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**SALESPERSON BEHAVIUR AND CUSTOMERS SATISFACTION IN
THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: AN EXPOSITION OF SELECTED
RESTAURANTS IN ENUGU METROPOLIS**



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SALESPERSON BEHAVIOUR AND CUSTOMERS SATISFACTION IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: AN EXPOSITION OF SELECTED RESTAURANTS IN ENUGU METROPOLIS

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper studied the effect of salesperson behaviour on customer satisfaction in the services industry. The specific objectives were firstly to determine the relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction in the services industry. Secondly, to ascertain the relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction in the services industry.

Methodology: The study comprises customers of elected restaurant in Enugu metropolis whose population is unknown. Cochran's sample size determination formula was used to determine the sample size of 384. Survey method was used to distribute structured questionnaires to the 384 respondents who eventually returned 300 well filled questionnaires. For the reliability of the study, Cronbach's alpha was used and the value of 0.784 was determined. Analysis of data was done using Pearson Product Moment correlation statistical tool.

Results: Findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. Similarly, it was revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. The implication of this finding is that if salespersons continue with these pleasant approaches, satisfied customers will make repeat purchase and transform into loyal customers. Therefore, restaurant management should lay more emphasis on improving salesperson behaviour to satisfy customers and improve organizational performance. Also, salespersons should be taught to be innovative in the manner they deliver restaurant services to enhance customer value.

Keywords: *Salesperson, Salesperson behaviour, Customer, Customer satisfaction, Services, Ethical behaviour, Smart behaviour, Disconfirmation Theory*

INTRODUCTION

This 21st century has marked a milestone and a paradigm shift from the usual business environment which projects the transactional aspect of marketing rather than relationship marketing (Akroush, 2010). Competition has skyrocketed and gone are the days when salespersons conduct themselves haphazardly and embark on business as usual. That is why it is evident that salespersons are no longer school leavers but graduates and postgraduates who have the knowledge, experience, expertise and passion in the art, science and act of selling (Okolo et al., 2018; 2016). In other words, quacks are no longer recruited to perform selling activities. In aeternum, selling itself is an appendage of marketing and as marketing preaches the doctrine of customer satisfaction (Okolo et al., 2015), selling must toll the same line. Nevertheless, satisfying customers through salesmanship had been topsy-turvy as many salespersons conduct themselves in an unethical and unprofessional manner. Survival in a highly competitive global economy is highly unpredictable and if companies really choose to do so, they must conduct adequate sales training for their salespersons to project an image of a victor in achieving their company's prime objectives.

In today's highly dynamic and competitive business arena, relational selling behaviour has become sine qua non as it is expected of the salespersons to meet their sales targets while at the same time establishing and sustaining perpetual profitable business relationships. However, the quality of relationships and the importance of behaviour by salespersons have been greatly considered by scholars and economic agencies (Islam et al., 2017; Alrubaiee, 2012). Johnston and Marshall (2003) concurred that relationship selling focuses on building, nurturing and maintaining superior and value-laden relationships with profitable customers. Indeed, salespersons add value to a product and service by enhancing confidence, trust, goodwill, customer satisfaction and loyalty (Yeo et al., 2019; ul Zia & Akram, 2016). Nevertheless, a little is known about salespersons service attitude deployed to establish trust and satisfy customers after initial sales. Madhani (2015) and Zoha (2015) observed that managers who use outcome-based control leave salespersons to achieve results using their own strategic approach without a particular regard on how their salespersons achieve these results. Conversely, behaviour-based control requires managers to be more proactive in monitoring and directing the operations of their salespersons (Zoha, 2016).

Moreover, salespersons in this study are into restaurant services and the services rendered by them range from indoor food preparation to out-door food vending services with local delicacies and intercontinental dishes such as melon soup, draw soup, rice, salad, shredded chicken, beans, pounded yam, abacha, yam porridge with vegetables, roasted plantain with ugba sauce, isi-ewu and pepper soup, mixed grill and cocktail, cow leg, catfish, croaker fish, seafood, indomie noodles, shawarma, burger, ice cream **and** soft drinks and **snacks**, beer and stout, red wine, champagne, gin/rum/whiskey/liquor, fresh palm wine and many more. Obviously, restaurants in Enugu have great dining options for all tastes, preferences and budgets. Nonetheless, the challenges of where tasty meals can be got outside home at good value in a neat and serene atmosphere still subsist.

Moreover, customer satisfaction is a transaction-specific attribute that is defined as the company's ability to provide for the emotional and psychological needs of its customers (Zhong & Moon, 2020; Kehinde et al.,

2016). It includes organization's efforts towards meeting consumers' expectations. Certainly, satisfaction is based on the customer's experience of both contact with the organizations and personal outcomes. There is a wide gulf between customer expectation and services performance based on total customer perception and attitude towards a service provider. Simply put, a customer is satisfied based on his/her high personal assessment, which is largely influenced by individual expectations. When these expectations are met, a customer is said to be satisfied but when the opposite is the case, dissatisfaction is the outcome. Indeed, customer satisfaction is being put under strict surveillance by services organizations to assess customer-base improvement, customer loyalty, market share and overall success. Although the primary driver is profit, extraordinary salespersons focus on customers and his/her image perception and experience with the organization. They work to make their customers happy and see customer satisfaction as the key to survival and profit. Customer satisfaction in turn hinges on the quality and effects of their experiences and the services they receive (Centre for the Study of Social Policy Report, 2010).

