TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

This study is on total quality management and customer satisfaction in hospitality industry in Delta State. The main objective of this study is to determine the relationship between total quality management and customer satisfaction in hospitality industry in Delta State. While the specific objectives are to: determine the relationship between customer focus and customer expectations and to ascertain the relationship between continuous improvement and service quality in hospitality industry in Delta State. The study used the descriptive survey design approach. The primary source of data was the administration of questionnaire.Quota sampling was used to select the sample of two hundred (250) respondents i.e. fifty (50) respondents each that visit the selected hotels during the period of data collection for this study.The data obtained were presented in frequency distribution tables and the corresponding values were expressed in percentages and the hypotheses developed for the study were tested using correlations analysis with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS Version 26). The results of the study revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between customer focus and customer expectations in the hospitality industry in Delta State.It also showed that there is a significant positive relationship between continuous improvement and service quality in the hospitality industry in Delta State.It was concluded thatfor the hospitality industry in Delta State to thrive, it is imperative to embrace TQM principles that focus on both customer needs and continuous service quality improvement.It was recommended among other things that hospitality businesses should regularly gather and analyze customer feedback to tailor services to meet evolving guest expectations, ensuring a customer-centric approach that boosts satisfaction and loyalty.

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Introduction
Background of the Study
Total Quality Management (TQM) has its origins in the early 20th century, with roots tracing back to Frederick Taylor's scientific management principles and Henry Ford's production techniques. However, the modern concept of TQM was significantly influenced by the work of W. Edwards Deming and Joseph Juran in the mid-20th century. Deming's philosophy emphasized continuous improvement, statistical quality control, and the importance of top management's commitment to quality (Deming, 1986). Juran contributed by focusing on the human aspect of quality management, advocating for comprehensive quality planning, control, and improvement (Juran, 1988). By the 1980s, TQM had evolved into a holistic management approach aimed at embedding quality in every aspect of organizational operations.

Globally, TQM has been widely adopted across various industries, including manufacturing, healthcare, education, and hospitality. Its principles of customer focus, continuous improvement, employee involvement, and process optimization have proven effective in enhancing organizational performance and customer satisfaction (Oakland, 2014). In the hospitality industry, where customer satisfaction is paramount, TQM practices are crucial for maintaining high service standards and achieving competitive advantage. Research indicates that TQM implementation leads to improved service quality, customer loyalty, and overall business performance in hospitality firms (Sila, 2007).

The hospitality industry, encompassing hotels, restaurants, and other service providers, relies heavily on delivering exceptional customer experiences. TQM practices such as regular employee training, process standardization, and customer feedback mechanisms are vital for ensuring consistent service quality and meeting customer expectations. The global success of hospitality giants like Marriott, Hilton, and Four Seasons can be attributed to their commitment to TQM principles (Singh & Sushil, 2013).

In Nigeria, the hospitality industry plays a significant role in the country's economic development, contributing to employment generation, tourism growth, and foreign exchange earnings. However, the sector faces numerous challenges, including inconsistent service quality, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of skilled personnel (Nwosu, 2016). Implementing TQM practices can address these challenges by fostering a culture of continuous improvement and customer focus.

Despite the potential benefits, the adoption of TQM in the Nigerian hospitality industry has been relatively slow. Many hospitality firms in Nigeria operate with traditional management practices that do not emphasize quality management and customer satisfaction. This gap results in suboptimal service delivery, customer complaints, and a lack of repeat business (Ebitu, 2015). To remain competitive and attract both domestic and international customers, Nigerian hospitality firms must embrace TQM principles and practices. The hospitality industry in Delta State, Nigeria, thrives on customer satisfaction. This background section explores the historical development of Total Quality Management (TQM) and its impact on customer satisfaction in the global hospitality industry, with a specific focus on the Nigerian and Delta State context.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
In an ideal scenario, hotels within the Delta State hospitality industry would meticulously implement Total Quality Management (TQM) practices. This would encompass a focus on continuous improvement across all aspects of their operations, ensuring consistent delivery of high-quality services that meet and exceed guest expectations. Consequently, guests would experience exceptional service, resulting in high levels of satisfaction and a strong likelihood of repeat business and positive recommendations.

