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Service Processes and Guest Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

The study examined Service Processes and Guest Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The objectives were to find out the relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State; find out the relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Satisfaction in Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State; also, find out the relationship between Intermittent Operations and Guest Satisfaction in Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Population of 220 employees from 8 Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State were used. A sample size of 100 employees were selected using Taro Yamane Formula. The study adopted Quasi Experimental research design. Face and content validity were employed to assess the relevance of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha Statistics was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics. Null Hypotheses were statistically tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings showed that Line Operations enhanced Guest Loyalty, ($r = 0.851$, $p < 0.05$). Line Operations positively influenced Referral, ($r = 0.872$, $p < 0.05$). Job Shop Operations significantly impacted on Guest Loyalty ($r = 0.825$, $p < 0.05$). Job Shop Operations have strong correlation with Referral ($r = 0.881$, $p < 0.05$). Intermittent Operations have significant relationship with Guest Loyalty, ($r = 0.772$, $p < 0.05$). Intermittent Operations related significantly with Referral, ($r = 0.727$, $p < 0.05$). Hence, it was concluded that the Service Processes have strong influence on Guests' Satisfaction, in the Hotel Industry. We therefore, recommended that Management should constantly improve on Service Delivery Processes to increase Guest Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Keywords: Service Process, Guest Satisfaction, Hotel Industry, Restaurants, Hotel Operations, Guest Loyalty, Referrals.

Introduction

Guests are the livelihood of any business; their continued patronage could be the sources of revenues, profits and sustainability of an organizational business, (Gan, 2006). Marketing Guests' Patronage in a competitive business environment could be a function of Guest Satisfaction. Consequently, Guest Satisfaction might become important area of interest for both business managers and researchers, (Ibojo 2013). The growing status of Guest Satisfaction could be derived from the premise that Satisfied Guest would spread positive word- of-mouth to other Consumers about the goodness of the Hotel Industry. This in turn could lead to the growth of the business in particular and the economy in general.

Hotel enterprises exist because they have Guests to serve and so Guest Satisfaction would be potentially an effective tool that Hotels could use in gaining strategic advantage and survive in today's ever-increasing competitive environment, (Ro-King, 2015). Guest Satisfaction in its essence, entails Guest's perception of the value expected and the value actually delivered. In a case where both of them match, guests could be said to be satisfied with the business, (Rohit, 2015).

Guest satisfaction has become important aspect of the Hotel Industry; which, through Guest Satisfaction and effective retention of Guests. According to Jana and Chandra (2016), Guests' Loyalty is basically dependent on the quality of services received from the Hotel. Guest Satisfaction might be associated with business philosophy which tends to creation of values for Guests in anticipation for managing their expectations, ability and responsibilities involved in satisfying their needs, Gronoos, and Parasuranman, (2007). Guest Satisfaction could be a strategic asset for the organization and a starting point for defining business objectives, (Zethaml, and Bitner 2012).

Enterprises which understand and Satisfy Guests' needs would make greater profits than those who fail to understand and Satisfy Guests. The key to achieving sustainable advantage of Guests' needs could rely on delivering high quality service which would result in satisfying Guests, (Shemwell 2014; Ollor, and Adiele, 2022). Oliver, (2017); Ollor, and Onoyo, (2022), have opined that Guest Satisfaction could be achieved with combined assessments of Service Innovations. These would point out the relevance of identifying the various antecedents and influence guests' experience which could be improved upon. It has been proven also that there would be need to always aim at affecting both expectations and experience of guests when seeking to attain their satisfaction.

Service Process could be the manner in which company operate before Guests receive service. According to Morgan, (2011), Service Process might involve determining procedures which could contribute to the process of tasks allocation, responsibilities, formulating routine schedules, defining service mechanisms and process flows. This might suggest that Service could also be another determinant of Guest Satisfaction.

Statement of the Problem

Guest Satisfaction could be the most fundamental component of any business operation especially in the Hotel Industry. The changing nature of today's global environment and the intense competition in the Hotel Industry demands Quality Service, accommodation quality, food quality and good pricing coupled with motivated and committed employees on duty, (Nwachukwu, 2006). Service Process and operations coincides with Guest Satisfaction, creativity and initiative, a sense of pride in one's work, and the desire to put the achievement of organizational goals ahead of personal goals; thereby, enhancing the organizational performance. However, poor service and products have proven to have direct effect on the overall financial stability of Hotel Industry leading to discontentment and increase in Guest complaints, (Makenze, 2014).

Lack of knowledge of what Guests want would also lead to wrong services and unsatisfied Guests. Hotel product offerings which might be considered good service procedure such as: Line Operations, Job Shop Operations and Intermittent Operations might be bound to fail in the long run. Considering the above statement, we might be tempted to ask: "Is there a link between Line Operations, Job Shop Operations and Intermittent Operations, the chosen Hotel and the food items purchased?" This Study will examine the relationship between Service Processes and Guest Satisfaction in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Conceptual Model of the Study Variables

The major Variables of this Study were Service Processes (Independent Variables) and Guest Satisfaction (Dependent Variables).

