

## **THE INFLUENCE OF SERVICESCAPE ON QUALITY PERCEPTION, BEHAVIORAL INTENTION AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR: A META-ANALYSIS OF EXISTING LITERATURE**

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### **Abstract**

The study conducts a meta-analysis of available literature to determine the position of existing body of research on servicescape in relation with perceived service quality, customer satisfaction and buying intention in the context of the healthcare sector. Total 41 relevant studies were found and reviewed, and their findings summarized. The uniqueness and originality value of this study is highlighted by the fact that no such study has been conducted in the past and this is the first of its kind. Findings would be valuable to practitioners and academics as practitioners would be able to emphasize aspects of servicescape that have been established as important to achieving customer satisfaction, improving perceived service quality of consumers, and enhancing consumer buying intention. Academics would get a clear account of where existing body of research stands and which areas need more attention in the association between servicescape, perceived service quality, customer satisfaction and buying intention in the healthcare sector.

*Keywords: Servicescape, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Healthcare Sector, Signage, HealthScape.*

### **Introduction**

Servicescape may be understood as an environment wherein a service is brought together and there is seller-customer interaction in combination with tangible goods that help communication or performance of the service (Booms and Bitner 1981). Simply put, servicescape includes such environmental components that are not human, but amidst which service encounters happen. While servicescape excludes: promotion (web-sites, PR, social media, advertising); back-of-house (spaces, cellars, kitchen, staff change rooms, store-rooms, housekeeping) or processes (billing, methods of payment, cleaning, cooking) where customers don't usually go, it includes an establishment's external (design, landscape, parking, environmental surrounding, signage) and interior appearance (interior design and decor, equipment, signage, layout), and surrounding conditions (temperature, lighting, and air quality). Booms and Bitner devised the servicescape model to stress the influence of the physical environment within which a service process occurred. The model sought to explain people's behavior in the service environment while aiming to create environments that achieved organisational goals in the matter of behavioural responses. From the point of view of consumers in a retail or service store, the first facet of the service that is perceived is the service environment. It is this perception that most likely leads consumers to create impressions with respect to the service they would receive (Hooper and Coughlan, Daire and Joseph (2012). It may be said that servicescape affects the quality and nature of employee-customer transactions, more directly in such services that are interpersonal in nature (Bitner, Mary Jo 2016). Thus, organizations strive to draw their servicescapes with a view to creating an atmosphere that enhances experience of customers and influences their buying behavior in the course of the service encounter.

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