### AN ASSESSMENT OF GUESTS SATISFACTION OF SERVICE QUALITY IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

**ABSTRACT**

This study was carried out to examine the assessment of guests satisfaction of service quality in the hotel industry in Uyo Local Government, Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study examined the relationship of service quality and guest satisfaction in selected hotels in Uyo Local Government, Akwa Ibom State. The study employed the survey descriptive research design. A total of 80 responses were validated from the survey. The study adopted the three factor theory. From the responses obtained and analysed, the findings revealed that higher customer satisfaction, greater competitive advantage and profitability to the hotels concerned was the relationship of service quality and guest satisfaction. The study recommend service quality in hotels to be improved as this leads to customer retention, increase in customer base and higher customer satisfaction. More so, hotels should give priority to their guests, and work on the data received through personal suggestions, enquiry from guests and the use of questionnaire to work on its improvement.

****CHAPTER ONE****

****INTRODUCTION****

****1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY****

Quality customer service means different things to different people. We can not assume everyone of employee understands how to provide “quality” customer service the way trainer or executives or human resource intend it to be. It is their responsibility to teach front-line staffs and all customer service providers your company’s quality customer service’s standards. (Haneborg, 1998)

It is important to invest in continuous quality customer service training for everyone. Organization should provide all employees with continuous education on customer service. Don’t stop with one session. If customer service is important to company in the market, company has to be sure staff members attend annual refresher or advance courses, whatever it takes to ensure consistency and quality.

In hospitality industry, achieving outstanding customer service requires much time, energy and money in the customer service training and call center performance and service enhancement areas. (Kelley, 1999) Professional and courteous customer service does not just happen. It requires a company commitment with training extended to all departments and all levels of the company. Training must be an ongoing commitment. Regular and comprehensive measurement of performance and customer attitudes is central to maintaining the commitment.

Customer service and worst customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. She stated that the hotel industry scored 71 out of 100 points in the industry’s best-known customer satisfaction survey, compared with drop from 75 points in 1994 when lodging companies were struggling to pull themselves out of a recession. The year of 1998’s score was the lowest since Andersen began its American customer satisfaction index five years ago. The survey found that guests don’t believe hotels are providing services that justify the rising room costs, giving the hotels a score of 73 in this category, the lowest in five years. Nearly one-quarter of the consumers surveyed said that hotel guests had voiced complaints over such things as sloppy housekeeping, time-consuming check-outs and tardy room service. As time progresses, hotel's room rate continued to increase but customer service is still more and more poor.

In this highly competitive lodging industry, each company must analyze and consider their training program. Good training will benefit the entire organization. Training reduces tensions, turnover, and cost and improves product and quality of service. (Shriver, 1988 & Tanke, 1990) Customer count is certainly going to improve the company image and the bottom line. Now many companies in the hospitality recognize training and have developed systematic training program. However not everyone in this industry sees training as an investment. Many managers of small operations consider training an exercise in futility because they believe it takes more time than it is worth, employee do not stay long enough for it to pay, people are not interested in being trained, and the like. Also people in entry-level service jobs tend to think, they should be able to do these jobs without training. So in fact, it is hard to convince these people that training is worth investment. It is difficult to measure and prove the difference training makes because there are always many variables in every situation. One way to reassure whether training pays off is to compare individual operations where the training is good with those that do little or no training. The differences will be obvious in “atmosphere,” in “smoothness of operation,” in “customer’s satisfaction in improved quality of service.” (Miller, 1998)

Davidoff (1994) stated that once an educated person gets into the workforce, there is little training in service available. Even though service companies provide a training program, most of the training concentrates on the technical aspects of the job. They neglect the significant real intangible service training. What separates one hotel from another is the quality of service. It is what people remember. (Rowe, 1998)

Davidoff suggested one of the things it takes for service to succeed is training system and education. He said the major reason why service is so bad today involved the lack of proper education and training. To make matters worse, most of businesses are not well prepared to provide the necessary training when a potentially good employee comes out of the education system. American companies must remember that a few days and dollars of training will more than pay for itself in the long run. Education and training are an essential part of the modern organization's efforts to support customer-contact personnel in hospitality industry.

Without general education on customer service, employees can not possibly be equipped to handle the rigorous regular interchange with customers. Without specific training on the processes involved with a particular company and its products, even the most talented service provider will sometimes fall flat on their face. As more and more organization realizes this, the service standard in the hospitality industry will rise. (Davidoff, 1994).

**1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The purpose of this study was to assess and examine hotel guests' perception of service quality in relation to hospitality training program. This study investigated how to improve service quality through the perception of hotel guests who stay at the hotel and determined what a trainer has to train hotel employees to improve service quality in the hotel. A questionnaire was given to hotel guest staying at particular hotel. The questionnaire focused on five dimensions which were reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy according to SERVQUAL scale of Berry, Parasuraman, (1990) and attitude of employees.

