

SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH FAST-FOOD RESTAURANTS IN THE UYO METROPOLIS, NIGERIA

¹Ekong, Justina E. and Akai, Iniobong M.

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study adopted the SERVQUAL model as the main framework for analyzing service quality. Linear regression analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to examine the effect of service quality dimensions of service reliability, service assurance, service empathy, service responsiveness, and service tangibility on customer satisfaction. A sample size of 384 was derived for the unknown population using the Topman formula. A structural questionnaire was used to collect information from the respondents. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed with the help of purposive sampling. Out of 384 questionnaires, only 334 useable copies were retrieved. The hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study showed that service reliability had a significant effect of ($\beta = 0.466$, $p = 0.884$) on customer satisfaction in fast-food restaurants. Service assurance revealed a significant effect of ($\beta = 0.210$, $P = 0.962$) on customer satisfaction. Service empathy had a significant effect of ($\beta = 0.009$, $P = 1.015$) on customer satisfaction. Service responsiveness showed a significant effect of ($\beta = 0.067$, $P = 1.063$) on customer satisfaction, and service tangibility revealed a significant effect of ($\beta = 0.234$, $P = 0.952$) on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Based on the findings, the study recommended that fast food restaurant management should constantly deliver fast, reliable service to their customers and create a friendlier environment where they would feel more comfortable. Fast-food

¹ Department of Marketing, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus, Nigeria

² Akwa Ibom State University (AKSU) Library, Obio Akpa Campus, Nigeria

E-mail: tinafidus@yahoo.com, iniobongakai@aksu.edu.ng

restaurant staff should be selfless when rendering services to their customers. They should listen and pay attention to complaints that arise from them. Management should ensure that the interior and exterior environment where they conduct business should always be kept neat and attractive. Also, fast-food restaurants need to have well-stated customer service departments and responsive front-line people in all contact positions. Staff needs to be responsive and proactive in providing services in various fast-food restaurants to better position themselves in the industry.

INTRODUCTION

In any business-related activity or organization, service quality can be considered a critical marketing strategy. The main goal of any business organization is to attain high profitability through customer patronage and repeat purchase, which is possible through an excellent service quality. Zaki and Ochsner (2012) posit that the key to sustain a competitive advantage in today's modern competitive and globalized business world lies in the quality of service that companies can provide, which in turn results in effective customer retention through their satisfaction. Service quality plays a key role in measuring organizational success (Keith & Simmers, 2011; Okon, Simon & Akai, 2015).

According to Ekong, Mfon, and Ibok (2023), service quality is a strategic tool for achieving operational efficiency and improving business performance. Customers perceive the quality of any given service due to an assessment process because they often make comparisons between the services they expect and their perception of the services they receive. Customer satisfaction is perceived as a key differentiator and has increasingly become a major element of business strategy in a competitive market place, where businesses compete for customers. Etuk, Anyadighibe, Amadi, and James (2022) defined customer satisfaction as the number of customers, or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a firm, its products, or its services (ratings) exceeds specified satisfaction goals.

To maintain high levels of customer satisfaction, the organization must update its services accordingly to customers (Ojo, 2010). Mfon and Ekong (2021) posit that the characteristics of services require that the quality of the people element and the quality of the service delivery facilities must be taken into cognizance in service delivery, which will enable the provision of clear dimensions for judging service quality. This is in agreement with Kotler and Armstrong (2013) who stated that consumers make inferences about service quality from things they can see in connection with the service, such as the place, people, price, equipment, and communication, and make purchase decisions accordingly. In other words, to allay the uncertainty in the service experience, consumers look for signals of service quality before purchasing to derive inferences (Udonde and Ekong, 2023). The effect of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction of fast-food restaurants in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. This study aimed to determine how the various SERVQUAL dimensions of service reliability, service assurance, service empathy, service tangibility, and service responsiveness affect customer satisfaction in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In today's competitive and rapidly evolving environment, service quality management is a key challenge for any service business. This critical task is to deliver satisfactory benefits to its current customers that are cost-effective the business. Most fast food organizations are enthusiastic about providing good quality services but

fall short simply due to observed factors such as rising health and nutritional concerns, intense competition in the fast food industry, labor shortages as seen in employee turnover and increased employee training costs, supply chain disruptions and rising cost of ingredients, which has made many restaurants to be skeptical of raising pricing so as not to lose their price sensitive customers and the desire of customers to have exceptional food experience.