However, the current situation in Delta State's hospitality industry may be characterized by inconsistency in service quality, leading to guest dissatisfaction. This could manifest as complaints regarding cleanliness,

amenities, staff responsiveness, or overall value for money. Such issues can damage a hotel's reputation, leading to negative online reviews, customer churn, and ultimately, lost revenue.

While TQM is recognized as a valuable approach for enhancing customer satisfaction in hospitality globally, its application within Delta State's specific context remains under-researched. There is a lack of in-depth understanding of the current state of TQM implementation and its impact on customer satisfaction in this region. This knowledge gap hinders the ability of hotels in Delta State to fully leverage TQM for improving service quality and achieving sustainable business growth. Without a clear understanding of the relationship between TQM practices and customer satisfaction, hotels may struggle to identify areas for improvement and implement targeted strategies to enhance the guest experience.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to determine the relationship between total quality management and customer satisfaction in hospitality industry in Delta State. While the specific objectives are to:

➢ Determine the relationship between customer focus and customer expectations in hospitality industry in Delta State

➢ Ascertain the relationship between continuous improvement and service quality in hospitality industry in Delta State

1.4 Research Questions

❖ What isthe relationship between customer focus and customer expectations in hospitality industry in Delta State?

❖ What isthe relationship between continuous improvement service qualityin hospitality industry in Delta State?

1.5 Statement of Hypotheses

▪ There is no significant positive relationship between customer focus and customer expectations in hospitality industry in Delta State.

▪ There is no significant positive relationship between continuous improvement and service quality in hospitality industry in Delta State.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The topic of this study is total quality management and customer satisfaction in hospitality industry in Delta State. Geographically, this study focuses on selected hotels in DeltaState. The independent variable of the study is total quality management, which is proxied bycustomer focus andcustomer expectations. The dependent variable of the study is customer satisfaction which is proxied by continuous improvement and service quality. The unit of analysis is the customers of the selected hotels in Delta State, Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a holistic management philosophy aimed at embedding awareness of quality in all organizational processes. The concept emerged in the mid-20th century as businesses sought more comprehensive approaches to quality assurance beyond traditional inspection methods. TQM integrates fundamental management techniques, existing improvement efforts, and technical tools under a disciplined approach focused on continuous quality improvement and customer satisfaction.

TQM is built on several core principles. First, customer focus is paramount. Organizations must strive to understand and meet the needs and expectations of their customers, as customer satisfaction is a primary measure of quality (Oakland, 2014). Second, continuous improvement is essential. TQM promotes an ongoing, proactive

approach to improving processes, products, and services. This requires a commitment to constantly evaluate and enhance operational performance (Dale, 2015).

Employee involvement is another critical component of TQM. The philosophy emphasizes that quality improvement is the responsibility of everyone in the organization, not just a designated quality control department (Goetsch& Davis, 2013). This necessitates comprehensive training and a culture that encourages teamwork and open communication. Moreover, the process approach is crucial, which means understanding and managing interrelated processes as a system to enhance the organization's efficiency and effectiveness (Hoyle, 2017).

The strategic and systematic approach under TQM ensures that quality improvement initiatives are integrated into the organization's strategic planning. This alignment ensures that quality objectives are part of the organizational goals, facilitating better coordination and resource allocation (Evans & Lindsay, 2014). Finally, fact-based decision making is central to TQM, where decisions are made based on the analysis of data and information rather than assumptions (Prajogo&Sohal, 2006).

2.1.2 Components of Total Quality Management

a. Customer Focus

Customer focus is a business philosophy that places the customer at the center of all organizational activities. It is a foundational principle in modern business management, emphasizing the importance of aligning a company's strategies, processes, and culture with the needs and expectations of its customers. This orientation towards the customer is critical for achieving sustained business success and fostering long-term loyalty (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Customer focus involves understanding and anticipating customer needs, creating value through products and services, and consistently delivering superior customer experiences.