                Therefore,  the project intends to solve the following problems;

1. non-cordial  relationship in rendering service and guest satisfaction

2. Inadequate training of staff in rendering quality service

2. To review the perception of customers on service quality

3. providing data that would be useful to management in designing and developing training program in the hotel through assessment of service quality of the hotel

****1.3 THE OBJECTIVES OF STUDY****

The three major objectives of this study were:

1. To understand the relationship of service quality and guest satisfaction

2. To assess the perception of service quality of the hotel

3. To provide data that would be useful to management in designing and developing training program in the hotel through assessment of service quality of the hotel

****1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS****

1. What is the relationship between service quality and guest satisfaction?

2. What perception do guests have on service quality of the hotel?

3. How would data be provided that would be useful to management in designing and developing training program in the hotel through assessment of service quality of the hotel? 

****1.5 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY****

This work is significant to the hotel industry because it focused on service quality and guest satisfaction. When staff and management of hotel can render quality services, then the guests are satisfied. When the guests are satisfied, it will lead to more patronage which will in turn affect the profitability of the hotel.

Again, the government will be of benefits because when organization makes more profit it result to increase in taxes. Hence the government will generate more revenue.

Finally, the work is also, beneficial to other organizations as service quality and customer satisfaction cannot be underestimated in any business.

**1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study focuses on an assessment of guests satisfaction of service quality in the hotel industry. Also, this study will look to understand the relationship of service quality and guest satisfaction. The study will assess the perception of service quality of the hotel and it will further provide data that would be useful to management in designing and developing. The findings of this study will be limited to Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Some selected hotels in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State serve as the enrolled participants for this study.

**1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The major limitation to the study are insufficient fund to involve many respondents to this research and carry out other logistics required in this study. Also, time factor was another constraint where the researcher had to share available time with academic work and conducting of this research within the given time frame.

Inadequate materials needed for the success of this study was another factor that limited this study. The sources for literatures and conducting of interviews in order to validate this research posed a barrier to the researcher.

Furthermore, limiting this study to only to Uyo metropolis in Akwa Ibom State, instead of involving all the 36 states in Nigeria was another limitation of this study.

**1.9 Definition Of Terms**

**Assessment:** The action of assessing someone or something

**Guest:** a person staying at a guest house or hotel

**Satisfaction**: fulfilment of one's wishes, expectations, or needs, or the pleasure derived from this.

**Service:** the action of helping or doing work for someone.

**Quality:** the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something.

**Hotel:** an establishment providing accommodation, meals, and other services for travellers and tourists.

**Industry:** economic activity concerned with the processing of raw materials and manufacture of goods in factories

**CHAPTER TWO**

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**INTRODUCTION**

Our focus in this chapter is to critically examine relevant literatures that would assist in explaining the research problem and furthermore recognize the efforts of scholars who had previously contributed immensely to similar research. The chapter intends to deepen the understanding of the study and close the perceived gaps.

Precisely, the chapter will be considered in three sub-headings:

* Conceptual Framework
* Theoretical Framework and
* Empirical Review

**2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

**Concept Of Guest Satisfaction**

Trilyo(2018) opined that guest satisfaction also known as customer satisfaction is the internal feelings of every individual which may be satisfaction or dissatisfaction resulting from the assessment of services provided to an individual in context to customer’s anticipation by an organization. Customer satisfaction is called customer feedback as assessment after buying goods or services compared as their expectations. According to Razak, Nirwanto & Triatmanto (2016), customer satisfaction is estimated by utilizing the customer expectations with the presentation of the goods or services that can address the needs and expectations of the Customer. A satisfied customer indicates that there is a similarity between the performance of the product and service with the expectation of the customer, where it will attract them to repurchase the items. Simultaneously, a disappointed customer would persuade different customers to not re-buy and subsequently they will move to another service providers. Initially, Customer satisfaction is a significant segment of a business procedure, just as customer maintenance and item repurchase. Customer satisfaction is an indicator that predicts the future customer loyalty (Hill, Roche and Allen 2007.)

Hotels are continuously trying to improve the service just to satisfy their customer because higher customer satisfaction will leads towards customer loyalty.

Guest satisfaction is the evaluation of a guest whether or not the quality of a service meets his expectations. Performance that falls below expectations makes guests dissatisfied (Kottler & Killer, 2006). In the hotel industry, satisfaction of guests is in terms of their satisfaction with the service of the F&B department and the customer relations developed by hotel staff (Al Rousan, 2011; Parasuraman et al., 1985). Customer satisfaction is considered one of the most important outcomes of all marketing activities in a market-oriented firm. The obvious objective of satisfying a customer is to expand a business, to gain higher market share, and to acquire repeat and referral business, all of which lead to improved profitability (Barsky, 1992; Carev, 2008). However, the guest satisfaction concept in this model refers to judgement that depends on both good service quality and fitness of service to the needs of guests (Tse and Wilton, 1988)

