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Correlation depiction on how service quality effects customer patronage of eatery centers and hotels in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Due to increased national development objectives and the search for new market opportunities, the hospitality industry is becoming more and more globalized. In order to succeed, industry participants must develop a strong identity and promote a reputable brand. Merely attracting new consumers is insufficient to maintain profitability; instead, significant efforts must be made to retain current clients by putting in place efficient customer satisfaction procedures. In order to sustain profitability, it is inadequate to merely attract new clientele; rather, substantial efforts must be directed towards the retention of existing customers through the implementation of effective customer satisfaction policies. This research concentrated on the service quality and customer patronage within dining establishments and hospitality services in Aba, Abia State, utilizing Terminus Hotels and Crunchies Fried Chicken as primary case studies. The investigation was conducted to ascertain the degree to which service quality can positively influence customer purchasing behavior and patronage. The study employed a framework that included four distinct research goals, as well as related research questions and hypotheses. To make data collecting easier, a survey methodology was used, employing a carefully designed questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, mean values, and standard deviations, were used to analyze the collected data. Additionally, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21, the hypotheses were assessed using correlation coefficients. The results showed that responsiveness has a big impact on customer loyalty and that dependability greatly adds to consumer pleasure and patronage. According to the study, in order to be competitive in the hospitality sector, businesses must continuously maintain their responsiveness and dependability, among other SERVQUAL attributes.

Keywords: Hospitality Industry, Customer Satisfaction, Patronage, Service Quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The satisfaction of customer wants is the core purpose of marketing. Because consumer preferences are constantly changing, marketers must adjust their strategies to be in line with what consumers expect. In the event that a customer is not satisfied for any reason, they may decide to stop giving their business. This phenomenon underscores the necessity for dining establishments and hospitality firms to perpetually uphold or enhance their standards of service and quality. The domains of service quality and sustainable development are garnering augmented attention within the marketing frameworks and strategies employed by numerous service providers.

Because of their crucial role in guaranteeing an organization's survival and success in the marketplace, the relationship between service quality and customer happiness has been a focus of research for both marketing academics and practitioners. It is commonly believed that gaining a competitive advantage requires careful evaluation of service quality, which differs from physical items in a few key ways (Markovic et al., 2004). On a global scale, an escalating propensity for dining outside the home is evident, driven by increased disposable incomes, shifts in consumption patterns, alterations in household structures, and the temporal constraints imposed by dual-income families (Nwokah and Kenneth-Adiele, 2018).

Consumers serve as pivotal evaluators, playing crucial roles in the assessment of service quality. Service providers are under a lot of pressure to improve the quality of their offerings in order to meet customer expectations due to the growing competition in the dining and hospitality industries as well as consumers' increased awareness of their rights. The extent to which a service meets or exceeds the expectations of the client is a measure of service quality. The caliber of service quality is a determinant of customer loyalty and engagement (Caruana, 2002). When consumers receive services that meet or surpass their expectations, they are likely to develop a favorable perception of the organization, and conversely, when expectations are not met, negative perceptions may ensue.

Contemporary consumers are not solely concerned with services that fulfill their expectations; they are also increasingly cognizant of the social and environmental ramifications of these services on society. In the majority of service industries, service quality is evaluated utilizing the SERVQUAL model conceptualized by (Parasuraman et al., 1985). They articulated service quality as a function of the discrepancies between consumer expectations and actual performance across ten critical dimensions. In subsequent research, Parasuraman et al., (1985) refined the definition of service quality, delineating it through five dimensions:

Tangibility (referring to physical facilities, equipment, and personnel appearance), Reliability (the capability to deliver the promised service dependably, accurately, and consistently), Assurance (encompassing the knowledge and courtesy of staff and their capacity to engender trust and confidence, which includes competence, courtesy, credibility, and security), Responsiveness (the eagerness to provide prompt service), and Empathy (the delivery of considerate and personalized attention to customers, which encompasses accessibility, effective communication, and comprehension of customer needs). It is this framework (particularly the components of Reliability and Responsiveness) that Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken utilize to evaluate their performance among their clientele.

Thus, hospitality enterprises such as Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken ought to devote significant attention to aspects of customer patronage, encompassing customer retention and satisfaction, which commences with the provision of superior service (Mohsan et al., 2011). This factor is crucial since a company's level of service quality has a direct impact on the level of consumer patronage, which is shown in customer satisfaction and retention. Customer patronage refers to the frequency with which consumers purchase a specific product and engage with a particular organization, thereby fostering repeat purchases of that product (Choi et al., 2004).

