

Food Service Methods and Customer Satisfaction in Hotels in Owerri, Imo State

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Abstract

The study examined food service methods and customer satisfaction in hotels in Owerri, Imo State using survey research design, with questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The data collected were analysed using simple percentage and mean, while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation coefficient through SPSS version 21.0. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between buffet service, room service and customer satisfaction. The study concludes that if well implemented, food service methods can enhance customer satisfaction and repurchase intention in the hotel industry. It was recommended that hotel organisations should effectively implement buffet service method and quick responses to customers' needs in the room service to achieve customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Food Service Methods, Customer Satisfaction, Buffet Service, Table Service Room Service

Introduction

Food service is the practice or act of providing meal ordered by a customer who is able and willing to pay for the cost of the service. In order to achieve effective and efficient food service method, the following factors are taken into consideration, namely the type of establishment, the type of customers to be served, the time available for the meal, the turnover of customers expected, the type of menu presented, the cost of the meal served and the site/location of the establishment (hotel), (Lillicrap & Cousin, 2010). The frequent emergence of hotels in many cities in Nigeria including Owerri is increasingly creating a tough competition in the hospitality and tourism industry. In Owerri and its suburbs alone, an estimated four hotels come into existence every year (Mbachu, Irodi, Efula & Chukwuezi, 2023). In most cases, these hotels are located close to each other thereby intensifying the competition that is often associated with proximity of businesses. While this rapid explosion in the emergence of hotels can be favourable to guests in making choices that suit their tastes, the situation brews a major challenge to the management of hotels (Mbachu, et al., 2023), as it continues to influence hotel customer satisfaction.

To achieve positive satisfaction of customers in the hotel industry, many services are offered to customers/guests. One of such services which can contribute to customer satisfaction is food service. The demand for food in the

hotel industry is influenced by customers' cultural background. There are five basic methods of food service (Lilicrap and Cousin 2010). These are table service, assisted service, self-service, single point service and specialized or in situ service. However, there are several food service methods available to the hotel industry which includes buffet service, room service, English/silver service, plate/American service, guerdon service, take-away, vending service, home delivery, and so on. The increase in the culinary travel has resulted in a rise in emphasis on food throughout the world. Today's tourist is better informed, more cultured, well traveled and looks for new experience and adventures. The tourist/customer is interested in living a healthy lifestyle and wants to experience the local food culture when he goes on holiday (Walker & Evans, 2012). Food service is a key part of hotel service culture, and a major element of attraction for tourists. It has been shown that much capital goes to food production in the hotel. In effect, more revenue is expected to be sourced from food service. Thus, inability to justify the huge budget profile of purchase and production of food is tantamount to poor performance of hotel operation.

However, the contribution of food service methods in revenue generation is increasing tremendously in many climes. This is because through the skillful application of food service methods like room service, table service and buffet service, customer satisfaction and repurchase could be achieved considerably. It is worrisome that researchers have not actually established the basic relationship between food service methods and hotel customer satisfaction using hotels in Owerri as focal point. Indeed, little is known of the extent to which adoption of food service methods like room service, buffet service, table service, and so on can be used to bolster hotel customer satisfaction in Owerri as competition in the hotel industry continues to heighten. According to Mbachu et al (2023), hotels operating in Owerri may not be well versed in food service styles that enhance customer experience. Although some studies have been done on room service and performance of hotels in Pakistan (King 2021), and food service delivery and customer repeat purchase behavior in private hotels in India (Danish 2018), both studies were carried out in far away countries and therefore have no Nigerian background. Thus, after reviewing extent empirical studies, this researcher discovered some gaps which this study intends to fill.

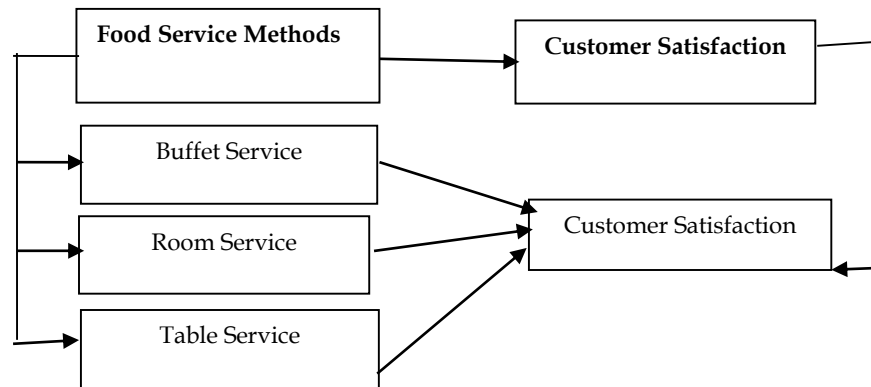
To this end, the study investigated food service methods and customer satisfaction in hotels in Owerri, Imo State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