Customer satisfaction is a critical success factor in service organizations. Hotel industries in developing countries also have to compete with others and have to

satisfy local and international customers, because, today‟s customers are more aware, educated and open to a lot of information through web sources, internet,

bulletins, magazines, journals, articles, etc., (Armstrong, Mok et al. 1997; Padma and Rajendran 2010). Customer satisfaction is a key to building lasting relationships with consumers. Satisfied customers repurchase the service, recommend and encourage others to use the service, develop positive word of mouth toward the service and the organization, pay less attention to competitive brands and advertising, are less sensitive to price and buy other services (Zekiri, 2011). A dissatisfied consumer, on the other hand, responds differently. As a satisfied customer tells people about a good service experience, dissatisfied customer complains to even more people than a satisfied customer does. In the hotel industry, service quality received much attention from both researchers and practitioners because of its positive impact on financial performance, customer satisfaction, and retention (Triyo 2018).

Customer satisfaction has been one of the top apparatuses for an effective business. Customer satisfaction is defined as an overall evaluation focused on absolute acquisition and administration participation (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha and Bryant 1996). Customer satisfaction comes with marketing that demonstrates the customer's wish for the goodness of the product and service. (Oliver 1999.) As per Kotler and Armstrong (2012), customer satisfaction is the degree to which an item's apparent exhibition coordinates a customer's expectations. Kotler and Keller, (2012) also stress that there are a few indicators of customer satisfaction, to be specific, repurchases story, small questions to put forward, readiness to prescribe the product and organizational awareness. Nonetheless, the most important subjects needed to reach or go beyond customer satisfaction are product and its features, functions, efficiency, distribution operation and customer support. Customers who are happy typically hop back and buy more. In addition to buying more, they are often used as a system by exchanging meetings to reach other potential customers (Hague and Hague 2016). Subsequently, when an organization wins a customer it should keep on working up a decent connection with the customer. In the twentieth century, the essence of goods and undertakings is not just to please consumers but also to retain a secure position. Indeed, the consumption of quality goods was very beneficial for customers (Rebekah & Sharyn 2004). Explicit things or administrative highlights and value experiences impact customer satisfaction. Satisfaction is additionally affected by customer's enthusiastic reactions, their attributions under view of value (Zeithaml and Bitner 2003). Expanded customer satisfaction can give organization benefits like customer loyalty. It may cause consumers to buy regularly and propose goods and services to potential customers at the moment the consumer is satisfied with the organization's product or service. A business association cannot develop if the company ignores or disregards customers' necessities (Tao 2014.)

It is natural for hotel operators to invest a tremendous amount of resources in satisfying their customers. As customer satisfaction constitutes a critical barometer for assessing hotel performance, an in-depth appreciation of the factors contributing to both satisfied and dissatisfied customers is paramount to hotel management. On one hand, very satisfied (or delighted) customers are more likely to return and recommend a hotel. Delighted customers exhibit behavioral patterns that are distinct from moderately satisfied customers. On the other hand, very dissatisfied (or frustrated) customers are likely to spread negative word of mouth that not only tarnishes the image and reputation of the targeted hotel but also decreases hotel revenue by deterring potential customers. Indeed, it has been documented that one negative review from an unhappy customer can translate into the subsequent loss of 30 customers ([Olsen, 2010](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2019-0581/full/html" \l "ref039" \o ")).

The above phenomena highlight the urgency for modern hospitality industries to strive for customer delight while averting customer frustration. Yet, it should not come as a surprise that hotel operators have to pursue separate business strategies to attain the two business objectives. Past studies have demonstrated that the determinants of customer delight are distinguishable from those that cause customer frustration ([Albayrak and Caber, 2013](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2019-0581/full/html" \l "ref003" \o "); [Alegre and Garau, 2011](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2019-0581/full/html" \l "ref005" \o "); [Füller and Matzler, 2008](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2019-0581/full/html" \l "ref012" \o ")). For instance, while hotel guests may be indifferent to having a clean towel, they are likely to be irritated by the presence of a dirty towel. Conversely, an offering of welcome chocolate in the room may delight customers, even though customers are unlikely to be unhappy in the absence of such services. Conceivably, hotel attributes could exert asymmetric impact on customer satisfaction: whereas customers can be highly satisfied with a hotel attribute, they can be equally dissatisfied with another hotel attribute ([Albayrak and Caber, 2015](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2019-0581/full/html" \l "ref004" \o ")). In other words, the relationships between hotel attributes and customer satisfaction could be asymmetric. Specifically, one unit of positive performance of a hotel attribute could have a much greater impact on customer satisfaction than a corresponding unit of negative performance, and similarly negative performance of a hotel attribute could outweigh the effect of its positive performance on customer satisfaction.