A focus on service quality can distinguish an organization from its competitors and facilitate the attainment of a sustainable competitive advantage owing to the resultant increase in patronage (Boshoff and Gray, 2014). Elevated service quality will enhance customer patronage, provide a firm with a competitive advantage in market share, and subsequently generate profit (Hossan, 2012). Content and satisfied customers tend to exhibit positive behaviors. This contentment and satisfaction stem from high service quality, which defines as the capacity of knowledgeable, competent, and enthusiastic employees to deliver products and services to both internal and external customers in a manner that meets both recognized and unrecognized needs.

Statement of the Problem

Curuana, (2002) articulates that the intensifying competition within the eatery and hotel sector, coupled with an increasing customer awareness of their rights, has exerted pressure on service providers to enhance the quality of their offerings to fulfill customer expectations. The degree of service quality in a business is a determinant of customer patronage levels. When customers receive services that meet or surpass their expectations, they are likely to develop a favorable perception of the firm, and conversely, the opposite holds true. Posit that quality serves as a metric for the alignment of the services provided with customer expectations.

The capacity to draw in customers with excellent cuisine and service, while also satisfying and fostering their loyalty, is crucial for business success in the highly competitive restaurant and hotel sectors. In Aba, Abia State, the hotel and fast-food industries are expanding, with new competitors joining the market every day. Consumers often evaluate and contrast the extensive service packages offered by different hotels and restaurants in this cutthroat industry. Changes in patronage may result from this tendency. The problem occurs when Terminus Hotels Limited and Crunchies Fried Chicken encounter a decrease in business and must, therefore, determine the factors behind this drop.

For these businesses, determining the elements and characteristics influencing consumer patronage at the moment has grown to be a major task. This problem is made worse by the fact that customer preferences are always changing and can be impacted at different times by elements like assurance, tangibility, responsiveness, empathy, and dependability. It is therefore the motivation of this study to examine the applicability of Reliability and Responsiveness dimensions of 'SERVQUAL' by Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken to attract consumer patronage and find out why they are losing their customers to competitors.

Objectives of the Study

The major objective of the study is to determine the influence of service quality on customer patronage of hotels and eatery centres with particular reference to Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken, based on two (Reliability and Responsiveness) out of the five dimensions of the 'SERVQUAL' model. Specifically, the objectives are to:

Determine the influence of "Reliability" component of service quality on consumer retention of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken

Establish the relationship between "Reliability" component of service quality on customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Ascertain how "Responsiveness" component of the service quality influences customer retention of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Determine the influence of "Responsiveness" component of service quality on customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

To what extent does "Reliability" component of service quality influence customer retention of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken?

What is the relationship between "Reliability" component of service quality and customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken?

How does "Responsiveness" component of the service quality influence the customer retention of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken?

To what extent does "Responsiveness" component of service quality influence customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken?

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses guided the study:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between "Reliability" component of service quality and customer retention of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between 'Reliability' component of Service quality and satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Ho3: 'Responsiveness' component of Service quality has no influence on customer retention of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Ho4: There is no relationship between 'Responsiveness' component of service quality and customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken'.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Research has shown that there is an increased demand for restaurants and lodging on a global basis as people look to satisfy their need to eat outside of their homes. This phenomenon is attributable to elevated income levels, modifications in consumption behaviors, alterations in household structures, and the temporal constraints imposed by households with dual-income earners (Ryu et al., 2012). For a significant proportion of consumers, the pursuit of a memorable dining experience appears to be exceedingly salient. It has been posited that these individuals actively seek high-quality cuisine and exemplary services in order to attain an indelible experience within gastronomic venues (Ryu et al., 2012).

The construct of service quality has been defined in various manners. According to Irfan and Ijaz, (2011), service quality can be conceptualized as the outcome of a comparative analysis between the customer's anticipations regarding the service and their actual perceptions of the services rendered or the manner in which such services are delivered. Consequently, this implies that an accurate definition of service quality necessitates consideration of the customer's viewpoint. Parasuraman et al., (1985) delineated the notion of perceived service quality as the comprehensive assessment made by customers regarding a product or service, predicated upon its superiority or excellence, as well as the evaluation of performance by customers, which can subsequently exert either a positive or negative influence on their future behaviors.

