

Assessment of Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

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Abstract

The Study set out determine the relationship between Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The Purpose was to determine the relationship between Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The specific aims were to: assess Service Quality of Airlines and Satisfaction of Airline Passengers at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria; determine how the attitudes of Airline Employees influence Airline Passengers' choice of Airlines at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria; and assess the relationship between Service Quality and Attitudes of Airline Passengers at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive design in describing Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction. The research population covered Ten Airline Service Providers of the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. 150 respondents were drawn using simple random sampling technique. Face and content validity were employed to assess the relevance of the instrument; while Cronbach Alpha Statistics was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The dimensions of Service Quality and measures of Passengers' Satisfaction were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation; while the Hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22. The findings revealed that there was significant relationship between Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction ($r=0.932$ $p=.000$). Also, there was significant relationship between In-flight Service and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction ($r=0.872$; $p=.000$). Service Responsiveness had strong and positive correlation with Airline Passengers' Satisfaction ($r=0.881$; $p=.000$). Baggage Handling Service had positive relationship with Airline Passengers' Satisfaction. Check-in Service had positive correlation with Airline Passengers' Satisfaction. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Managers of Airlines should render reliable service in order to build organizational integrity and increase Airline Passengers' Satisfaction. Also, Airline industry should always place Quality Service as top priority because Airline Passengers are the essence of the business.

Keywords: Service, Quality, Service Quality, Airlines, Passengers, International Airport.

Introduction

The term 'Service Quality' could be defined as the ability to provide customers with efficient and thorough business services which could lead to better excellent performance. It could also be seen as the ability of firms to hang on to their customers; which might lead to customer retention, Kotler and Armstrong, (2006). Cronin, (2001) clarified the specification

and nature of the Service Quality and Satisfaction constructs and found empirical support for the conceptualization that Service Quality could be an antecedent of Satisfaction construct. Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction could therefore be the key to success and survival of any service organization, Adeola and Adebisi, (2014).

In this context, Service Quality offered to customers depend on Customers' perception of products offered in terms of failure or utility derived from the Service. To achieve Airline Passengers' Satisfaction, excellent Service Quality such as Check-in Services delivered by Airlines, are normally considered antecedents of Airline Passengers' Satisfaction, (Cronin and Hult, 2000). According to Haryono, Suyonohar, Achmad Fauzi and Suyudi, (2015), competition among Airlines might arise through Service Quality delivery. Service Quality include Responsiveness, Baggage Handling Service, Check-in Process. These factors promote Airline Passengers' Satisfaction which affect the growth and sustenance of the Airlines. According to Sureshchandar, Rajendran & Anantharaman, (2002), Airline Passengers' Satisfaction should be seen as multidimensional construct along dimensions that constitute Service Quality. In the point of view of Baker, (2013), despite strong Correlations between Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction, the two constructs are different and are expected of the International Airport in Port Harcourt in delivering consistently than the competitors.

Statement of the Problem

International Airport in Port Harcourt have been in the limelight in marketing and promoting Airline Industries in Nigeria; but despite the growth and tremendous progress in the industry, it is still facing low Service Standards such as Check-in time, and Baggage Handling. Brady and Cronin, (2001) have clarified the specifications such as the nature of Service Quality, Responsiveness and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction Constructs which could be Reliable. It was found that empirical support for Service Quality is an antecedent of the Satisfaction construct. These are questions if asked, would involve Airline Passengers' respond to a particular Service Quality such as: In-flight Service of one Airline as compared with another Airline Service at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. The question might be: Which Service Quality Yields Airline Passengers' Satisfaction? In answering these questions, the gap in literature will be filled. This Study will find out the relationship between Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