**The hospitality industry:**

The hospitality industry is a vast sector, and many people think of the kind of organizations which consider hospitality brands, and a much more modest number can explain what is and is the company fairly and correctly. This implies the essence and style of the changes in the organization as do the kinds of food and celebrations and the levels of knowledge and expertise used at all levels of the company. The hospitality industry refers to a variety of organizations and administrations connected to recreation and customer satisfaction. The characteristic aspect of hospitality industry was also pointed out by Hallak, Rob & Etal, (2019), which focuses instead of providing food for necessities and fundamental values on the thinking of luxury, pleasure, pleasure and experience. They also underlined three divisions of the hospitality industry, for example, Restaurants, Bars, and takeaways. The restaurant industry is encountering solid revenue development around the world. The industry reported a compound annual sales growth (CAGR) rate of 4.4 percent in the (US) from 2009 to 2017. (Deloitte, 2019). In 2018, the increase in appreciation in Europe, Germany and Spain's restaurant industry relative to 2013 was 7.7 percent and 7.4 percent respectively (Euromonitor Universal, 2019c). A comparable pattern across Asia, Africa and South America is seen in 2018 relative to the 2013 trend of China, China, Nigeria at 28.9 percent, Nigeria at 10.7 percent, and Peru at 24.8 percent (Euromonitor Global, 2019b). From 2015 to 2018, the regular development of deals in New Zealand was 6.93% (Restaurant Link of New Zealand, 2018), while in Australia, home food accounted for 27% of weekly household food and beverage spending in Australia (Australian Wellness Organization, 2012; Venn et al, 2018). At a worldwide level, it is evaluated that there are over USD 500 billion in foodservice industry exchanges in daily basis (Newson et al., 2015). While focusing in restaurant business next most important thing is maintaining the quality of food to bring customer satisfaction. According to Bowman and Vinyard (2004), the quality of the food, which is offered to the customers, should be well considered by the restaurants. The food served by the restaurant should endeavor to address the issues just as the regularly changing desires of the customers (Buckley, Cowan, McCarthy & O'Sullivan, 2005). Part of the main technique that restaurants obtain to ensure that the recruiting of deeply professional chefs produces excellent food. Simultaneously, it includes ensuring that the remarks and proposals which are offered by the customers are taken into consideration. This is vital to ensure that top-of-the-line food is accessible to customers (Campos and Nobrega, 2009)

**Service Quality**

Quality concept can be viewed in various perspectives in order to fully appreciate the role it plays in the many parts of business organization especially in the hotel industry. According to Bruhn and Manfred (2006) the concept of service quality emerged as a major challenge for service companies. This is because of the characteristics of services; especially the encounter of provider and customer in the service process, service quality is a more complex construct than product quality. Indeed the most fundamental definition of a quality product is one that meets the expectations of the customer. In hotel industry, quality is defined simply as product conformation to specifications while meeting the expectations of the customer. Since each customer have their own expectations, and then service quality remains a subjective matter that befits objective assessment through understanding of various facets of perception, their measurement and how they relate to satisfaction an issue we shall pursue in this proceeding section.

**Factors influencing customer satisfaction of service quality in the hotel industry**

In the significantly engaged food industry like restaurant, satisfying customers should be the essential objective of organizations that may effort to develop new buys. As food is a crucial part of the restaurant's experience, food can definitely have a vital effect on customer loyalty and return support and will continue to do so. The imperative test for restaurants today is to deliver affordable food to consumers, which is also convincing for business enthusiasts. Quality food is outstanding among the other powerful approaches. Among the other effective methods, quality food is excellent. According to Rebekah (2017), while talking about factors that influence customer satisfaction in restaurant, we can focus on several factors as follows- Accessibility, Navigation, Language, Memory, Personalized, Convenience, Intuition, Real-Time, Simplicity, Logic, Deliverability, Choice, Community and Moment of Truth.

**Importance of guest satisfaction and quality service**

**Customer Loyalty**: Happy customers are loyal customers. Not only is it important for you to provide stellar service, but awesome products as well. Make it a point to be on the fast track for [keeping up with trends that your customers may follow](https://blog.trilyo.com/smart-rooms-for-smart-guests-is-your-hotel-ready) such as building personal assistance services for traveling customers or making special concessions for avid repeat consumers. Be sure you have items on hand so when your customer needs you and your products, everything’s available. A customer who has to continuously wait for you to do your part may grow tired, no matter how loyal, and venture off to your competition. Keep customers loyal by focusing on them at all times.

**Happier Environment:**The physical perception imparted by your hospitality business is important in achieving customer satisfaction. Your restaurant or hotel need not spend lots of money to create an amicable environment. Over-the-top interior design can be perceived as either cold and off-putting, genial and inviting or somewhere in between. The difference lies in the emotive quality of your employees — the main ingredient in creating a special experience for your guests. Your environment must be clean, well-lit and comfortable, however, for your customers to feel at home.

