

The role of customer satisfaction and maintenance culture in the sustainability of hospitality industries in Umuahia North and South local government area of Abia State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of customer satisfaction and maintenance culture in the sustainability of hospitality establishments in Umuahia North and South LGAs. The study was guided by six objectives and six research questions. The research adopted a survey research design. The data generated was analyzed using simple frequency percentage and mean. The study revealed that the following variable was shown to have a positive impact on customer satisfaction namely high quality service, and the main negative impact identified by the respondents was the lack of staff training. Recommendations have been made that will improve the situation considerably, based on the findings of this study.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction, sustainability, hospitality industry, maintenance culture

Introduction

The hotel sector is a segment within the 'guest rooms for sleeping' (Hayes and Ninemeier, 2007). In its narrowest sense, this definition is correct. However today the traveling public has a wide variety of lodging alternatives and the definition just cited is of limited use. A hotel is a "home away from home". David (2010) has broadly defined a 'hotel' as an establishment held out by the proprietor, providing accommodation, food and beverages, to any traveler presenting his/herself, who is willing and able to pay for the services rendered and is in a good state of mind to be received by the hotel. Customer satisfaction is thus important and a central phenomenon in marketing (Kucukosmanoghu, 2010). It is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet or surpass customer expectations (Farris, Paul and Neil, 2010). Customer satisfaction is defined as "the number of customers or percentage of total customers whose reported experience with a firm, its products, or its services (ratings) exceeds specified satisfaction goals" (Frennea *et al.*, 2010). John (2003) sees customer satisfaction as a key performance indicator within the business which is part of a business scorecard.

Customer satisfaction is an ambiguous and abstract concept and the actual manifestation of the state of satisfaction will vary from person to person and product/service to product/service. The state of satisfaction depends on a number of both psychological and physical variables which correlate with satisfaction behaviors such as return and recommendations (Gutman and Lawrence, 2005). Maintenance is essential in today's competitive hospitality industry. Hotel management should give due importance to maintenance of assets. Maintenance management deals with planning, organizing, directing, staffing, controlling, and evaluating functions of management applied to maintenance activities (Aroro and Goyal, 2008). Maintenance is a combination of actions carried out to retain an item/machine equipment/system/plant in order to restore it to an acceptable working condition (Aroro and Goyal, 2008). The purpose of maintenance is thus to increase the systems availability. The basic function of maintenance is to keep plant, machinery, equipment and systems in a condition that will meet normal operating requirements (Aroro and Goyal, 2008).

According to (Harold, Ritchey Hully, 2008) maintenance is the day to day problem of keeping the physical plant in a good generating condition". They also added that it is necessary to ensure that availability of machine, building and service needed by other units of the organization for the performance of their organization for the performance of their function, at an optimum returns investment is generated. According to Aroro and Goyal (2008) different types of maintenance are:

- a)** Routine maintenance this includes sweeping washing floors, walls, cutting grass, sizing trees, shrubs ,cleaning readily accessible windows doors, ventilators,
- b)** Scheduled maintenance: It is initiated at the property based on a form work order which identifies a known problem. Scheduled maintenance covers inspection, adjustment, repair, replacement, predetermined from past failure patterns.
- c)** Repair maintenance : this involves the disassembling of the equipment, to locate the fault, to find out that part needed to replace it to reassemble, then to check the equipment to ensure that it has restored its function capacity,
- d)** Breakdown maintenance: a failed component or system is repaired and put back to operating condition.

Sustainability is the development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs (Fuller, 2009). The concept of sustainable development can be interpreted in many different ways, but at its core is an approach to development that links to balance different and often competing needs against an awareness of the environmental, social and economic limitations we face as a society Fuller, (2009). Over the past decade hotel companies have implemented programmes to reduce the waste generated and the energy used in their daily operations. Many have been successful in saving both resources and money as well as attracting environmentally conscious guest; however the industry as a whole has yet to make sustainability an integral part of its strategic plans (Collins, 2008).