The concept of customer focus extends beyond mere customer satisfaction; it involves a proactive and strategic approach to engaging with customers throughout their lifecycle with the company (Shah et al., 2006). This requires a deep understanding of customer behavior, preferences, and feedback, which can be achieved through robust data collection and analysis. Companies that prioritize customer focus invest in customer relationship management (CRM) systems to gather and analyze customer data, enabling them to personalize interactions and offerings (Peppers & Rogers, 2016).

Customer-centric culture is a key element of customer focus. It necessitates that all employees, from top management to front-line staff, share a common commitment to serving customers effectively (Lemon &Verhoef, 2016). This cultural alignment ensures that customer needs are at the forefront of decision-making processes across the organization. Training and development programs aimed at enhancing customer service skills are crucial for fostering a customer-centric culture.

Customer feedback mechanisms are vital for maintaining customer focus. Regularly soliciting and acting on customer feedback allows organizations to identify areas for improvement and innovate based on customer insights (Johnston & Kong, 2011). Tools such as surveys, focus groups, and social media monitoring provide valuable information about customer perceptions and experiences.

Product and service quality also play a significant role in customer focus. Ensuring that products and services consistently meet or exceed customer expectations is essential for building trust and loyalty (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). This involves rigorous quality control processes and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Customer experience management (CEM) is another critical aspect of customer focus. CEM involves managing and optimizing all interactions that a customer has with a company, from the initial contact through post-purchase support (Meyer &Schwager, 2007). By mapping the customer journey and identifying key touchpoints, organizations can enhance the overall customer experience and address any pain points.

In the digital age, technology and innovation are pivotal in maintaining customer focus. Leveraging digital tools such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and big data analytics enables companies to anticipate customer needs more accurately and deliver personalized experiences (Rust & Huang, 2014). These technologies help in creating seamless and engaging customer interactions across multiple channels.

b. Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is a management philosophy that emphasizes the ongoing pursuit of excellence in all organizational processes. Continuous Improvement (CI) is a persistent and iterative process aimed at enhancing organizational processes, products, and services. Rooted in the Japanese concept of "Kaizen," which means "change for the better," CI involves making incremental improvements regularly rather than relying on large-scale changes (Imai, 1986). This philosophy is fundamental to various quality management practices, such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and Lean management.

At its core, CI emphasizes the importance of incremental and ongoing progress. Organizations adopting CI strive to identify opportunities for improvement, implement changes, and evaluate the outcomes in a cyclical manner. This iterative process ensures that enhancements are continuously integrated into the organizational workflow, leading to sustained improvements over time (Bessant &Caffyn, 1997).

Employee involvement is a critical component of CI. By encouraging all employees to participate in identifying inefficiencies and suggesting improvements, organizations harness a diverse array of insights and foster a culture of collective responsibility (Liker, 2004). This approach not only improves operational processes but also enhances employee morale and engagement, as workers feel valued and integral to the company's success.

Data-driven decision-making is another vital aspect of CI. Effective CI initiatives rely on accurate data collection and analysis to identify areas needing improvement and to measure the impact of implemented changes (Evans & Lindsay, 2014). Tools such as Statistical Process Control (SPC) and Root Cause Analysis (RCA) are commonly used to provide a factual basis for making informed decisions and ensuring that improvements are sustainable.

The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle is a widely used framework within CI. This iterative four-step management method is used for the control and continuous improvement of processes and products. It involves planning the change (Plan), implementing the change (Do), observing the results (Check), and acting on what has been learned to make necessary adjustments (Act) (Deming, 1986).

Customer feedback is also integral to CI. Regularly soliciting and analyzing feedback from customers helps organizations understand their needs and expectations, guiding improvement efforts to enhance customer satisfaction (Oakland, 2014). By aligning improvement initiatives with customer requirements, companies can ensure that their efforts directly contribute to better service and product offerings.

Leadership commitment is crucial for the successful implementation of CI. Leaders must champion the philosophy of continuous improvement, allocate necessary resources, and create an environment that encourages experimentation and learning from failure (Juran& Godfrey, 1999). This commitment from the top ensures that CI is embedded in the organizational culture and aligns with strategic goals.