**Increased Security:** When customers are paying to be served, they expect to be able to relax and enjoy themselves without worrying about security. A secure environment means having plenty of friendly employees visible to guests from the moment of arrival to departure. Helpful, too, are frequent interactions with guests to instill a sense of inclusion in the goings-on at your establishment. Security need not be overt, however. Armed and uniformed security guards will frighten guests rather than impart a sense of safety.

**Better Value:** Guests need to believe they are receiving an excellent value for their money. Value can be inexpensively included in their visit in the form of discounts, free candy or snacks, bottled water at no charge, gift cards and the like. Guests generally don’t expect these perks so they can build repeat business — a sure sign of customer satisfaction.

**Relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction**

[According to latest statistics](https://www.politesi.polimi.it/bitstream/10589/13105/1/2010_10_Le.pdf), the hotel service sector accounts for 38 percent of the value added in the World Economic Community. In this sector, quality and customer satisfaction play irreplaceable roles! Various researchers such as Knutson and Naumann succeeded to prove that satisfaction of customers is the cheapest mean of promotion. Each year, billions of dollars are spent on improving the level of service quality. It is said that ‘doing things wrong’ accounts for 30 or 40% of operating costs in service organizations! “It’s six to seven times more expensive to gain a new customer than it is to retain an existing customer. A 5% increase in customer retention can increase profits by 25% to 95%”

[Measurement also helps the organization compare](http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol18-issue5/F01853944.pdf) the difference before and after changes, identify the standard of service delivery and it is also a good chance to recognize problems related to the quality of service. Therefore, the measurement of service quality and customer satisfaction benefits company in both qualitative and quantitative way. Gaining a high level of service quality and customer satisfaction equal to enhancement in customer loyalty, market share increase, higher returns on investment, cost reduction and guarantee a competitive advantage. It also has a positive impact on employee satisfaction

For the three star hotels or above, measurement of the service quality is a way to prove its quality and it is one of the hotel marketing methods. Those [hotels management systems look at the hotel rating](https://blog.trilyo.com/the-top-10-hotel-management-systems-in-the-world) system. The top ten positions in hotel rating websites are the common target of thousands of hotel because those positions are considered as the certificate for their hotels’ quality service. When travelers search for the hotels, they also browse those websites. It is usual that travelers who care about high quality only look at some beginning pages which show the highest positions. Having the name here becomes a competitive advantage and helps hotels attract more guests. It is clear that hotel rating systems encourage hotel operators to improve their service quality, which may lead to changes in hotel performance.

[One of the main strategies used by hotels to enhance customer satisfaction](https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/114578/Mubiri Joleen thesis.pdf?sequence=1) is benchmarking! Benchmarking enables hotels to learn from other players in the industry and learn what makes their competitors competitive. In some cases, some hotels may not reveal their secrets to their competitors. However, [the hotel industry does not involve sensitive information](https://blog.trilyo.com/how-will-gdpr-rules-affect-hotels-a-quick-checklist). For this reason, most hotels are willing to share the secrets of their success. Nonetheless, the only thing that makes some hotels prosper as compared to others is hotel inventiveness. Hotel innovation enables prosperous hotels to create new strategies that enhance a competitive advantage over their rivals.

**2.2 THEORETICAL CONCEPT**

**The Three Factor Theory**

The three-factor theory holds that product/service attributes exert asymmetric effects on overall customer satisfaction. According to the three-factor theory ([Kano et al., 1984](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2019-0581/full/html" \l "ref04a" \o ")), hotel attributes can be categorized into basic, performance and excitement factors, where basic and excitement factors denote dissatisfiers and satisfiers, respectively, and performance factors induce satisfaction and dissatisfaction in a linear and symmetric fashion.

In this scenario, providing high quality services and improving customer satisfaction are widely recognized as fundamental factors boosting the performances of companies in the hotel and tourism industry (Barsky & Labagh, 1992; Le Blanc, 1992,; Le Blanc et al., 1996; Stevens et al., 1995, Opermann, 1998). Hotels with good service quality will ultimately improve their profitability (Oh & Parks, 1997). In a competitive hospitality industry which offers homogeneous services, individual hoteliers must be able to satisfy costumers better then their counterparts (Choi & Chou, 2001).

To obtain loyalty and to outweigh other competitors, hotel providers must be able to obtain high levels of customer satisfaction for the service supplied. There are several studies that analyze the needs and the desires of tourists. A research by Wuest et al. (1996) defined the perception of hotel attributes as the degree to which guests may find various services and facilities critical for their stay in a hotel. Hotel's attributes such as cleanliness, price, location, security, personal service, physical attractiveness, opportunities for relaxation, standard of services, appealing image, and reputation are recognized as decisive by travelers to assess the quality of the hotel (Atkinsons, 1988; Ananth et al., 1992; Barsky & Labagh, 1992; Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988; Knutson, 1988; McCleary et al., 1993; Rivers et al., 1991; Wilensky & Buttle, 1988).

According to a survey carried out by Barsky & Nash in 2006, regarding the main hotel chains worldwide, between 2002 and 2005, the importance of loyalty programs for guest's decision on where to stay increased from 32% to 34%.