Customer satisfaction, with products, services, and performance of operational facilities and equipment is a cornerstone of a hotel's corporate strategy, laying the foundation for long-term sustainable success knowing customers' needs and expectations and learning more about them by maintaining an ongoing dialogue with customers is a top priority for hotels. In this respect, alongside excellent products and services, excellent equipment and facilities and expert achievement, personal contacts with the customer are of critical importance to the satisfaction of the customers which links with the sustainability of the hotel industry in general.

The measurement of subjective aspects of customer service depends on the conformity of the customers' perceived result, (Vikas and Carly, 2010). This in turns depends upon the customer's service provider's ability and talent to present this expected service, through well maintained faculties and equipment (Vikas and Carly, 2010). Successful hotels add benefits to their offering that not only satisfy the customers, but also surprise and delight them. Delighting customers is a matter of exceeding their expectations, (Jagsish *et al.*, 2007). The hotel is made up of two customers, the internal and external customers. If the internal customers, being the service providers are well satisfied, and good working conditions are provided for them, they will in-turn provide quality service for the external customers (customer satisfaction) which will lead to customer loyalty and relationship, therefore leading to an increase in profitability and sustainability (Jagdish *et al.*, 2007).

An important model of consumer behaviour was formulated by Engel, James, Kollar, David T. Blackwell, and Rodger (1968) which is worth reading. Today's marketplace has become very competitive with thousands of hotels and restaurants in operation. In addition, during recent years the hospitality industry has undergone globalization. The result is a fiercely competitive international market with hotels fighting for their share of consumers (Forall, (2006). To win this battle, they invest in research that will reveal what customers want to buy, which location they prefer, which amenities are important to them, how they buy and why they buy (Belch, 2007). This is thus the central question: How do consumers respond to the various marketing stimuli that a hotel might use to satisfy its customers? The starting point is the model of buyer behavior shown below, Kotler *et al.*, (2006).

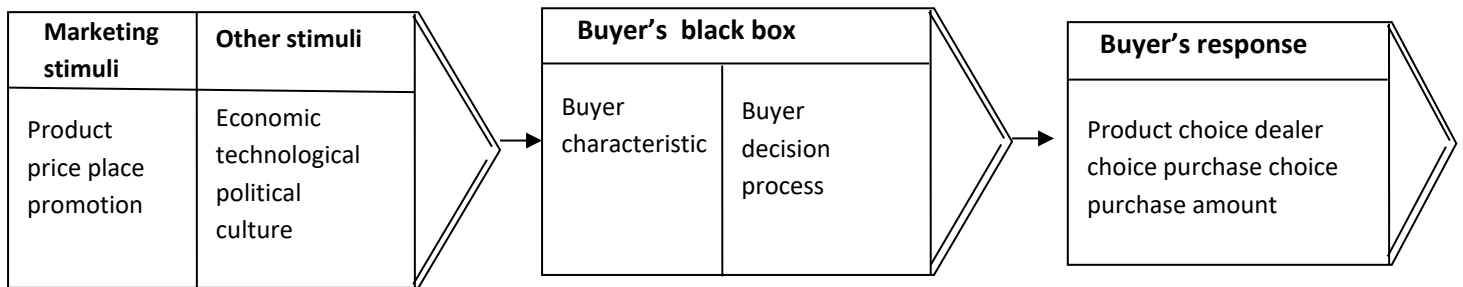


Figure 1: Model of buyer behavior

The figure above shows that marketing and other stimuli enter the consumer's 'black box' and produce certain responses which hotel managers must unravel to determine what is in the buyer's 'black box', in order to satisfy their needs and wants (Kotler *et al.*, 2006). On the left side of the figure, the marketing stimuli consists of four Ps: product, price, place and promotion. Other stimuli include major forces and events in the buyer's environment: economic, technological, political and cultural environment. All these stimuli enter the buyer's 'black box', where they are turned into a set of observable buyer responses shown on the right: product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchase timing, and purchase amount. Hotel managers must understand how the stimuli are changed into responses inside the consumer's 'black box'. The 'black box' has two main parts. First, a buyer's decision process itself affects outcomes.

The Five GAP Model of Service Quality

The five gap model of service quality, created by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in 1985 is important to our study.

