**1**	**7**	**4.94**	**1.105**	**-0.445**	**0.253**
REL5	**1**	**7**	**5.04**	**0.982**	**-0.262**	**0.621**
Responsiveness (RESP)			4.97	1.012	-0.307	0.255
RESP1	**1**	**7**	**5.02**	**1.116**	**-0.591**	**0.301**
RESP2	**1**	**7**	**5.00**	**1.089**	**-0.374**	**0.355**
RESP3			**5.04**	**1.100**	**-0.119**	**-0.083**
RESP4	**1**	**7**	**4.85**	**1.237**	**-0.471**	**0.457**
Assurance (ASSUR)			5.18	0.824	-0.207	0.107
ASSUR1	**1**	**7**	**5.11**	**1.040**	**-0.427**	**0.613**

ASSUR2	**1**	**7**	**5.41**	**0.898**	**-0.335**	**0.205**
ASSUR3			**5.16**	**1.061**	**-0.300**	**0.262**
ASSUR4	**1**	**7**	**5.06**	**0.957**	**0.076**	**-0.102**
Empathy (EMP)			4.94	0.934	-0.522	0.556
EMP1	**1**	**7**	**4.97**	**1.145**	**-0.223**	**0.229**
EMP2	**1**	**7**	**4.97**	**1.094**	**-0.351**	**0.411**
EMP3	**1**	**7**	**4.91**	**1.150**	**-0.471**	**0.678**
EMP4			**4.86**	**1.090**	**-0.964**	**1.761**
EMP5	**1**	**7**	**4.98**	**1.079**	**-0.630**	**0.575**
Loyalty (LOY)	**1**	**7**	5.41	0.947	-0.639	0.785
LOY1	**1**	**7**	**5.55**	**1.026**	**-0.808**	**1.189**
LOY2	**1**	**7**	**5.37**	**1.187**	**-0.924**	**1.521**
LOY3			**5.44**	**1.108**	**-0.689**	**0.838**
LOY4	**1**	**7**	**5.29**	**1.076**	**-0.372**	**0.485**

Standard deviation for all constructs and indicators is between 0.898 to 1.237. Values for Skewness for all the Constructs and Indicators in the present data set vary from -0.882 to +2.368. These are within the acceptable range. Similarly values for Kurtosis for all the constructs and Indicators vary from -1.258 to +0.051. These values also fall within the acceptable range. Thus, Normality of the dataset is established.

4.6 Reliability and Validity

Reliability is the degree to which the measure of a construct is consistent or dependable. Validity refers the extent to which a measure adequately represents the underlying construct that it is supposed to measure. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using AMOS (version 23.0) to test the measurement model. As part of Reliability analysis, factor loadings were assessed for each item and all factor loadings were >0.5 (Falk and Miller,1992). Factor loadings ranged from 0.672 to 0.952 for all 57 indicators. Construct reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha for each construct in the study was found over the required value of 0.70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Composite Reliability ranged from 0.978 to 0.934, above the 0.70 benchmark (Hair et al., 2010). Hence, construct reliability was established for each construct. Convergent validity of scale items was estimated using Average Variance Extracted. The Average Variance Extracted values were above the threshold value of 0.50 (Fornell& Lacker, 1981) for all constructs

Reliability and Validity Analysis

Table:4

Factor Analysis, AVE, C R and Cronbach's alpha

Construct	Item	Factor Loadings	AVE	C R	Alpha
Ambient Conditions (AC)	AC1	0.952	0.758	0.978	0.961
	AC2	0.949			
	AC3	0.908			
	AC4	0.892			
	AC5	0.877			
	AC6	0.853			
	AC7	0.674			
	AC8	0.827			
Layout and Functionality (LF)	LF1	0.815	0.668	0.956	0.922
	LF2	0.75			
	LF3	0.859			
	LF4	0.845			
	LF5	0.832			
	LF6	0.798			