Although the search for new locations is certainly the most important factor for many tourists, several studies highlighted that there is a good portion of customers that chose to repeat their holidays' destination, showing a certain degree of loyalty (Oppermann, 1998; Fyall et al., 2003). These studies on tourists' loyalty indicate five main factors which affect the repetition of the trip to the same tourist place:

the desire to reduce the risk of making a mistake when choosing an alternative destination; the chance to meet the same people again ;

* the emotional affection to a specific place;
* the possibility to explore the place better ;
* the desire to show the place to other people.

Hoteliers need to fully acknowledge which service attributes are most likely to influence customers’ choice intentions (Richard & Sundaram, 1993). Customer satisfaction practices can help them to identify the crucial parts of service quality that needs to be improved. Customer satisfaction is the starting point to build customer loyalty, therefore a long-term relationship. This creates a loyalty's stock in the enterprise which improves corporate image. The consolidation of relations with guests leads to repeated patronage. On the other hand, an unsatisfied customer may represent a danger for the enterprise. A research, conducted by Cherubini (1997), shows that only 4% of unsatisfied customers complains to the business explaining the reason of their unsatisfaction, and each client who doesn't officially complain generates a negative approach and a tendency to be loyal to the hotel is slim.

Hence, both exploring the importance for customers of single attributes in hotelselection and to systematically survey their level of satisfaction are indispensable. Research on the topic of guest satisfaction, which translates into the consideration of whether or not customers will return to a hotel or advise it to other tourists, is pivotal to the success of the hospitality business. Neglecting to pay attention to those hotel attributes considered most important by guests leads to negative evaluations of the hotel, thus restricting the chance of repeat patronage.

**2.3 EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Ogungbayi, Olatidoye & Agbebi 2019) carried out a study on“Assessment of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in Selected Hotels in Abeokuta Metropolis, Ogun State, Nigeria”.The study was carried out to assess service quality on customer satisfaction in some selected hotels in Abeokuta Metropolis. A total of one hundred and fifteen (115) structured questionnaires was distributed, out which ninety seven (97) respondents representing 84.3% completed and returned the questionnaire. The results showed that the socioeconomic characteristics of respondents involved in hotel patronage were 81.4% (male) and 18.6% (female) with 58.7% of the total respondents rated unsatisfactory with mean value of ‘2.68’, 52% of respondents rated service experienced unsatisfactory with mean value of ‘2.62’, 71.1% of respondents consented to the various solutions offered . The chi-square showed there was significant relationship (x2 =789.537a > x2 =9.488, p<0.05) between socio-economic characteristics of respondents and the level of their satisfaction with service qualities in the hotels. Also, there was significant relationship (x2 = 837.990a > x2 =9.488, p<0.05) between the various service qualities and customer satisfaction. The study further confirmed that service quality delivery to customers was the major challenge of all the hotels in Abeokuta metropolis which is on how to deliver the service to customers in a way that will bring satisfaction to them. The study therefore recommended that hotels owners should constantly embark on staff training in ‘service quality delivery’ that will bring about customer satisfaction at all times.

HUNG & YONG (2013) carried out a study on“Assessment of Service Quality in the Hotel Industry”. The study made use of 622 customers as the sample size. Reliability and validity of the measurement scale were established through a pilot test and the substantive survey. The study extended the literature on service quality in the fields of hospitality and tourism management by providing a comprehensive framework and measurement scale. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed. The findings oof the study revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between service quality and guest satisfaction in hotel industries.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, we described the research procedure for this study. A research methodology is a research process adopted or employed to systematically and scientifically present the results of a study to the research audience viz. a vis, the study beneficiaries.

**3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research designs are perceived to be an overall strategy adopted by the researcher whereby different components of the study are integrated in a logical manner to effectively address a research problem. In this study, the researcher employed the survey research design. This is due to the nature of the study whereby the opinion and views of people are sampled. According to Singleton & Straits, (2009), Survey research can use quantitative research strategies (e.g., using questionnaires with numerically rated items), qualitative research strategies (e.g., using open-ended questions), or both strategies (i.e., mixed methods). As it is often used to describe and explore human behaviour, surveys are therefore frequently used in social and psychological research.

**3.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

According to Udoyen (2019), a study population is a group of elements or individuals as the case may be, who share similar characteristics. These similar features can include location, gender, age, sex or specific interest. The emphasis on study population is that it constitute of individuals or elements that are homogeneous in description.

This study was carried out to an assessment of guests satisfaction of service quality in the hotel industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom state. Selected hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State form the population of the study.

**3.4 SAMPLE SIZE DETERMINATION**

A study sample is simply a systematic selected part of a population that infers its result on the population. In essence, it is that part of a whole that represents the whole and its members share characteristics in like similitude (Udoyen, 2019). In this study, the researcher adopted the convenient sampling method to determine the sample size.