Within the hospitality sector, the provision of quality service is a fundamental aspect of strategic differentiation, and this phenomenon is intrinsically linked to the evolution of consumer behavior and the intensification of competition among tourism enterprises (Aaker and Jacobson, 1994). Clarified the idea of quality as a metric for determining how well a service meets the expectations of the client. Delivering this quality consistently means continuously meeting the expectations of the client, which promotes a satisfying experience. According to Parasuraman et al., (1985) SERVQUAL model, service quality is inherently linked to the degree of customer satisfaction with the service they receive.

This degree should be assessed via the prism of performance perception. Customer satisfaction as a function of assurance, tangibles, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy Assurance refers to the knowledge and civility displayed by staff members as well as their ability to inspire confidence and trust in stakeholders. Responsiveness necessitates the provision of prompt service to customers, a willingness to assist customers, and the preparedness to address customer inquiries and requests. These attributes serve to enhance customer satisfaction and ultimately encourage repeat patronage (Ajomiwe, 2013). Reliability reflects the service provider's capability to deliver services in a consistent and precise manner. It encompasses the principle of performing tasks correctly on the initial attempt and constitutes a critical component of customer service (Messay, 2012).

In a hospitality enterprise, the reliability of hotels can be leveraged to attain customer satisfaction by ensuring services are delivered as promised, maintaining dependability in addressing customer service issues, and executing services accurately on the first occasion. Tangibility, in this context, ensures the efficiency of physical facilities, equipment, and the presentation of personnel; these factors significantly contribute to the assurance of customer satisfaction. Empathy: This makes for caring and provision of individualized attention to customers including access or approachability and ease of contact, effective communication and understanding the customer. It recognizes the feelings and emotions of customers and are better able to meet their needs.

Customer Satisfaction and Customer Patronage

The level of service quality in hotel business determines the level of customer patronage. Caruana, (2002) opines that if customers are offered services that they expect or that exceeds their expectation, they will have a positive view about the firm and vice versa. Customers will become devoted if they are satisfied, but their high patronage is not certain if they are not. According to Adiele and Grend, (2016), patronage occurs when a person makes a conscious effort to choose a solution for his or her needs by analyzing

situations that would be rewarding and relatively satisfying despite some challenges encountered in the course of fulfilling his or her desires.

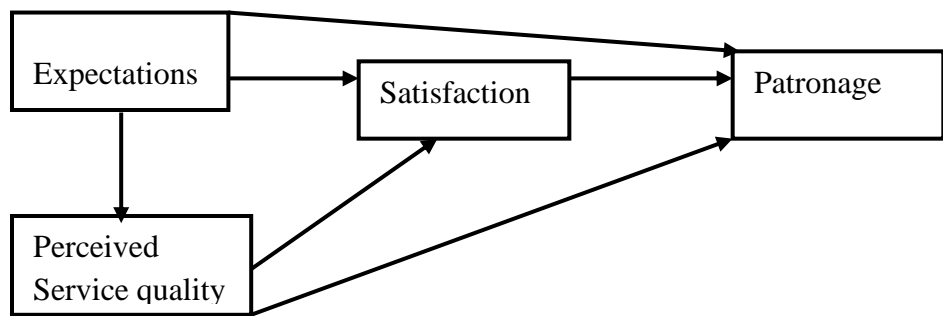


Figure 1 Conceptual framework
Source – Desk Research (2024)

From the foregoing, the conceptual framework of analysis for the study was thus- the figure 1 shows that relationship between Reliability and Responsiveness as service quality concepts and how they enhance customer patronage, which is evident in customer retention and customer satisfaction.

Theoretical Review

Studies are usually linked to existing theories in the field of study. Several theories abound that can back up the relationship between service quality and consumer patronage. The research anchored on the service quality (SERQUAL) model of (Parasuraman et al., 1985). The Service Quality (SERQUAL) model. The first service quality model was presented by Parasuraman et al., (1985), who claimed that the five components of the functional quality dimension—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—could be used to quantify service quality. Five gaps between service expectations and actual service delivery are described by this model, which identifies the service organization's service quality gaps. For the study, the researcher focuses on responsiveness and reliability out of these five aspects of service quality.

SERVPERF (Service Performance) Model

Cronin and Taylor, (2012) developed a different model and called performance model to measure the service quality. They claimed SERVPERF (Service Performance) is more suitable and accurate than SERVQUAL. They also claimed that SERVPERF needs fewer items than SERVQUAL to measure service quality. Disconfirmation theory Oliver, (1993) Dis-confirmation theory is a theory that analyzes the relationship between customer patronage, satisfaction and the level of service quality the customer receives from the organization. Here, there is confirmation and positive feeling by customers when they are given quality services through Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and empathy by the organization. Also, there is dis-confirmation when the customers are dissatisfied.

