

Marketing approach to hotel patronage and product quality during COVID-19

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Abstract

Frame of the research: *Hoteliers pursue the goal of continuing to keep their clients by understanding the factors that influence a customer's decision to prioritise a hotel. Many components could give the hotel an extra advantage in the hotel competition.*

Purpose of the paper: *This paper looks into the impact of hotel components as service centres due to COVID-19, comparing it to customers' overall satisfaction with their lodging visits in Lagos, Nigeria, and the likelihood of patronising the same lodges on their subsequent expeditions.*

Methodology: *The study employed a survey research design, which allowed the phenomena to be examined in their natural setting. The study population included the three hundred and thirty-three (344) star-rated hotels in Lagos, Nigeria.*

Findings: *The study recognised that product quality considerations have significance in deciding customers' general satisfaction and the probability of patronising the same lodging house.*

Research limits: *The results do not cover some parts of the country as the pandemic is still ongoing.*

Practical implications: *The findings indicate that customer loyalty is influenced by product quality. It was suggested that, at the beginning of the planning of the hotel structure, management must take note of different classifications of customers, along these lines, guaranteeing that a satisfactory quality is provided.*

Originality of the paper: *The study supports the notion that hotel product quality is a dynamic construct with varying effects on customer patronage. It helps to understand that the image of a business, the quality of food, the environment, the price, and customer trust-all of which are thought to make a business more competitive and improve mental well-being-can have a big impact.*

Key words: product quality; customer patronage; business image; food quality; quality personnel; hotel atmosphere

1. Introduction

Despite the currently underway COVID-19, service industries have faced new opportunities and difficulties, with the hospitality industry being one of the most severely affected (Davahli *et al.*, 2020; Hao *et al.*, 2020; Ozdemir *et al.*, 2021). The coronavirus outbreak poses a threat to the hotel, restaurant, club, travel, and tourism industries. Our hospitality industry has taken the brunt of the damage (Gössling *et al.*, 2020). In a work cited by Chan *et al.* (2021), the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations predicts a 98 percent decline in international tourism in 2020. The crisis has had an impact on the macro-environment and consumer behaviour,

resulting in changes in hotel performance (Jones and Comfort, 2020). The hospitality industry, as a service industry, now accounts for a significant portion of the global economy and plays an important role in all global economies (Ozdemir *et al.*, 2021). It is also impossible for countries to disregard it.

Coronavirus, also known as novel pneumonia, was introduced to the world in December 2019 in Wuhan, China (Eniola, 2022; Eniola and Ineba Decster, 2022). The World Health Organization called this new, highly contagious coronavirus a global pandemic because it was so easy to spread. Nigeria went on a lockdown on March 30, 2020, for an initial period of 14 days with only essential products permitted (Eniola, 2022). The coronavirus pandemic created an unprecedented level of instability in the hotel business, not just in Nigeria but around the world (Anunobi *et al.*, 2021; Bello and Bello, 2021; Jones and Comfort, 2020; Ozdemir *et al.*, 2021). In reaction to this infectious disease, state lockdowns and travel curbs were set, which brought about numerous hostels' shutting down incidentally or working for a portion of their accessible limit. COVID-19 has caused great damage (Eniola, 2022). A new global pandemic may have changed our very own social lives. However, the industry should not view these unfortunate times as a complete loss. The lockdown ban is lifted in certain countries, such as Nigeria. The question is: how did the hotel use the lockdown period to get the most out of it and prepare for new business after COVID-19?

Within this contemporary industry, the imperative of shifting gears from conventional modes of operation to modern-style operations is now imposed on the hospitality business. The competitiveness of the hospitality industry is becoming more and more alarming in the business environment because of a globalised and technological approach (Maria *et al.*, 2008; Quesado, 2022). The attention of the hospitality industry is now focused on what to do during and after the pandemic period in order to meet their customers' needs and wants and ensure guest satisfaction with their minimally accessible resources. To seek competitive advantages, it becomes imperative that organisations not only be concerned with what they can do to satisfy their workforce but also seek ways to maximise the performance of their organisation through patronage (Velthuis, 2022).

The hospitality industry is based on the relationship between the host and the customer. When customers come in, the host greets them, makes them feel welcome, provides comfort, and meets their needs. When they leave, the host thanks them and invites them back (Ariffin and Maghzi, 2012). The provision of comfortable and secure lodging in a hotel is a critical factor in a tourist's decision to visit a particular destination. Hence, countries worldwide are expanding their scope of hospitality enterprises to meet the needs of the home-away-from-home market in the tourism business. This is because the primary concern of hospitality is to cater for customers by providing food and accommodations, offering entertainment, making provision for a myriad of services, and meeting other needs from time to time. Furthermore, service providers have upgraded from meeting people's needs to focusing on product quality. In the face of the contemporary and volatile environment, it has become a competitive issue that must be