Therefore, it becomes pertinent for fast-food restaurants to provide indicative evidence about the quality of their services to enable consumers to create a mental picture of the service experience or the ability of the service provider. It was against this backdrop that the researchers decided to conduct this research to determine the effect of the surrogates of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

This study primarily aimed to examine the effect of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study include the following:

- i. Examine the effect of service reliability on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- ii. Determine the effect of service assurance on customer satisfaction with fast-food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria
- iii. Ascertain the effect of service empathy on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- iv. Determine the effect of service tangibility on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- v. Examine the effect of service responsiveness on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses of the study

The following null hypotheses were developed to guide the study:

Ho₁: There is no significant effect of service reliability and customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Ho₂: There exists no significant effect of service assurance on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Ho₃: There exists no significant effect of service empathy on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Ho₄: Service tangibility does not significantly affect the satisfaction of customers with fast food restaurants in Uyo, AkwaIbom State.

Ho₅: Service responsiveness has no significant effect on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Service Quality

Service quality is one of the major contributors to customer satisfaction, and as a result, it is given importance in the service sector. Service quality enables companies to achieve high customer patronage, satisfaction, loyalty, and retention and enhances their financial performance. Service quality has become a major area of academic investigation in the past few decades (Akai & Uford, 2025; Akai, Uford & Udoh, 2025). Some

researchers have produced several definitions and an understanding of the concept of service quality, but a few are being looked at low:

Asubonteng (2012) defined service quality as the difference between customers' expectations for service performance before the service encounter and their perceptions of the service received. Gronroos (2010) described total service quality as customers' perceptions of the difference between the expected and perceived services. Kenneth and Douglas (2012) posited that quality is the lifeblood of service delivery firms, and Zeithaml (2018) posited that service quality is the process where customers conduct a comparative analysis of the entire service being provided. Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1998) defined service quality as the level and extent of difference between the perceptions that a customer has his/her expectations. This definition clearly shows that service quality is what customers examine through their expectations and perceptions of a service experience.

Quality is the lifeblood of service delivery firms, bringing increased customer patronage, competitive advantage, and long-term profitability (Johnson and Karlay, 2018). Gronroos (2014) defined services as non-stoppable interactions that involve both customers and service providers. These services may be considered superior and non-touchable services, but they require tangible resources and any valuable instrument that will facilitate the process of solving customers' problems. Zeithaml (2018) explained service quality as the process where customers conduct a comparative analysis of the entire services being provided.

Service sectors, such as fast-food restaurants, have the responsibility to provide the best services to their customers to have a sustainable competitive advantage. Because of the critical quality of service to business, it is difficult for service providers to measure the quality of services (Al-Azzam, 2015; Udoikah & Ndaeyo, 2021), thus, an independent framework for explaining and measuring quality is required (Akpan-Atata, Akwang, Akai, & Eyene, 2015). Among the key frameworks, the service quality model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988) is the most popular model and is widely used to measure service quality in the service industry. Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) stated that service quality is the dominant element in customer evaluations in pure services. However, when customer service or services are offered in combination with a physical product, service quality may also be critical in determining customer satisfaction.

Service quality dimensions

According to research, customers do not perceive quality in an un-dimensional way, but rather judge quality based on multiple factors relevant to the context. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) postulated the SERVQUAL model as a multi-dimensional construct. In their work in 1988, an initial construct of ten was reduced to five to include the following: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. These dimensions represent how customers organize information in their minds. The five dimensions are discussed below:

i. Reliability:

Reliability is defined as the ability to perform the promised service.