(1) assess the relationship between buffet service and customer satisfaction, (2) investigate the link between room service and customer satisfaction, and (3) evaluate the extent to which table service method relate to customer satisfaction.

The study is guided by the framework below:

The study area hosts a good number of hotels. Owerri is the capital city of Imo State, Nigeria. The researcher selected ten hotels ranging from 3-star to 4-star,

focusing on food service methods and customer satisfaction. The staff (waiters and waitresses) of the food service units (restaurant) and customers constituted the research subjects.



Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were stated in null forms to guide the study:

Ho₁: There is no significant association between buffet service and customer satisfaction.

Ho₂: There is no significant link between room services and customer satisfaction.

Ho₃: Table service method does not relate with customer satisfaction.

Conceptual Review

Food Service Methods

Food service methods and food service were used interchangeably as the two concepts are semantically related to the terms “foodservice” (Mbachu, Irodi, Efula & Chukwezi, 2023). Food service method refers to the service styles, approaches, and ways by which a hotel provides different food and beverage to its guests/customers (Lillicrap & Cousins, 2010), while foodservice is a broader term that encompasses the entire process of preparing, serving, and managing food and beverage operations (Mbachu et al, 2023). Foodservice typically refers to the specific establishments that provide food and drink to customers, such as restaurants, cafes, catering joints, and fast food outlets. These businesses focus on the creation, presentation and delivery of food items to customers or patrons, and they are usually responsible for customer service, menu development, and managing kitchen operation. This implies that the food and beverage department of hotel is referred to as food service.

Food service methods play a crucial role in various settings including healthcare facilities, schools, corporations, cafeterias, and other institutional settings. In terms of scope, foodservice method is confined to the actual serving of meals and beverages to customers, while food service extends

beyond that to include aspects such as food safety, sanitation, menu planning, cost control, and procurement (Mbachu et al, 2023).

Categories of food service methods

There are many categories of food service method, but this work focuses on table service, buffet service, and room service.

1. **Table service:** Table service is considered a broad category of service style, which consists of English service, American/prepared service and so on (Audris, Barlsman & Lopart, 2023). In this type of food service, the guest is seated at the table, with a laid cover and orders from the menu. When serving the guests' orders, the server or waiter/waitress should have a good understanding of who ordered what dishes (Amoaka, Doe, & Neequaye, 2021).
2. **Buffet:** This is where customers select food and drink from displays or passed trays. Consumption is either at tables, standing or in lounge area (Mbachu, Irodi, Efula and Chukwezi 2023). Audris, Barlsman and Lopart (2023) described buffet as a food service approach where customers serve themselves from a buffet of food that is laid out in a designated area. Buffets are often used for breakfast, lunch, or dinner service, and can include a range of options, such as salads, main courses and desserts.
Every menu and even food items can be created so that it becomes a new innovation. As one of the fields engaged in the culinary business, hotels must continue to follow trends and be flexible to new developments and changes. Over the years, the concept of menu engineering has continued to be developed, but an important point in this concept is the balance between menus that have high food costs and low ones so as not to cause waste products or losses. Overall, the type of service that guest can expect to receive at a hotel will depend on the hotel's level of luxury and the guests individual luxury, needs and preferences. However, regardless of the type of service provided, hotels strive to ensure that their guests have an enjoyable and comfortable stay (setupmyhotel.com, 2023). The food and beverage service staff must see that the guests have all they require and are completely satisfied. It is of great importance to anticipate a customer's needs. If he/she is comfortable in the surroundings then this is because of the warm and friendly atmosphere in the food service area, and the team spirit amongst the waiting staff (Lilicrap & Cousin, 2010).
3. **Room service:** Elvira and Shopetim (2016) posit that room service is an important component of the overall service experience within upscale hotels and resorts. Also referred to as "in-room dining," room service is defined as an operating department within a lodging facility that takes guest orders for food, prepares that food, and delivers it to the guest's room for consumption there. Some room service operations function in a capacity that supports banquets or convention services departments with food delivery and services to guests throughout the hotel. Two widely utilized hotel rating systems, AAA

and Mobil, consider in-room guest dining to be one of the more important aspects of hotel services. Thus, no hotel can get the top diamond or star ratings/awards from these organizations if its operation does not have a 24-hour room service operation in place (Ninemeier & Purdue, 2018).

