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Amue, G. J., Ph.D
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EFFECT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER PATRONAGE IN THE NIGERIAN HOTEL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

In this dynamic world market environment in addition to cut-throat competition, service quality has become imperative in order to be able to satisfy and retain customers. This study therefore, investigated the effect of service quality on customer patronage in the Nigerian hotel industry, with major focus on selected five star hotels in Lagos, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to: i. examine the effect of service quality on customer patronage on the selected hotels; ii. determine the difference between customers' actual and expected satisfaction. The study adopted the survey design. The population of the study comprised top ten 5-star hotels in Lagos, Nigeria and their respective infinite number of customers. Convenience and random sampling were used in selecting three 5-star hotels and 128 customers from each hotel since they are of the same rating. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 384 respondents. Data were analyzed using multiple regression and gap analysis to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study were that: i. Service quality has a significant effect on customer patronage in the Nigerian hotel industry with (empathy: $b = -0.482$, $t = -3.495$, $p < 0.05$; responsiveness: $b = -0.306$, $t = -2.913$, $p < 0.05$; reliability: 0.283 , $t = 2.443$, $p < 0.05$; tangibles: 0.694 , $t = 4.165$, $p < 0.05$ and Assurance 0.021 , $t = 0.144$, $p < 0.05$) and ($r^2 = 0.492$, $p < 0.05$). ii. There is a significant difference between customers expected satisfaction and the actual satisfaction in the selected hotels. Conclusively, service quality has a significant effect on customer patronage in the Nigerian hotel industry. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the selected hotel should allocate more resources and time to the area of service quality and improve more on their assurance which has no significant effect and also on empathy and responsiveness which are significant but with inverse relationship.

Keywords: Customer Patronage, Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, hospitality sector, Customer Loyalty.

Introduction

In recent years, the tourism industry has become an effective source for gains and economic growth. Tourism as a global industry and as the biggest provider of jobs on the planet boasts a larger display of various stakeholders than many other industries (Buhalis, 2008). The hospitality sector as part of a huge group of travel and tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries that provide the necessary and desirable goods and services to travelers worldwide. Hotels however, being an important part of the hospitality sector, is the major significant supplier of the components of tourism (Maarit, 2011). Sriyam (2010) points out that customer satisfaction in the hotel industry is the highest priority for owners and managers competing with hundreds of others, because personal services are at the top of the travelers list as the most important things when considering a hotel to stay in.

Also, in this recent growing competitive market, the basis of a firm's marketing strategies and tactics is profit making and contribution to the growth of the firm. Customer satisfaction, quality and retention are universal concerns that affect all types of organizations, either large or small, profit or non-profit, global or local. Several companies are concerned about studying, evaluating and implementing marketing strategies that focus at improving customer retention and take full advantage of share of customers in view of the positive effects on the financial performance for the firm.

Providing high quality services and improving customer satisfaction is widely recognized as fundamental factors boosting the performance of companies in the hotel and tourism industry (Dominici, 2010). This is

right in the sense that, it is a satisfied customer that makes a repeat purchase in the form of patronage, and when patronage increases, definitely sales increases, hence, profitability and greater performance.

To ensure that customer satisfaction level is high enough for a repeat purchased to be made, organization must first of all know the expectations of the customers and how they can meet such expectations. Customer satisfaction enhances customer loyalty and retention. It has been discovered that the cost of attracting new customer far exceeds the cost involved in retaining existing ones. It is this high level of customer satisfaction that will lead to more patronage which will at the long run, enhance the profitability and performance level of the organization.

Statement of the Problem

In their contributions, (Onyango, Odhuno, Kambona, and Othuon, 2012), discovered that the hotel industry has experienced enormous growth in business volume thereby making it larger and more complex to manage and meet challenges of customer demands. Therefore, once customers' challenges and demand could no longer be met as expected, customers will remain unsatisfied and probably think of shifting to a better provider that will be able to satisfy their needs and challenges. This will now lead to low or reduced patronage which eventually brings down the profitability level. But if the organization is able to put up a good service quality technique, they will be able to proactively act before customers will start withdrawing their patronage.