accorded ultimate priority. This is consistent with Eniola and Olorunleke (2020); Garvin (1984); Styliadis *et al.* (2020) opinion that product quality is becoming an important competitive issue because surveys have revealed that consumer dissatisfaction has to do with the existing level of quality of a product. Furthermore, academics have been able to provide empirical investigations into the influence of product quality in almost all countries in the world. Studies like Mosoma (2014) in Tanzania, Okibo and Ogwe (2013) in Telkom Kenya, Natuhwera (2011) in Uganda, Jakpar *et al.* (2012), Shariff *et al.* (2015) in Malaysia, Choi and Chu (2001) in Hong Kong, Zaim *et al.* (2013) in Turkey, and Oliveira *et al.* (2013) in Portugal all discuss the critical success factor of hotel patronage. Moreover, the lockdown has been lifted, with normalcy gradually returning to the country. Hospitality businesses do not have to wait in fear for the end of the pandemic to start planning a recovery. The recovery process begins. As countries around the world are beginning to relax restrictions, every hospitality outfit should be oriented towards a start and pay more attention to maximising and preparing for a renovated company. Therefore, this study will look at how the hotel's product quality influences customer patronage.

2. Literature

2.1 Customer patronage

Patronage in marketing refers to a transaction procedure in which someone is compensated in exchange for supporting a brand or organization (Gremler and Brown, 1996; Oliver, 1999). According to Sirgy *et al.* (2000), factors like location, products, pricing, promotions, and atmosphere might affect customers patronage behaviour. Customer patronage has become everything that a customer does to purchase, or not purchase, a good or service. In offering its goods or services, the consumer makes a payment with the expectation that it will provide benefits or exchange satisfaction for the costs incurred (Bogicevic and Bujisic, 2021).

According to Anderson and Sullivan (1993); Butkouskaya *et al.* (2021), customers who expect a particular brand to satisfy them will be more likely to purchase the product in question. Customers who are satisfied with a business's services and products are more likely to purchase them again in the future. This is especially true if the business consistently provides better services. Firms that provide superior quality services to their customers are more likely to have satisfied customers as well as earn higher profits than their industry norms (Bogicevic and Bujisic, 2021; Kivela *et al.*, 1999). Managers use customer satisfaction as a tool to forecast loyalty for the brand and ultimately predict repurchase behaviour. Based on this information, it is expected that customers of the hotels will seek out the hotels that fulfil their value-for-money anticipations over those that do not. Those who are oblivious will encounter a lack of customer movement due to choosing the competitors over the national chain restaurants the same way they would choose to stay away from a competitor (Klimkeit *et al.*, 2021; Stevens *et al.*, 1995). To sum it all up, the quality of staff, food, and atmosphere are just

some of the factors that contribute to a customer's long-term loyalty to a company.

2.2 Product quality

Although quality is not a complex trait, it is the consumer's buying behaviour similarity between a certain brand, service, store, and product category (Xhema *et al.*, 2018). Empirical literature has demonstrated a plethora of customer loyalty via product quality (Hellier *et al.*, 2003; Xhema *et al.*, 2018). A consensus view can be supported by at least a few examples from this study, which agree with the attitude and psychological position of the concepts in question. In a study conducted by Jacoby *et al.* (1978), it was shown that a customer's loyalty to a company is based on their preference for one or more of a set of alternatives, such as the product's overall quality. Customers' patronage is often determined by a psychological process of quality (Anh and Chi, 2021; Syafarudin, 2021). Consequently, it could not be less agreed that the customer's slavish devotion to purchasing or re-purchasing the product offering is consistent whether or not they are influenced by marketing or other external factors. Contrary to what Dick and Basu (1994) stated, the patronage and loyalty of a customer is a set of attitudes held by the customer that are consistently favourable toward the brand purchased. In this study, hotels' personal relevance and attitudes towards a competitor's product, such as brand image, quality of the personnel, hotel meal quality, price equality, consumer trust, and atmosphere of the hotel, are taken into consideration. However, the relationship between the customers and the product is not clearly defined; rather, their perception is in terms of customer sentiment and perceptions of the product (Xhema *et al.*, 2018). In addition, by citing empirical and anecdotal evidence, Boshoff and Terblanche (2006) agreed that consumer patronage is a long-standing strategy and behaviour configuration that has been strengthened by a number of experiences over time.

2.2.1 Business image

The study by Zaid *et al.* (2021), shows that increasing the positive image of a company can generate profits as a result of substantially increased customer satisfaction and retention. Societies such as the US and Canada are highly influenced to some degree by articles in the mass media, circulating advertisements, and a company's continuous effort to convince the public of its value and its lack of likeness to the rest of the competitors in the field (Anh and Chi, 2021; Nguyen and Leblanc, 2001). Awareness of an organization's positive behaviour is called "reputation," which is the behaviour reliability the company has established over time by ensuring a high quality service with zero tolerance for defects (Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000). Customers often expect high levels of customer service, so a poor level of service will affect the positive image the firm has in their mind (Xhema *et al.*, 2018).