Consumer

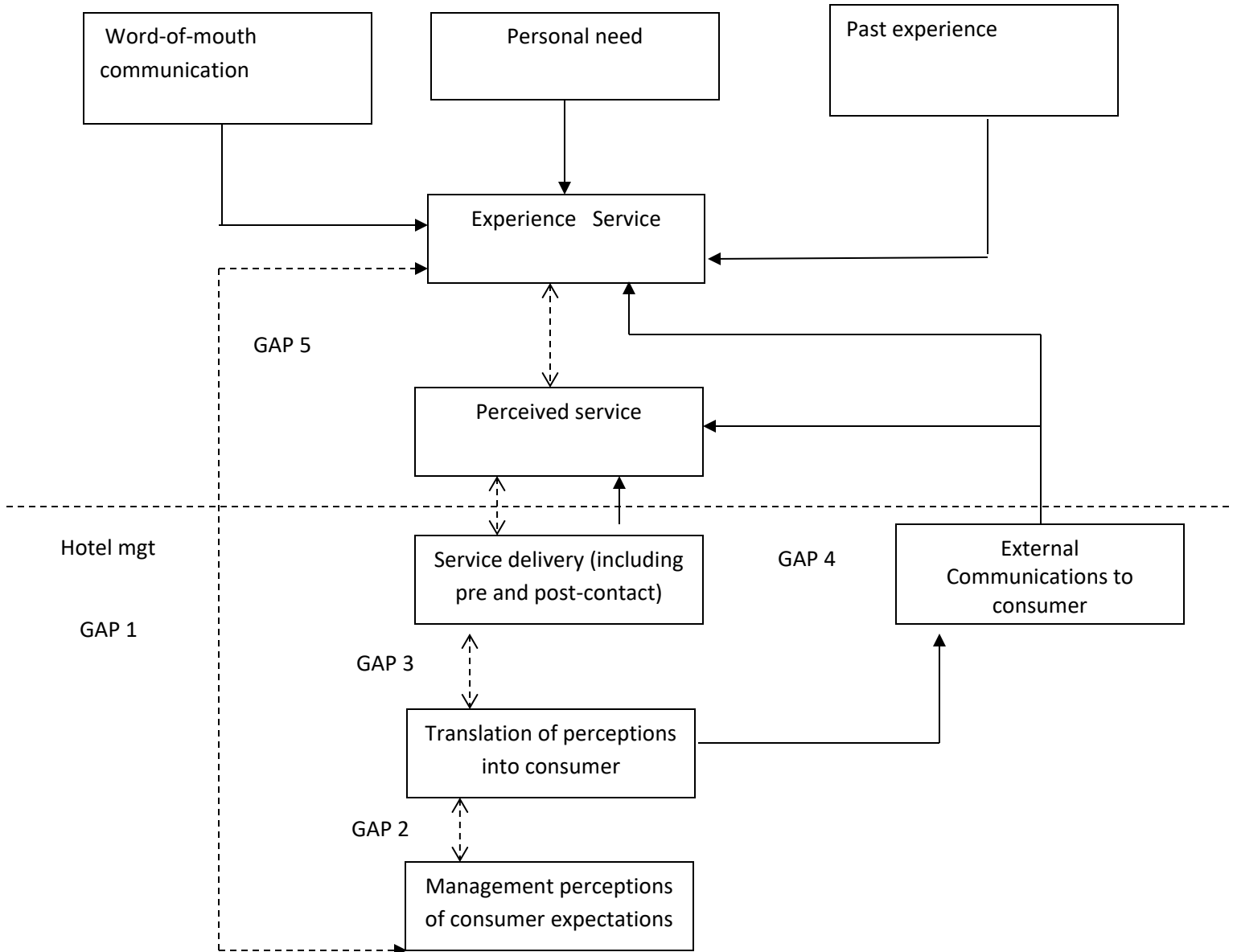


Figure: 2: Conceptual model of service quality: the gap analysis model

Customer satisfaction starts from the consumer behavior model and buyer decision process which starts long before and continues long after the actual purchase is made by the consumer or guest. Before a guest chooses to patronize a hotel, a lot of factors come into play in the minds of the prospective guests such as product, price, place and promotion and continue with their social, cultural, economic and psychological factors of the prospective guest. Their individual needs and expectations. Now when the prospective guest has recognized his/her need, he proceeds to search for information to satisfy this needs desirably this is where the physical environment of the hotel establishment comes in. How maintained the whole facility is and how well equipment works in various hotels of choice, the speed of service delivery, service providers relationship with guests, quality of service and the overall customer