2.1.3 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction can be defined as the customer's perception of the degree to which their expectations have been met by a company's offerings (Anderson &Fornell, 2000). High levels of satisfaction are essential for fostering customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth, both of which are critical for sustainable business growth. Satisfied customers are more likely to make repeat purchases, refer others, and show resistance to competitive offers (Hallowell, 1996).

Determinants of Customer Satisfaction: Several factors contribute to customer satisfaction, including product quality, service quality, price, and overall customer experience. Product quality refers to the inherent attributes of the product, such as reliability, functionality, and durability. High product quality directly influences customer perceptions and satisfaction levels (Garvin, 1987). Service quality involves the interactions customers have with the company, encompassing aspects such as responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Effective service delivery can significantly enhance customer satisfaction by ensuring that customer needs are met promptly and efficiently.

Perceived Value: The concept of perceived value plays a vital role in customer satisfaction. Perceived value is the customer's evaluation of the benefits of a product or service relative to its cost (Zeithaml, 1988). Customers who perceive high value are more likely to be satisfied, as they feel they are getting their money's worth. This perception can be influenced by pricing strategies, promotional offers, and the overall quality of the product or service.

Customer Expectations: Meeting or exceeding customer expectations is fundamental to achieving high satisfaction levels. Expectations are formed based on prior experiences, word-of-mouth, marketing communications, and individual needs (Oliver, 1980). Companies must understand these expectations and strive to meet or surpass them through consistent quality and excellent service delivery.

Measurement and Feedback: Regularly measuring customer satisfaction is essential for identifying areas for improvement and tracking progress over time. Tools such as surveys, feedback forms, and Net Promoter Scores (NPS) are commonly used to gauge satisfaction levels (Reichheld, 2003). Analyzing this data provides valuable insights into customer perceptions and helps organizations make informed decisions to enhance the customer experience.

Impact on Business Performance: The link between customer satisfaction and business performance is well-documented. High levels of customer satisfaction lead to increased customer retention, reduced churn rates, and higher lifetime value (Anderson, Fornell, &Mazvancheryl, 2004). Moreover, satisfied customers are more likely to provide positive referrals, contributing to brand reputation and attracting new customers.

2.1.4 Components of Customer Satisfaction

a. Customer Expectations

Customer expectations is defined as the beliefs, perceptions, and desires that customers hold about a product, service, or company (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990). These expectations are shaped by a variety of factors, including personal experiences, word-of-mouth, advertising, and the overall market environment (Oliver, 1997).

Customer expectations are dynamic and can evolve over time due to changing needs, preferences, and competitive offerings (Anderson & Mittal, 2000). What customers expect today may differ from what they expected in the past, and companies must continually monitor and adapt to these shifting expectations to remain competitive.

Meeting or exceeding customer expectations is essential for building customer satisfaction and loyalty. When customers' expectations are met, they are more likely to repurchase, recommend the company to others, and become brand advocates (Oliver, 1997). Conversely, when expectations are not met, customers may experience dissatisfaction, switch to competitors, and share negative experiences with others.

Understanding customer expectations is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies, designing products and services, and delivering exceptional customer experiences. By actively listening to customers and gathering feedback, companies can gain valuable insights into their needs and preferences, enabling them to tailor their offerings accordingly.

b. Service Quality

Service quality can be defined as the degree to which a service meets the needs and expectations of customers (Gronroos, 1984). Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) introduced the SERVQUAL model, which identifies five key dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

Service quality is a holistic evaluation of the overall experience a customer has with a service, encompassing the entire process from pre-purchase to post-purchase interactions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985). It is a multidimensional construct that encompasses various elements such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles (SERVQUAL model) (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

Service quality is distinct from product quality as it involves the interaction between the customer and the service provider. It is influenced by factors such as employee behavior, the physical environment, and the overall service delivery process (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990). A high level of service quality leads to customer satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth, ultimately contributing to the organization's success.