In the same manner, the physical environment also communicates and projects the mission and image to the customer (Al-Gharaibah, 2020);

so, in a similar manner, customer satisfaction levels are also raised by the staff's conduct and attitudes, which reflect the calibre of the services and products the hotel provides. In addition, as previously mentioned, it is important to note that the client is most attentive to what the service provider does rather than what he or she says (Crosby *et al.*, 1990; Moreira and Axt, 1986). Peng and Zhang (2020) opine that when evaluating the service to be offered, organisations must ensure that the services they offer are delivered to their customers in a timely, professional, and appropriate manner to avoid keeping customers waiting. A long wait for a service could have bad consequences for both the service and the company, which is why Anh and Chi (2021) said that having a long wait for a service could hurt both the service and the company. Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) found that a positive business image leads to high loyalty among customers of different companies. Based on the present study, customers are more likely to come back to a hotel that is seen as professional and appealing in the neighbourhood.

2.2.2. Food quality

When it comes to making decisions about what food to buy, quality is an important factor (Nwokah and Adiele, 2018). Consumers generally prefer high-quality products, which extends to their food options as well (Kuhn *et al.*, 2018). Since consumers will make a purchase decision based on their perceptions of quality, it is important to recognise that the word "quality" itself can mean different things to different people, depending on how they choose to interpret it (Majid *et al.*, 2018; Shariff *et al.*, 2015). Taste, temperature, portion size, menu variety, and nutritional value are just a few of the many ways customers judge the quality of the food they eat (Kivela *et al.*, 1999). Food quality is the most important thing for customers to think about when they go to a restaurant.

Majid *et al.* (2018); Namkung and Jang (2007) assert that the meal quality of the hotel restaurant is the key determinant of hospitality. Although studies have shown that customer loyalty is the major determinant of a hotel's profitability, the results of a few specific studies have been criticised, while other studies have shown that the quality of the food from the hotel restaurant is the most important determinant of client retention and loyalty (Han and Hyun, 2017). There has been a lot of research done on customer patronage in various restaurant settings, such as fine dining, cafés, chain restaurants, and authentic restaurants (Abdullah *et al.*, 2018). There has been a lack of research in the hotel restaurant industry on the relationship between food quality, service quality, brand image, and customer patronage (Abdullah *et al.*, 2018; Majid *et al.*, 2018). However, Majid *et al.* (2018); Namkung and Jang (2007) found that meat quality and taste are also strongly correlated with customer satisfaction and that customer satisfaction positively influences the interest in purchasing. According to Kivela *et al.* (1999); Kivela *et al.* (2000), there are measures of how good the food is, how nutritious the food is, and how many different food qualities are satisfied. These three are asked to find out how well-liked foods make customers feel.

2.2.3 The personnel quality

According to Brown and Swartz (1989); Verma *et al.* (2020), they suggest that the contact between the consumer and the service representative has the greatest impact on how well customers perceive the quality of the service they get as a whole. Accordingly, Anyasor and Njelita (2020) assert that asking service personnel to attend to the requirements and desires of returning clients provides a perception that serves as an incentive, which may then have a significant, continuous patronage with some customers or be a means that can cause dissatisfied customers to lessen their patronage.

In order to have score high for a good performance by the clients, personal quality services must be in a satisfactory way. Anyasor and Njelita (2020) mentioned ways that personnel needed to perform in order to give excellent service. To be successful in the role of providing customer service, it is important to recognise and connect with the client in terms of the product and the product experience, as well as their value and perception, a capacity for customer-oriented thinking and action, as well as the ability to handle social pressure. A complete understanding of a customer's needs will help you better provide value and give the customer a better experience.

Hence, considering the fact that the patrons' evaluations of the service quality depend on the level of cooperation they have with the providers, the level of cooperation depends on the service provider's performance. Nikolich and Sparks (1995) suggested that the level of cooperation between the service provider and the customer plays an important role in the assessment of service quality. It is put forward that higher-quality hotel employees have a positive correlation to customer loyalty as a larger portion of customers spend more.

2.2.4 Hotels atmosphere

Hotel atmosphere is important because it affects the customer's cognitive, emotional, and psychological state (Emir, 2016). It also affects how likely the customer is to visit again. The atmosphere is classified into three aspects: environmental conditions, spatial order and functionality, and symbols, signs, and artefacts (Bitner, 1992). Environmental conditions include things like lighting, colour, and scent. The appropriate arrangement of furnishings and materials is denoted by spatial order and functionality; signs, symbols, and artefacts are the elements through which people interact with a given environment (Emir, 2016; Liu and Jang, 2009). An atmosphere-related element is divided into four categories based on guest perceptions: distinctiveness, hospitability, relaxation, and refinement (Heide and Grønhaug, 2009). Moreover, atmospheric elements was equally break down into five groups: external variables, general interior variables, layout and design variables, point-of-purchase and decoration variables, and human variables (Turley and Milliman, 2000). These points to the fact that researchers have looked into the importance of having a unique atmosphere in the hotel industry.