satisfaction are all critical aspects to consider. The next step is evaluation of alternatives by the customers to arrive at a final brand choice. If a hotel establishment is perfectly maintained and effective in customer satisfaction of course it will be the number one choice for a prospective guest in the purchase decision stage. In the final step which is the post purchase behavior, here the guest now equates the services provided to the initial expectation if the services of the hotel through high customer satisfaction oriented and effective maintenance culture habit surpass the guest expectations he/she becomes loyal customer to that hotel, this lead to the sustainability of the hospitality establishment. For the five gap model, Gap 1 error can be corrected in this study with the use of customer questionnaire from time to time, to ascertain what the customers really desire from the hotel and meet their needs and satisfaction through quality service and effective maintenance of facilities.

Gap 2 and 3 errors, can be corrected in this work through staff training. Making staff efficient with good knowledge of the culture of the hotel and what it stands for making them to better understand how important it is to satisfy a guest beyond their expectations. Gap 4 and 5 errors, which mostly occur in hotels, could be corrected according to this research by the management saying what they can do in their sales promotion and by actually doing it. If you say more and do less, customers will be disappointed and will not visit the hotel again. Expectations should not surpass delivered services by the hotel- it is better to promise little and remit more than promised. This model and processes if well built on and effectively used, will help in the sustainability of an hotel.

Citing research on customer loyalty conducted by the forum cooperation Schlesinger and Heskett (2006) noted that only 14% of customer stopped patronizing service business because they were dissatisfied by the quality of the product, while two thirds defected because of what they judged to be indifferent or unhelpful service. The roles of customer satisfaction and maintenance culture in the sustainability of hotels especially in Umuahia North and South cannot be over-emphasized. Hotels are yet to gain its ground in Nigeria like it's counterparts in the world (Goyal, 2006). One of the ways to make hotels in Umuahia meet up with the hospitality industry standards of the outside world is by embracing a serious maintenance culture which will in turn satisfy the customers. This is was what prompted this work.

Objectives of study

The main objectives of this research is to study how customer satisfaction and maintenance culture could aid in sustainability of hotels in Umuahia North and South Local Government areas.

Specifically the work;

1. Identified various variables for customer satisfaction in hotels in Umuahia North and South LGAs.
2. Ascertained the ones that are applied in the various hotels in Umuahia North and South LSAs.
3. Determined the maintenance culture utilized in the various hotels in Umuahia North and South LGAs.
4. Determined the role of customer satisfaction in sustainability of the hotels in Umuahia North and South LGAs.
5. Determined the role of maintenance culture in the sustainability of the hotels in Umuahia LGAs.
6. Seek ways of improving the customer satisfaction and maintenance in the hotels in Umuahia North and South for sustainability.

Research Questions

1. What are the variables of customer satisfaction?
2. What variables of customer satisfaction are applied in hotels in Umuahia?
3. What maintenance culture is utilized in hotels in Umuahia?
4. What is the role of customer satisfaction in the sustainability of the hotels in Umuahia?
5. What is the role of maintenance culture in the sustainability of the hotels in Umuahia?
6. What are the ways of improving the customer satisfaction and maintenance in the hotels in Umuahia North and South?

Methodology

Area of study: The study was carried out in Umuahia North and South local government area of Abia state.

Research design: The study adopted a survey research design.

Population for the study: The population for the study is basically the Umuahia North and South hotels and their guests. Based on the information collected from the Tourism Board Umuahia Abia State, 52 hotels were identified and registered with them. The total number of staff and guests in the study area was 3600 people (Abia State Tourism Board 2014)

Sample Size: Sample size of n=360 was derived using the Taro Yamane formula.