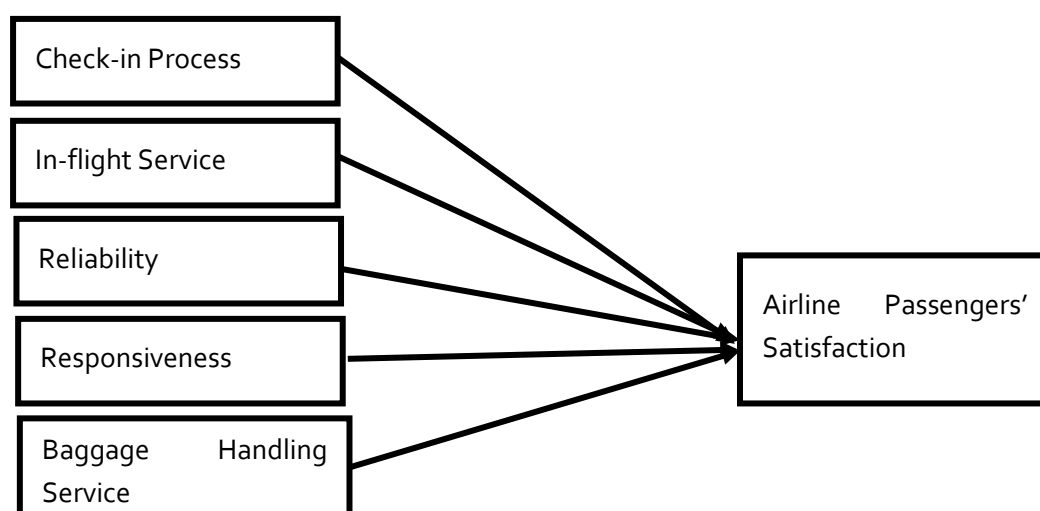


Figure 1: Researchers' Conceptual Framework

Source: Researchers' Conceptual Framework, 2022

Figure 1 above illustrates the Conceptual Framework for Service Quality and Airline Passengers Satisfaction at the International Airport, Port Harcourt. There are five Independent Variables, which are: Check-in Process, In-flight Services, Reliability, Responsiveness and Baggage Handling Services. The Dependent Variable is Passengers' Satisfaction. Our Purpose is to develop a Conceptual Framework that is specific to Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The Purpose of this Study is to assess the relationship between Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria with the specific aims of:

1. Assessment of Service Quality of Airlines and Satisfaction of Airline Passengers at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria
2. Determining how the attitudes of Airline Employees' influence Airline Passengers' choice of Airlines at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. Nigeria.
3. Assessment of the relationship between Service Quality and Attitudes of Airline Passengers at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Research Question

1. What is the relationship between Check-in Process and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?
2. How does In-Flight Services affect Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between Reliability and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airline in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?

4. Does Responsiveness affect Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airline in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?
5. How does Baggage Handling Services influence Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

- Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between Check-in Process and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
- Ho₂:** There is no significant Relationship between In-flight Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria
- Ho₃:** There is no significant Relationship between Reliability and Airline Passengers Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
- Ho₄:** There is no significant Relationship between Service Responsiveness and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
- Ho₅:** There is no significant relationship between Baggage Handling Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Airline Service Quality

Services in Airport are referring to facilities that provide convenience to Airline Passengers. Airline Passengers need to be physically present in the Airport to utilize the Service and emphasize in term of time. Fodness and Murray, (2007) found that the Airport experience demands significant time commitment and for many Passengers' times might be the ultimate scarce resource and the extent to which airport facilities frustrate use of time with significant influence on perception of the overall Quality of Service encounter. This study emphasized duration of Service; time needed for passenger to wait for delivery of service until the particular Service is finished to delivery time. The term for service here indicates processes required by time, such as Check-in, Customs, Immigration Process, and Customs Inspection. These are the Service attributes which contribute to Service factors. Airports need to keep service duration as short as possible that fulfill Passengers' demand that utilize their time in term of Quality Service.

In Airline Industry, there are many types of measurements on Service Quality, examples of subjective attributes could be: 'Overall Passengers Satisfaction,' 'Walking Distance/Time,' 'Terminal Comfort,' 'Punctuality,' 'Staff Appearance,' 'Staff Appearance,' etc. Objective attributes include 'Response Time to make Phone Calls,' 'Ticketing and Waiting Time,' 'Seat Congestion,' 'Car Park Congestion,' etc. The suggested subjective attributes could measure by video recording and/or directly observing. Lee and Kim, (2003), stated that flux of research concerning Airline Passenger service, have made it nearly impossible to review the affluent body of literature on the subject. Studies of the operations and Services provided by Airports are currently being carried out from highly diverse perspectives. Some authors analyze Passengers' expectations and experience, others study the Airport's operational

efficiency and productivity using a variety of methods of Airport performance assessment, yet others examine and evaluate the quality of Airport Services, (Fodneset *et al.* (2007). The created conceptual model of the Quality of Airport Service was empirically tested by interviewing nearly one thousand Passengers frequently using the Services of Airports, which enabled the authors to propose a set of recommendations for the measurement of airport service quality.

The Concept of Service Quality

Service Quality is perception of Airline Passengers toward a product or Service delivered by the Airport. Airline Passengers compare their expectation with the actual situation, when the Airport delivers product or service that reaches or exceeds Airline Passenger's expectation, Quality of Service will be high and Airline Passenger may prefer to repurchase the product or Service. The conceptualization of quality is more challenging for services industry than manufacturing business due to the intangible nature of services, (Palmer, 2011). According to Ghylis, (2008) Service Quality, as a business could offer service of high quality which could lead to Airline Passenger Satisfaction.