However, service quality is challenging to measure and manage due to its intangible nature and the variability in service delivery. To address these challenges, organizations often employ service quality measurement tools and customer feedback mechanisms to identify areas for improvement (Gronroos, 1990). By consistently monitoring and enhancing service quality, companies can differentiate themselves from competitors and build long-term customer relationships.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The two theories underpinning this study are Total Quality Management (TQM) and SERVQUAL Model

2.2.1 Total Quality Management (TQM)

Total Quality Management (TQM) propounded by Deming, Juran, and Crosby in the Mid-20th century is a comprehensive management approach focused on continuous improvement, customer satisfaction, and involvement of all organizational members. It emphasizes a systematic and data-driven approach to enhancing product and service quality.

In the hospitality industry, TQM can be applied to improve guest satisfaction by focusing on all aspects of the guest experience, from check-in to check-out. This includes enhancing service quality, improving facilities, and addressing guest complaints efficiently. TQM's emphasis on continuous improvement aligns with the dynamic nature of the hospitality industry, where guest expectations constantly evolve.

2.2.2 SERVQUAL Model

SERVQUAL model propounded by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in 1985is a service quality model that measures the gap between customer expectations and perceptions of service delivery. It identifies five dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

In the hospitality industry, SERVQUAL can be used to assess guest satisfaction by measuring the gap between their expectations and perceptions of hotel services. By identifying areas where expectations exceed perceptions, hotels can implement targeted improvements to enhance guest satisfaction. This model provides a structured framework for measuring service quality and tracking progress over time.

2.3. Empirical Review

Iwu, &Oparanma, (2020). Customer Focus and Service Quality in the Hospitality Industry: Evidence from Nigeria. The study carried out in Lagos State, Nigeria among 200 customers and 50 hospitality firms. Descriptive statistics, regression analysis was utilized in the study. The study found a significant positive relationship between customer focus and customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry. Higher levels of customer focus led to better alignment with customer expectations and improved service quality. The results suggest that effective customer-focused strategies are crucial for meeting and exceeding customer expectations in hospitality settings.

Okoro & Ogbonna (2019). The Impact of Customer Expectations on Service Delivery in Nigerian Hotels. The study was carried out among 150 hotel guests and 30 hotel managers in Enugu State, Nigeria. The method of data analysis used in the study was correlation analysis, ANOVA. The study revealed that customer expectations significantly impact the service delivery in Nigerian hotels. It highlighted that hotels with a strong customer focus

were better at meeting or exceeding customer expectations, leading to higher satisfaction levels. The study underscores the need for hotels to continuously adapt their services based on evolving customer expectations.

Kumar & Sethi, (2020) on the role of continuous improvement in enhancing service quality in Indian hotels. Done in Mumbai, India among 200 hotel employees and 250 hotel customers, using regression analysis and factor analysis. The study demonstrated that continuous improvement initiatives, including regular service evaluations and customer feedback mechanisms, significantly enhance service quality in Indian hotels. The study emphasized the importance of iterative improvements and employee involvement in maintaining high service standards.

Smith & Lee, (2019). Evaluating Continuous Improvement Practices and Their Effect on Service Quality in U.S. Hotels. The study was carried out in New York City, USA with the population 120 hotel managers and 350 hotel guests. Analysis of variance (ANOVA), multiple regression analysis was employed in the study. The study found that continuous improvement practices such as staff development programs and customer service training positively impacted service quality in U.S. hotels. Hotels with systematic approaches to process improvement were better positioned to meet and exceed guest expectations, leading to enhanced overall service quality.

Chukwu & Ogbeide, (2022) studied continuous improvement strategies and their influence on service quality in Nigerian hotels. The study was done in Lagos State, Nigeria with a population of 100 hotel managers and 200 hotel patrons. The method of data analysis employed was descriptive statistics and path analysis. The study identified a strong positive relationship between continuous improvement strategies, such as quality management systems and guest feedback integration, and service quality in Nigerian hotels. Hotels that implemented continuous improvement practices were observed to provide superior service quality, leading to increased guest satisfaction and loyalty.