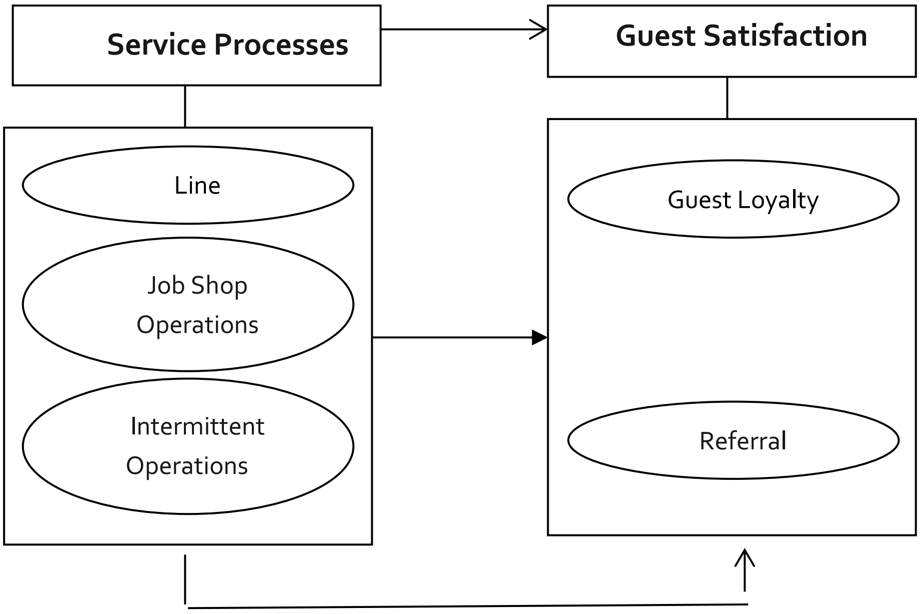

***Figure** 1: Conceptual framework of Service Processes and Guest Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State*
***Source:** Modified from Taylor, (2010). Impact of Service Process on Organizational Performance*

Purpose of the Study
The Purpose of this Study is to find out the relationship between Service Processes and Guest Satisfaction in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The Specific Objectives are:

1. To determine the relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.
2. To ascertain the relationship between job shop operations and Guest satisfaction in Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.
3. To ascertain the relationship between intermittent operations and Guest satisfaction in Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions
The following Research Questions were proposed to aid the study.

1. What is the relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?
2. Does Line Operations affect Referral in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?
3. How does Job Shop Operations influence Guest Loyalty in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?
4. What is the relationship between Job Shop Operations and Referral in the Hotels Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?
5. How does Intermittent Operations influence Guest Loyalty in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?
6. What is the relationship between Intermittent Operations and Referral in the Hotels Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Ho_2: There is no relationship between Line Operations and Referral in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Ho_3: There is no relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Ho_4: There is no relationship between Job Shop Operations and Referral in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Ho_5: There is no relationship between Intermittent Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Ho_6: There is no relationship between Intermittent Operations and Referral in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

This research is built on the following theories:

1. The Side-Bet Theory

Side Bet Theory, is the relationship between Customers and the Organizations bounded behaviours on contracts and economic gains. According to Cropanzano and Greenberg, (2007), Customers are committed to the organization because they have hidden Vested Investments or Side-Bets. These Side-Bets are valued by the individuals because of the accrual of certain costs that render disengagement difficult. The authors argued that over a period of time certain costs accrued could make it more difficult for the individuals to disengage from consistent pattern of activities which could maintain membership in the organizations. Accordingly, threats of losing investments, along with perceived lack of alternatives to replace or make up for their losses could commit customers to the organizations, (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 2007).

Several elements could exist in order for commitment to be achieved through "Side Bet". One of such elements might be the individual was aware that "Side Bet" was made. Another could be that the choices that were made regarding a particular decision have effect on other potential decisions. The "Side Bet" philosophy states that: An investment could be made today with the expectation that the benefits would be achieved at some future point, (Mayer and Herscovitch, 2001).

2. Reciprocity Theory

According to Reciprocity Theory, Customers have specific desires and expectations. When an organization seeks to meet and exceed these desires and expectations through reciprocity, then the likelihood of improving commitment is enhanced. The premise behind reciprocity is that a customer will help the organization because the organization helped them. Under the norm of reciprocity, customer with strong perceptions of organizational support would therefore feel obligated to repay the organization in terms of organizational commitment (Mowday, 2008).

Brum (2007) argues that customer may view some human resource outcomes as a "gift". Training is one of such practices which employees may view as a "gift". The result of this "gift" is that employees exert more effort, become more productive, and have a greater sense of debt to the organization. The "gift" also has the potential to make employees feel like "insiders" into the organization. An "insider" is likely to be more committed and devoted to the organization. On the idea of "gifts" an "insider" parallels closely to the concept of reciprocity, (Brum, 2007).

Concept of Service Process

Service Process as defined by Ollor and Onyemachi, (2022) could lead to Guest Satisfaction, Referrals and Repeat Purchase. The way in which service is rendered to customers is so important that a systematic process would give a company advantage over its competitors. According to Chase, (2008) Service Process refers to how Service could be provided or delivered to Customers. Processes involve the Procedures, Tasks, Schedules, Mechanisms, Activities and Routines by which service are delivered to the Customer. Service Process helps marketers ensure that Customers understand the Process of acquiring a Service and the acceptable Delivery Times. Creating and Managing Effective Service Processes are essential tasks for Service Firms. The most remarkable thing about Service Processes is that they do not take place without the Customer, (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000).