Empirical Review

In this segment, the investigator articulated several historical findings pertinent to the research inquiry. Conducted an analysis on the impact of environmental determinants—namely economic, social, and cultural factors—on the assessment of service quality and customer satisfaction within restaurant environments situated in Port Harcourt city, employing a framework of partial metric invariance. The investigation relied on a cohort of 400 participants. Latent mean comparisons indicated that, irrespective of their expectations, respondents from Port Harcourt expressed diminished perceptions of quality and satisfaction ratings when performance levels were high, and conversely.

Consequently, consumers in Port Harcourt exhibit a more conservative stance in their evaluations of superior service while demonstrating a lesser degree of criticism (i.e., being more forgiving) towards subpar service. Ajomiwe, (2013), in an examination involving 350 participants in Umuahia, Abia State, determined that operations within the tourism sector were largely contingent upon a significant interaction between service quality and sustainability. This study used methods that collected primary data from surveys

of people involved in the tourism industry. Descriptive analysis and basic linear regression methods were both included in the analytical strategy that was used. The results showed that, with regard to sustainable development, public opinions of tourism services, as measured by metrics like assurance, tangibles, and dependability, were notably negative.

Research Gap

A considerable number of investigations have been conducted concerning service quality and its ancillary domains. Prior study has mostly focused on how much service quality has been used to achieve customer happiness, frequently citing non-tourism firms. Notably, a number of studies conducted in Nigeria have concentrated on different states and cities, ignoring Abia State and establishments like Crunchies Fried Chicken and Terminus Hotels Ltd. Furthermore, crucial factors like responsiveness and reliability that are used to gauge the quality of services have not received enough attention. The purpose of this study is to identify these shortcomings and address them.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design serves as the foundational framework of the study. It includes the justification and methodology for the research question; this study used a descriptive survey design, which made it easier to gather information from respondents via questionnaires and interviews, as well as the characteristics that help the researcher understand how service quality and customer loyalty interact. All patrons of Terminus Hotels Ltd. and Crunchies Fried Chicken in Aba, Abia State, make up the study's population. However, this population is still unknown. Therefore, using Ololube's approach, a sample was chosen to represent the larger population.

The sample size constitutes the aggregate number of elements actively studied from the entire population. The proportional method for determining sample size was employed, utilizing the following formula:

$$n = \frac{Pq(1.96)^2}{e^2}$$

Source

Note: A question was asked to a pilot group of ten (10) respondents and they answered thus:

Question: Has service quality any influence on your patronage of Terminus Hotels Ltd and

Crunchies Fried Chicken? Yes No.

Answer: Eight (8) of the respondents responded 'yes' and that is the 'p' value while two (2) responded 'No' and that is the 'q' value.

Where n	=	Desired sample size	
p	=	Percentage of positive respondents -	8 or 80%
q	=	Percentage of negative respondents -	2 or 20%
e	=	tolerable error	= 0.052
n	=	$\frac{(0.8 \times 0.2) (1.96)^2}{(0.05)^2}$	= 246

This sample of 246 was divided into two so that each of the firms has 123 customers contacted in the study. The respondents for this study are students of various institutions, civil servants, businessmen and artisans. The researcher used the non-probability sampling method in selecting the respondents. The purposive sampling technique was used as it gives the researcher freedom to choose the respondents based on accessibility and maturity. In this study, the researcher used both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data was gathered through the use of questionnaire from the customers of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

The secondary data was collected for the use of relevant materials like textbooks, journals, articles, seminar papers, periodicals, library research etc. The data collection instrument used for the study was a structured rating scale questionnaire developed by the researcher (Appendix). The questionnaire was designed in Linkert format of SA, S, D, SD and U. The face and content validity of the instrument was established through the assessment of experts in the field of marketing research. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a test, re-test exercise was carried out and there was up to 95% consistency in the responses.

In addition, Cronbach Alpha test of reliability was carried out and a reliability score of 0.85 was got. This is higher than the minimum acceptable benchmark for reliability given by of 0.70. For this study, both descriptive and inferential statistics method were applied. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, mean and standard deviation while the inferential

statistics of correlation coefficient were used to test the hypotheses at 5% degree level of significance. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 21 was used in the calculations of the study.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

Results and Findings

This section of the study presents analysis and findings of the research based on data collected from the field of study.