Research by Namkung and Jang (2007) found that the atmosphere, quality, aura, and character of a hotel are all influenced by the hotel's

environment. Cleanliness, the display of executive and spacious rooms, and the arrangement of flowers and tables, as well as lighting and colour displays in the interior, may be responsible for this. As a result, the hotel's music and colour displays are being blamed for any potential depressive behaviour. It is critical to consider the ambiance when evaluating a hotel. The atmosphere quality influences the perceived service quality (Reimer and Kuehn, 2005). The effect of the hotel lobby atmosphere on customer impressions was investigated by Countryman and Jang (2006), who discovered that atmospheric features such as colour, illumination, and style influence customer impressions. Likewise, a study was carried out to determine the effects of service and food quality on customer satisfaction and loyalty, as well as the effect of atmospheric variables (Ha and Jang, 2010). Customers' perceptions of quality were found to have a significant influence on their satisfaction and loyalty. The study also concluded that the magnitude of this effect varied depending on the customers' perception of the physical environment. Customers' perceptions of a hotel can be influenced by the hotel's atmosphere. Consumers purchase hotel products based on their perception of the establishment. This will be looked into to see if the atmosphere of a hotel affects customer patronage. Hence, hypothesis will be made to ascertain if hotel atmosphere and customer patronage are linked in a positive way.

2.2.5 Greater price equality

Malik *et al.* (2012) say that businesses should think about more than just the quality of their services or products when they want to make their customers happy. They should also think about the price they charge. Price and quality are two of the most important factors in determining a product's value (Malik *et al.*, 2012).

Researchers, in previous studies, found a negative relationship between price and perceived value: the more expensive a product, the lower its perceived value (Dodds *et al.*, 1991; Lauren Munger and Grewal, 2001). Many consumers are looking to get the most value for their money and are demanding better quality at lower prices. Some customers, however, may be willing to pay more for a product or service they truly enjoy. Accordingly, it was noted that high-priced services can have a negative impact on the consumer experience. This means that if the service received does not match the price paid, the consumer experience suffers (Radwan, 2022). To make sure customers are happy, hotel owners should think about pricing variables and look for the best way to match prices with people's expectations.

Likewise, Bei and Chiao (2001) say there is a direct association between pricing fairness and consumer loyalty, as well as an indirect beneficial impact through customer satisfaction and patronage. The study of Hidayat *et al.* (2019) findings indicates that perceived price fairness had the greatest impact on customer patronage, followed by perceived service quality and perceived product quality. Moreover, Kimes and Wirtz (2002) identified a number of strategies for maintaining consumers' perceptions of price fairness, including providing discounted prices, gradually increasing the

price over time, and adding extra services. As a result, when services or products are sold for more money, people do not think they are getting a bad deal.

2.2.6 Customer trust

Morgan and Hunt (1994) previously conceptualised trust as occurring when both people believe that the other person is honest and reliable. Trust is seen to be one of the fundamental factors that create successful business relationships, whether you are dealing with business-to-business or business-to-consumer. According to Napitupulu *et al.* (2021), trust is the result of a behavioural strategy and positive outcomes.

Customer trust is the interaction between two or more parties. Trust is perceived as confidence in the intent and behaviour of the other in the context of a producer-consumer relationship (Trini and Salim, 2018). Trust is a psychological state characterised by a desire to accept an unpleasant situation based on a positive expectation of another party's desire or behaviour (Trini and Salim, 2018). Trust can be viewed as the willingness of the clients to put up with the shortcomings of the hotel services in hopes that the other party will take certain actions to correct them. Therefore, trust is a cognitive component of psychological factors.

Trust has been categorised into beliefs, intentions, behaviour, systems, dispositional, and situational trust decisions (Salo and Karjaluoto, 2007). This categorisation shapes the relationship between the customer patronage and the hotel service quality. Hence, it will be relevant if consumer trust theory is useful in reviewing hotel services based on consumer confidence as well as the object of this research. Likewise, Robbins and Judge (2022), divide the concept trust into four key proportions; they are integrity, competence, consistency, and openness. Integrity refers to honesty and truth. Competence talks about an individual's knowledge, technical, and interpersonal skills; consistency refers to reliability, predictive ability, and accurate individual assessment in handling situations; and openness refers to three aspects of interpersonal communication, namely: willingness to self-discipline; acting honestly; and having feelings and thoughts. In this study, the trust dimension is associated with the integrity of the hotel's administration, competence in terms of service provision, consistency in retaining their loyal customers, and openness in terms of business dealings.

Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) found that trust, which is the cornerstone of trust-based buying, can help consumers with their decision-making process and help reduce the dissonance that consumers feel when choosing a product that is not trusted. If a service provider can make it easier for a customer to switch, the customer's perceived transaction costs will go up. As a result, the customer will trust the brand more. That is why this study puts to the test the existence of a positive relationship between customer trust and customer patronage.