Customer demands and expectations are ever increasing and changing rapidly in the hotel industry. Achieving high performance and competitive advantages therefore, have become imperative for success in the hotel industry; and this will mostly be achievable through an effective service quality. An effective service quality will definitely enhance the success and performance of the organization.

Again, the Internet has made it very easy for customers to communicate their level of satisfaction as regard the service supply of an organization with one another, and new tools for relating like emails, website, bloggs, cell-phone and video sharing to online communities and social networks such as face book, u-tube and twitter also pose a lot of challenge to the organization because customer's comment about satisfaction or dissatisfaction of services to a reasonable extent have either, a positive or negative effect on the organizational performance since it takes a satisfied customer to make a repeats purchase

However, before any organization can arrive at a maximum level in satisfying customers need, there must be an effective service quality in place that enhances customer satisfaction in any given organization. This is because consumers all over the world have become more quality conscious and customers' requirements for higher quality service have been on the increase in the recent past (Lee, 2000). In fact, today's customers are more knowledgeable in the sense that, they know their right and want and how best it should be met and demanding ways they want to be served, and even prepared to challenge any firm whose services fall below expectations.

Research Question

The research questions below was formulated to achieve the objective of the study.

- i. How does service quality affect customer patronage?
- ii. What difference exist between customers' actual and expected satisfaction in the selected hotels?

Research objective

The objectives of the study were to:

- i. examine the effect of service quality on customer patronage in Nigerian hotel industry;
- ii. determine the difference between customers' actual and expected satisfaction.

Research Hypothesis

H_{01} : Service quality has no significant effect on customer patronage.

H_{01} : There is no significant difference between customers actual and the expected satisfaction in the selected hotels.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual definition

Marketing

In this present era of highly competitive market, strategy is needed to offer product or service which will be more preferable than that of the competitors. The marketing strategy must be implemented by the appropriate methodology for it to be effective. When the market is attractive and the company is holding a strong position in that particular business, then it must endow the greatest resources for supporting the offering. But if the company is not in a good position then it must focus on strengthening the company first.

Service Quality

The term "quality" is often understood differently by different authors, for example, (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985), defines quality as zero defect production, whereas (Crosby, 1979) understands quality as conformance to the requirements of the customer. From the customer's perspective it is then possible to understand quality as quality perceived on the basis of the consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority (Zeithaml, 1988). Quality could be said to be associated with customer satisfaction, which connotes that the quality level is determined by the level of customer satisfaction. At the same time, however, this level of customer satisfaction (and product quality) also reflects the value that the customer (subjectively) ascribes to the product. The price, which the customer is prepared to pay for a product, can then be inferred from this value. However, with respect to the above definition, it will be a fact that higher satisfaction of the customer's needs and his higher gratification does not automatically mean that the customer perceives the higher quality of the product. To this notion it can be added that higher product quality also means a higher value of the product and the higher the price the customer attributes to the product (Petr & Maria, 2015).

Akroush (2008) also pointed out that service quality is the result of the comparison made by customers about what they feel service firms should offer, and perceptions of the performance of firms providing the services. This is the result of the expectation of the customer with regard to the service of a particular organization. Gronroos (2007) also defined service quality as the outcome of the comparison that consumers make between their expectations and perceptions. Akroush and Gronroos definition of service quality are very acceptable because it is from the actual service rendered to a customer that will help such customer to be able to deduce if actually what they expected of the service of such organization is what they actually got or it is above or below expectation. Customer's expectation serves as a foundation for evaluating service quality because, quality is high when performance exceeds expectation and quality is low when performance does not meet up with expectation (Athanasopoulos et al., 2001).

According to Rashed and Tabassum (2014), Organizations operating within the service sector consider service quality to be a strategic component of their marketing plan and through service quality, organizations can reach a higher level of customer satisfaction, and maintain a constant competitive advantage. It is an action of fulfilling a need, desire, demand or expectation. Customers compare their expectations about a specific product or services and its actual benefits.

Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Quality (of a product or service) and customer satisfaction are the key factors of a company performance, which has been confirmed by many studies (Matzler et al., 2004). Customer satisfaction is generally defined as a feeling or judgment by customers towards products or services that they have used (Jamal & Naser, 2003). Customer satisfaction can mean very different things among to the respondents. It may include such factors as delivery time, price, conformity, professionalism, or it is generally just a response to customer' requests (Kuronen, Takala, 2013).

The definition of customer satisfaction has been widely debated as organizations increasingly attempt to measure it. Customer satisfaction can be experienced in a variety of situations and connected to both goods and services. It is a highly personal assessment that is greatly affected by customer expectations. Satisfaction also is based on the customer's experience of both contact with the organization.

Customer satisfaction is also viewed as a central determinant of customer retention. This is because it determines to a great extent whether a particular customer will make a repeat purchase or not since it takes a satisfied customer to make a repeat purchase. It measures how well a firm's product meet or exceed customer expectation (Smith, 2007), enhances the quality of relationship between customers and service providers and increases repeat purchase behavior (Nakhleh, 2012).

Kotler and Armstrong, (2010), views satisfaction as a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from the comparison of product's perceived performance in reference to expectations. Customer's feelings and beliefs also affect their satisfaction level. Zeithaml (2009), also sees satisfaction or dissatisfaction as a measure or evaluation of a product or service's ability to meet a customer's need or expectations.

Razak et al. (2007) also opine that overall satisfaction is the outcome of customer's evaluation of a set of experiences that are linked with specific service provider. It is observed that organization's concentration on customer expectations resulted into greater satisfaction. If the customers of an organization are satisfied by their services the result is that, they will be loyal to them and consequently be retained by the organization, which is positive for the organization because it could also mean higher profits, higher market share, and increasing customer base (Karatepe et al., 2005). Suman and Garg (2012), in their opinion, said that customers will judge quality as 'low' if performance does not meet their expectations and quality as 'high' when performance exceeds expectations.

However, a satisfied customer is the real asset for an organization that ensures long-term profitability even in the era of great competition. Cronin et al., (2000) mentioned in their study that satisfied customer repeat his/her experience to buy the products and also create new customers by communication of positive message about it to others. On the other hand, dissatisfied customer may switch to alternative products/services and communicate negative message to others. Customer satisfaction is a set of feeling or outcome attached with customer's experience towards any product/ service (Solomon, 1998). Hence, organizations must ensure that they try as much as possible to satisfy their customers.

Service Quality and Customer patronage

In an organization's capabilities and customers' perception and learning, service quality plays a significant role in customer patronage and usage of a product or service, as have been established by several studies such as (Luiza et al, 2009; Sahin and Kitapçı, 2013). Sanayei, (2012); Bolton and Drew, (1991) also suggest that there is a direct link between service quality and behavioural intentions. Among the various behavioural intentions, considerable emphasis has been placed on the impact of service quality in determining repeat purchase and customer loyalty (Jones and Farquhar, 2003). As pointed out by Bolton (1998), service quality influences a customer's subsequent behaviour, intentions and preferences. Besides, Cronin and Taylor (1994) also found that service quality has a significant effect on repurchase intentions. Studies which support that repurchase intentions are positively influenced by service quality Kheng et al (2010), Hafeez and Mohammed, (2012) and Saleem and Raja (2014).

Customer satisfaction and customer patronage

Satisfaction of customers with products and services of a company is considered as most important factor leading toward competitiveness and success (Dauda et al, 2013). Customer satisfaction is actually how customer evaluates the ongoing performance of a firm (Dadoa et al, 2012). Therefore a firm should concentrate on the improvement of Service Quality and charge appropriate fair price in order to satisfy their customers who would ultimately help the firm to retain its customers. According to (Sharma and Saleem, 2014) customer satisfaction is the customer's reaction to the state of satisfaction, and customer's judgment of satisfaction level.

Customer satisfaction is very important in today's business world as (Deng et al., 2009) have ascertained that the ability of a service provider to create high degree of satisfaction is crucial for product differentiation and developing strong relationship with customers. Customer satisfaction makes the customers to continue to patronize one service provider or other. Previous researchers have found that satisfaction of the customers can help the firm build long and profitable relationships with their customers (Srivastava et al, 2013; Harmeed, 2013).