Ollor and Efemene, (2019) perceived that Quality of Service is the result of an evaluation process in which Customers compared their perceptions of Service Process with the expected outcomes. Kumra, (2008) is of the view that the concept of Service Process should generally be approached from the customer's point of view because it might have different values, different grounds of assessment, and different circumstances. Rohit, H. (2015) have said that Service Process could be procedure of rendering Service to Customers through the Service Encounter. Kumra, (2008) opined that Service Process might not only be involved in the final product and service; but, could also be in the production and delivery process, thus, employee involvement in process redesign and commitment is important to produce the final product or Services.

Service Processes require the participation of the customer: Without the customer, Service Processes cannot take place. The fact that the service provider is dependent on customer participation causes difficulties in managing service processes efficiently and effectively because Customers' contributions can only be influenced by the provider up to a certain extent. Services are means of delivering value to customers by facilitating the outcomes customers want to achieve without the ownership of specific costs and risks, (Mengen and Krimm,2015). Services facilitate outcomes by enhancing the performance of associated tasks and reduce the effect of constraints.

Most services operational systems are organized based on two stages. The first stage is labeled the "front-stage", while the second stage is labeled the "back-stage" (Yasin and Yavas, 2001). The front-stage includes all operational tasks and activities, which the customer directly interact with. An example of such tasks and activities is the process of checking-in a guest in a hotel. The back-stage, on the other hand, includes all operational tasks and activities, which take place without direct interaction with the customers. An example of such tasks and activities is the room cleaning service in a hotel.

Rohit, (2015) defined Service Process as Internal Service operations behind-the-scenes routines, procedures, and activities that provide the necessary support to the company's more visible functions. Zeithaml and Bitner, (2000) view Service Process as the way in which a company works so that a customer receives service.

Customers of Service organization obtain benefits and satisfactions from the services themselves and from how those Services are Delivered, (Palmer and Cole, 2005).

Dimensions of Service Process

Line operations

According to Morrison, (2012), in a line operation there is an arranged sequence of operations undertaken and Service produced following this sequence. In manufacturing, an assembly line for

domestic appliances typifies this type of process and in services, a self-service restaurant could typify this process.
According to Gronroos, (2007) Line operations progress in a linear fashion, thus, the client passes through a sequential experience beginning at point A, when they first enter the store or contact the business. Service Delivery, on the other hand, passes through a number of processes before the final transaction. Although this is perhaps the simplest of the Service Processes to understand, it has several drawbacks. If one element in the linear operation is flawed, customers might judge the service negatively.
Morgan, (2011) observed that Line Operations is not a Service Process that allows for much flexibility to make controlling easier; but suits standard offerings and implements repetitive processes with little variations. This type of Service Process could be very easy; as it is standardized. Every customer has similar customer experience because, Service Process does not vary.

Job Shop Operations

Mayer, (2011) sees Job Shop Operation as a Service Process that could produces variety of Services using different combinations and sequencing activities. The services could be tailored to meet varying customer needs to provide modified service. Restaurants and professional services could be used as examples. While flexibility is the key advantage of this type of system, it might be difficult to schedule and as such, more difficult to substitute capital for labor and so might be difficult to calculate the capacity of the system.
Shedrack, (2010) deduced that this type of service model provides Guest Satisfaction by tailoring the service to the client's needs. Each clients' need will vary to some degree, and the Service Process must vary accordingly too. Being able to offer flexibility makes this model attractive, but it can complicate scheduling.
According to Charles, (2005) information is the most critical aspect of a Job Shop Operations. Information is needed to quote a price, bid on a job, route an order through the shop, and specify the exact work to be done. Information begins with quoting, then a job sheet and blueprint prepared before releasing the job. Once on the production floor, employees complete job sheets and time cards for labor cost calculations and update records for quoting future jobs when variances are present.

Intermittent Operations

According to Rohit, (2015) intermittent operations refer to service projects which could be one off. Examples might be the construction of new service facilities, designing of advertising campaign, or installation of a large computer. Some service projects are unique, for example, construction projects could fall under this category and might be on a relatively large scale. They will involve bringing together several elements to be able to work harmoniously. In this away, planning would be the key. managers would evaluate each project independently to determine which process flows would contribute to the final result desired for the customers' satisfaction.

Concept of Guest Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction may be defined the extent to which a firm fulfils a customer's needs and desires in relation to his expectations, prior to receiving the products or service (McCarthy and Perrault, 2002). Thus, customer expectation is the difference between the expectations of the customers before receiving the services and perceptions of the customers after receiving the services. Customer satisfaction mainly depends on the build-up of the perceived value to which the customers have concerning a product or service (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004; 2009). So, customers' satisfaction can reflect a person's feeling of pleasure.

Guest Satisfaction could be defined as the extent to which a firm fulfils guests' needs and desires in relation to their expectations, McDougall, and Leveque, (2000). Thus, Guest expectation could be the difference between the expectations of the customers before receiving the services and perceptions of the Guests after receiving the services. Guest Satisfaction mainly depends on the build-up of the perceived value to which the Guests have concerning a product or service, (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004; 2009). According to Liu, and Yen, (2010), Guest Satisfaction could get more benefits than their costs.

Fourner and Glenmick, (2011) concluded that the concept of satisfaction holds well only when the expectation is positive. Expectations from the customer's point of view could be the reference points on which a customer forms judgment about service or a product. Guest Satisfaction starts with the first contact organization has with a customer and continues throughout the entire lifetime of the relationship. In comparison with other traditional performance measures, Guest Satisfaction is probably less sensitive to seasonal fluctuations, changes in costs, or changes in accounting practices (Reicheld, 2016). So, for a hotel to carry on in business, it must ensure the satisfaction of needs and wants of the Guests are maintained continuously, which would eventually lead to Strong Guest Base.