Dependable accurately. According to Singh (2012), reliability refers to accessibility, continuity, and performance. Accessibility means that the service is always available whenever it is required or desired. Continuity means that the fast-food outlet's service must be available and at the right standard. Third, performance is related to of high-quality customer satisfaction, thus gaining their loyalty for a longer time (Arslan, 2015).

ii. Assurance:

Assurance involves credibility, security, competence, and courtesy exhibited by fast-food restaurants. According to Zeithaml and Bitner (2003), assurance is defined as employees' knowledge of courtesy and the firm's and its employees' ability to inspire trust and confidence.

iii. Empathy:

Parasuraman et al. (1985) defined empathy as Empathy caring and giving Individual attention that the firm provides to its clients. Employees who understand the needs of the customer facilities during business hours are given individual attention (Al-zam, 2015). The essence of empathy is conveying that customers are unique and special through personalized or customized service.

Tangibles:

Tangibles include the firm's physical facilities, materials, equipment, representatives, and communication materials. Udonde and Ekong (2023) posit that tangibles are controllable physical factors such as signage, furnishing, layout, color, cleanliness, smell, and music that can be systematically manipulated to produce desired effects in the form of favorable disposition toward the service environment and the organization providing the service.

iv. Responsiveness:

Responsiveness refers to the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service (Parasuraman et al., 1988). It contains the timeliness of service, understanding of the needs and requirements of the customer, individual attention provided by the staff, easy operation time, attention to the problem, and customer's safety in dealings (Kumar et al. 2009). Responsiveness is communicated to customers by the length of time they have to wait for assistance, answers to questions or attention to problems, flexibility, and ability to customize the service to customer needs.

Customer Satisfaction Concept

Customer satisfaction is the customer's evaluation of a good or service in terms of whether it has met their needs and expectations. Kotler and Keller (2006) defined customer satisfaction as the level of a person's state resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome in violation to his/her own expectations. Customer satisfaction is the totality of a customer's pre-purchase expectation and post-purchase evaluation of a shopping experience. A positive experience will result in a satisfied customer and vice versa.

Customer satisfaction is affected by elements such as a particular product feature, perception of quality, and emotional responses of customers and Cheung (2013) indicate that customer satisfaction results from what customers believe should happen (anticipation) compared with the situation when what they believe is not the case (perceived performance).

Matzler et al. (2002) identified three factors that affect customer satisfaction. They are; **Basic Factors:** which are those factors that lead to the fulfillment of the basic requirement for which the product is produced. **Performance Factors:** These include reliability and friendliness, which lead to satisfaction if fulfilled and dissatisfaction if not fulfilled.

Excitement Factors: These factors, including project management, increase customer satisfaction if fulfilled but do not cause dissatisfaction if not fulfilled. These factors surprise the customer and generate 'delight'.

Fast-Food Restaurants

According to Mfon and Uford (2022), fast food restaurants are restaurants that provide different types of food to customers at short times. Ukorebi (2018) described fast-food restaurants as entries known as quick-service restaurants where vendors prepare food quickly and make it accessible. According to Mathur and Patodiya

(2016), fast food includes the following components: minimal table service fixed menus and most ingredients prepared ahead of time.

Theoretical Framework: The SERVQUAL Model (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988))

The SERVQUAL model views service quality as the gap that exists between customer expectations and performance. The model explained that the greater the distance between the two variables, where performance supersedes expectations, the greater the service quality. The main aim of SERVQUAL is to have a standard and reliable tool that can be used to measure the quality of services in different service sectors they are: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The tangibles comprised physical facilities, workers, communication materials, and equipment. It refers to the physical environment in which at service provider operates. Reliability is the ability of the service organization to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. Reliability means that the organization delivers on its promises regarding delivery, provision, problem resolution, and pricing. Empathy refers to the ability of service organizations to pay attention to individual customers' problems and demands and then address them effectively. Responsiveness refers to the willingness to help customers provide prompt service. Assurance is the knowledge and courteous attitude of the organization's staff and management to instill trust and confidence in customers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized survey research. This design was chosen because it offered the opportunity to assess the population under consideration.

Population of the study

The study population comprised all customers of fast-food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State. The total population was deemed unknown as they could not be obtained from the management of the fast-food restaurants.