Landrum, Prybutok, Kappelman, and Zhang, (2008) maintain that the service quality is evaluated by computing the difference between two scores where the superior Service Quality results in a lesser gap. Douglas and Connor, (2003) observed that the Service Quality is not only evaluated as an outcome of Service experience but also on the manner provided during the service process and its eventual consequence on Passenger's perceptions.

Dimensions of Service Quality

Reliability

This dimension is shown to have the highest influence on the Passengers perception of Quality. It is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. The ideas of reliability came from the concept of flight performance. A flight is more reliable if it takes care of its timely schedule and guarantees no delays before the departure or after it (Sultan and Simpson, 2000). Flight safety is very important for customers, in its absence, very few are interested to take an experience of any flight (Mitic, Kapoulas, & Karapiperis, 2014); Leong, Hew, Lee, and Ooi, (2015) found that customers are more loyal in an airline if it promises to deliver you at your destination on time. Wang, Park, and Jung, (2011) provide the notion that if there is little reliability in an airline, customers can have the opportunity cost of quickly arriving at their destination and most probably spending a quality time with their loved ones.

Responsiveness

This reflects the service provider's willingness to help the passengers and to provide a service in a courteous and fast manner. It is the level of services provided and willingness to help customer promptly (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1990; Yong, 2000). It involves the willingness to provide prompt or favorable services and eager to support clients and offer brief assistance.

If a passenger in the airline does not like a certain meal served to him, that person should be offered an alternative meal (Leong *et al.*, 2015). A customer's perception and opinion about the airline company depend on how satisfied he has left after taking the experience of airline, so his complaints should be quickly catered for (Farooq *et al.*, 2017). Mitic *et al.* (2014) used a twitter model to analyze the customer reviews about different airlines where it was highlighted that customers want quick response on their query either through online check-in system or very helpful website. Chen *et al.* (2015), highlighted service innovation which can assist in quick response given to customers through self-check-in kiosk and social media communication.

Tangibility

These are the physical facilities and equipment available in the airport (Fadare and Adeniran, 2018). Tangible features are the physical features, which a customer can see. These would be the proofs, helping the customer to judge the quality of service. The tangibility in service sector is limited but plays the vital role in creating the image of service being provided (Sabri *et al.*, 2011). In case of airline industry, Wang *et al.* (2016) found that the dressing of waiters, the decorations in the flight cabins, the internal décor of the flight plays an important role in making customers satisfied at the first sight. Erdilet *al.* (2011) provide the notion that although airline has the service output which is completely intangible but it cannot be successful in having customer satisfaction without the tangibles in the airline.

Assurance

This is the ability of airport employees to convey trust and confidence in the passengers, such as; competence to perform the service, politeness, and respect for the passengers (Fadare and Adeniran, 2018). Expertise matters in every business, whether its airline or some other business. The training of employees is very crucial at each stage of customer purchase of airline service (Wang *et al.*, 2011). Sricharoenpramong, (2018) found that there is a good demand for skilled airport ground staff. Most of the airlines prefer good level of secondary education as well as minimum two years of experience in the airline industry for ground staff jobs at the airport. Farooq *et al.* (2018) emphasized the importance of personal services being delivered to customers in Malaysia airlines. Personal services are delivered better if employees are good in communication, active and can understand the needs of customers.

Empathy

This is the act by which the airport Staff provide individualized attention to airport customers (Fadare and Adeniran, 2018). The empathy dimension of service quality is defined as showing care and individualized attention to customer. Compassion is tied in with detecting the feelings of others and having the option to envision what others are experiencing. The simplest path for a carrier to keep up and develop its customer base is to

be sympathetic towards their clients, to comprehend their particular needs and to take into account them and they should cause every client to feel like he/she is a special resource for the organization and like their single most significant customer (Sabri *et al.*, 2011).

Concept of Airline Passengers Satisfaction

Passengers' satisfaction always top on the mind of airlines. Unhappy or disengaged Passengers naturally mean fewer Passengers and less revenue. It is important that Passengers have an excellent experience every time they travel. On-time flights, good in-flight entertainment, more (and better) snacks, and more legroom might be the obvious contributors to a good experience and more loyalty, (Eugene, 2018). Thus, this study is to find out the relationship between Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction in International Airport in Port Harcourt.

Measures of Airline Passengers' Satisfaction

Check-In Service

Check-In Service is the process whereby Airline Passengers are accepted by an airline at the airport prior to travel. The Airlines typically use service counters found at Airports. The check-in is normally handled by an Airline itself or a handling agent working on behalf of an airline. Passengers usually hand over any baggage that they do not wish or are not allowed to carry in to the aircraft's cabin and receive a boarding pass before they can proceed to board their aircraft.