The impact of Service Quality on customer satisfaction and customer patronage was confirmed by Omotayo and Joachim's study 2011, the result revealed that Service Quality has a positive impact on satisfaction and patronage. Caruana (2002) evaluated and analyzed service patronage over 1200 retail banking customers in

state of Malta. Study results show that customer satisfaction had a mediating role in the effect of Service Quality on service Patronage. Satisfaction is an important predictor of customer patronage (Aziz, 2014). Satisfied customers tend to use a service more often than the less satisfied ones (Sharma, 2014), they present a stronger repurchase intention, and they recommend the service to their acquaintances (Zeithaml et al., 1996).

Theoretical frame work

Given the growth of services during the last decades, many researchers have recognized the need to develop measures of service quality. One of the most frequently used measures is the SERVQUAL model based on determinants of perceived service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1994). The model measures the difference between customers' expectations about general quality of a certain group of service providers and their perceptions about the actual performance of a service provider from that group. It uses a set of service quality determinants for gaps between service/ideal products and those perceived, separately for five fundamental dimensions (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy). Many studies in different service industries have used this model as a basis of developing surveys to assess customer satisfaction.

There are several conceptual models which have been developed to evaluate customer satisfaction. From marketing perspective, customer satisfaction is achieved when the customer's needs and wants are fulfilled (Lam & Zhang, 1999). The aim of managing satisfaction is to obtain a higher rate of customer retention and to improve a company's market share and profits (Hessamaldin 2008).

The purpose of measuring customer satisfaction is to assess the quality of the existing management practices and to identify directions for improvement. The measurement of customer satisfaction could provide specific data that could be used in quality management.

SERVQUAL instrument is extensively used to assess external service quality. However, the instrument can also be modified to assess the quality of the internal services provided by departments and divisions of a company to its employees in other departments and divisions. The SERVQUAL instrument has been the predominant method used to measure consumers' perceptions of service quality. It has five generic dimensions or factors and are stated as follows (van Iwaarden et al., 2003):

- (1) Tangibles: Physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel.
- (2) Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- (3) Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
- (4) Assurance: (including competence, courtesy, credibility and security). Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
- (5) Empathy: (including access, communication, understanding the customer). Caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers.

Measuring service quality is difficult as compared to product quality due to some features unique to services such as intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perish-ability (Chang & Yeh, 2002). In view of these limitations a number of measurement models have been developed for measuring perceptions of service quality (Van Dinh & Lee Pickler, 2012) such as SERVQUA, the SERVPERF that was postulated by (Cronin & Taylor 1992) and the CARTER developed by (Othman & Owen, 2001). However, this study adopts the SERVQUAL model to examine the effect of service quality on customer patronage in some selected hotels in Lagos, Nigeria.

Empirical frame work

Research has shown repeatedly that service quality influences organizational outcome such as performance superiority (Lien, et al 2010), increasing sales profit (Kuang-Wen Wu, 2011; Bag, 2012) and market share (koo Kin, 2014), boost brand image (Ehigie, 2006), improving customer relations, enhance corporate image and promote customer patronage (Ehsan et al, 2012) and promote customer loyalty (Qadri & Khan, 2014; Loh et al., 2010). Furthermore, service quality and customer satisfaction were found to be related to customer patronage through repurchase intentions (Dadoa et al, 2012; Sharma, 2014).

Rahaman et al. (2011) explored service quality of the private commercial banks in Bangladesh. The findings from their study revealed that, one of the primary causes of service quality design failure is the lack of understanding of the evolving need and preferences of targeted customers.

Ilhaamie (2010) examined the level of service quality, expectation and perception of the external customers towards the Malaysian public services using the SERVQUAL instrument. The study found that tangible is the most important dimension. It also has the lowest scores of perception. On the other hand, service quality gap is neither the lowest nor the highest. Finally, these external customers have the highest expectation on the reliability of the Malaysian public service.

Ojo (2010) investigated the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the telecommunication industry with a focus on Mobile Telecommunication Network (MTN) Nigeria. A total of 230 respondents participated in the study. Regression analysis and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient were employed in analyzing the data. The study revealed a positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. The researcher therefore recommended that organizations should focus more attention on service quality, because of its effects on customer satisfaction.