2.3 Customer patronage and product quality - theoretical, empirical frameworks and hypothesis

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Consumer and marketing researchers have applied the theory of reasoned action to a broad range of actions across time, including the selection and use of hotels (Buttle and Bok, 1996; Kumar *et al.*, 2019; Nezakati *et al.*, 2015). The foundation of the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) is the idea that people are rational and use the information at their disposal in a methodical manner. The theory seeks to clarify human modes of conduct and the fundamental causes of conduct. Customers' beliefs and attitudes Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), regarding the quality of the hotel's products result in an increase in their preference for hotel patronage (Sirgy *et al.*, 2000). When a customer travels, his first preference is to choose a hotel that meets all of his needs in terms of food quality, business image, personnel quality, the atmosphere of the hotel, customer trust, and greater price equality, which are the factors of product quality in this study.

With regards to the hotel business, good quality service can be expressed in several different ways, but business image, convenient room facilities, assorted drinks and foods, customer security, the atmosphere of the environment, an affordable price, room maintenance, and a courteous attitude on the part of the hotel workers are the primary determinants of good quality service (Ahmad *et al.*, 2010; Asmayadi and Hartini, 2015; Lahap *et al.*, 2016; Malik *et al.*, 2020; Nikou *et al.*, 2017; Shariff *et al.*, 2015). Patronage is the product of a distinction made by a visitor between their perceptions of the service and their experience of it. This act would contribute to the repetitive purchasing actions of a service provider by a consumer (Choi and Chu, 2001). Consequently, customer patronage is viewed as a profoundly held duty to repurchase a company's item to the detriment of a contender's contribution.

According to Jasinskas *et al.* (2016), two elements are needed to provide hotel service: the material base in terms of the technical quality and service in terms of functional or process quality. Kinderis *et al.* (2011), says that what the customer gets during his stay is the professional standard. The guests at the hotel get accommodation, parking, food for the visitor from the hotel restaurant. This is an external side of quality. Frequently, however, not generally, the customer might estimate these components; their inclination relies upon the specialized arrangement applied by the hotel management to take care of the customers' concern. Before selecting the service, its availability and status can be displayed to the customer, as this affects the quality expectations. As a result, technical quality is often thought of as a combination of material measures and technologies, the characteristics of which can be found out through the products' normal quality assurance methods.

The service cannot be seen and outlined in advance in the context of managing the hotel operation. Therefore, consumer evaluation in this regard is subjective (Jasinskas *et al.*, 2016), which proposes concentrating on observable evidence of every operation, i.e., the interior of a room, correspondence with a guest, the food quality, assorted drinks, etc.

Nonetheless, researchers show that consumers respect the professionalism and expertise of the hotel's staff. The review reveals two key groups of components, the standards of which should be handled by the owner of a hotel. However, some hotel experts say that what a customer appreciates most is taken into account (Anyasor and Njelita, 2020; Kinderis *et al.*, 2011; Wadawi *et al.*, 2011).

In research done by Haghghi *et al.* (2012), the authors used structural equation modelling to analyse the data and test the hypotheses, demonstrating that food quality, pricing, service quality, company atmosphere, and customer happiness all had a positive, substantial influence on loyalty. However, neither the price of the product nor the location of the business has a significant impact on customer loyalty. According to research by Sefian *et al.* (2013), the best predictors of patronage are food and service quality. Tan *et al.* (2014) looked into Chinese customers' perceptions of service quality in relation to customer satisfaction in hospitality businesses. The study discovered that service quality variables have a positive impact on customer satisfaction when using both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

In the country's retailing industry, Chinomona and Sandada (2013) looked into whether customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty are predictors of customer intention to repurchase. The findings revealed a link between customer satisfaction and trust and loyalty, as well as a significant positive link between customer loyalty and repurchase intent. During a period of economic recession, Agu *et al.* (2017) looked into the relationship between restaurant image and customer loyalty. The results show that the study firms' environment, convenience, merchandise, and personnel attributes are all significant predictors of customer loyalty. Olise *et al.* (2015) looked into the factors that influence customers' patronage of hospitality establishments. According to the study's findings, service quality, atmosphere quality, perceived value, environment, consumer demographics, and modernity all have a significant influence on consumer patronage behaviours. Many factors in this study have a positive effect, which means that this is very clear from the previous studies. This study hypothesises that:

H1: Hotel image has a significant association with consumer patronage

H2: Hotel food quality has a significant association with consumer patronage.

H3: Hotel quality personnel have a significant association with customer patronage.

H4: Hotel atmosphere has a significant association with consumer patronage.

H5: Hotel price value has a significant association with consumer patronage.

H6: Customer trust has a significant association with consumer patronage.

3. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive method and utilised an online questionnaire, given the difficulty of assessing all of the hoteliers due to

personal contact restrictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic. To elicit information from the population as regards all the explanatory variables under investigation, it is generally believe that this method could be used for data collection on experiences, feelings, thoughts, and motives that are impossible to observe directly. Adoption of an online survey reduces manipulation tendencies. Eniola *et al.* (2019) opined that questionnaires could be used to obtain an answer to specific questions in order to produce a quantitative answer to a particular issue. The population of the study was 3, 218 hotel customers from Lagos State, Nigeria. The study was carried out in Lagos State because the accessible information from hotels.ng (<https://hotels.ng/>), an online travel organisation in Nigeria, indicated that there are 12, 833 hotels in Nigeria, with Lagos State, the business focus of the nation, having the biggest hotel highlight with 3, 218 hotels accounting for 25.1 percent of the absolute hotels in Nigeria. The study applied Cochran (1963) sample size formula to determine the sample size of the study. The study's sample size was 344, with a 95 percent confidence level and a 5 percent error level. According to Eniola (2018), this was considered the level of acceptable response. Three hundred and forty-four (344) online questions were sent out, of which two hundred and sixteen (216) responses were received, thus having a response rate of 75.8 percent.

Prior research reviewed to establish the measure of scale variables. The questions were drawn from a variety of studies and were to be responded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Business image (BI) was measured using ten components from Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000). Five items were adopted from Suhartanto (2011) for quality personnel (QP). Four components from Olorunniwo *et al.* (2006) were incorporated into the hotel atmosphere (HA). Customer Trust (CT) adopted seven items Skogland and Siguaw (2004). Six items were taken from Gagić *et al.* (2013) for food quality (FQ). The price value (PV) has four items adopted from Hassan *et al.* (2013), while customer patronage (CP) was measured by three items drawn from Ryu and Jang (2008). Before proceeding with the data analysis, all constructions must have a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.7. (Hair *et al.*, 2010) to calculate construct reliability, . Business image (0.786), food quality (0.849), quality personnel (0.856), hotel atmosphere (0.789), price value (0.819), and customer trust (0.732) all received great marks. All of the measuring scales were chosen because their Cronbach's alpha values were greater than 0.7. Furthermore, two academics and three industry administrators validated the proposed questionnaire in order to establish its face validity and gain helpful comments on the questions. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 22) software was used to analyse the construct.

4. Results

The results of the R-square (R²) test show the adjusted R-square (R²) equals 0.67 as shown in the Table 1, implying 67 percent of variation in customer patronage is explained by variations in the predictor variables

(Business image, Food quality, Quality personnel, Hotel atmosphere, Price value and Customer trust). The value of the Durbin Watson statistic of 1.98 indicates that the error terms are not correlated and that by implication means the regression results are authentic.

Tab. 1: Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	R ² Change	Durbin Watson
1	.276a	.067	.054	.48247	.067	1.980

a. Predictors: (Constant), BI, FQ, QP, HA, PV, CT

b. Dependent Variable: CUP

The ANOVA in the table 2 shows the statistical significance (sig=0.000), in which the F-value is 6.886, and less than or equal to 0.000.

The F-Value of 6.886 indicates that the sample data provide sufficient evidence to conclude that the regression model fits the data better than the model with no independent variables. This is a sign that the level of independent variables in the study model improves the dependent variables

Tab. 2: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.649	3	1.623	6.886	.000b
Residual	47.550	212	.232		
Total	53.640	215			

Tab. 3: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	2.004	.242		8.644	.000	
BI (H ₁)	.161	.062	.162	2.437	.016	Accepted
FQ (H ₂)	.164	.052	.186	1.243	.015	Accepted
QP (H ₃)	.162	.060	.183	2.608	.006	Accepted
HA (H ₄)	.172	.063	.191	1.493	.017	Accepted
PV (H ₅)	.191	.071	.183	1.568	.004	Accepted
CT (H ₆)	.161	.051	.126	1.623	.000	Accepted

a. Dependent Variable: CUP

4.1 Analysis of the results

Stemming from Table 3 above, it was shown that product quality, which was measured via six explanatory variables, has the capacity to predict the patronage of hotels. The first hypothesis was tested to determine the relationship that exists between business image (BI) and customer patronage (CUP). According to the result, it can be concluded that CUP will be affected by a sixteen point one percent (16.1) change in BI. It was determined that the test was significant at 5% because the t value and resultant significant level of likelihood of occurrence were 2.437 (P<0.016),

indicating that the 0.05 percent level was below the test significant level. So, it can be said that, at a 95% level of confidence, the BI has a big impact on CUP. As a result, the decision rule is to confirm the H_1 .

To determine the relationship that exists between food quality (FQ) and customer patronage (CUP), the hypothesis was put to the test. The results showed that the coefficient of FQ was 0.164. Thus, from the result, it can be concluded that CUP will be affected by a sixteen point four percent (16.4%) change in FQ. It was determined that the test was significant at 5% because the t value and resultant significant level of likelihood of occurrence were 1.243 ($P < 0.015$), indicating that the 0.05 percent level was below the test significant level. Therefore, H_2 is confirmed.