Instrument for data collection: The study employed qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire and oral interviews which were guided by an interview schedule.

Method of data collection: The researcher administered 300 questionnaires by hand to guests of the selected hotels in Umuahia North and South LGAs and 60 questionnaires to the management and staff of same hotels and collected the questionnaire on the spot. This gave a total of 360 retrieved questionnaires.

Data analysis technique: Simple descriptive analysis was used to analyze objectives one, two, three, four and six; objective five was analyzed using a five point Likert scale.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the various variable of customer satisfaction?

Table 1: Which of the following made you choose to stay in this hotel?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High service quality	89	24.7
Exceeds customer expectation	120	33.3
Effective customer touch point	65	18.1
High customer value	86	23.9

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Table 1 above showed that 24.7% of the respondents stated that high service quality made them stay in a particular hotel in Umuahia, 33.3% of the respondents stated that exceeding customer expectations made them stay in some top hotels such as Dramgrate in Umuahia, 18.1% of the respondents stated that effective customer touch point is the variable that made

them stay in some smaller hotels in Umuahia , 23.9% of the respondents stated that high customer value made them choose to stay in certain hotels in the study area.

Research Question 2: What variables of customer satisfaction are applied in hotels in Umuahia?

Table 2: Which of the following services do hotels in Umuahia provide for its guests?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High quality services	200	26.2
Meet customer expectations	309	40.6
Speed to service delivery	94	12.3
High customer value	70	9.2
Effective customer touch point	89	11.7

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Table 2 above shows that 26.2% of the respondents stated that high quality service is one of the variables of customers satisfaction applied in Umuahia hotels, 40.6% of the respondents stated that meeting customer expectations is a variable of customer satisfaction applied in hotels in Umuahia, 12.3% of the respondents stated that speed to service delivery is a variable of customer satisfaction applied in Umuahia hotel, while 9.2% of the respondents said high customer value is a variable of customer satisfaction applied in Umuahia hotel and 11.7% agreed that effective customer touch point is a variable of customer satisfaction applied in hotels in Umuahia.

Research Question 3: What maintenance culture is seen in hotels in Umuahia?

Table 3 what are the methods of maintenance practiced in this hotel?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Preventive maintenance	93	8.3
Repair maintenance	315	26.9
Routine maintenance	38	3.3
Renovative maintenance	57	4.8
Breakdown maintenance	306	26.1
Scheduled maintenance	109	9.3
Corrective maintenance	45	3.8

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Table 3 above shows that 8.3% of the hotels in Umuahia practices preventive maintenance culture, 26.9% of the hotels practices repair maintenance method, 3.3% of the respondents practices routine maintenances, 4.8% of the hotels in Umuahia practices renovative maintenance, 17.5% of the hotels practices breakdown maintenance method, 26.1% of the hotels in Umuahia practice emergency maintenance method, while 9.3% of the hotels practice scheduled maintenance method and 3.8% of the hotels in Umuahia practice corrective maintenance culture.

Table 4: How often do you think maintenance activities are carried out in this hotel?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily basis	82	22.8

Weekly basis	63	17.5
Monthly basis	123	34.2
Yearly basis	92	25.2

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Table 4 above shows that 22.8% of the respondent stated that maintenance activities are carried out on daily basis in Umuahia hotels, 17.5% stated that maintenance culture are carried out on weekly basis in Umuahia hotels, 34.2% stated that maintenance culture are carried out on monthly basis, while 25.5% stated that maintenance are carried out on yearly basis in Umuahia hotels.