Check-in is usually the first procedure for an Airline Passenger when arriving at an airport, as airline regulation require passengers to check in by certain times prior to the departure of a flight. This duration spans from 15 minutes to 2 hours depending on the destination and Airline (with self-check in, this can be expanded to 24 hours, if checking in by online processes), (Fodness and Murray, 2007).

In-Flight Services

Travel website as Daunless, (2016) defined In-Flight Services as offerings by an Airline, both free and paid that add to Passengers' flying experience. They are also Services during flights or Services provided onboard. Services that Airlines offer Passengers onboard may include beverages, In-Flight entertainment, duty free shopping, comfortable seats and other amenity kits. A Cabin crew could be assigned to deliver service items, hospitality and personal touch to comfort and satisfy Passengers. Providing flight information and help Passengers to solve some problems regard to the travel destination are considered as cabin crew duties. In-Flight Services can be classified into 3 phases including pre-flight Services or on ground preparation, In-Flight Service or Service during flight, and post-flight Services that happen after the Airplane lands at the Airport destination. Cabin crew prepare Passengers' cabin and Service products such as, Passengers' meal, pillows and blankets, reading materials, welcome drinks, and menus before Passengers' board the Airplane. Cabin crew could start meals and beverage Service after takeoff; duty free shopping could

be commenced after meal Service for Passengers' comfort and privacy. After landing, cabin crew farewell and ensure that Passengers are safe when they disembark the Airplane.

Empirical Review of Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction

Relationship between Reliability and Airline Passengers Satisfaction

Lusch and Vargo, (2006) defined Service as the application of specialized competences (knowledge and skills), through deeds, processes, and performances for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself. The offer of Service and Service delivery facilities as point-of-sales attracts Passengers in need to seek an encounter, which will later build up into experience and feeling of satisfaction.

Relationship between Responsiveness and Airline Passengers Satisfaction

According to Kim and Lee (2011), Responsiveness could be willingness to help the Passengers and provide prompt service. The degree of responsiveness could show the level of commitment that the people of the Airline companies have toward their work. It could be necessary for the Airline companies to concentrate on prompt and the right kind of responsiveness to the needs and problems of the passengers.

Relationship between Tangibility and Airline Passengers Satisfaction

Erdil, (2011) provided notion that, although airline has the service output which is completely intangible but it cannot be successful in having customer satisfaction without the tangibles in the airline. These tangible features which is the material basis of service, help the customer to judge the quality of service offered. And so, it is necessary that Airline companies' personnel undergo some training on how to look and appear smart before their passengers and be able to easily understand communication materials.

Relationship between Assurance and Airline Passengers Satisfaction

According to Farooq *et al.*, (2018) Personal services are delivered better if employees are good in communication, active and can understand the needs of customers. And so, there should be a good demand for skilled airport staff by Airline companies for service efficiency. Service attitude of airport staff goes a long way to ensure high passenger satisfaction.

Relationship between Empathy and Airline Passengers Satisfaction

Yong, (2000) defined Empathy as the ability to provide personal attention and care to customers. It is important for Airlines to do better at managing the fall-out to communicate with empathy to its passengers. Airline companies should make their passengers feel like a special resource by giving them special treatments and be able to provide solutions to their problems. Thus, this will give the passengers some level of satisfaction.

Methodology

Research Design

Quantitative research design is a survey technique used to measure specific characteristics through structured questionnaire from a representative sample, and the results generalized for the entire population, (Davis, 2000). The research design for this study, adopted cross sectional survey. Structured questionnaire was used to determine the relationship between price strategy and patronage of airline operators. This survey design is appropriate for this study because it will enable the researchers to obtain information from respondents considered to be representatives of the entire population, (Creswell, 2010). However, these elements have the characteristics of changing and this change cannot be controlled by the researchers.

Population of the Study

The population is a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific query, (Kingsley, 2012). It is for the benefit of the population that research is done. However, due to the large size of the population it was difficult to manage, too expensive and time consuming. This was the reason why researchers used sampling techniques.