In hotel operations, room service has long served as a convenience to guests. Room service provides an opportunity for guests to eat at their own pace, in their own rooms, whether it is for practical, time-saving purposes or for luxurious indulgence. Menu prices for room service are often at a premium in comparison to the hotel's restaurant menu offerings, which are frequently the source for the room service menu itself. Delivery of food and beverage to a guest's room is generally more labour intensive than restaurant services, if for no other reason than the less distance that needs to be covered to successfully deliver meals in a restaurant. Hotel guests who utilize room service are usually aware of the additional expense of ordering food delivery and generally accept the premium cost of convenience as an aspect of their bill. If developed and executed in a fashion that is appropriate for guest needs, hotels may generate significant revenue at potentially healthy profit margins from their room service operations.

Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the "customers' cognitive and affective evaluation based on their personal experience across all service episodes within the relationship" (Davis-Sramek, Droge, Mentzer & Myers, 2019:66). It is also an overall evaluation and outcome of a firm's products (or services) from customers. Customer satisfaction is expressed through continuous consumption and purchase experience. It is the final basis in modern marketing; therefore, the success of each business institution depends heavily on identifying and satisfying the customers' needs and demands. The goal of every organization is to ensure that customers are satisfied. Levels of their satisfaction can trigger behaviours such as loyalty to the organization's products/services and positive word of mouth advertising which enhances increased patronage (Otioma, 2022). Researchers have shown that satisfaction impact customer retention. The fundamental motive is that customers aspire to make the most of the utility they could acquire from a particular firm or supplier, depending on the customer's satisfaction level. The more the customers are satisfied, the more likely they are retained.

The key to organizational survival and prosperity is the retention of satisfied customers. The study of Ranaweera and Prabhu (2023) affirmed that the more satisfied customers are, the higher is their retention, the positive word of mouth generated through them and the more the financial benefits to the firms who serve them. It is evident that all firms seek to manage and increase customer satisfaction using superior strategic marketing programmes. The customers who are unsatisfied would not be expected to have long time relationships. Poor or unsatisfactory level of services leads to

dissatisfaction; it creates a gap between customers' expectation and experience. Variation in the quality and value of products and services provided to customer creates variation in customer satisfaction, and that generate change in customer loyalty. Lawal (2017) opined that customer satisfaction is derived when a product consumed by the consumer meets his expectation. This means that consumers have their individual expectations before consuming a product/service, which if met by the seller makes them feel satisfied.

These expectations, according to Shone and Parry (2019), are desired product/ service outcomes and include pre-consumption beliefs about overall performance or the levels or attributes possessed by product/services. Ibezim (2021) viewed consumer satisfaction from a broadened perspective, and states that creating satisfied customers, and thus future sales require that customers continue to believe that your brand meets their needs and offers superior value after they have use it. That is, you must deliver as much as or more value than your customer initially expected, and it must be enough to satisfy their needs. Satisfaction can be associated with feelings of happiness, relief, acceptance, excitement, achievement, and delight, and dissatisfaction can be related to feeling of tolerance, distress, regret, agitation, outrage, sadness and lamentations (Auh & Johnson, 2015). The need for service providers to satisfy their customers cannot be over-emphasized as consumers remain the bedrock of every business. Satisfied customers buy and re-buy a firm's brand, they are loyal customers; they do word-of- mouth advertising about brands that satisfy them to others and lure them to buy. In fact, customer satisfaction refers to the customer's perception that his/her expectations have been met (Garbarino & Johnson, 2019). If the customer's expectations are met, then he is satisfied, if the expectations are surpassed, then he is delighted, but in the event that they are not met, the customer is dissatisfied. Customer satisfaction is achieved when a customer's expectations are met and this is largely influenced by the value of customer care provided by the organization. Musa (2017) states that in the service-profit chain, greater service delivery, results in satisfied and loyal customers who make repeat purchases and refer other customers to the organization. Employees are the interface between the organization and its customers, what they portray are what the customers see and use in their evaluation of the service experience.