**3.5 SAMPLE SIZE SELECTION TECHNIQUE AND PROCEDURE**

According to Nwana (2005), sampling techniques are procedures adopted to systematically select the chosen sample in a specified away under controls. This research work adopted the convenience sampling technique in selecting the respondents from the total population.

In this study, the researcher adopted the convenient sampling method to determine the sample size. Out of all the entire population of hotels in Uyo, the researcher used 3 hotels and conveniently selected 80 guests out of the overall population as the sample size for this study. According to Torty (2021), a sample of convenience is the terminology used to describe a sample in which elements have been selected from the target population on the basis of their accessibility or convenience to the researcher.

**3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

The research instrument used in this study is the questionnaire. A survey containing series of questions were administered to the enrolled participants. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, the first section enquired about the responses demographic or personal data while the second sections were in line with the study objectives, aimed at providing answers to the research questions. Participants were required to respond by placing a tick at the appropriate column. The questionnaire was personally administered by the researcher.

**3.7 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

Two methods of data collection which are primary source and secondary source were used to collect data. The primary sources was the use of questionnaires, while the secondary sources include textbooks, internet, journals, published and unpublished articles and government publications.

**3.8 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

The responses were analysed using the mean and standard deviation, which provided answers to the research questions.

In analyzing data collected, mean score was used to achieve this. The four points rating scale will be given values as follows:

SA = Strongly Agree 4

A = Agree 3

D = Disagree 2

SD = Strongly Disagree 1

**Decision Rule:**

To ascertain the decision rule; this formular was used

|  |
| --- |
| 4+3+2+1 =10  **= 2.5**  4 4 |

Any score that was 2.5 and above was accepted, while any score that was below 2.5 was rejected. Therefore, 2.5 was the cut-off mean score for decision taken.

**3.9 VALIDITY OF THE STUDY**

Validity referred here is the degree or extent to which an instrument actually measures what is intended to measure. An instrument is valid to the extent that is tailored to achieve the research objectives. The researcher constructed the questionnaire for the study and submitted to the project supervisor who used his intellectual knowledge to critically, analytically and logically examine the instruments relevance of the contents and statements and then made the instrument valid for the study.

**3.10 RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY**

The reliability of the research instrument was determined. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. A co-efficient value of 0.68 indicated that the research instrument was relatively reliable. According to (Taber, 2017) the range of a reasonable reliability is between 0.67 and 0.87.

**3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

he study was approved by the Project Committee of the Department. Informed consent was obtained from all study participants before they were enrolled in the study. Permission was sought from the relevant authorities to carry out the study. Date to visit the place of study for questionnaire distribution was put in place in advance.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the analysis of data derived through the questionnaire and key informant interview administered on the respondents in the study area. The analysis and interpretation were derived from the findings of the study. The data analysis depicts the simple frequency and percentage of the respondents as well as interpretation of the information gathered. A total of ninety six (96) questionnaires were administered to respondents of which only eighty (80) were returned and validated. This was due to irregular, incomplete and inappropriate responses to some questionnaire. For this study a total of 80 was validated for the analysis.

**4.1 DATA PRESENTATION**

**Table 4.2: Demographic profile of the respondents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographic information** | **Frequency** | **percent** |
| **Gender**  Male |  |  |
| 34 | 42.5% |
| Female | 46 | 57.5% |
| **Age** |  |  |
| 20-29 | 10 | 12.5% |
| 30-39 | 28 | 35% |
| 40-49 | 21 | 26.25% |
| 50-59 | 16 | 20% |
| 60+ | 5 | 6.25% |
| **Marital Status** |  |  |
| Single | 27 | 33.7% |
| Married | 38 | 47.5% |
| Separated | 10 | 12.5% |
| Widowed | 5 | 6.25% |
| **Education level** |  |  |
| WAEC | 10 | 12.5% |
| BSC | 40 | 50% |
| MSC | 20 | 25% |
| MBA | 8 | 10% |

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

**Question 1:** What is the relationship between service quality and guest satisfaction?

**Table 4.3:** Respondent on question 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEM STATEMENT** | **SA**  **4** | **A 3** | **D 2** | **SD 1** | **X** | **S.D** | **DECISION** |
| 1 | Higher customer satisfaction | 65 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 3.8 | 5.52 | Accepted |
| 2 | Greater competitive advantage | 41 | 28 | 6 | 5 | 3.3 | 5.1 | Accepted |
| 3 | Profitability to the hotels concerned | 37 | 29 | 13 | 1 | 3.2 | 5.1 | Accepted |
| 4 | Financial value | 40 | 27 | 8 | 5 | 3.5 | 5.2 | Accepted |

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

In table above, item1 with mean response of 3.8 accepted that Higher customer satisfaction. Item 2 with mean score of 3.3 also accepted Greater competitive advantage Item 3 with mean score of 3.2Profitability to the hotels concerned Item 4 with the mean score of 3.5 also accepted that Financial value are some of the relationships between service quality and guest satisfaction. Item 1,2,3,4 have mean scores above 2.50. This indicates that respondents accepted in all the items on the relationship between service quality and guest satisfaction.