3.0 Methodology

The study used the descriptive survey design approach. The primary source of data was the administration of questionnaire. The study was executed in Asaba, Delta state, Nigeria. The city is significant to this study because it is the capital of Delta state - one of the major oils producing states in the country- and also a major economic hub of the state where economic and business activities take place. The state has hotels of different classes scattered all over the city as a result of the growing number of consumers and rising population of people that engage in one business activity or the other. The inhabitants are predominantly traders who are into various kinds of economic activities and civil service etc. The population of the study is made up of the customers of five selected hotels in Asaba, Delta state, which are BON Hotel Asaba, Mardezok Hotel, Sweet Spirit Hotels and Suites, D' Fortunes Home, and Asaba Gardens & Resort. Since all the hotels have lodging which is a common feature, the study selected fifty guests from each of the hotels for investigation. Quota sampling was used to select the sample of two hundred (250) respondents i.e. fifty (50) respondents each that visit the selected hotels during the period of data collection for this study. The aim of using quota sampling was to enable the researcher reduce bias in sample selection from the population of the study. The instrument used for the data collection is the questionnaire which was designed and administered to customers of the selected hotels in Asaba, Delta state, Nigeria. The data obtained were presented in frequency distribution tables and the corresponding values were expressed in percentages. In addition, the hypotheses developed for the study were tested using correlations analysis with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS Version 26)

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS PRESENTATIONS

Table 4.1 The relationship between customer focus and customer expectations in hospitality industry in Delta State (N = 228)

Survey Question	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
The hotel staff consistently goes above and beyond to meet my needs and expectations.	68(29.82)	98(42.98)	32(14.04)	20(8.77)	10(4.39)	3.85	1.10
The hotel accurately understands and responds to my needs and preferences.	75(32.89)	90(39.47)	30(13.16)	23(10.09)	10(4.39)	3.86	1.05
My overall expectations of the hotel were met during my stay.	80(35.09)	95(41.67)	25(10.96)	18(7.89)	10(4.39)	3.95	1.02
The hotel demonstrates a strong commitment to understanding and fulfilling customer needs.	70(30.70)	100(43.86)	28(12.28)	20(8.77)	10(4.39)	3.88	1.08

Source: Field survey 2024

Table 4.1 shows the responses of respondents on the relationship between customer focus and customer expectations in hospitality industry in Delta State. It shows that with Mean and Standard Deviation of 3.85 and 1.10, the table above show that majority of the respondents agree (42.98%) or strongly agree (29.82%) with the statement, indicating overall satisfaction with the staff's efforts to exceed expectations. It further shows that with Mean and Standard Deviation of 3.86 and 1.05 most respondents agree (39.47%) or strongly agree (32.89%) with the statement, suggesting that the hotel effectively understands and responds to customer needs. Also, with Mean and Standard Deviation of 3.95 and 1.02, the majority of respondents agree (41.67%) or strongly agree (35.09%) that their expectations were met, indicating high overall satisfaction. The table finally showed that with Mean and Standard Deviation of 3.88 and 1.08 most respondents agree (43.86%) or strongly agree (30.70%) that the hotel is committed to understanding and fulfilling customer needs, reflecting positively on the hotel's customer focus.The data indicates that customers generally have positive perceptions of the hotel's customer focus and its ability to meet their expectations. The relatively high means and low standard deviations suggest consistent satisfaction among the respondents.

Table 4.2 The relationship between continuous improvement and service quality in hospitality industry in Delta State (N=228)

	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
The hotel regularly updates its services and facilities based on customer feedback and industry standards.	80(35.09)	90(39.47)	30(13.16)	18(7.89)	10(4.39)	3.93	1.07
I have noticed an improvement in the quality of service provided by the hotel over time.	75(32.89)	95(41.67)	28(12.28)	20(8.77)	10(4.39)	3.90	1.08
The hotel's commitment to continuous improvement positively affects my overall satisfaction with their services.	70(30.70)	100(43.86)	25(10.96)	23(10.09)	10(4.39)	3.86	1.10
The staff at the hotel is consistently trained to enhance their service delivery skills.	78(34.21)	92(40.35)	27(11.84)	21(9.21)	10(4.39)	3.91	1.09