Ogu (2019) opined that customer satisfaction exists in five forms, namely; contentment, pleasure, relief, novelty, and surprise. It takes retained and job-mastered employees to be responsive in providing customers with top-notch satisfaction they desire according to those prototypes. This dimension is concerned with dealing with customer's requests, questions and complaints promptly and attentively. A good relationship with the people that a company is dealing with is much more important than exclusive profitability. Therefore, retaining employees who understand the business, the need of customers and the essence of relationships cannot be overemphasized for organizational

performance. According to Zhang and Feng (2019), customer satisfaction is a measure of how products or services supplied by a company meet customer expectations. It refers to the extent to which customers are happy with the products and services provided by a business. Gaining high levels of customer satisfaction is very important to a business because satisfied customers are likely to be loyal, make repeated orders and use a wide range of services offered by a business. Customer satisfaction is the single most important issue affecting organizational survival.

Theoretical framework

This research is anchored on Customer Value Theory, which was propounded by Woodruff (1997). The theory states that customers will measure the advantages and disadvantages of a product or service before buying it which is known as customer value. He further explained this concept from the perspective of changing customer's values. In his opinion, customer value refers to customers' satisfaction with a product's attributes and auxiliary functions based on their likes and dislikes. Li (2001) described satisfaction as the benefit received by customers from an enterprise that participates in their consuming behaviour by managing them (Li & Zhang, 2020). Therefore, the customer value theory, which extends customer guided market, is the footstone to improve customer satisfaction and establish customer loyalty (Amoaka, Doe & Neequaye, 2021). Kotler (1972) cited in Amoaka et al (2021) believed that for enterprise, customer value management mainly lies in how to build a long-term interest relationship with customers and perceived values of customers are the key to greater competitive advantage. To this end, enterprises should improve their services and resources with high quality products or services, to maintain high value (Amoaka, et al, 2021). This theory is important to hotel industry in identifying food service methods/styles that create customer value. In effect, if the hotel identifies an interesting or acceptable food service method to serve customers, they will serve the customers to their satisfaction.

Empirical Review

This section reviews related extant literature on the subject matter to promote an understanding of the opinion of other scholars and provide a direction for the study. Walker (2011) examined food service practices and intention to stay in Australian tourism sites as a guest. The study adopted cross sectional design in well-established public and private tourism sites to ascertain the effect of service styles performance of tourism organizational and guest intentions to stay. Delphi technique was adopted in interviewing the respondents. The formulated hypothesis was tested using structural equation modeling. The results showed that the relationship between table service and room service were positive and significant.

On the role of Food and Beverage service techniques in hotels' performance in Nigeria, Obinna & Augustine (2019), sampled 102 respondents using survey. Frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the generated data while Regression (Multiple) analysis was carried out to test the formulated hypotheses. The study revealed that food and beverage service techniques in hotels present opportunities for hoteliers looking to enhance their guest experience and drive revenue growth.

Ononogbo K. U. & Ukabuilu E. N (2023) carried out a research on Vended food service quality and tourist destination loyalty in southeast Nigeria. The study sampled 380 tourists from 10 tourists sites in Abia, Imo, Anambra, Enugu, and Ebonyi states, with the aid of structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using multiple linear regression and correlation analytical techniques. Findings showed that food service quality affects tourists patronage, satisfaction and image of southeast Nigeria.

Comen (2019) investigated the effects of food service practices on performance of the hospitality sector in Rivers State. A sample of 236 respondents was drawn from three hotels in Port Harcourt, using random technique, while the three hotels organizations studied were judgmentally selected. Analysis of variance and multiple regressions were performed on the data using version 20 of the SPSS. The study revealed that, on the average, a 10% improvement in foodservice practices led to increases in revenue by 1.2%, and it improved efficiency by 0.9%. However, the marginal effect of improved foodservice practices on the production cost was found to be steeply low, while the marginal impact on inefficiency gradually declined to zero. The study also provided managerial implications and how to effectively use foodservice systems to improve hotel performance in terms of customer satisfaction and repurchase behaviour of customers.