Kheng et al, (2010) employed the SERVQUAL model with five dimensions to evaluate the impact of service quality on customer loyalty among bank customers in Penang, Malaysia. Customer satisfaction was used as an intermediate variable. The findings show that improvement in service quality can enhance customer loyalty. The service quality dimensions that play a significant role in the equation are reliability, empathy, and assurance. The findings indicate that the overall respondents evaluate the bank positively, but still there are rooms for improvements.

Methodology

The objective of the study was to examine the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction in the selected hotels. The procedure that were used to achieve the objective of the study includes, population size, sample size and sampling techniques, research instrument, data type and resources, data collection as well as method of data presentation is fully discussed in this section. The study made use of questionnaire to obtain information from the customers of Eko Hotels & Suites and Goldview Hotel & Suites, and Intercontinental hotel, to be able to achieve the objective of the study.

The study focused majorly on South-West, particularly, Lagos being the core business center of Nigeria, the head quarters' of so many organization and an area where we have the concentrate of 5-star hotels. The target population was the customers of top ten 5-star hotels in Lagos, Nigeria and the study randomly selected 3 of these 5-star hotels.

Sample size and sampling techniques

The population of customer in the hotel cannot be ascertained, so a random sampling method was used to select 128 respondents from each of the selected hotels to make a total of 384 respondents which was gotten through golden formula for determining sample size for an infinite population, for the selected hotels in Lagos, Nigeria.

Research instrument

Questionnaire was the major research instrument employed for this study. The questionnaire that was administered to the respondents were designed in such a way that it answered relevant questions for the study in the area of service quality as designed by SERVQUAL model and modified by adding customer patronage related question. The questionnaire were rated in seven point Likert scale answers ranging from (7 to 1) (extremely agreed to extremely disagree).

Data collection and Administration

The study employed the use of primary source of data with questionnaire being the major instrument to gather the relevant information needed for the achievement of the objectives of the study. The copies of questionnaire were structured in a clear cut simple language that enabled the respondents to be able to get the real understanding of what the researcher was talking about. The copies questionnaire were administered by the researcher with the help of two other trained assistants on the field. The study administered 384 copies, out of which 375 were correctly filled and returned.

Model Specification

In evaluating the effect of service quality on customer patronage, the relevant data collected were considered which lead to the formulation of the model below:

$$Y = f(X_0, X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, \dots, X_n) + e$$

Where Y is the dependent variable representing customer satisfaction and X is the independent variable representing service quality variables.

$$SQ(RBT, ASS, TAG, EMP, RSP) = f(X_0, X_1, X_n) + e$$

Hence the model becomes:

$$SQ(\beta_0 + \beta_1 RBT + \beta_2 ASS + \beta_3 TAG + \beta_4 EMP + \beta_5 RSP + e) \quad \text{where:}$$

SQ = service Quality

RBT = Reliability

ASS = Assurance

TAG = Tangibles

EMP = Empathy

RSP = Responsiveness

e = Error and

X0 = constant

X1 = Patronage

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Discussion of Findings

Regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of service quality on customer patronage in the Nigerian hotel industry, Lagos. The regression analysis identifies the variables that mostly contribute to customer patronage in the hotel industry.

Hypothesis 1

H₀: Strategic marketing planning has no significant effect on customer patronage

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.702 ^a	0.492	0.451	0.396

a. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness, Reliability, Tangibles, Empathy, Assurance

Source: (Author's Computation, 2018)

Table 1 shows that the value of r^2 is 0.492 which denotes that 49.2% of variation in customer patronage is explained by service quality and the remaining percentage is explained by other variables outside the model. Therefore service quality actually contributes to customer patronage in the selected Hotels in Lagos, Nigeria.

Table 2: ANOVA ^b

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	9.414	5	1.883	12.03	.000 ^a
Residual	9.704	62	0.157		
Total	19.118	67			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Responsiveness, Reliability, Tangibles, Empathy, Assurance

b. Dependent Variable: customer satisfaction

Source: (Author's Computation, 2018)

The ANOVA result from table 2 shows that the value of ($F = 12.030$, $p < 0.05$) significant level is higher than the calculated table value of ($F = 4.42$, $p < 0.05$) significant level. Therefore since the calculated value is more than the table value 0.05 or 5% significant level, it shows that the model is fit.

