5 senses at the dining table – A systematic literature review of human five senses within dining settings

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**Introduction:**The rise of experience-centred dining has urged the service providers in the restaurant industry to evolve and improve their businesses in order to accommodate the new needs of their guests. As a result, the study of the human five senses, the leading drivers of human experience, has also attracted increasing attention in recent years. This systematic review is aimed at critically investigating the current state of multisensory research within dining settings. More specifically, it identifies the different sensory elements that have been studied so far, investigates the employed methods of research, addresses the geographical distribution of research on the topic and highlights the gaps and limitations of the literature.

**Method:** The systematic literature review was conducted from the earliest possible data through to September 2020. Seven sets of keywords were searched in four major databases (EBSCOhost, Sage, ProQuest and ScienceDirect) and after several rounds of screening, 120 peer-reviewed journal articles met the selection criteria and were included in the review.

**Findings and Conclusion:** The focus of the existing literature is mainly on the visual elements such as interior design, tableware and staff physical appearance, and other less tangible sensory elements have not received enough attention. The findings also indicate that the literature is mostly focused on the experiences, perceptions or satisfaction of the customers and very few studies have taken a step back and have addressed the awareness or opinions of the service providers. Finally, there is a significant lack of qualitative research resulting in a very limited rich and in-depth data regarding this topic.