The H_3 was tested to indicate the association between quality personnel (QP) and customer patronage (CUP). The result shows that the coefficient of the QP was 0.162. Thus, it can be concluded that CUP will be affected by a sixteen point two percent (16.2) change in QP. The test was determined to be significant at 5% because the t value and resultant significant level of likelihood of occurrence were 2.608 ($P < 0.006$), indicating that the test was significant below the 0.05 percent level. Therefore, the implication is that the QP does have a significant positive influence on CUP. Therefore, H_3 is confirmed.

The test result indicated a relationship between hotel atmosphere (HA) and customer patronage (CUP). The result shows that the coefficient of the HA was 0.172. Thus, it signifies that a change in HA will result in a seventeen point two percent (16.2%) change in CUP. The test was significant at the five percent (5%) level since the computed t value and significance probability were both 1.493 ($P < 0.017$), which is lower than 0.05%. As a result, the inference is that, at a 95% confidence level, the HA has a considerable favourable impact on CUP. Therefore, H_4 is confirmed.

The tested result indicated the relationship between price value (PV) and customer patronage (CUP). The result shows that the coefficient of the PV was 0.191. As a result, a change in PV results in a nineteen point one percent (19.1%) change in CUP. The test was significant at the five percent (5%) level since the computed t value and significance probability were both 1.568 ($P < 0.004$), which are lower than 0.05%. As a result, at a 95% confidence level, the PV does have a substantial beneficial impact on CUP.

As a result, a change in PV results in a nineteen point one percent (19.1%) change in CUP. The test was significant at the five percent (5%) level since the computed t value and significance probability were both 1.568 ($P < 0.004$), which are lower than 0.05%. As a result, at a 95% confidence level, the PV does have a substantial beneficial impact on CUP. Therefore, H_5 is confirmed.

The tested result indicated the relationship between customer trust (CT) and customer patronage (CUP). The result shows that the coefficient of the CT was 0.161. As a result, a change in CT causes a seventeen point one percent (16.1%) change in CUP. The test was significant at the five percent (5%) level since the computed t value and significance probability were both 1.623 ($P < 0.000$) which is lower than 0.05%. Consequently, at a 95% confidence level, the CT does have a considerable positive influence on CUP. Therefore, H_6 is confirmed.

When looking at the explanatory model, it can be agreed that strong correlation relationships exist between the observable variables. Lahap *et al.* (2016); Nikou *et al.* (2017) support the H_1 finding in this study, who found that an organisation's overall image management improves and contributes positively to customer loyalty while also increasing customer patronage. This result contributes to the fact that increasing a company's positive image can increase sales through increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. As Lagos was a highly accessible place, hotel operators ought to be more concerned with noting the market edge to increase the value of the hotel. Some hotel management can use a positive image to gain an advantage over others.

In addition, a positive business image is a significant factor in determining what kind of service a business provides its customers. When a customer is committed to a product, they will do their utmost to ignore all competitors of that product to maintain their company's long-term profit. Superior service quality could have a long-term impact on customer loyalty. To be profitable, hoteliers must focus on creating strong customer-facing products or services that lead to customer retention and patronage.

The findings H_2 in this study are consistent with those of a study conducted in Shah Alam, Malaysia, by Shariff *et al.* (2015), which confirmed the tenacious capacity of food quality on customer satisfaction and revisit intention. Likewise, it is consistent with the findings of Namkung and Jang (2007) that food quality is the essential variable that affects customer patronage and loyalty. Taking a critical look at the overall predictive effects of the explanatory variables on product quality as indicated by the results, it is an undeniable fact that hotels with a passion for product quality have a better chance of enjoying consistent customer patronage. This finding is in line with Wadawi *et al.* (2011) in Kenya, Asmayadi and Hartini (2015) in Pontianak, Indonesia. Additionally, results indicated that the most significant influences on patronage were various drinks, followed by practical hotel amenities, delectable meals, and roomy accommodations, in a hierarchical method of predictive impacts. The study's contribution is that during COVID-19, when social distancing is required, many customers may not consume food from outside the hotel but consider it worthwhile to take their dishes in their lodgings for health reasons. Overall, it is noted that hotel food services facilities are, by all accounts, one of the least significant selections made by hotel consumers. Choi and Chu (2001) asserted that hotel food service facilities are decent, but are not focal elements in the selection of hotels. The authors agreed that there is frequently a variety of other restaurants close to the lodging area. Therefore, as a matter of health and safety during this period, hotel food service facilities are a significant factor in the choice of accommodation.

The present H_3 study corroborates the findings of Ahmad *et al.* (2010) that excellent service offered by the personnel to a customer enhances customer loyalty, customer retention, and patronage. This study looks at the need for contact with customers in areas like booking effectiveness, personal customer service, helpfulness of personnel towards customers,

neat appearance, efficiency of personnel in multilingual skills, and understanding ability. All these are an indication that the interaction with the service employee is the most influential factor in the customer service quality assessment and overall service satisfaction. In addition, it shows that service quality is regarded as one of the primary concerns in assessing the quality of service.