**Question 2:    What perception do guests have on service quality of the hotel?**

Table 4.4: respondent on question 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEM STATEMENT** | **SA**  **4** | **A 3** | **D 2** | **SD 1** | **X** | **S.D** | **DECISION** |
| 1 | Quality services rendered | 43 | 22 | 7 | 8 | 3.2 | 5.1 | Accepted |
| 2 | High professionalism of staff | 68 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 3.8 | 5.52 | Accepted |
| 3 | Minimal complaints by guests | 53 | 21 | 4 | 2 | 3.5 | 5.3 | Accepted |

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

In table above, item1 with mean response of 3.2 accepted that Quality services rendered. Item 2 with mean score of 3.8 also accepted that High professionalism of staff. Item 3 with mean score of 3.5 accepted Minimal complaints by guests . Item 1,2,3,4 have mean scores above 2.50. This indicates that respondents accepted in all the items on the table are perception of guests on service quality of a hotel.

**Research Question 3:  How would data be provided that would be useful to management in designing and developing training program in the hotel through assessment of service quality of the hotel?**

Table 4.5: respondent on question 3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEM STATEMENT** | **SA**  **4** | **A**  **3** | **D**  **2** | **SD**  **1** | **X** | **S.D** | **DECISION** |
| 1 | Personal suggestions from staff | 38 | 34 | 5 | 3 | 3.3 | 5.1 | Accepted |
| 2 | Enquiry from guests | 22 | 49 | 4 | 5 | 3.1 | 4.9 | Accepted |
| 4 | The use of questionnaire | 36 | 10 | 30 | 4 | 2.9 | 4.8 | Accepted |

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

In table above, item 1 with mean response of 3.3 accepted that Personal suggestions from staff . Item 2 with mean response of 3.1 accepted that Enquiry from guests. Item 3 with mean response of 2.7 also accepted that The use of questionnaire. . Item 1, 2, 3 all have mean scores above 3.05. This indicates that respondents agreed on item 1to 4 are some of the ways data would be provided that would be useful to management in designing and developing training program in the hotel through assessment of service quality of the hotel.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**5.1 SUMMARY**

In this study, our focus was to assess guests satisfaction of service quality in the hotel industry using 3 selectedhotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State as a case study**.** The study specifically was aimed at understanding the relationship of service quality and guest satisfaction, To assess the perception of service quality of the hotel in Akwa ibom State, and to provide data that would be useful to management in designing and developing in Akwa Ibom State. This study was anchored on the three factor theory.

The study adopted the survey research design and conveniently enrolled participants in the study. A total of 80 responses were received and validated from the enrolled participants where all respondent are drawn from the staff of the 3 hotels in Akwa Ibom State.

**5.2 CONCLUSION**

Based on the finding of this study, the following conclusions were made:

* Higher customer satisfaction, greater competitive advantage, profitabilty to the hotels involved were seen to be the relationship between service quality and guests satisfaction.
* Quality services rendered, high professionalismof staff and minimal complaints by guests were some of the perceptions guests have on service quality of the hotel.
* Personal suggestions, enquiry from guests and the use of qustionnaire are some of the ways data can be collected and used for hotel improvement.

**5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are hereby proposed:

* Suggestions and complaints from guests should be taken into consideration and acted on accordingly for a enhanced service quality.
* Staff from the hotel industry should be duly trained and act professionally at all times.
* Guest satisfaction should always come first before hotel polcies.

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**APPENDIXE**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PLEASE TICK [√] YOUR MOST PREFERRED CHOICE(S) ON A QUESTION.**

**SECTION A**

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Gender

Male ( )

Female ( )

Age

20-29 ( )

30-39 ( )

40-49 ( )

50-59 ( )

60+( )

Marital Status

Single ( )

Married ( )

Separated ( )

Widowed ( )

Education Level

WAEC ( )

BS.c ( )

MS.c ( )

MBA ( )

**SECTION B**

Please note that SA is for strongly agree, A is for agree, D is for disagree and SD is for strongly disagree

**Question 1:** What is the relationship between service quality and guest satisfaction?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEM STATEMENT** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1 | Higher customer satisfaction |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Greater competitive advantage |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Profitability to the hotels concerned |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Financial value |  |  |  |  |

**Question 2:    What perception do guests have on service quality of the hotel?**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEM STATEMENT** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1 | Quality services rendered |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | High professionalism of staff |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Minimal complaints by guests |  |  |  |  |

Research Question 3:  How would data be provided that would be useful to management in designing and developing training program in the hotel through assessment of service quality of the hotel?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEM STATEMENT** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1 | Personal suggestions from staff |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Enquiry from guests |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | The use of questionnaire |  |  |  |  |