Data presentation

Reliability is a major component of service quality expectations from customers that can enhance customer retention, 238 (96.7%) of the respondents agreed that when the firms promise to do a thing at a given time, that they do it (Table 1). Also 238 (96.7%) agreed that Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken performs the service right at the first time. Also, 243 (98.9%) agreed that the firms insists on customer satisfaction while 233 (94.5%) agreed that the firms have good and understandable employees

Table 1 Influence of Reliability on Customer retention of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken

Statement	SD	D	A	SA	U	Mean	Std
The firms usually do what they promised to do for me and when they promised to	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(70) 28.6%	(168) 68.1%	(8) 3.3%	4.69	0.51
The firms usually perform the service right for me at the first time.	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(65) 26.4%	(173) 70.3%	(8) 3.3%	4.7	0.54
I feel the firms insist on customer satisfaction	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(70) 28.6%	(173) 70.3%	(3) 1.1%	4.69	0.48
I noticed that firms have good and understandable employees	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(65) 26.4%	(168) 68.1%	(13) 5.5%	4.6	0.59

Table 2 Reliability and Customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Statement	SD	D	A	SA	U	Mean	Std
I noticed that the firms are reliable and I feel at home there.	(11) 4.4%	(0) 0.0%	(111) 45.1%	(38) 15.4%	(86) 35.2%	2.61	0.799
The hotels keep to their promise to me and this adds to my satisfaction.	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(57) 23.1%	(178) 72.5%	(11) 4.4%	4.68	0.56
The firms ensure my security and that of my property.	(11) 4.4%	(6) 2.2%	(140) 57.1%	(57) 23.1%	(32) 13.2%	2.5	0.86
The firms even adjusts to give me personalized services.	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(186) 75.8%	(57) 23.1%	(3) 1.1%	4.74	0.46

The relationship of Reliability and Customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken. From the table 2, it could be seen that a greater number of the respondents (149) representing 60.5% affirmed that the hotels are reliable and it makes them feel at home. Also, 235 representing 95.6% of the respondents are of the opinion that the hotels keep to their promise and this adds to their satisfaction. On the same vein, 197 (80.2%) affirmed that the hotels ensure their security and that of their property, while a whopping 243 (98.9%) are of the opinion that the hotels adjust to give them personalized services.

Table 3 presents statistics on how respondents related to various elements of Responsiveness components of service quality. 235 (95.6%) of the total respondents agreed that employee normally tell customers exactly when services will be performed. 197 (80.3%) of the respondents agreed that employees give prompt service to customers. In the same vein, 172 (70.3%) also agreed that employees are never too busy to respond to customers requests. Finally, 242 (98.9%) affirmed that employees quickly informs customers of critical announcements.

Table 3 Responsiveness and Customer Retention of Terminus and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Statement	SD	D	A	SA	U	Mean	Std
Employees of the firms tells me exactly when services will be performed	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(57) 23.1%	(178) 72.5%	(11) 4.4%	4.68	0.56
Employees of the firms give prompt services to me.	(11) 4.4%	(38) 15.4%	(111) 45.1%	(86) 35.2%	(0) 0.0%	2.61	0.799
Employees of the firms are never too busy to respond to my requests.	(11) 4.4%	(6) 2.2%	(32) 13.2%	(140) 57.1%	(57) 23.1%	2.5	0.86
Employees of the firms quickly makes me aware of announcements	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(57) 23.1%	(186) 75.8%	(3) 1.1%	4.74	0.46

Table 4 Influence of Responsiveness on customer's satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken

Statement	SD	D	A	SA	U	Mean	Std
The firms gives me individual attention.	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(89) 36.3%	(151) 61.5%	(6) 2.2%	4.59	0.53
The firms have my interest at heart	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(92) 37.4%	(154) 62.6%	(0) 0.0%	4.62	0.48
The firms have effective communication with me	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(87) 35.2%	(159) 64.8%	(0) 0.0%	4.64	0.48
The firms have good administrative relationship with me.	(0) 0.0%	(0) 0.0%	(84) 34.1%	(159) 64.8%	(3) 1.1%	4.63	0.50

The table 4 presents descriptive analysis of respondent's reaction to Responsiveness component of service quality of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken. Majority of the respondents 240 (97.8%) agrees that the firms give their customers individual attention. All the respondents 246 (100%) agreed the firms have their customer's interest at heart. Also, all the respondents 246 (100%) accepted the firms have effective communication with their customers and finally 243 (98.1%) affirms that the firms have good administrative relationship with their customers.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between 'Reliability' component of service quality and customer retention of Terminus Hotels and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Table 5 Reliability Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	Std. Error of the estimated
	.749a	.561	.556	.29301

Predictors: (constant) Reliability

The Reliability Model Summary shows that there was a positive relationship between reliability and customer patronage (retention) with beta value of 0.557 and the P value 0.000 which is less than 0.05 (Tables 5 & 6). The results show that reliability influences customer retention and patronage (Coefficient Table 6).