The managerial implication is that, because of COVID-19, if the major determinants of consumers' general fulfilment levels are recognized, then the resources associated with those areas must be taken into account by hotel management. Since personnel-service quality is the greatest factor affecting the level of customers' general fulfilment with hotels in Nigeria, hotel management ought to devote more efforts during this pandemic period to staff training. Train employees on etiquette, friendliness, intelligibility, communication skills, dress sense, and check-in/out operational efficiency. Additionally, hoteliers must make sure that all personnel are involved in developing and continuously improving service quality, and employees must understand that upholding service quality is an integral component of their jobs.

The result of the H_4 is in agreement with Choi and Chu (2001) investigation on determinants of hotel guests' repeat patronage in Hong Kong, which found that room quality, which is an atmosphere, was one of the most influential factors in repeat patronage. This study agrees with the results of Emir (2016) that the hotel atmosphere has a strong positive relationship with customer patronage and loyalty.

During this coronavirus, clients will become conscious of their environment and have the hotel atmosphere include room qualities, room neatness, comforts of the bed or sleeping cushion, and quality control of temperatures inside the room. Studies showed that the atmosphere of a hotel, such as tidiness, quietness, and facility usability, has a significant impact on customers' lodging selection. In this manner, additional resources, such as room set-up, cleanliness, quietness, and room temperature control, ought to be aimed at improving the hotel atmosphere. In this respect, hotel management has to guarantee that their lodges represent their organization's reputation during and after this coronavirus pandemic, particularly when designing promotional activities. They should emphasise environmental signals.

The H_5 correlates with the works of Anyasor and Njelita (2020), who found that price value, had a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and patronage. The pandemic's impact on the country's overall economic system in terms of expenditure means that consumer value is linked to clients' perceptions of value for money. Now, consumers have become more sensible and careful about discretionary expenditure (Choi and Chu, 2001). They cut back and look for ways to bargain less, and they are becoming more demanding in their purchasing decisions. Moreover, as a highly competitive and similar hotel industry in aspects of services and amenities, the accessibility of consumer options available can be seen as essential elements in prospective customers' purchasing behaviours.

The H_6 revealed that customer trust has a significant positive relationship with customer loyalty. Haghghi *et al.* (2012); Napitupulu *et al.* (2021), support this finding by whose results indicate that customer trust is a factor in enhancing and maintaining customer loyalty towards a firm. Given the level of safety at their disposal, the current coronavirus problem has given customers the confidence to return to the hotel. Customer trust-based repeat patronage consists of responsibility for health security measures, reliability of safety, and availability of safe health boxes. The measures necessary to preserve a feeling of wellbeing, safeguard lives and assets, and minimise the threat of mishaps or endemic events are included in guest security in hotels. Safety and security for most consumers, including airlines, destinations, and accommodations, can be seen as the basis for travel. Our study did not suggest that client satisfaction would result from the presence of this factor. It is, however, very likely that the lack of these can lead to client displeasure, thereby decreasing the prospect of patronage repetition. Therefore, consumers are likely to stress other features, like quality service, room quality, and value for money, which can directly affect their general fulfilment and the probability of returning. Most hotels in Lagos should be fitted with a high-tech safety and security system to ensure consumer confidence. Choi and Chu (2001) stated that the security and security system could distinguish the property system from its rivals, making it a winning tool for the hotel to gain trust and trust among consumers. Each consumer has certain basic expectations of these factors in COVID-19, but if consumer perceptions are not fulfilled or surpassed, their perceptions of service quality and fulfilment might be influenced.

5. Conclusion

The result of failing to consider a high-quality product is a gradual loss of customers to competitors, which may signal the end of business. Based on the findings, it has been indicated that product quality is emphatically related to and critical to the creation of customer support for hotels in the area of study. As a result, it was reasoned that customer patronage was a function of business image, food quality, quality personnel, hotel atmosphere, price value, and customer trust. The study backs up the notion that hotel product quality is a multidimensional concept and that different practises have varying effects on customer patronage. It adds to current knowledge of the theory of reasoned action that initiatives such as business image, food quality, quality personnel, the environment, price value, and customer trust, all of which are thought to improve service quality and are linked to personal health, can have a significantly strong positive influence. It is recommended that management be aware of the various customer classifications from the start of the hotel structure planning, ensuring that a satisfactory, spacious room is provided. In addition, qualified architects must be engaged in the development of the structure. The management should use qualified cooks, who are extensively involved in the preparation of both local and intercontinental dishes, for delicious food.

The work has limitations. Concerns' limitations can be addressed in a future study. The research focused on hotels in the state of Lagos. This research did not look into the impact on the hotel category the consumer used, but rather their general level of fulfilment and the possibility of their return. Hence, predisposition could arise considering the fact that customers may have different views of different categories of hotels. In addition, this study may be extended geographically to the other regional zones of the country. In addition, there might be some other significant attributes that consumers might see as critical but that have been inadvertently left out of the technique. Further studies are therefore required.

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