Rutherford (2020) investigated the influence of hotel food service on hotel performance in Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was employed in the study, while the sample size consisted of 257 employees of the hotel. Structured questionnaire was the instrument of data collection. The z-test was used to test the formulated hypotheses. The study revealed that quality foodservice methods were a significant factors in determining the numerical strength of hotel customers. For Moreo (2020) who studied hotel menus ... among 286 hotel firms in Andover, room service strategy helped in developing financial competencies and enhancing the competitiveness of the hotels. The study employed quota sampling and Smirnoff statistic in its methodology. The main aim of the strategic room service was to develop and use guest satisfaction as a tool for developing financial strength and competitiveness of the hotel.

Wolf (2022) investigated foodservice culture and performance of hotels in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study made use of cross sectional survey research design. The sample size of 287 service staff was extracted from a total population of 1,809 using Taro Yamane's formula. Reliability was tested using

Cronbach Alpha coefficient, while correlation coefficient was used to test the formulated hypotheses. The result revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between foodservice culture and hotel performance in relation to customer satisfaction and patronage.

The study on the Contribution of Foodservice Management on the Growth of Food Service Industry in Rwanda: a case study of Lemigo Hotel by . Alphonso & Jean-baptiste, (2020), used a structural equation model with AMOS software, result showed that hotel efficient foodservice management helps to maintain the food quality like purchasing the quality which enhances customer satisfaction and repurchase intention. (Nwokorie, 2021), investigated the impact of service practice on guest satisfaction in the hotel industry in five medium hotels in Abeokuta, South-West, Nigeria. The questionnaires served as the instrument for data collection and the probability sampling method was employed. A total of 119 respondents were sampled in Abeokuta. This study made use of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 2.6 version to test the formulated hypotheses. Findings revealed a significant relationship between sufficient service management and guest satisfaction, while the relationship between guest goodwill and service management in the study area is not statistically significant.

Research Method

The study adopted survey research design which involved the use of questionnaire (rating scale) for data collection. The population of the study is made up of the service staff (waiters and waitresses) of the hotels of study numbering 214, and an unknown population of customers of the hotels. The population of staff was obtained from the personnel unit of the selected hotels and the population of the customers is infinite; hence percentage proportion method was used to determine the sample size of the customers.

Table 1: Details of staff population.

Hotels	Estimate of Waiters and Waitresses
Willow Wood	26
East Gate	22
City of Angels	19
All Seasons	17
Rockview	23
Johnvita	18
Pine wood	22
City global	20
Best-Way	25
Majex	22
Total	214

Personnel Unit of the Selected Hotels, 2025

Taro Yamane statistical formula was used and the sample size for staff is 139. To get the sample size for customers, the researchers applied the percentage proportion method by Fraud and Williams (1975) and we have $n = 138$ (Sample size of Customers). Non-probability sampling technique was adopted to select the sample specifically, the researcher adopted judgemental sampling procedure.

The primary source of data collection was the questionnaire. In addition, content validity and test retest reliability were used. The data collected were analysed using Simple Percentage, Mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) at 0.05 level of significance through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21.0).

Results, Analysis and Interpretation

Out of 139 copies of the questionnaire distributed, to the staff of the organisations, only 120 copies were returned and used. More so, out of 138 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the customers of the organisations, only 100 copies were returned and used.

Analysis of Responses from Staff of the Hotels

Table 2: Construct on buffet service.

S/ N	Buffet service	Scale							
		(4) SA	(3) A	(2) D	(1) SD	N	$\sum X$	X	Dec.
1	My hotel buffet service is a regular practice	22	45	38	15	120	314	2.6	Positive
2	Buffet service in my hotel is a fascinating service method and is used whenever we have group of guests	60	50	4	6	120	404	3.4	Positive
3	Our hotel adopt buffer services when the need arises	56	59	2	3	120	408	3.4	Positive
4	I like buffet service in my hotel because it reduces my labour in service delivery	56	59	2	3	120	408	3.4	Positive
5	Buffet service in my hotel is put in place to attract, retain and satisfy group of customers	68	47	3	2	120	421	3.5	Positive
	Grand mean							3.3	

Field Survey (2024).

Table 2 shows that all the items are positive. All the items have mean scores of more than 2.5 and above.

Table 3: Construct on room service.