Sampling Technique and Determination of Sample Size

The population of the study was unknown; hence, the researcher applied the Topman formula to determine the sample size of an unknown population

Source of data and collection method

Data for the research work were mainly collected from customers of all the fast-food restaurants by using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A solicited the respondents' biometrics, while section B contained questions on the dimensions of service quality. It consisted of closed-ended multiple-choice questions and Likert-scale questions that enable respondents to express their level of agreement and select the best answer. The researcher adopted a five-point Likert scale for the questionnaire. The instrument was distributed to customers through purposive sampling. The questionnaires were shared with the fast-food restaurants based on their perceived customer base due to the daily high-level activities observed there and from random customers' visual perceptions.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The questionnaire was presented to some senior colleagues and experts to ensure face and content validity regarding the instrument used. Their inputs were used in finalizing the instrument prior administration after confirming that the research instrument (questionnaire) has met the study's objective. According to Burns and Grove (2013), reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures an attribute.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaires was measured using Cronbach's alpha correlation, which ranges from 0 to 1 (Kothari, 2004). Higher alpha coefficient values imply that the scales are more reliable and vice versa. Therefore, the rule of thumb is that the acceptable alpha should be at least 0.70 or higher (Hall, 2008).

Table 1: Reliability analysis

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Reliability
Service Reliability	0.807	4	Reliable
Service Assurance	0.844	4	Reliable
Service Empathy	0.823	4	Reliable
Service Tangibility	0.909	4	Reliable
Service Responsiveness	0.730	4	Reliable
Customer Satisfaction	0.870	4	Reliable
Total	0.981	24	Reliable

Source: Survey data from 2023

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The descriptive statistics in which percentages were used in analyzing the research questions. Furthermore, linear regression was used to test the extent and effect of the relationship between the variables using the SPSS version 21 statistical package for social sciences. Linear regression was performed using SPSS version 21 to examine the effect between the variables.

Data presentation, analysis, and findings

This section of the study presents the descriptive analysis, results of the test of hypotheses, and a summary of the results.

Table 2: Number of questionnaires administered and returned to the researcher and the response rate

Fast-Food Restaurants	Frequency	Percentages
Distribution of copies of questionnaire	384	100%
Copies of the retrieved questionnaire are usable	334	87.0%
Copies of the questionnaire not retrieved	50	13.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3: Respondents' Personal Data

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
<u>Age</u>		
18-25 years	11	3.3
26-33 years	203	60.8
34-42 years	95	28.4
42 years and above	25	7.5
Total	334	100.0
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	205	61.2
Female	130	38.8
Total	334	100.0

Marital Status

Single	93	27.8
Married	218	65.3
Divorced	14	4.2
Widowed	9	2.7
Total	334	100.0

Educational Qualification

SSCE or below	29	8.7
Diploma	169	50.6
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	136	40.7
Post Graduate and above	-	-
Total	334	100.0

Income level

5,000-25,000	136	40.7
26,000-50,000	37	11.1
50,000-75,000	148	44.3
76,000 and above	13	3.9
Total	334	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Test of the Hypotheses**Hypothesis 1**

H₀₁: Service reliability has no significant effect on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom.

Table 4: Model Summary of Regression Analysis on Service Reliability and Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error in the Estimate
1	.799 ^a	.639	.637	.30171

a. Predictors: (Constant), service reliability

Table 5: Analysis of Variance of the Effect of Service Reliability and Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Sum of the Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.659	1	28.659	314.834	.000 ^b
	Residual	16.203	178	.091		
	Total	44.862	179			

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), service reliability

Table 6: Coefficients Service Reliability and Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.466	.153		3.055	.003
	Service Reliability	.884	.050	.799	17.744	.000

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

The model summary in Table 4 shows an R-value of 0.799. This shows that service reliability has a positive effect on customer satisfaction in fast-food outlet in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State. The R square value of 0.639 shows that 63.9% of the variation in service reliability was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 314.834 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service reliability has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.466 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 0.884-unit increase in service reliability given a unit increase in customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2:

H₀₂: Service assurance has no significant effect on customer satisfaction with selected fast-food restaurants in Uyo.