The target population for this study consisted of passengers of the Port Harcourt International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The population size of the study was not determined because it was large and unknown. It is therefore transient since the researchers cannot pre determine the number of passengers that patronized the Airlines at a particular period of the day or week. The researchers assessed the population elements from ten (10) popular Airlines of the Port Harcourt International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

This is itemized as follows:

Table 1: Lists of Airlines from which Respondents were Drawn

S/N	Name of Airlines	Number of Respondents
1	Dana Airlines Limited	10
2.	FirstNation Airways Limited	10
3.	Webetog Travels and Tours	10
4.	Air France	10
5.	Streamline Travel and Tours Limited	10
6.	Aero Contractors	10
7.	Air Cruise and Travel Tours Limited	10
8.	Allied Air	10
9.	Med-View Airline	10
10	Fly Aero Airline	10

Source: Survey Data (2022)

Sampling Procedure and Sampling Size Determination

According to Baridam, (2001), sampling is the process or method of delimiting the population of the study. It is the process of taking a small portion of the population to represent the whole. The researchers adopted purposive sampling of the non-probability sampling method, because with the method all items were selected on the bases of researchers' convenience. Researchers used this portion of the whole population to represent the views and opinions of the population of members or elements. Freud and Williams (2010) formula are most appropriate. Thus, the sample size of the study was statistically determined thus:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where:

n	=	Sample size
p	=	Percentage of positive response
q	=	Percentage of negative response
e	=	Margin of error
Z	=	Level of confidence

Thus, we had:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.3)(0.2)}{(.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416(0.10)}{.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{0.3841}{.0025} = 153.64$$

$$\cong 154$$

Data Collection Method

Data for this Study was collected from two sources namely: Primary and Secondary sources. Primary source was collected from the questionnaire; while the secondary data was collected from relevant Journals, Textbooks, News Papers and Internets.

Instrument Design

The questionnaire was used for the survey purposes of this research. In designing the questionnaire, extra caution was taken for better clarification of each question. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; section 'A' deals with the demographic

characteristics of the respondent, and section 'B' answers the question raised in the study. A "5" point Likert scales with 5 as strongly agree, 4 as agree, 3 as undecided, 2 as disagree and 1 strongly disagree.

Validity of the Instrument

The validity of an instrument means how accurate the instrument measures the phenomena which is being researched (Sekaran, 2003). Two popular methods to evaluate the content validity of scale suggested in Hair, Coshall, and Combe, (2006) included: 1. Expert judgment and 2. Pilot test (Hair et al., 2006). Expert judgments involved the use of experts to validate the content of the scale; hence, copies of the scale were made available to our Senior Colleagues in the Department of Hospitality and Tourism for validation.

Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability refers to 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 assess the reliability index of 0.8 which is appropriate for this study.

Data Analysis and Procedures

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze questionnaire distribution and respondents' demographics characteristics. Pearson's correlation was used to assess the degree of linear relationship between any two of the image variables. It can be used to calculate between all summation scores to explore the simple bivariate relationships between variables. According to Pallant, (2010) if the Correlation Coefficient value is (+1), it shows that the relationship is positive and strong, and if it is (-1) the relationship is strong but inverse, therefore the Correlation Coefficient should not be more than (+1) and should not be less than (-1), while (0), indicates a weak relationship, and is either positive or negative. Table 2 showed the directions to interpret the Pearson correlation.

Table 2: Cohen's Strength of Relationship between Two Variables

Strength of the relationship	r values
Small Correlation	- 0.10 to - 0.29 and + 0.10 to + 0.29
Medium Correlation	- 0.30 to - 0.49 and + 0.30 to + 0.49
Large Correlation	- 0.50 to - 1.00 and + 0.50 to + 1.00

Source: Cohen (2003).

Pearson Correlation analysis was used to assess the relationship between dimensions of Service Quality, such as, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility and empathy and the Airline Passengers' satisfaction such as: Check-in Service and in-flight.

Questionnaire Administration and Response Rate

Table 3: Questionnaire administration and response rate

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Copies Retrieved	117	95.9	95.9	95.9
	Copies unretrieved	33	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	150	100	100	

Source: Survey Data (2022)

From the Table 3 above, a total of 150 copies of questionnaire were administered, out of which 117 copies were fully completed and returned to the researcher, which makes up 95.9% of the total questionnaires administered. 33 copies of the questionnaires that were not returned which represent 4.1%. This implies that 117 copies of the returned questionnaires were used for the data analysis.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 20 years	11	19
18 – 30 years	49	33
31 – 40 years	22	15
41 – 50 years	25	24
60 years and above	10	9
Total	117	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

From the Table 4 above, more of the respondents fall between the age brackets of 18-30 years (33%) followed by the 41 – 50 years (24%), 41-40 years (24%), less than 20 years (19%) and 60 years and above (9%) respectively.

Table 5: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	77	65.8
Female	40	34.2
Total	117	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 5 above, reveals that males are 77 (65.8%) in the study, indicating more males than the females which are 40 (34.2%) respondents.