Table 3: Coefficients ^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.661	1.03		3.554	0.001
Reliability	0.425	0.174	0.283	2.443	0.017
Assurance	0.023	0.159	0.021	0.144	0.886
Tangibles	0.908	0.218	0.694	4.165	0
Empathy	-0.522	0.149	-0.482	-3.495	0.001
Responsiveness	-0.404	0.139	-0.306	-2.913	0.005

Dependent Variable: customer satisfaction

Independent variable: strategic marketing planning

Source: (Author's Computation, 2016)

The coefficient table was used to test whether the five independent variables (service quality) affects the dependent variable (Customer patronage). The overall coefficients from table 3 reveals that there is a significant effect of service quality on customer patronage with the significant value of 0.001 which is less than the set value of 0.005 significance level; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The direction of the Beta coefficient sheds light on the nature of relationships. Thus, as each of empathy and responsiveness increases, customer patronage decreases (empathy: $\beta = -0.482$, $t = -3.495$, $p < 0.05$; responsiveness: $\beta = -0.306$, $t = -2.913$, $p < 0.05$ meaning there is an inverse relationship, while as each of reliability and tangibles increases, customer patronage increases (reliability: 0.283 , $t = 2.443$, $p < 0.05$; tangibles: 0.694 , $t = 4.165$, $p < 0.05$. And Assurance has a low positive relationship but not significant at 0.05 significant level with 0.021 , $t = 0.144$, $p < 0.05$. The overall study however was found to be significant at 0.05 significant level which supports the study of Brysland & Curry (2001) that was carried out in a catering company and they discovered that organizations can at least assess five dimensions of service quality to ascertain the level of services provided, and determine which dimensions need improvement.

Hypothesis 2: there is no significant difference between expected satisfaction and actual satisfaction.

Table 4:

Expectation (E)	Actual (A)	Gap Scores (A-E)	t-value	Prob.(t)
6.2158	6.6474	-0.43158	-10.459	0.0000

Table 4 presents a pre-regression test of difference between customers' actual and expected satisfaction of hotel services. The students' t-test was used to test the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between customers expected satisfaction and the actual satisfaction in the hotel. The result shows the difference between expected and actual satisfaction to be -0.43158, implying that the satisfaction customers expected exceeds the satisfaction they derived or enjoyed from the hotels which means the service quality of the hotels are low. The t-value reported is -10.459 with a probability value of 0.0000 which implies the rejection of null hypothesis and therefore concluding that there is significant difference between customers' expected and actual satisfaction. In other words, customers' expected satisfaction is significantly greater than their actual satisfaction.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this competitive era, every organization is faced with the problem of how to outperform their competitor because of the technological changes and more awareness of customer of their right which has stiffened competition. Organizations have to find a means of remaining in the market and not just that, but also to retain their customers by trying to satisfy them in various ways because they are the ones that determines the survival of the organization. However, service quality has now become a very good tool that helps the organization to scrutinize its services and know where they are getting it right or wrongly so as to utilize its area of opportunity as an advantage over competitors.

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1.
 - a. The use of Assurance to enhance customer patronage must be seriously worked upon by the hotel industry to enable customer to have greater assurance in the hotel's services.
 - b. Empathy and responsiveness is another area of focus for the hotel industry even if it actually affects patronage; it was showing an inverse relationship, meaning it has to be improved upon for it to show a positive relationship. The organization may be neglecting or over attentive to some important aspect of it that may probably be making it to have an inverse relationship.
2. The hotels of study should also try as much as possible to improve on their service quality (all the dimensions of SERVQUAL) since the study proves that there is a significant difference between expected satisfaction and the actual satisfaction derived in the hotels of study. This will help them to be able to increase the level of customer satisfaction and patronage.
3. Service quality of no doubt, have effect on customer patronage. Therefore, the hotel industry should try and invest more quality time and resources in this area.

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