Source: Field survey 2024

Table 4.2 shows the responses of the respondents on therelationship between continuous improvement and service quality in hospitality industry in Delta State. It shows that withMean and Standard Deviation of3.93 and 1.07, most respondents agree (39.47%) or strongly agree (35.09%) that the hotel updates its services and facilities based on feedback and standards, suggesting a strong perception of responsiveness to customer needs. It also shows that with Mean and Standard Deviation of3.90 and 1.08 reflects a general agreement (41.67%) that there is an improvement in service quality, with most customers noticing this positive change. It further shows that with Mean and Standard Deviation of3.86 and 1.10, there is a strong agreement (43.86%) that the hotel's commitment to continuous improvement positively impacts overall satisfaction, indicating that customers value ongoing enhancements. It finally shows that with the Mean and Standard Deviation of3.91 and 1.09, most respondents agree (40.35%) or strongly agree (34.21%) that staff training is effective, reflecting a positive perception of the hotel's commitment to improving service skills.This analysis helps in understanding customer perceptions and satisfaction related to continuous improvement efforts and service quality in the hospitality industry.

Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis One

Ho: There is no significant positive relationship between customer focus and customer expectations.

H₁: There is a significant positive relationship between customer focus and customer expectations.

Table 4.3 Correlations

	Customer Focus	**Customer Expectations**
Customer Focus	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
	1	.412**
		.000
	N	228
Customer Expectations	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
	.412**	1
	.000	
	N	228

Source: SPSS Version 26

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r): 0.412

This indicates a moderate positive correlation between customer focus and customer expectations.

P-value: 0.000

Since the p-value is much less than the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis.

There is a significant positive relationship between customer focus and customer expectations in the hospitality industry in Delta State. The correlation coefficient of 0.412 suggests a moderate positive correlation, meaning that as customer focus improves, the likelihood of meeting customer expectations also increases.

Hypothesis Two

Ho: There is no significant positive relationship between continuous improvement and service quality.**H₁**: There is a significant positive relationship between continuous improvement and service quality.

Table 4.4 Correlations

	Continuous Improvement	**Service Quality**
Continuous Improvement	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
	1	.354**
		.000
	N	228
Service Quality	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
	.354**	1
	.000	
	N	228

Source: SPSS Version 26

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r): 0.354

This indicates a moderate positive correlation between continuous improvement and service quality.

P-value: 0.000

Since the p-value is much less than the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$\alpha = 0.05$\alpha=0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis.

There is a significant positive relationship between continuous improvement and service quality in the hospitality industry in Delta State. The correlation coefficient of 0.354 suggests a moderate positive correlation, meaning that as continuous improvement efforts increase, the perceived service quality also tends to improve.

5.1 Summary of Findings

➢ There is a significant positive relationship between customer focus and customer expectations in the hospitality industry in Delta State.

➢ There is a significant positive relationship between continuous improvement and service quality in the hospitality industry in Delta State.

5.2. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study on "Total Quality Management and Customer Satisfaction in the Hospitality Industry in Delta State" reveals crucial insights. Firstly, the significant positive relationship between customer focus and customer expectations underscores the importance of understanding and meeting guest needs to enhance satisfaction. Secondly, the notable correlation between continuous improvement and service quality highlights the necessity of consistently upgrading processes to maintain high standards. These findings suggest that implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) practices in the hospitality sector can lead to higher customer satisfaction by prioritizing customer-centric strategies and fostering a culture of ongoing enhancement. Therefore, for the hospitality industry in Delta State to thrive, it is imperative to embrace TQM principles that focus on both customer needs and continuous service quality improvement.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

❖ Hospitality businesses should regularly gather and analyze customer feedback to tailor services to meet evolving guest expectations, ensuring a customer-centric approach that boosts satisfaction and loyalty.

❖ Implement regular training and development programs for staff to refine service quality, encouraging a culture of ongoing enhancement that maintains high standards and meets customer demands.

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