Table 7: Model Summary of Regression Analysis on Service Assurance on Customer Satisfaction with Selected Fast-Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error in the Estimate
1	.825 ^a	.681	.679	.28363

a. Predictors: (Constant), Service assurance

Table 8: Analysis of Variance of the Effect of Service Assurance and Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Sum of the Squares		Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	30.542		1	30.542	379.666	.000 ^b
	Residual	14.319		178	.080		
	Total	44.862		179			

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Service Assurance

Table 9: Coefficients of Service Assurance and Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	.210	.152		1.382	.169
	service assurance	.962	.049	.825	19.485	.000

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

The model summary in Table 7 shows an Rvalue of 0.825. This shows a positive effect of service assurance on customer satisfaction in a selected fast-food outlet in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The R^2 value of 0. 681 shows that 68.1% of the variation in service assurance was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 379.666 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service assurance has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.210 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 0.962 unit increase in service assurance given a unit increase in customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis Three: H_{02} : There is no significant effect of service empathy on customer satisfaction of selected fast-food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis.

Table 10: Model Summary of Regression Analysis on Service Empathy on Customer Satisfaction with Selected Fast-Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error in the Estimate
1	.725 ^a	.526	.523	.34567

a. Predictors: (Constant), Service Empathy

Table 11: Analysis of Variance of the Effect of Service Empathy on Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Sum of the Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	23.593	1	23.593	197.456	.000 ^b
	Residual	21.269	178	.119		
	Total	44.862	179			

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Service Empathy

Table 12: Coefficients of Service Empathy and Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.009	.225		.039	.969
	service empathy	1.015	.072	.725	14.052	.000

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

The model summary in Table 9 shows an R-value of 0.725. This shows that service empathy has a positive effect on customer satisfaction in a selected fast-food outlet in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State. The R^2 value of 0. 526 shows that 52.6% of variation in service empathy was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable

given the F-value of 197.456 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service empathy has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.009 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 1.015 unit increase in service empathy given a unit increase in customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4

H₀₄: There is no significant effect of service tangibility on the customer satisfaction of selected fast-food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 13: Model Summary of Regression Analysis on Service Tangibility on Customer Satisfaction with Selected Fast-Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted square	R-Std. Error in the Estimate
1	.820 ^a	.672	.670	.28743

a. Predictors: (Constant), service tangibility

Table 14: Analysis of Variance of the Effect of Service Tangibility on Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Sum of the Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	30.156	1	30.156	365.024	.000 ^b
	Residual	14.705	178	.083		
	Total	44.862	179			

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), service tangibility

Table 15: Coefficients of Service Tangibility and Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.234	.154		1.521	.130
	Service Tangibility	.952	.050	.820	19.106	.000

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

The model summary in Table 12 shows an R-value of 0.820. This shows that service tangibility has a positive effect on customer satisfaction in selected fast-food outlets in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State. The R-square value of 0.672 shows that 67.2% of the variation in service tangibility was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 365.024 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service tangibility has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.234 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 0.952 unit increase in service tangibility given a unit increase in customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5:

H₀₅: Service responsiveness has no significant effect on customer satisfaction of selected fast-food restaurants in Uyo.

Table 16: Model Summary of Regression Analysis on Service Responsiveness on Customer Satisfaction with Selected Fast-Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error in the Estimate
1	.742 ^a	.550	.547	.33678

a. Predictors: (Constant), Service responsiveness

Table 17: Analysis of Variance of the Effect of Service Responsives on Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Sum of the Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.673	1	24.673	217.528	.000 ^b
	Residual	20.189	178	.113		
	Total	44.862	179			

a. Dependent variable: on customer satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), service responsiveness

Table 18: Coefficients of Service Responsiveness on Customer Satisfaction with Fast Food Restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.067	.219		-.305	.761
	service responsiveness	1.063	.072	.742	14.749	.000

a. Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

The model summary in Table 16 shows an R-value of 0.742. This shows that service responsiveness has a positive effect on customer satisfaction in selected fast-food outlets in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The R square value of 0.550 shows that 55.0% of the variation in service responsiveness was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 217.528 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service responsiveness has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.067 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 1.063 unit increase in service responsiveness given a unit increase in customer satisfaction.