The Hotel Industry is a customer bound service and for Hotel Industries to market themselves as brands it is very important to be customer centric, making sure that customers get values for what they pay for, (Ollor and Jumbo, 2018). The Hospitality Managers to ensure that customers are continuously satisfied, welcomed, and efficiently served in a clean, safe and secured environment with the best quality of products sold at a reasonable price, (Jones and Newton, 2007).

Qualities of service and Guest Satisfaction are critical factors for success of any business, (Gronoos and Parasuraman, 2008). Gan, (2006). enumerated the strategies that can be used to improve Guest Satisfaction as listening ears, that is, proper customer compliant handling procedures or techniques; pricing, which could be, adequate and reasonable pricing policies; provision of adequate security and proper satisfaction management; quality service with prompt delivery by courteous staff training and retraining to improve service quality for guests so as to achieve Guest Satisfaction and loyalty, (Jones, 2007).

As Valdani, (2009) points out an enterprise subsist only because they have customers to serve, thus making it clear that an organization exists only because of its customers. The key to attain sustainable benefit could lie in delivering high quality service which eventually would lead to satisfied customers, (Shemwell, 2017).

According to Kotler, (2001) Guest Satisfaction philosophy acknowledges supremacy of the guest.

Measures of Guest Satisfaction

Guest Loyalty

The role of Guest Loyalty cannot be quantified in keeping business thriving. The success of every business is the ability to consistently follow up the patronising decision in a way that has a positive effect on the guest, Petasis and Opoku-Mensah, 2009).

Effective follow-up begins instantaneously after the service rendered, when the industry calls to recognize and appreciate the guest for patronizing them by saying thank you and find out what or how they feel about the product or service. Guest loyalty can also be seen as a new form of directing organizational resources and employees to a structure that can reliably, dependably and consistently satisfy the guests, (Simon, (2002); Tumi, (2005). According to Varki and Colgate, (2001), Guest Loyalty begins by letting the guests know about the industry values. Expressed this in form of memo, newssheet, bulletin, newsletter mailed to their current guests, and in form of phone calls. It's important for the hotel industry to inform the respective guests on the excellent services provided and made available for the guests. Sending gifts can also be excellent follow-up tools for building Guest Loyalty, (Ollor, and Efemene, 2019). Hotel Industry can also build guest loyalty by sending guests birthday messages, anniversary cards, holiday cards, and seasonal cards in order to promote an excellent follow-up tool, (Ndubuisi, 2005).

Referral

Referral is a powerful persuasive force, particularly in the diffusion of information about new product, (Dean and Lang, 2008). According to Bowen, and Chan, (2001) Referral could be used to describe positive information between groups such as the product provider, independent experts, family and friends and actual or potential consumer. Philipp, Bernd & Christophe, (2011), stated that Customer Referral programs are a form of stimulated Word-Of-Mouth which provides incentives to existing customers to bring in new customers.

Katz and Lazarsfeld, (2015) found referrals effective than newspaper and magazine advertising, four times more effective than personal selling and twice as effective as radio advertising in influencing consumers to switch brands. Word of mouth is especially important for service providers whose offerings are largely intangible and experience or credence based on, (Taghizadeh, Taghipourian & Khazaei, 2013). Oliver, (2013) opined that consumer take performance outcomes of a service and used the information to shape their own subsequent expectations as well as expectations of others through word of mouth.

All business organizational ultimate goals are to make sales and sizeable profit. They achieve these goals by traditional promotional mix of communication of ideas, and products with their targeted customers. However, satisfied customers themselves have also come in terms with the idea of making reference of good and acceptable products with their colleagues, family and loved ones.

Empirical Review

Service Process and Guest Satisfaction

According to Kotler (2005), growth of business in most service industries could be built on reputation for providing Guest Satisfaction through good standard, attention, and care. These could be associated with exercising fiduciary responsibilities. Maintaining good standard for customer service should be fundamental for marketing as well as development and launching of new products or services.

Line Operations and Guest Satisfaction

Brum, (2007) conducted a study on Line Operations and Guest Satisfaction in Hotel Industry in Lagos State. Four objectives were adopted. The instrument for the study was Questionnaire, titled "Service Reliability and Guest Satisfaction, (SRGS)" for data collection. The findings revealed that standard service operations facilitated guests' decision making and satisfaction. Based on the result of finding, it was recommended that Hotel Industries should render standard services in order to win the minds of their potential Guests.

Taghizadeh, Taghipourian, & Khazaei, (2013) carried out research on the impact of Line Operations on Guest satisfaction among Hotel Industry in Nairobi. Population of 400 respondents was used for the study. Taro Yamane Formula was used to select 358 respondents using stratified sampling technique. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire which were issued to each respondent. All the 358 Questionnaire issued to the respondents were returned, resulting to a 100% response rate. The result of analysis indicated that Line Operation Service Process has significant relationship with guest satisfaction.

Turni, (2005) conducted a study on Line Operations and Guest Satisfaction in Kenya. Five objectives and corresponding hypotheses were adopted. The research design was survey design. Population of 300 respondents were used and 100 were selected using purposive random sampling technique. Simple percentages and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyze the data. The instrument for the study was Questionnaire. The study used descriptive design and it was found that a strong positive relationship exists between Line Operations Process and Guest Satisfaction.