Research Question 5: What is the role of customer satisfaction in the sustainability of the hotels in Umuahia?**Table 5: Impacts of customers satisfaction to the sustainability of hotels.**

S/N	Perception of impacts	Tot score	Mean	Decision
1.	Increase hotel profitability	1683	4.7	Agreed
2.	Increase customer loyalty	1748	4.8	Agreed
3.	Advertise the hotel establishment	1726	4.8	Agreed
4.	Increase patronage of guests	1734	4.8	Agreed
5.	Increase revenue level of the hotel	1716	4.7	Agreed
6.	Enable hotel better than	1495	4.2	Agreed
7.	Make a hotel better than other competitors	1457	4.0	Agreed
8.	Only position the hotel high in the market	630	1.8	Disagreed
9.	Require more cost on	544	1.5	Disagreed
10.	Customer satisfaction will lead to employment of additional labour cost	421	1.2	Disagreed
Total			13, 154	36.5
Clustered mean			3.7	

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Table 5 above shows that the respondents agreed that customer satisfaction has increased profitability, customer loyalty, advertise the establishment, patronage of guests, revenue, long term business and make hotels better than competitors with the mean 4.7, 4.8, 4.8, 4.7, 4.2 and 4.0 respectively. While respondents disagreed that customer satisfaction will only position high in the market, will require more cost on the management and will lead to employment of additional labour costs had 1.8, 1.5 and 1.2 means respectively. This indicated that the respondents perceived the impacts of customer satisfaction as positive rather than negative considering the clustered mean of 3.7 (from the decision rule any mean response of 3.0 and above should be regarded as a positive impacts).

Research Question 6: What are the roles of maintenance culture in the sustainability of the hotels in Umuahia?**Table 6: Impact of maintenance to the sustainability of hotels**

S/N	Perception of impacts	Total score	Mean	Decision
1.	Increased in the durability of hotel building	1648	4.5	Agreed
2.	Increased effective functioning of hotel facilities	1735	4.8	Agreed
3.	Reduces damages and replacement cost	1735	4.8	Agreed
4.	Increase efficiency and speed of service	1472	4.6	Agreed

	delivery by sales			
5.	Reduces risks in the hotel	1754	4.8	Agreed
6.	Increases level of safety and security in the hotel	1538	4.2	Agreed
7.	Causes frequent breakdown of facilities	434	1.2	Disagreed
8.	Increase the general quality of hotels in Umuahia	1553	4.3	Agreed
9.	Increase the condition and appearance of hotel	1628	3.8	Agreed
10.	Create a better working condition for staff	1750	4.9	Agreed
11.	Cause the hotel to be in a long term business	1402	3.8	Agreed
12.	Causes more cost than profit	596	1.7	Disagreed
	Total	17,449	46.2	
	Clustered mean		3.9	

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Table 6: above showed that the respondents agreed that maintenance would increase durability of building, effective functioning of hotel facilities, reduces damages and replacement costs, increase efficiency and speed of delivery, increase safety and security, reduces risks, increase general quality of hotel, create better working condition, increase condition and appearance of hotel and causes hotel to be in long term business had 4.5, 4.8, 4.8, 4.6, 4.8, 4.3, 3.8, 4.5 and 3.8 means respectively. While respondent disagreed that maintenance has increased cost than profit and causes frequent breakdown of facilities had 1.7 and 1.2 means perceived the impacts of maintenance as positive rather than negative considering the clustered mean 3.9 (from the decision rule any mean response of 3.0 and above should be regarded as a positive impacts).

Research Question 6: What are the ways of improving the customer satisfaction and maintenance in the hotels in Umuahia?

Table 7: How would hotels in Umuahia increase their service quality?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Training staff	213	40.3
Providing highly effective customer touch point make maintenance part of the company	105	19.9
Implement strong maintenance strategies	98	18.6
	112	21.2

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Table 7 showed that 40.3% of the respondents stated that training staff could increase the service quality of hotels in Umuahia, 19.9% stated that providing highly effective customer touch point could increase the quality of service in Umuahia hotels, 19.6% of the respondent stated that making maintenance part of the company strategy could help increase the quality of hotels and 21.2% of the respondent stated that implementing strong maintenance strategies could increase the quality of hotels in Umuahia.