Table 6: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE/NECO/GCE	24	28%
ND/NCE	17	7%
B.Sc./B.Ed./B.A./H.N.D	55	56%
M.Sc/M.Ed/M.A./M.B.A	16	5%
Ph.D	5	4%
Total	117	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 6 above, reveals that 28% of the respondents were holders of SSCE/NECO/GCE, 7% had ND/NCE, 56% had B.Sc/M.Ed/M.A/MBA degree, 5% had M.Sc/M.Ed/M.A./M.B.A, and 4% had Ph.D respectively. This implies majority of the respondents are B.Sc/B.Ed/B.A/H.N.D degrees.

Univariate Analysis

Table 7: Shows the Mean Score and standard deviation analysis of respondents on Reliability and Airline passengers' satisfaction

S/N	Items Reliability	N=310 X	SD	Decision
1	This airline provides services as promised.	3.92	.89	Accepted
2	Service is always efficient and speedy.	3.95	.95	Accepted
3	This airline keeps passengers informed about when services will be performed.	3.99	.92	Accepted
4	The services provided by this airline are consistently good.	3.94	.83	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.95		

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 7 above, indicates that the respondents stand on the same position on item 1-4. The items in these areas were accepted since their mean value was above the criterion mean of 3.0

In summary, from the mean of 3.95, it is evident that the respondents accepted that the Airline provide services as promised. They also agreed that the services provided by this airline are consistently good, efficient and speedy. Therefore, the researcher can say that there is a significant relationship between reliability and Airline passenger's satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Table 8: Shows the mean score and standard deviation analysis of respondents on the significant relationship between responsiveness and Airline passengers' satisfaction at the

International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

S/N	Items	N=310 X	SD	Decision
	Responsiveness			
5	This Airline is known for its willingness to help Passengers.	3.97	.97	Accepted
6	This Airline is known for readiness to respond to customers' requests	4.08	.89	Accepted
7	This Airline responds to Passengers' complaints promptly.	3.81	.84	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.95		

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 8 above, indicated that the respondents agreed on the items listed from 5-7 as the mean score for the items was above 3.00.

In summary, with the mean score of 3.95, respondents agreed that the hotel is known for its willingness to help customers. This clearly showed that there exists a relationship between responsiveness and airline passengers' satisfaction in International Airport in Port Harcourt.

Table 9: Showed the mean score and standard deviation analysis of respondents on the significant relationship between tangibility and Airline Passenger's Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

S/N	Items	N=310 X	SD	Decision
	Tangibility			
8	The air-condition in this airline gives me a pleasant feeling	3.05	.81	Accepted
9	The decorations in the flight cabins are adorable	3.76	.95	Accepted
10	Facilities in this airline is appealing and satisfactory	4.3	.88	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.70		

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 9 above, indicated that the respondents agreed on the same position on item 8-10. The items in these areas were accepted since their mean value was above the criterion mean of 3.0

In summary, from the mean of 3.70, it was evident that the respondents accepted that the decorations in the flight cabins were adorable. The respondents equally agreed that the air-condition in this airline gave pleasant feeling. To this end, the researchers concluded that

there was significant relationship between tangibility and Airline Passengers' satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Table 10: Showed the mean score and standard deviation analysis of respondents on the significant relationship between empathy and airline passenger's satisfaction at the Port Harcourt International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

S/N	Items Empathy	N=310 X	SD	Decision
11	This airline gives Passengers individual attention	3.11	.81	Accepted
12	This airline has Passengers best interest at heart	3.00	.86	Accepted
13	Staff attitude toward Passengers is very good	3.44	.94	Accepted
14	Passengers service in this airline is satisfactory	3.73	.90	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.32		

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 10 above, indicated that the respondents agreed on the same position on item 11-14. The items in these areas were accepted since their mean value were above the criterion mean of 3.0

In summary, from the mean of 3.32, it was evident that the respondents accepted that the airline gave passengers individual attention and had passenger's interest at heart. The result implied that there was significant relationship between empathy and Airline passengers' Satisfaction.

Table 11: Shows the mean score and standard deviation analysis of respondents on the significant relationship between Check-in Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction

S/N	Items Check-in Service	N=310 X	SD	Decision
15	I am satisfied with the services received in this company	3.07	1.03	Accepted
16	The check-in service is pleasant and promptly	3.11	.87	Accepted
17	I admire their service procedure	3.30	.75	Accepted
18	I am satisfied with their services because they respond to passenger's questions during check-in process	3.28	.68	Accepted

	Grand Mean	3.23		
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Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 11 above, indicated that they agreed on the same position on item 15-18. The items in these areas were accepted since their mean value were above the criterion mean of 3.0. In summary, from the mean of 3.23, it was evident that the respondents accepted that passengers were satisfied with airline services because they responded to passenger's questions during check-in processes; which showed significant relationship between check-in service and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction.