JOB SHOP OPERATIONS AND GUEST SATISFACTION

Mowday, (2008) investigated Job Shop Operations and Guest Satisfaction of the hotel sector in Bangladesh. A total of one hundred native and international tourists were selected for this study. The self-employed form survey was used to gather information from the respondents. Data has been analysed by using SPSS version 22. The relationship between the variables were studied by applying Pearson Correlation analysis. Results indicate that a significant relationship exist between service responsiveness and guest satisfaction. Results conjointly revealed that Job Shop Operations results in satisfying Guest and Guest Satisfaction results in loyalty. It was recommended that hotel managers should offer better services to their Guest for gaining competitive advantage, and it will facilitate them to guide the market with efficiency.

Johns, (2009) researched on Job Shop Operations Process and Guest Satisfaction in restaurant industry in Pakistan. Respondents were chosen from different demographics using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire technique was used to collect the data and about 152 questionnaires were distributed among people and all were selected for research analysis. Findings indicate that there is a highly significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Satisfaction in restaurant industry.

Intermittent Operations and Guest Satisfaction

Charles, (2005) empirically researched on the effect of Intermittent Operations on Guest Satisfaction. The survey was intended to examine how well the hotel employees emotionally handle hotel Guests' incidents or inquiries related to any discomforts through personalized attention. The data were collected from 330 hotel Guests who had actually complained about service failures while staying at the hotel during the record-breaking summer in terms of number of visitors. An active empathetic listening (AEL) tool has been taken to measure the hotel Guest's cognitive views and behavioural intentions, as well as emotional empathy measures under the empathic concern and emotional contagion. The results revealed that Intermittent Operations strongly influenced the service experiences of hotel Guests.

Gronroos, (2009) conducted a study on Intermittent Operations and Guest Satisfaction among Hotel Industries in Pakistan. Population was consisted of customers of diverse hotels located at diverse cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The study used two hundred and sixty (260) respondents as population. A sample size of 200 respondents was selected using simple random sampling technique.

Questionnaire was formulated as instrument for data collection. Simple percentages and spearman rank order were used as statistical tools for data analysis. This research study reveals that there exists significant positive relationship between Intermittent Operations and Guest Satisfaction.

Research Design

Research design is the blue print that enables the investigator to come up with solutions to problems and guides in the various stages of the research, (Nachmias, 2009). Burns and Grove, (2003) defined research design as a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of findings. The quasi-experimental design was used in this study because it involves human beings which really occurred in a laboratory. However, this research design waw adopted because the study elements were not under the researchers' control.

Population of the Study

According to Okafor (2003), research population is a complex set of items of interest to researchers. Eboh, (2009) defined population as the items in any field of study. That is, population is any group that the researchers focused attention on and chosen as the approved subject of study. The target population for this study consisted of all the guests in the eight (8) Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Sample Size Determination and Sampling Procedure

Taro Yamane's Formula was used in determining the sample size mathematically as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size sought

N = Population (220)

e = Level of significance (5% = 0.05)

$$:.\ n = \frac{220}{1 + 220(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{220}{1 + 220(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{220}{1 + 1.2025}$$

$$n = \frac{220}{2.2025}$$

n = 99.88

n ≈ 100

Data Collection Method

Both primary and secondary sources were utilized in this study.

Instrument Design

Questionnaire was the major instrument for data collection. In designing the Questionnaire, researchers took cognizance of the research questions and Hypotheses. The Questionnaire were

structured into two sections (section A and B). Section A was classification section containing demographic data of respondents such as sex, age, and marital status. Section B consisted of questions relating to the subject matter of study.
The Questionnaire were structured on a five (5) point Likert Scale with weights assigned as follows:

Strongly Agree	(SA)	5
Agree	(A)	4
Undecided	(U)	3
Disagree	(D)	2
Strongly Disagree	(SD)	1

Validity of the Instrument
Anyanwu, (2006)) defined validity as the appropriateness of an instrument in measuring what it's intended to measure. Four types of validity were identified: Content Validity, Predictive Validity, Concurrent Validity, and Construct Validity. Content validity was further divided into Face Validity and Sampling Validity. Copies of the Questionnaire were given to few Lecturers in the Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism. Observations and suggestions were used to modify and improve the survey instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument
Reliability is the consistency or precision of the measure, (Baridam, 2001). It is the extent to which a measuring instrument is consistent in measuring whatever it measures. A measure is said to be reliable if it is consistently reproducing the same result. To ensure reliability, the researchers adopted Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient to obtain the reliability index of this study. The copies of the questionnaire were administered to five Hotels who were not included in the original sample used for the study. The following variables were covered in the reliability test of this study. They include: Line Operations, Job Shop Operations, Intermittent Operations, Guest Loyalty and Referral.

Data Analysis Technique
Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used in testing the Hypotheses with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. The Formula for Pearson Correlation Coefficient is as shown below:

$$r = \frac{N\Sigma XY - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{\left[N\Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2\right]\left[N\Sigma y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2\right]}$$

Analysis of Questionnaire
Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Retrieved and usable	56	70
Not Retrieved/Retrieved but not Usable	44	30
Total	100	100

Source: *Field Survey Data, 2021*

From the Table 1 above, one hundred (100) copies of Questionnaire were distributed to Top Management Staff of the selected Hotels in Uyo. Out of the hundred (100) copies of the Questionnaire, fifty-six (56), corresponding to 70% were completely filled, retrieved and useful, and were used for the analysis; while, forty-four (44) copies, corresponding to 30% were among those that were not retrieved or retrieved data but invalid for the analysis.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Details	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	40	71.4
Female	16	28.6
Total	56	100

Source: *Field Survey Data, 2021*

Table 2 above, shows that forty (40) of the respondents representing 71.4% were male; while, sixteen (16) respondents representing 28.6% were female. This indicates that more males served as our respondents than females.