Major Findings

Citing from the simple frequency analysis the maintenance level of hotels in Umuahia North and South LGAs is low, therefore affecting the level at which customers are satisfied in these hotels and the ability of the hotels to be sustained from the hypothesis testing it reveals that there is a significant difference between the variable of customer satisfaction and maintenance culture to the sustainability of hospitality establishments in Umuahia North and South LGAs, meaning this

research work can if applied aid rising maintenance level, customer satisfaction level and increase the sustainability of the hotel. The findings of the research showed that there would be sustainability in hotel establishments in the study area if the negative impacts of sustainability is strongly minimized.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 showed that 24.7% of the respondents stated that high service quality made them stay in a particular hotel in Umuahia, 33.3% of the respondents stated that exceeding customer expectations made them stay in some top hotels such as Dramgrate in Umuahia, 18.1% of the respondents stated that effective customer touch point is the variable that made them stay in some smaller hotels in Umuahia , 23.9% of the respondents stated that high customer value made them choose to stay in certain hotels this is in relation with the work of Atasié (2010) which stated that high quality is the reason for guest selection of hotels. The study also showed that 23.9% of the respondents stated that the service providers in Umuahia hotels solve their problems extremely well, 27.8% stated that their problems were solved quit well, 26% stated that service providers answered that their questions moderately well, 13.6% stated that their questions were answered slightly well and 9.7% stated that there questions or problems was not at all well answered. The finding also showed that 13.9% of the respondents rate the quality services in Umuahia hotels extremely high, 16.7% rate the quality of services in Umuahia hotels quite high, 33.3% rate the quality of services in Umuahia hotels moderately high, while 25% of the respondents rate that quality of services slightly high and 11.1% rate the quality of services in Umuahia hotel as not at all high.

Table 2 shows that 26.2% of the respondents stated that high quality service is one of the variables of customers satisfaction applied in Umuahia hotels, 40.6% of the respondents stated that meeting customer expectations is a variable of customer satisfaction applied in Umuahia hotels, 12.3% of the respondents stated that speed to service delivery is a variable of customer satisfaction applied in Umuahia hotel, while 9.2% of the respondents said high customer value is a variable of customer satisfaction applied in Umuahia hotel and 11.7% agreed that effective customer touch point is a variable of customer satisfaction applied in hotels in Umuahia. This justifies the work of Atasié (2010) which states that meeting customer satisfaction is the major factors of guest loyalty. The finding showed that 12.5% of the respondents stated that Umuahia hotels are extremely convenient to use, 18.1% of the respondent stated that Umuahia hotels are very convenient to the use, 28% stated that the Umuahia hotels are moderately convenient to use, while 27.5% stated that Umuahia hotels are slightly convenient to use and 13.9% of the respondent state that Umuahia hotels are not convenient to use at all. It also revealed that 14.2% of the respondent stated that Umuahia hotels understand guests needs extremely well, 23.6% of the respondent stated that Umuahia hotels understand guests needs quite well, 27.2% stated that Umuahia hotels understands guests need moderately well, while 31.7% of the respondents stated that Umuahia hotels understands guests need slightly well and 3.3% of the respondents stated that Umuahia hotels do not understand guests needs at all.

Table 3 showed that 8.3% of the hotels in Umuahia practices preventive maintenance culture, 26.9% of the hotels practices repair maintenance method, 3.3% of the respondents practices routine maintenances, 4.8% of the hotels in Umuahia practices renovative maintenance, 17.5% of the hotels practices breakdown maintenance method, 26.1% of the hotels in Umuahia practice emergency maintenance method, while 9.3% of the hotels practice scheduled maintenance method and 3.8% of the hotels in Umuahia practice corrective maintenance culture. In line with Akuwudike (2008) research work which states that poor maintenance strategies are the number one killers of hotel sustainability.

Table 4 showed that 22.8% of the respondent stated that maintenance activities are carried out on daily basis in Umuahia hotels, 17.5% stated that maintenance culture are carried out on weekly basis in Umuahia hotels, 34.2% stated that maintenance culture are carried out on monthly basis, while 25.5% stated that maintenance are carried out on yearly basis in Umuahia hotels. This relates to the work of Akuwudike (2008) which states that facility maintenance frequency is the reason for survival. It also showed that 19.4% of the respondents stated that the level of maintenance in Umuahia hotels is extremely high, 20.8% of the respondent stated that the level of maintenance in Umuahia hotels is quite high, 30.6% of the respondents stated maintenance level in Umuahia hotel to be slightly high, while 23.6% stated it to be moderately high and 5.6% of the respondent stated that the level of maintenance activities in Umuahia hotels is not all high.