Table 12: Table showed the mean score and standard deviation analysis of respondents on the significant relationship between in-flight services and Airline Passenger's Satisfaction

S/N	Items	N=310 X	SD	Decision
	In-flight services			
19	I will patronize this airline because of entertainment services they give to passengers	3.33	.89	Accepted
20	I patronize this airline because of their free browsing network services	3.14	.80	Accepted
21	The in-flight facilities and neatness of seat arrangement is wonderful and gives me joy	3.8	.76	Accepted
22	I patronize this airline because of food and beverages they serve to their passengers	3.9	.82	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.54		

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 12 above, indicates that they agreed on the same position on item 19-22. The items in these areas were accepted since their mean value were above the criterion mean of 3.0. In summary, from the mean of 3.54, it was evident that the respondents affirmed that they were satisfied with the services and would revisit and recommend the airline to friends and relatives.

Bivariate Analysis (Testing of Hypotheses)

The research statistics used for this study is the Pearson correlation analysis. This will be tested at a significance level of 5% or 0.05 with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Rejection Rule:

p-value approach: Reject H_0 if $p\text{-value} \leq \alpha$

Accept H_0 if $p\text{-value} \geq \alpha$

The tested Hypotheses were interpreted through the Dana's (2001) Correlation Decision Framework; where:

$\pm 0.00 - 0.19$ (Very weak)

$\pm 0.20 - 0.39$ (Weak)

$\pm 0.40 - 0.59$ (Moderate)

$\pm 0.60 - 0.79$ (Strong)

$\pm 0.80 - 0.99$ (Very strong)

± 1 (Perfect)

While testing the Hypothesis 2-tailed test was used at the significance level of 5% (0.05).

Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis One

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between Check-in Process and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Decision rule:

If p-value is greater than alpha value, accept the Null Hypothesis and reject the alternate.

If p-value is less than alpha value, reject the Null Hypothesis and accept the alternate. Below is the SPSS output result.

Table 13: Correlations analysis of Check-in process and Passengers Satisfaction

		Check-in process	Passengers' satisfaction
Check-in process	Pearson Correlation	1	.963
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	117	117
Passengers' Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.963	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	117	117

Source: Researcher Using SPSS v21 Outputs

Decision: From the result above, the Correlation Co-efficient ($r = 0.963$) between check-in process and passengers' satisfaction, which indicated strong positive linear relationship. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) revealed significant relationship. Based on this, the Null Hypothesis was rejected. This implied significant relationship between check-in process and Airline Passenger's Satisfaction.

Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis Two

Ho₂: There is no significant Relationship between In-flight Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Table 14: Correlations analysis of In-flight Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction

		In-flight services	Passengers' satisfaction
In-flight services	Pearson Correlation	1	.872
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	117	117
Passengers' satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.872	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	117	117

Source: Researcher Using SPSS v21 Outputs

From the result above, the Correlation Co-efficient ($r = 0.872$) between in-flight services and passengers' satisfaction indicated strong positive linear relationship. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) revealed significant relationship. Based on this, the Null Hypothesis was rejected; which implied significant relationship between in-flight services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis Three

Ho₃: There is no significant Relationship between Reliability and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Table 15: Correlations analysis of Reliability and Airline Passengers Satisfaction

		Reliability	Passengers Satisfaction
Reliability	Pearson Correlation	1	.932
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	117	117
Passengers Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.932	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	117	117

Source: Researcher Using SPSS v21 Outputs

Decision:

From the result above, the Correlation Co-efficient ($r = 0.932$) between reliability and passengers' satisfaction indicated strong positive linear relationship. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) revealed significant relationship. Based on that, the Null Hypothesis was rejected; which implied significant relationship between reliability and Airline Passengers'

Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis Four

Ho₄: There is no significant Relationship between Service Responsiveness and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Table 16: Correlations analysis of Service Responsiveness and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction of the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

		Service Responsiveness	Passengers' Satisfaction
Service Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.899
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	117	117
Passengers' Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.899	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	117	117

Source: Researcher Using SPSS v21 Outputs

Decision: From the result above, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.899$) between service responsiveness and passengers' satisfaction indicated strong positive linear relationship. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) revealed significant relationship. Based on that, the Null Hypothesis was rejected; which implied significant relationship between service responsiveness and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt.

Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis Five

Ho₅: There is no significant relationship between Baggage Handling Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Table 17: Correlations analysis of Baggage handling Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

		Baggage handling services	Passengers' satisfaction
Baggage handling services	Pearson Correlation	1	.946
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	117	117

Passengers' satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.946	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	117	117

Source: Researcher Using SPSS v21 Outputs

Decision: From the result above, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.946$) between baggage handling services and passengers' satisfaction indicated strong positive linear relationship. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) revealed significant relationship. Based on that, the Null Hypothesis was rejected; which implied significant relationship between baggage handling services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The first Hypothesis (H_{01}) stated that there is no significant relationship between Check-in Process and Passengers' Satisfaction in the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. This was tested at 5% significance level using Pearson Correlation. The result from our analysis showed a p-value of 0.000 while the alpha value was 0.05, therefore, following the decision rule the Null Hypothesis was rejected and the alternate Hypothesis accepted which state that there is a significant relationship between check-in process and passengers' satisfaction Port Harcourt. Our analysis also showed Pearson Correlation to be 0.963 and Co-efficient of determination of 93% which implies that there is a strong positive relationship between check-in process and passengers' satisfaction. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Fodness & Murray, 2007) that check-in process is capable of influencing Airline Passengers' Satisfaction.

The second hypothesis (H_{02}) stated that there is no significant Relationship between In-flight Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. This was tested at 5% significance level using Pearson Correlation Co-efficient. The result from our analysis showed a p-value of 0.000 while the alpha value was 0.05, therefore, following the decision rule the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate Hypothesis accepted which state that there is a significant relationship between in-flight services and passengers' satisfaction in the International Airport in Port Harcourt. Our analysis also showed Correlation Co-efficient of 0.872 and Co-efficient of determination of 76%. This implies that there is a strong positive relationship between in-flight services and passengers' satisfaction of International Airport in Port Harcourt. This finding is in tandem with the assertions of Namukasa, (2013) which revealed that in-flight services are good passenger influencer.

The third Hypothesis (H_{03}) stated that there is no significant Relationship between Reliability and Airline Passengers Satisfaction in International Airport in Port Harcourt. This was tested at 5% significance level using Pearson correlation coefficient. The result from our analysis showed a p-value of 0.000 while the alpha value was 0.05, therefore, following

the decision rule the Null Hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted which state that there is a significant relationship between reliability and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. This implies that there is a strong positive relationship between reliability and airline passengers' satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. This finding supported earlier findings of Lusch and Vargo, (2006) whose reliability significantly impacted on Airline passengers' satisfaction.

The fourth Hypothesis (H_{04}) stated that there is no significant Relationship between Service Responsiveness and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction in the International Airport in Port Harcourt. This was tested at 5% significance level using Pearson correlation coefficient. The result from our analysis showed a p-value of 0.000 while the alpha value was 0.05, therefore, following the decision rule the Null Hypothesis was rejected and the alternate Hypothesis accepted which state that there is a significant relationship between service responsiveness and airline passengers' satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. Our analysis also showed Correlation Co-efficient of 0.932 and Co-efficient of determination of 87%. This implied that there was strong positive relationship between service responsiveness and airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Kim and Lee, (2011) opined that service responsiveness is key to passengers' satisfaction. The findings of this study affirmed their positions as it revealed that Airline passengers only go to a place that have willingness to render helpful services to them.

The fifth hypothesis (H_{05}) stated that there is no significant relationship between Baggage Handling Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. This was tested at 5% significance level using Pearson Correlation Co-efficient. The result from our analysis showed a p-value of 0.000 while the alpha value was 0.05, therefore, following the decision rule the Null Hypothesis was rejected and the alternate Hypothesis accepted which state that there is a significant relationship between Baggage Handling Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. The analysis also showed Correlation Co-efficient of 0.946 and Co-efficient of determination of 89%. This implied that there was strong positive relationship between Baggage Handling Services and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to have better understanding of the effect of Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt. This research project fulfilled its objectives by assessing the degree of relationship between Service Quality and Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. After testing the Hypothesized relationships with Pearson Correlation Analysis, the result showed that the five dimensions of Service Quality had strong positive significant relationships with Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port

Harcourt, Nigeria. In conclusion, the outcome of the research indicated that Check-in Process had the greatest effect on Airline Passengers' Satisfaction at the International Airport in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. This implied that management should always pay more attention on Passengers' Check-in process as this showed great and significant influence on Airline Passengers' Satisfaction.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers made the following recommendations:

1. Managers of airlines should render reliable service in order to build organizational integrity and increase airline passengers' satisfaction.
2. Airline industry should orientate their employee to respond to Airline Passenger's complain and respond to their request.
3. Staff attitude toward Airline passengers should be friendly and respectfully in order to persuade Airline passengers to keep patronizing their industry.
4. Airline industry should always place quality service as top priority because Airline passengers are the essence of business.

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