Signs, Symbols and Artifacts (SA)	SA1	0.883	0.692	0.953	0.893
	SA2	0.800			
	SA3	0.795			
	SA4	0.863			
	SA5	0.814			
Social Servicescape (SS)	EC1	0.928	0.768	0.960	0.927
	EC2	0.928			
	EC3	0.900			
	CC1	0.735			
Customer Banking Experience (CBE)	CBE1	0.753	0.583	0.951	0.917
	CBE2	0.801			
	CBE3	0.784			
	CBE4	0.688			
	CBE5	0.732			
	CBE6	0.802			
	CBE7	0.695			
	CBE8	0.838			
Tangibility (TAN)	TAN1	0.859	0.756	0.958	0.924
	TAN2	0.948			
	TAN3	0.849			
	TAN4	0.817			
Reliability (REL)	REL1	0.817	0.703	0.955	0.919
	REL2	0.901			
	REL3	0.872			
	REL4	0.873			
	REL5	0.717			
Responsibility (RES)	RES1	0.854	0.738	0.954	0.913
	RES2	0.902			
	RES3	0.892			
	RES4	0.782			
Assurance (ASSU)	ASSU1	0.828	0.587	0.907	0.851
	ASSU2	0.637			
	ASSU3	0.804			
	ASSU4	0.782			
Empathy (EMP)	EMP1	0.821	0.635	0.907	0.956
	EMP2	0.767			
	EMP3	0.842			
	EMP4	0.745			
	EMP5	0.805			
Loyalty (LOY)	LOY1	0.746	0.665	0.934	0.859
	LOY2	0.825			
	LOY3	0.91			
	LOY4	0.771			

Discriminant Validity is established if the shared variance between the constructs is lower than the AVE for each construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981)

Table 5
Convergent and Discriminant Validity

			Checking for Convergent Validity		Checking for Discriminant Validity (Diagonal Value=√ AVE Below Diagonal estimated correlations										
Construct	Mean	S.D.	CR	AVE	AC	LF	SA	SS	CBE	TAN	REL	RESP	ASSU	EMP	LOY
AC	4.85	1.223	0.978	0.758	**0.871**										
LF	4.891	0.980	0.956	0.668	0.741	**0.817**									
SA	4.516	0.979	0.953	0.692	0.711	0.794	**0.832**								
SS	4.856	1.063	0.960	0.768	0.671	0.709	0.793	**0.876**							
CBE	5.332	0.861	0.951	0.583	0.64	0.622	0.6	0.643	**0.763**						
TAN	5.091	1.039	0.958	0.756	0.730	0.743	0.759	0.753	0.761	**0.869**					
REL	4.945	0.953	0.955	0.703	0.728	0.706	0.675	0.736	0.722	0.763	**0.838**				
RESP	4.975	1.012	0.954	0.738	0.663	0.648	0.678	0.725	0.721	0.713	0.722	**0.859**			
ASSU	5.184	0.824	0.907	0.587	0.736	0.7	0.716	0.718	0.698	0.798	0.890	0.718	**0.766**		
EMP	4.937	0.934	0.907	0.635	0.682	0.676	0.672	0.693	0.710	0.789	0.850	0.773	0.702	**0.797**	
LOY	5.411	0.947	0.934	0.665	0.315	0.279	0.161	0.206	0.474	0.282	0.462	0.484	0.543	0.511	**0.815**

5. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

5.1. Relationship between Servicescape and Customer Banking Experience

H1: There is a significant impact of Ambient conditions (AC) of servicescape on Customer Banking experience (CBE).

The hypothesis tests if the ambient condition (AC) carries a significant impact on Customer Banking experience (CBE). The dependent variable CBE was regressed on predicting variable AC to test the hypothesis. AC significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) = 419.890. P<.001, which indicates that AC play a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.624, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of AC. Moreover, the R^2 =0.390 depicts that the model explains the 39% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H1	**AC--->CBE**	**.624**	**.390**	**419.890**	**0.000**	**Yes**

H2: There is a significant impact of Layout and Functionality (LF) of servicescape on Customer Banking experience.

LF significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) = 331.687, P<.001, which indicates that LF play a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.579, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of AC. Moreover, the R^2 =0.335 depicts that the model explains the 33.5% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H2	LF--->CBE	.579	.335	331.687	0.000	Yes

H3: There is a significant impact of Signs, symbols and artifacts (SA) of servicescape on Customer Banking experience (CBE).

SA significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) = 302.937 P<.001, which indicates that SA play a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.561, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of SA. Moreover, the R^2 =0.315 depicts that the model explains the 31.5% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H3	SA--->CBE	.561	.315	302.937	0.000	Yes

H4: There is a significant impact of Social Servicescape (SS) on Customer Banking experience.

SS significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) = 398.991, P<.001, which indicates that SS play a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.614, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of SS. Moreover, the R^2 =0.377 depicts that the model explains the 37.7% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H4	SS--->CBE	.614	.377	398.991	0.000	Yes

5.2. Relationship between Service Quality (SQ) and Customer Banking Experience (CBE)

H5: There is a significant impact of Tangibility element (TAN) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking experience.

TAN significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) = 623.172, P<.001, which indicates that TAN plays a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.697, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of AC. Moreover, the R^2 =0.486 depicts that the model explains the 48.6% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H6	TAN--->CBE	.697	.486	623.172	0.000	Yes

H6: There is a significant impact of Reliability element (REL) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking experience (CBE).