Table 3: Respondents' Age

Details	No. of Respondents	Percentage
18-25 years	2	3.6
26-35 years	15	26.8
36-45 years	20	35.7
46- 55 years	10	17.9
56 and above	9	16.1
Total	56	100

Source: *Field Survey Data, 2021*

The Table 3 above, indicates that 2 (3.6%) represents Staff within the age brackets of 18-25; while, 9 (16.1%) represents Staff within the age range of 56 and above years. Also, Staff within the age bracket of 46-55 years (17.9%) were the third lowest number of respondents whereas 15 (26.8%) represents Staff that fall within the age bracket of 26–35 years. Finally, it is obvious that management Staff within the age bracket of 36-45 were the highest responses with a number of 20 (35.7%).

Table 4: Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE/O Level	1	1.8
NCE/OND	5	8.9
HND/BSC	15	26.8
MSC/Ph.D	28	50
Others	7	12.5
Total	56	100

Source: Field Survey Data, 2021

The Table 4 above, shows that out of the fifty-six (56) useful Questionnaire, 1 respondent corresponding to 1.8% belong to the educational category of SSCE. 5 which is equivalent to 8.9% belongs NCE/OND. 7 which is equivalent to 12.5% belongs to other qualification; while, 15 respondents representing 26.8% are those with HND/B.Sc qualification. 28 respondents representing 50% of the total respondents belongs to M.Sc /Ph.D qualifications.

Univariate Analysis of Line Operations

Table 5: Frequencies on Item of Line Operations Responses

S/N	Items	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Total	Mean	Remark
1	I patronize this Hotel because they arrange their operations sequentially	20 35.7% 100	25 44.6% 100	5 8.9% 15	2 3.5% 4	4 7.1% 4	56 100% 223	4.0	Agree
2	I patronize this Hotel for their Service Delivery Processes	19 33.9% 95	23 41.1% 92	6 10.7% 18	2 3.6% 4	6 10.7% 6	56 100% 215	3.8	Agree
3	I patronize this Hotel because their services follow repetitive processes without much differences	22 39.3% 110	18 32.1% 72	7 12.5% 21	6 10.7% 12	3 5.3% 3	56 100% 232	4.1	Agree
4	This Hotel win the minds of guest due to standardized Service Process	24 42.9% 120	17 30% 68	4 7.1% 12	5 9% 10	6 10.1% 6	56 100% 216	3.9	Agree
	Total	85	83	22	15	19	224	3.9	Agree
		425	332	66	30	19	863		

Source: *Field Survey, 2021*

Table 5 above, shows that the respondents agreed on each of the four items of Line Operations, that is, Mean Scores were greater than 3. Grand Mean of 3.9 >3.0 on five-point Likert Scale is considered appropriate as the Grand Mean is equally greater than 3. Indicating that Line Operations in the Hotel Industry were significant and appreciable.

Table 6: Frequencies on Item of Job Shop Operations Responses

S/N	Items	**SA (5)**	**A (4)**	**N (3)**	**SD (2)**	**D (1)**	**Total**	**Mean**	**Remark**
5	Modified service provision in this Hotel motivates guests to visit the hotel	18 32% 90	22 39% 88	5 9% 15	5 9% 10	6 11% 6	56 100% 203	4.0	Agree
6	This Hotel provide professional service to their guests	25 45% 125	20 36% 80	3 5.4% 15	5 9% 10	3 5.4% 6	56 100% 236	4.2	Agree

7	This type of service model provides Guest Satisfaction by tailoring the service to the client's needs.	28 50% 140	15 27% 60	4 7.1% 12	4 7.1% 8	5 9% 5	56 100% 225	4.0	Agree
8	I patronize this firm because of flexibility and attractive Service Process	29 52% 145	16 28.6% 64	3 5.4% 15	6 10.7% 12	2 3.6% 2	56 100% 238	4.25	Agree
	Total	100	73	15	20	16	224	4.0	Agree
		500	292	57	40	16	908		

Source: *Field Survey, 2021*

Table 6 above, shows that the respondents agreed on each of the four items of personal attitude; that is, Mean Scores greater than 3. The Grand Mean were equally greater than 3; indicating that Job Shop Operations have positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Table 7: Frequencies on Item of Intermittent Operations Responses

S/N	Items	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Total	Mean	Remark
13	New service facilities entice me to visit this Hotel	16 28.6% 80	24 42.9% 96	10 17.9% 30	2 3.6% 4	4 7.1% 4	56 100% 214	3.8	Agree
14	The design of an advertising campaign in this Hotel is appealing	23 41.1% 115	20 35.7% 80	5 8.9% 15	3 5.4% 6	5 8.9% 5	56 100% 221	3.9	Agree
15	The branding initiatives of this Hotel give guests wonderful experience	22 39.3% 110	18 32.1% 72	7 12.5% 21	6 10.7% 12	3 5.3% 3	56 100% 232	4.1	Agree
16	I like patronizing this Hotel because each operation is completed before the next operation is started.	21 37.5% 105	17 30.4% 68	5 8.9% 15	7 12.5% 14	6 10.7% 6	56 100% 208	3.7	Agree
	Total	82	79	27	18	18	224	3.8	Agree

Source: *Field Survey, 2021*

Table 7 above, shows that the respondents agreed on each of the four items of Intermittent Operations, that is, Mean Scores greater than 3. The Grand Mean is equally greater than 3; showing that Intermittent Operations have positive correlation with Guest Satisfaction.