Table 5 shows that the respondents agreed that customer satisfaction has increased profitability, customer loyalty, advertise the establishment, patronage of guests, revenue, long term business and make hotels better than competitors with the mean 4.7, 4.8, 4.8, 4.7, 4.2 and 4.0 respectively. This agrees with the work of Atasie (2010), which stated that customer satisfaction is the only reason a customer will repeat visit to a hotels. While respondents disagreed that customer satisfaction will only position high in the market, will require more cost on the management and will lead to employment of additional labour cost had 1.8, 1.5 and 1.2 means respectively. This indicate that the respondents perceived the impacts of customer satisfaction as positive rather than negative considering the clustered mean of 3.7 (from the decision rule any mean response of 3.0 and above should be regarded as a positive impacts).

Table 6: showed that the respondents agreed that maintenance will increase durability of building, effective functioning of hotel facilities, reduces damages and replacement costs, increase efficiency and speed of delivery, increase safety and security, reduces risks, increase general quality of hotel, create better working condition, increase condition and appearance of hotel and causes hotel to be in long term business had 4.5, 4.8, 4.8, 4.6, 4.8, 4.3, 3.8, 4.5 and 3.8 means respectively. As in line with the work of Onyema (2006) if only Nigerians will imbibe good maintenance culture the whole sections in Nigerian will be sustained. While respondent disagreed that maintenance has increased cost than profit and causes frequent breakdown of facilities had 1.7 and 1.2 means perceived the impacts of maintenance as positive rather than negative considering the clustered mean 3.9 (from the decision rule any mean response of 3.0 and above should be regarded as a positive impacts). Table 7 showed that 40.3% of the respondents stated that training staff could increase the service quality of hotels in Umuahia, corresponds to the research of James (2011) saying a well trained staff is the company's asset. 19.9% stated that providing highly effective customer touch point cloud increase the quality of service in Umuahia hotels, 19.6% of the respondent stated that making maintenance part of the company strategy clouded help increase the quality of hotels and 21.2% of the respondent stated that implementing strong maintenance strategies cloud increase the quality of hotels in Umuahia. It also showed that 24.4% of the respondent stated that immediate attendance to guest query and complains are the recommended area for improvement in some hotels, 33.9% of the respondent stated that areas if security, hygiene and safety need improvement, 23.7% of the respondent stated that effective facilities functioning should be looked into, according to Akuwudike (2008) effectively maintained facility is a highly profitable one and 18.0% of the respondents stated that room services and catering should be improved.

Conclusion

In order for Umuahia hospitality establishment to be sustained the negative impacts of customer satisfaction and maintenance culture needs to be minimized. Hotel management needs to make maintenance activities part of their strategic plan and ensure it is implemented at the operational

level. This will address effective and efficient marketing efforts, which will help to enhance the competitive position of hospitality establishments within Abia State and help put the country on the global hospitality map.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the findings of the research work.

1. Abia is a state rich in commercial activities and tourist attractions. Better hotels that will attract guest should be maintained as alternative sources of revenue so as to boost the state's economy.
2. Hotel management should create awareness programmes on the impacts of hotel sustainability. This will help the employees to understand and preserve the service culture of the hotel and make them more able to meet and exceed guests needs and wants.
3. Policies and practices that ensure the sustainability of hotels such routine maintenance and exceeding customer expectations should be developed at an early stage of the hotels growth path so as to avert the negative impacts leading to non-sustainability.

The most common approaches to satisfy customers, is by collecting customer's feedback through customer's feedback survey and customer experience programs and thus taking action rapid and effective actions to increase customer satisfaction for the next visit of a customer. There should also be better management of customer complaints and initiatives should be introduced to reduce the number of customers' complaints in relation to increases in customer satisfaction.

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