4.4 Discussion of the Findings

The model summary in Table 4 shows an R-value of 0.799. This shows that service reliability has a positive effect on customer satisfaction in a selected fast-food outlet in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The R square value of 0.639 shows that 63.9% of the variation in service reliability was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 314.834 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service reliability has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.466 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 0.884-unit increase in service reliability given a unit increase in

customer satisfaction. This finding agrees with the findings of Kouthoris and Alexandris (2013) and Chigozie (2018) that reliability affects customer satisfaction. Alabar, Egena and Gbande from their research in 2014 posits that amongst physical facilities, reliability, and empathy, reliability has the most effect on customer satisfaction.

The model summary in Table 7 shows an R-value of 0.825. This shows a positive effect of service assurance on customer satisfaction in a selected fast-food outlet in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The R² value of 0.681 shows that 68.1% of the variation in service assurance was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 379.666 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service assurance has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.210 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 0.962 unit increase in service assurance given a unit increase in customer satisfaction. The positivity of service assurance on customer satisfaction is also held by the works of (Etuk et al., 2022; Bongoure & Neu, 2010; Alhkami & Alarussi, 2016).

The model summary in Table 10 shows an R-value of 0.725. This shows that service empathy has a positive effect on customer satisfaction in a selected fast-food outlet in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The R² value of 0.526 shows that 52.6% of variation in service empathy was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 197.456 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service empathy has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.009 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 1.015 unit increase in service empathy given a unit increase in customer satisfaction. Freitas and Cadido de Lima (2020) viewed service empty the most important dimension. Omar, Ariffin, and Ahmad (2016) and Wang et al. (2023) affirm that empathy positively affects customer satisfaction. However, Freita and Candido Le Lima (2020) and Ali et. al. do not support this view.

The model summary in Table 13 shows an R-value of 0.820. This shows that service tangibility has a positive effect on customer satisfaction in a selected fast-food outlet in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The R square value of 0.672 shows that 67.2% of the variation in service tangibility was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 365.024 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service tangibility has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.234 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 0.952 unit increase in service tangibility given a unit increase in customer satisfaction. This assertion is not supported by Gobena's (2019) findings, in which all dimensions of service quality are below average and insignificant to customer satisfaction. However, Agyapong (2011) agrees that empathy has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

The model summary in Table 16 shows an R-value of 0.742. This shows that service responsiveness has a positive effect on customer satisfaction in selected fast-food outlet in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The R square value of 0.550 shows that 55.0% of the variation in service responsiveness was accounted for by variations in customer satisfaction. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable given the F-value of 217.528 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that service responsiveness has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the B-coefficient of 0.067 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts a 1.063 increase in service responsiveness given a unit increase in customer satisfaction. Mhlanga and Tichaawa (2016) found that, responsiveness was the most important contributor to consumer choice among other service dimensions. In this research, the findings reflect that service assurance has the most effect on customer satisfaction.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Findings

The findings of the study showed significant effects of service reliability, service assurance, service empathy, service tangibility, and service responsiveness on customer satisfaction of customers in the fast-food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Conclusion

This study aimed to determine the effect of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction with fast food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

The following conclusions were drawn from the study results:

1. The dimension of service quality and reliability significantly affects the customer satisfaction of fast-food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.
2. The service quality dimension of service assurance significantly affects the customer satisfaction of fast-food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.
3. The dimension of service quality of service empathy significantly affects fast-food restaurant customer satisfaction, in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.
5. The dimension of service quality of service tangibility significantly affects the customer satisfaction of fast-food restaurants in Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

1. The fast-food restaurants should constantly deliver fast, strong, and reliable service based on the result on reliability to avoid losing their customers to competitors.
2. The management and staff of fast-food restaurants should create a friendlier environment where customers would feel more comfortable. Staff should also be trained on efficient customer service delivery.
3. In the aspect of service empathy, the staff of various fast-food outlets should be selfless when rendering services to their customers. They should listen and pay attention to complaints that arise from them. They should endeavor to resolve them as quickly as possible.
4. The interior and exterior appearances of fast-food restaurants should always be kept neat and attractive.
5. Staff must be responsive at all times. Fast-food restaurants need to have well-stated customer service departments and responsive front-line people in all contact positions.

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