Univariate Analysis of Guest Satisfaction

Table 8: Frequencies on Item of Guest Loyalty Responses

S/N	Items	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Total	Mean	Remark
17	I am satisfied with the services in this hotel	20 35.7% 100	24 42.9% 96	6 10.7% 18	2 3.6% 4	4 7.1% 4	56 100% 222	4.0	Agree
18	I will revisit this hotel on several occasions	18 32.1% 90	22 39.3% 88	4 7.1% 12	5 8.9% 10	7 12.5% 7	56 100% 207	3.7	Agree
19	I hold positive attitude about this hotel	22 39.3% 110	18 32.1% 72	7 12.5% 21	6 10.7% 12	3 5.3% 3	56 100% 232	4.1	Agree
20	I will likely not to switch to other competing hotels	21 37.5% 105	17 30.4% 68	5 8.9% 15	7 12.5% 14	6 10.7% 6	56 100% 208	3.7	Agree
	Total	81	81	22	20	20	224	3.8	Agree
		405	324	66	40	20	855		

Source: *Field Survey, 2021*

Table 8 above, shows that the respondents agreed on each of the four items of Guest Loyalty, that is, Mean Scores greater than 3. The Grand Mean were equally greater than 3; indicating that Guests Loyalty have positive and strong relationship with Guest Satisfaction.

Table 9: Frequencies on Item of Referrals Responses

S/N	Items	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Total	Mean	Remark
21	I am willing to spread positive word of mouth about this Hotel	25 44.6% 125	22 39.3% 88	7 12.5% 21	1 1.8% 1	1 1.8% 1	56 100% 236	4.2	Agree
22	I will promote this Hotel to others	27 48.2% 135	19 33.9% 76	2 3.6% 6	2 3.6% 4	6 10.7% 6	56 100% 227	4.1	Agree
23	I shall talk to my neighbours about this Hotel	22 39.3% 110	18 32.1% 72	7 12.5% 21	6 10.7% 12	3 5.3% 3	56 100% 232	4.1	Agree
24	I will bring my wife to this Hotel on holidays	28 50% 140	15 26.8% 60	4 7.1% 12	4 7.1% 8	5 9.9% 5	56 100% 225	4.0	Agree
	Total	102	74	22	13	15	226	3.9	Agree
		510	296	66	25	15	887		

Source: *Field Survey, 2021*

Table 9 above, shows that the respondents agreed on each of the four items of Referrals. Mean Scores were greater than 3. The Grand Mean were equally greater than 3; indicating that Referrals have positive effect on Guest Satisfaction.

Analysis and Statistical Testing of Hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 10: Test for Hypothesis One (Ho_1)

Correlations

		Line Operations	Guest Loyalty
Line Operations	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.851**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Guest Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.751**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

** Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Table 10 above, reveals that the Correlation Value is 0.851 using a two-tailed test $p > 0.000$ at $p < 0.05$ level of significance, indicating a positive correlation, showing a strong significant relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty. Thus, the Null Hypothesis was rejected and Alternate Hypothesis accepted meaning that there is a significant relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty.

Ho_2: There is no relationship between Line Operations and Referral in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 11: Test for Hypothesis Two (Ho_2)

Correlations

		Line Operations	Referral
Line Operations	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.872**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Referral	Pearson Correlation	.872**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

** Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

The analysis in Table 11 above, shows that correlation value is 0.872 using a 2-tailed test; $p = 0.000$ at $p < 0.05$ level of significance indicating a positive correlation between Line Operations and Referral. Hence, the Null Hypothesis was rejected and Alternate Hypothesis accepted. Therefore, significant relationship exists between Line Operations and Referral.

Ho_3: There is no relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 12: Test for Hypothesis Three (Ho_3)
Correlations

		Job Shop Operations	Guest Loyalty
Job Shop Operations	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.825**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Guest Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.825**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

** Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

In Table 12 above, the correlation value is 0.825 using a 2-tailed test, $p = 0.000$ at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. Meaning there is positive correlation and showing strong and significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Loyalty. Hence, the Null Hypothesis was rejected and Alternate Hypothesis accepted. There is therefore, a significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Loyalty.

Ho_4: There is no relationship between Job Shop Operations and Referral in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 13: Test for Hypothesis four (Ho_4)
Correlations

		Job Shop Operations	Referral
Job Shop Operations	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.881**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Referral	Pearson Correlation	.881**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

** Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Table 13 above, reveals that the Correlation Value is 0.881; using a two-tailed test $p > 0.000$ at $p < 0.05$ level of significance, indicating a positive correlation, with strong significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Referral. Thus, the Null Hypothesis was rejected and Alternate Hypothesis accepted; meaning there is significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Referral.

Ho_5: There is no relationship between Intermittent Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 14: Test for Hypothesis five (Ho_5)
Correlations

		Intermittent Operations	Guest Loyalty
Intermittent Operations	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.772**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Guest Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.772**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

** Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

The analysis is Table 14 above, shows that Correlation Value is 0.772; using a 2-tailed test; $p = 0.000$ at $p < 0.05$ level of significance indicating a positive correlation between Intermittent Operations and Guest Loyalty. Hence, Null Hypothesis was rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. Therefore, significant relationship exists between Intermittent Operations and Guest Loyalty.