REL significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) =554.947, P<.001, which indicates that REL plays a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.624, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of AC. Moreover, the R^2 =0.458 depicts that the model explains the 45.8% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H6	REL--->CBE	.624	.458	554.947	0.000	Yes

H7: There is a significant impact of Responsiveness element (RESP) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking experience.

RESP significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) =521.555, P<.001, which indicates that RESP play a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.665, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of RESP. Moreover, the R^2 =0.442 depicts that the model explains the 44.2% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H8	RESP-->CBE	.624	.442	521.555	0.000	Yes

H8: There is a significant impact of Assurance element (ASSU) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking experience.

ASSU significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) = 392.281, P<.001, which indicates that ASSU play a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.624, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of ASSU. Moreover, the R^2 =0.374 depicts that the model explains the 37.4% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H9	ASSU-->CBE	.611	.374	392.281	0.000	Yes

H9: There is a significant impact of Empathy element (EMP) of Service quality (SQ) on Customer Banking experience.

EMP significantly predicted CBE, F (1,658) =474.863, P<.001, which indicates that EMP play a significant role in shaping CBE (b=.647, p<.001). These results clearly direct the positive effects of EMP. Moreover, the R^2 =0.419 depicts that the model explains the 41.9% of the variance in CBE. Table shows the summary of the following:

Hypothesis	Regression weights	Beta coefficient	R^2	F	p-value	Hypothesis supported
H9	EMP--->CBE	.647	.419	474.863	0.000	Yes

5.3 Correlation between Customer Banking Experience and Loyalty

H10: There is a significant relationship between Customer Banking Experience (CBE) and Loyalty.

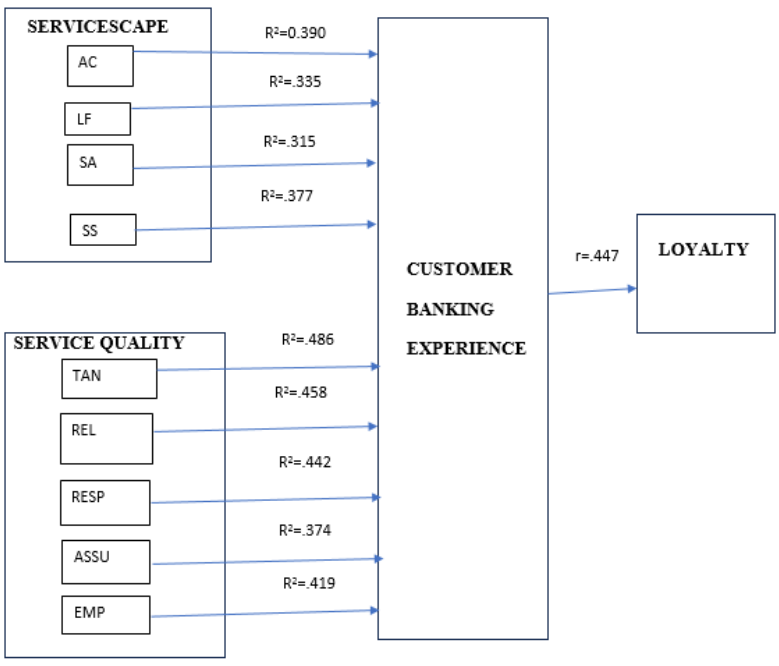
Pearson Correlation analysis was used to test the hypothesis H10.

Pearson product correlation of Customer Banking Experience and Loyalty was found to be moderately positive and statistically significant (r =0.447, p<.001). Hence H_5 was supported.

	Customer Banking Experience	Loyalty	p-Value	Hypothesis
Customer Banking Experience	**1**	**.447****	**.000**	**Accepted**

Figure:2

Assessment of Measurement model



6. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that servicescape and service quality in banking industry contribute to the customer banking experience which in turn impacts to the loyalty of the customers. Among the four dimensions of servicescape the maximum impact was observed in case of Ambient conditions (39.0%) and minimum was obtained in case Signs, symbols and artifacts. This seems logical in the sense that customer experiences the temperature, lighting, air quality, colour, and hygiene of corridors etc., during his entire period of stay inside the bank. In the service quality dimensions the Tangibility element outweighed other four dimensions. This is in line with the findings about the servicescape. Finally, the Customer Banking experience is moderately positively correlated with the loyalty.

7. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The present study highlights the importance of Servicescape in inducing the positive impact on customer banking experience. Servicescape assumes the role of a facilitator by adding to the ability of customers and employees to carry out their activities. The floor plan and the signage can assist the customers in reaching to respective transaction desks easily. Lay out of equipment like Automated Teller Machines, Passbook Printing Machines, Cash Deposit Machines and Self-Service Kiosks can also impact on the ability of the customer to complete their tasks and achieve their service goals. Service scape can also encourage and nurture the interaction among and between employees and customers. This study also confirms the positive relationship between all the service quality attributes and customer banking experience. Moreover, because all the dimensions of service quality attributes significantly impact customer banking experience, bank managers should give emphasis to all the service quality dimensions in maintaining and improving their service quality, which would lead to better customer loyalty.

8. LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While this study makes several contributions to the literature, there are several limitations of the study. The first limitation of this study is that it has studied the influence of three antecedents on loyalty of bank customers. The loyalty behavior of customers of retail banks may be influenced by several other antecedents. Second, the current study was undertaken based on the responses given by customers belonging to an emerging economy. A comparative analysis of customers belonging to different geographical areas with regard to their willingness to engage in loyalty recommendations can also be studied.

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Annexure-1

Items in the questionnaire

S. No.	Item	Description of Indicator
		Ambient Conditions
1	AC-1	Temperature is comfortable
2	AC-2	Air quality is soothing
3	AC-3	The noise levels are acceptable
4	AC-4	The lighting is comfortable
5	AC-5	Odor is appealing
7	AC-6	The colors of the exterior and Interior are pleasing
7	AC-7	Bathroom facilities in the bank unit are clean
8	AC-8	The corridors are clean and Hygienic
		Layout and functionality
9	LF-1	Safety and security are good
10	LF-2	Location is convenient
11	LF-3	Quite spacious
12	LF-4	The layout is attractive
13	LF-5	Seating arrangement in waiting area is adequate
14	LF-6	Chairs in the waiting area are comfortable
		Signs, symbols and artifacts
15	SA-1	Ambience is gorgeous
16	SA-2	Décor at the entrance is appealing
17	SA-3	Physical facilities are visually appealing
18	SA-4	Furnishings are appropriate
19	SA-5	Signage(directions) are clear
		Social servicescape
20	SS-1	Employees attitude and behaviour are pleasant
21	SS-2	The staff are quite homely and caring
22	SS-3	The Staff's welcoming is good
23	SS-4	The other customers present in the Bank are of my type.
		Customer Banking Experience
24	CBE-1	This Bank brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.
25	CBE-2	I find this Bank brand interesting in a sensory way.
26	CBE-3	This brand induces feelings and sentiments.
27	CBE-4	This brand is an emotional brand.
28	CBE-5	I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this Bank brand.
29	CBE-6	This brand results in bodily experiences.
30	CBE-7	I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this Bank brand.
31	CBE-8	This Bank brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.

		Service Quality Dimensions
		Tangibility
32	TAN-1	Your Bank Has Modern-Looking Equipment;
33	TAN-2	Your Bank's Physical Facilities are Visually Appealing;
34	TAN-3	Your Bank's Employees are Neat – Appearing;
35	TAN-4	Materials Associated with the Service, such as Pamphlets and Statements, are Visually Appealing at Your Bank;
		Reliability
36	REL-1	When Your Bank Promises to Do Something by a Certain Time, It Does So.
37	REL-2	When You Have a Problem, Your Bank Shows a Sincere Interest in Solving it.
38	REL-3	Your Bank Performs the Service Right at the First Time.
39	REL-4	Your Bank Provides its Services at the time it Promises to Do so.
40	REL-5	Your Bank insists on Error-Free Records.
		Responsiveness
41	RESP-1	Employees of Your Bank tell You Exactly When Services Will Be Performed.
42	RESP-2	Employees of Your Bank give you prompt service.
43	RESP-3	Employees of Your Bank Are Always Willing to Help You.
44	RESP-4	Employees of Your Bank Are Never too Busy To Respond To Your Requests.
		Assurance
45	ASSU-1	The Behavior of Employees of Your Bank instills Confidence in Customers.
46	ASSU-2	You Feel Safe in Your Transactions with Your Bank.
47	ASSU-3	Employees of Your Bank Are Consistently Courteous with You.
48	ASSU-4	Employees of Your Bank Have the Knowledge to Answer Your Questions.
		Empathy
49	EMP-1	Your Bank Gives You Individual Attention.
50	EMP-2	Your Bank Has Operating Hours Convenient to All Its Customers.
51	EMP-3	Your Bank Has Employees Who Give you Personal Attention.
52	EMP-4	Your Bank Has Your Best Interests at Heart.
53	EMP-5	Employees of Your Bank Understand Your Specific Needs.
		Loyalty
54	LOY-1	I consider myself loyal to the bank.
55	LOY-2	I will not avail services from any other Bank, if I can avail the same service at this bank.
56	LOY-3	This bank would be my first choice.
57	LOY-4	I might suggest this bank to my colleagues.