S/ N	Room service	Scale							
		(4)) S A	(3)) A	(2) D	(1) SD	N	ΣX	X	Dec.
1	I like to serve customers in their rooms	60	50	4	6	120	404	3.4	Positive
2	I use to interact with my hotel guests and identify their preference when offering them room service	70	41	5	4	120	408	3.4	Positive
3	I do not always like to do room service work because it is stressful	6	5	50	59	120	198	1.7	Negative
4	My hotel offers quick foodservice in the rooms	68	47	3	2	120	404	3.4	Positive
5	My hotel adopts room service method to encourage privacy of its guests	72	41	4	3	120	417	3.5	Positive
	Grand mean							3.1	

Field Survey (2024).

Analysis of table 3 shows that not all the items are positive. This is because of the items has a mean of 1.7, and falls below 2.5.

Table 4: Construct on table service.

S/ N	Table service	Scale							
		(4) SA	(3) A	(2) D	(1) SD	N	ΣX	X	Dec.
1	My hotel offers table service to customers	46	63	6	5	120	390	3.3	Positive
2	My hotel in most cases do not encourage table service	4	6	60	50	120	204	1.7	Negative
3	I like to serve my hotel customers while they sitting at the table	70	41	5	4	120	417	3.5	Positive
4	I like to interact with the customers while serving them on the table	46	63	6	5	120	390	3.3	Positive
5	I like to display my service skill while serving customers at their tables	56	59	2	3	120	408	3.4	Positive
	Grand mean							3.0	

Field Survey (2024).

Table 4 shows that four of the items were positive, while item 2 has a mean of 1.7, which is below 2.5.

Analysis of responses from customers of the hotels

Table 5: Construct on buffet service.

S/ N	Buffet service	Scale							
		(4) SA	(3) A	(2) D	(1) SD	N	$\sum X$	X	Dec.
1	I have experienced buffer service in the hotel	47	43	6	4	100	380	3.8	Positive
2	I prefer Buffet service when we lodge in group	41	47	7	5	100	324	3.2	Positive
3	I usually make repurchase visit to this hotel because of their buffet service?	4	2	55	39	100	171	1.7	Negative
4	Any time I bring my friends to this hotel they prefer buffet service to any other foodservice method?	40	41	10	9	100	312	3.1	Positive
	Grand mean							2.9	Positive

Field Survey (2024).

The above table shows that not all the items were positive. This is because item 3 has a mean of 1.7; hence not all the items have mean scores of more than 2.5 and above.

Table 6: Construct on room service construct.

S/ N	Room service	Scale							
		(4) SA	(3) A	(2) D	(1) SD	N	$\sum X$	X	Dec.
1	I like room service when there is quick responses	43	51	2	4	100	333	3.3	Positive
2	I feel happy and relaxed being served in the comfort of my room in this hotel	41	47	7	5	100	324	3.2	Positive
3	I feel like coming again because of their room service treat	51	46	1	2	100	346	3.5	Positive
4	I like room service, but most times, I prefer other services because of delay in this hotel room service	48	49	1	2	100	343	3.4	Positive
	Grand mean							3.4	Positive

Field Survey (2024).

Food Service method and Customer satisfaction

It is seen in table 6 that all the items were positive. This is because item 1 has a mean of 3.3, item 2 has a mean of 3.2, and item 3 has a mean of 3.5 and item 4 has a mean of 3.4; hence all the items have mean scores of more than 2.5 and above.

Table7: Construct on table service.

S/ N	Table service	Scale							
		(4) S A	(3) A	(2) D	(1) S D	N	$\sum X$	X	Dec.
1	I advise the management of this hotel to continue to apply table service method because I feel delighted being served at the table.	42	51	4	3	100	332	3.3	Positive
2	I like to patronize this hotel restaurant because it gives me joy and opportunity to feel relaxed while dining at the table	48	49	1	2	100	343	3.4	Positive
3	Table services add value to my meal experience in this hotel?	43	51	2	4	100	333	3.3	Positive
4	I enjoy being served food while sitting at a table	41	47	7	5	100	324	3.2	Positive
	Grand mean							3.3	Positive

Field Survey (2024).

The data in the table 6 above indicated that all the items were positive. This is because item 1 has a mean of 3.3, item 2 has a mean of 3.4, item 3 has a mean of 3.3 and item 4 has a mean of 3.2; hence all the items have mean scores of more than 2.5 and above.