Table 6 Reliability Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
	B	Std error	Beta	-	-
(Constant) 1	2.038	.196	-	10.416	.000

Reliability	.557	.052	.749	10.669	.000
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Ho3: There is no significant relationship between the 'Responsiveness' component of service quality and customer retention of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Table 7 Responsiveness Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	Std. Error of the estimated
1	.593a	.352	.345	.35610

Predictors: (constant) Responsiveness

The result shows a relationship between the firm's Responsiveness and customer retention with beta value of .586 and P value of 0.000 (Tables 7 & 8), (Coefficient Table 8).

Table 8 Responsiveness Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sign
	B	Std error	Beta	-	-
(Constant)	1.330	.400	-	3.321	.001
Assurance	.586	.084	.593	6.951	.000

Dependent Variable: Responsiveness

Ho4: There is no significant relationship between 'Responsiveness' component of service quality and customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

Table 9 Responsiveness Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	Std. Error of the estimated
1	-	.544a	.288	.37105

Predictors: (constant) Responsiveness

Positive significant relationship between the firm's Responsiveness and customer satisfaction was revealed with a beta of 2.92 and a p value of 0.000 (Tables 9 & 10), (coefficient Table 10).

Table 10 Responsiveness Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sign
	B	Std error	Beta	-	-
(Constant)	3.041	.177	-	17.148	.000
Empathy	.292	.048	.544	6.122	.000

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the analysis of Research questions one and hypothesis one, it was revealed that reliability enhances customer retention and satisfaction (patronage) of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken. This is in tandem with the views of that organizational reliability promotes high level of customer satisfaction. Analysis of research question two and hypothesis two exposed a significant impact of Reliability on customer satisfaction (patronage) of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken. This is also in line with that when an organization is reliable, and extends effectiveness to their customers, it leads to customer loyalty for the business.

Hypothesis three revealed that Responsiveness enhances customer retention. The result shows a positive significant relationship between the firm's Responsiveness and customer retention with beta value of .586 and P value of 0.001

Hypothesis four revealed significant relationship between Responsiveness and customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken. Messay, (2012) observed that high level of Responsiveness for customers encourages customer patronage.

Summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations

The study set out to investigate the influence of service quality on patronage of firms, using Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken, both domiciled in Aba, Abia State as reference points. After reviewing literature and analyzing data collected from fields of study, it was found that:

Reliability enhances customer retention.

Reliability enhances customer satisfaction.

Responsiveness influences customer retention, and

Responsiveness component enhances customer satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION

The study examined service quality and customer patronage of firms with reference to Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken. It tries to identify the extent service quality encourages patronage of firms. The objectives of the study includes; to determine the influence of "Reliability" component of service quality on consumer retention, establish the relationship between "Reliability" component of service quality on customer satisfaction, ascertain how "Responsiveness" component of the service quality influences customer retention, and determine the influence of "Responsiveness" component of service quality on customer satisfaction of Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken.

The chapter two is grouped into four subheadings; conceptual framework, theoretical framework, empirical review and summary of literature review. Data were collected through the use of structured questionnaire from the Terminus Hotels Ltd and Crunchies Fried Chicken. Data collected were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and correlation analysis. The result revealed that reliability enhances customer retention, reliability enhances customer satisfaction, responsiveness influences customer retention, and responsiveness component enhances customer satisfaction. We conclude that service quality has a significant influence on customer patronage.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations were made.

The hospitality firms should ensure they are reliable to their customers to enable them survive in the intense competitive industry. These could be achieved through a backup service in case of breakdowns.

The firms should innovate ways of being responsive to their customers to avoid service breakdowns – customer training and re-training can be relevant in this.

Hospitality firms should see Responsiveness component of service quality as a focal point of customer patronage and repeat purchase. A special section could be created to handle Responsiveness related issues.

Informed consent

Written & Oral informed consent was obtained from individual participants included in the study.

Conflicts of interests

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interests.

Ethical approval

The ethical guidelines for Human Subjects are followed in the study.

Funding

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Data and materials availability

All data associated with this study are present in the paper.

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