Ho_6: There is no relationship between Intermittent Operations and Referral in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 15: Test for Hypothesis six (Ho_6)

Correlations

		Intermittent Operations	Referral
Intermittent Operations	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.727**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	56	56
Referral	Pearson Correlation	.727**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	56	56

** Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

In Table 15 above, the Correlation Value is 0.727; using a 2-tailed test, $p = 0.000$ at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. Meaning that there is positive correlation with strong and significant relationship between Intermittent Operations and Referral. Hence, Null Hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. There is significant relationship between Intermittent Operations and Referral.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis One (Ho_1)

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty in Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The result of the analysis shows that rho = 0.851; while $p = 0.000$. By adopting the interpretation of strength of relationship; this indicates that $r < 0$, hence correlation is statistically significant and has a strong relationship. Thus, the Null Hypothesis is rejected and Alternate Hypothesis Accepted meaning that there is a significant relationship between Line Operations and Guest Loyalty. This present finding is in agreement with Barney, (2011) who supports that Line Operations has a positive relationship with Guest Loyalty.

Hypothesis Two (Ho_2)

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between Line Operations and Referral. The result of the finding shows that rho = 0.872, while p = 0.000, which indicates that r < 0. Therefore, correlation is statistically significant and has a strong relationship. In other words, there is a significant relationship between Line Operations and Referral. We reject the Null Hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between Line Operations and Referral. Supportively, Barney, (2011) have noted that Line Operations is a predictor of Customer Referral. This implies that majority of the respondents agreed that sequential arrangement of operations relate with Guest Referrals.

Hypothesis Three (Ho_3)

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Satisfaction. The result of the analysis shows that correlation value = 0.825; while p = 0.00. Adapting the interpretation of strength of relationship, this indicates that r < 0, Hence correlation is statistically, significant and has a strong relationship. There is a significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Satisfaction. We reject the Null Hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Guest Satisfaction and accept the alternate Hypothesis. This finding is consistent with Mayer, and Herscovitch, (2011) who observed that Job Shop Operations tailored services to meet varying customer needs and to provide a modified service to customers. Job Shop Operations is recognized as an indicator of Guest Satisfaction.

Hypothesis Four (Ho_4)

Ho_4: There is no significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Referrals. The result of the analysis shows that correlation value = 0.881; while p = 0.000. By adopting the interpretation of strength of relationship; this indicates that r < 0, hence correlation is statistically significant and has a strong relationship. Thus, the Null Hypothesis is rejected and alternate Hypothesis accepted. Which means that, there is a significant relationship between Job Shop Operations and Referrals. This present finding is in agreement with Shostack, (2014) who contended that Job Shop Operations correlated significantly with Referrals. This indicates that channelling the service directly to the Guests' needs in a flexible way enhances Guests' Referrals and Revisit Intentions.

Hypothesis Five (Ho_5)

Ho_5: There is no significant relationship between Intermittent Operations and Guest Satisfaction. The result of the finding shows that correlation value = 0.772, while p = 0.000, which indicates that r < 0. Therefore, correlation is statistically significant and has a strong relationship. In other words, we reject the Null Hypothesis (Ho_5) that states that there is no significant relationship between Intermittent Operations and Guest Satisfaction and accept the Alternate Hypothesis because there is a significant relationship between Intermittent Operations and Guest Satisfaction. Supportively, Charles, (2005) who noted that Intermittent Operations is very suitable for a large variety of outputs and Guest Satisfaction. This process is appropriate for all Service Organizations like a Hotel where the offering is made as per the Customer's demand and could follow different sequence.

Hypothesis Six (Ho_6)

Ho_6: There is a significant relationship between Intermittent Operations and Referral. The result of the analysis shows that correlation value = 0.727; while p = 0.00. Adapting the interpretation of strength of relationship, this indicates that r < 0. Hence, correlation is statistically significant and has a strong relationship. There is a significant relationship between Intermittent Operations and Referrals. Consequently, we reject the Null Hypothesis and accept the Alternative Hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between Intermittent Operations and Referral. The result is consistent with Valdani, (2012) who revealed that in Intermittent Operations, the production is split into a series of manufacturing stages or operations. Each operation is completed on each one of the single items being made, before the next operation is started. In this way a group of identical products of a batch could be made.

Conclusions

The Findings of this research revealed that Service Processes played significant roles in Guest Satisfaction in the Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The levels of Guest Satisfaction dependent on Line Operations, Job Shop Operations and Intermittent Operations. In the Hotel Industry, Organizational Goal could be achieved when conscious efforts are made by increasing Service Processes and Guest Satisfaction. Hence, it was concluded that the three dimensions of Service Processes, (Line Operations, Job Shop Operations and Intermittent Operations), which significantly and strongly correlated with Guests' Satisfaction, such as: Guest Loyalty and Referrals in the Hotel Industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Recommendations

1. Management should constantly improve on Service Delivery Processes to increase Guest Satisfaction.
2. Employees should respond promptly to Guests' demands to increase Guest Loyalty and Referral.
3. Management should understand that branding initiatives should be encouraged to give Guests a wonderful experience.
4. Management to employ Trained personnel who would attend to Customers promptly.

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