Table 8: Construct on customer satisfaction

S/ N	Customer satisfaction	Scale							
		(4) S A	(3) A	(2) D	(1) S D	N	$\sum X$	X	Dec.
1	How I was served determines the extent of my satisfaction	43	51	2	4	100	333	3.3	Positive
2	In most cases, I am satisfied with the survives of the hotel	48	49	1	2	100	343	3.4	Positive
3	Delay in any of the service methods makes me unsatisfied	50	47	2	1	100	346	3.5	Positive

4	Some staff sometimes make me unsatisfied because of their attitude to work	40	41	10	9	100	312	3.1	Positive
	Grand mean							3.3	Positive

Field Survey (2024).

It is seen in table 8 that all the items were positive. Thus, all the items have mean scores of more than 2.5 and above.

Testing of Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between buffet service and customer satisfaction.

Table 9: To test the hypothesis, data in tables 2, 5 & 8 were used.

H ₁	There is significant relationship between buffet service and customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation = 0.83 Sig = 0.05 N for staff = 120 N for customers = 100 General mean = 3.2	Positive
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The analysis has a grand mean of 3.2. The figure above shows that the Pearson product moment correlation is 0.83 which indicates that there is significant relationship between buffet service and customer satisfaction. Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

H₀₂: There is no significant link between room services and customer satisfaction

Table 10: To test this hypothesis, data in tables 3, 5 & 8 were used.

H ₂	There is significant link between room services and customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation = 0.81 Sig = 0.05 N for staff = 120 N for customers = 100 General mean = 3.1	Positive
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The analysis has a grand mean of 3.1. The table above shows that the Pearson product moment correlation is 0.81 which indicates that there is significant link between room services and customer satisfaction. Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between table service method and customer satisfaction.

Table 11: To test hypothesis three, data in tables 4, 7 & 8 were used.

H ₃	There is significant relationship between table service method and customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation = 0.83 Sig = 0.05 N for staff = 120 N for customers = 100	Positive
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		General mean = 3.2	
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The analysis has a grand mean of 3.2. The table above shows that the Pearson product moment correlation is 0.83 which indicates that there is significant relationship between table service method and customer satisfaction. Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the hypotheses one revealed that there is significant relationship between buffet service, room service, and table service respectively, and customer satisfaction. Hypothesis one gave a Pearson moment correlation value of 0.88 indicating positive outcome. This aligns with customer value theory because when customers are recognized and appreciated, buffet service will be used to give them different varieties of food to make their choice. When customers come in group during wedding or other occasions in the hotel, they prefer buffet services which will enable them make choice and enjoy their stay. A good and attractive buffet service makes the customer to be happy. The results of hypothesis two were also positive, with Pearson value of 0.88.

Arguably, quick and excellent room services to customers are the key to business success, hence also aligning with customer value theory. For Ninemeier and Purdue (2018), most customers prefer room service when they are busy in the hotel room attending to their needs. Some customer like privacy, and will be very satisfied when they are served in their rooms (Gronroos, 2020; Coman, 2019). Finally, the results of hypothesis three indicated also significant positive relationship between table service method and customer satisfaction, with Pearson value of 0.88. During table service, customers are at home to make their order and when properly served, such maintains their level of value for the hotel establishment. Basically, table service is usual for the customers who are in the bar for meeting or for other purposes (Ochy & Wise, 2017). Customers who enjoy quick hotel service and good attention get satisfaction and are likely to continue patronizing the hotels.

Conclusion

Every customer wants to get the best from the organisation he patronizes. If they are satisfied, they will continue to repurchase from the hotel establishment and even tell others about the organization. Thus, service organisations like hotels should be concerned with the best strategies for implementation of food service methods. Basically, food service method is the overall plan of how a hotel will provide food and beverage services to its guests, in line with the goals of the hotel. This can include the type of food that is offered, the menu design, the price, point of the menu items and the way food is presented and served.

Consequently, the researcher makes the following recommendations: (1) Hotel organisations should effectively implement buffet service method so as

they could to achieve customer satisfaction, (2) There should be quick responses to customers' needs in the room service to achieve customer satisfaction, and (3) Hotel firms should also offer effective table service to customer so as to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

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