More so, based on the product or services, customer satisfaction will definitely vary (Mcquitty et al., 2000). A whole lot can lead to customer satisfaction; product, service, the customer's purchase decision, experience with product salespersons and service provider etc. (Alabboodi, 2018; Poor et al., 2013). To gather credible information and proper guidance, consumers often rely on salespersons who are company representatives (Mullins et al., 2014). Sustainable development yields profitable results for organizations and can be actualized through the incorporation of good business ethics (Strukelj et al., 2020; Tormo-Carbo et al., 2018; Wesarat et al., 2017). Previous studies such as Ramsey et al. (2007) mentioned the ethical sales behaviour under supervisor's perceptions and have generated mixed results ranging from those supporting a positive relationship hypothesis to those opposing it.

In addition, most customers recently have been complaining about the services they received from top restaurants in Enugu metropolis. This complaint might come majorly from inadequate speedy service delivery, bad approaches in delivering services, salespersons claiming something which is untrue in their advertisements of their services such as lying or exaggerating about the benefits of their services, lying about availability even when the food had deteriorated to the point in which it is not edible to humans or its quality of edibility becomes reduced, giving answers when the answer is not really known, and implementing manipulative influence tactics or high-pressure selling techniques and the like. The most pathetic is that a good number of salespersons in some restaurants in Enugu have paid strict attention to customer satisfaction.

Customer's satisfaction is one necessary factor to develop long-term relationships, keep market share, and attract customer loyalty. Unfortunately, most salespersons are insensitive to customer needs; they hardly understand initially when these customers are dissatisfied. Sadly, some of these customers are unlikely to complain at the point of departure. Thus, satisfaction is a challenge particularly in the restaurant-based service as customers can easily switch from one restaurant to another for better services. It has also been observed that not much attempt has been made here in Nigeria to study the interplay between salesperson's behaviour and customer satisfaction in the service sector. The study intends to determine the relationship between salesperson behaviours and customers satisfaction in the hospitality industry.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Salespersons Behaviour and Customer Satisfaction

A salesperson is expected to be honest and reliable in relating with the customers in order to secure a big customer account (Herjanto & Franklin, 2019). A good salesperson normally does not jettison information that he or she fears the prospect may not want to hear. This means that the salesperson should know that objection is part and parcel of sales job and should therefore remain focused under pressure when the customer remains difficult to convince. Thus, the salesperson need not engage in quarrel with the customer rather persuasive language should be used to encourage the customer to place order. Good listenership is a virtue for the salesperson (Drollinger & Comer, 2013). At the point when a salesperson's conduct is seen as moral, the organization is additionally seen as moral (Lin, 2012). Furthermore, a salesperson with great ethical disposition could build good rapport with the customer aimed at securing consumer confidence, trust, satisfaction, retention and loyalty (Hazrati et al., 2012).

However, the behaviour of the salesperson augments the value and taste of the food served and consumed in a restaurant. In situations in which the behaviours of the salespersons are awkward, repeat patronage and referrals are foreclosed. This had been confirmed by Alnsour (2018) and Chuang et al. (2012) who remarked that face-to-face interactions with customers have been traditionally considered as one of the most important determinants of customer loyalty. Indeed, dishonest and untrustworthy behaviours displayed by salespersons may jeopardize customer relationship and loyalty (Lin, 2012). Those reprehensible actions may not only influence customer expectations but also hurt the customer commitment, trust, and loyalty. Crosby et al. (2012) observed that in service organizations like restaurants, salespersons are the most visible and popular representatives. Salespersons who behave ethically are more committed and trusted in building good customer relationships as well as satisfying customer (Lee & Jin, 2019; Zoha, 2018).

Salesperson Strategic Behaviours

Salesperson Ethical Selling Behaviour

Through their behavioural interactions and relationships with their customer, salespersons present their organisation's image and reputation which is highly indispensable in achieving customer satisfaction (ul Zia et al., 2016). The ethical behaviour of salespersons has become a strategic weapon of warfare for service businesses as customers continue to value their interactions with the salespersons (Belas, 2012). Ethical sales behaviour plays a monumental role in attaining customer satisfaction in the service industry (Tolba et al., 2015). Ethical behaviour of salesperson is very important in creating customer satisfaction because salespersons are representing and projecting their organization image in their behaviour and interactions with customers.

Ethics refers to what is good or bad (Limaye & Pande, 2016). For Limaye and Pande (2016) business ethics refers to the day to day business behaviour and activities performed by businesses world over. According to them, it is the standard for moral conduct and judgment. Ethics is highly revered in businesses especially in

salesmanship as the salesperson plays a mediatory role between the customers and the firms (Hazrati et al., 2012). Hence, when the salesperson maintains standard by respecting customers views through adequate delivery of customer expectations, his or her ethical behaviour will improve (Wedatama & Sukaatmadja, 2019). In line with this, Bendixen and Abratt (2007) and Hurst (2008) suggested that respect for customers can improve salesperson ethical behaviour.

In addition, sales ethics is concerned with the influence of a salesperson's moral standard on the sales of an organisation's product, service and ideas (Hansen & Riggle, 2013). In their study, it was found that trust and customer satisfaction were positively and significantly affected by salesperson's behaviour (Wedatama & Sukaatmadja, 2019). They also revealed that customer satisfaction was the mediator between customer trust and the relationship between salesperson ethical behaviour. Trust also mediated between how ethical salesperson behaviour affected buyer commitment and buyer behaviour (Hansen & Riggle, 2013). In truism, salesperson ethical behaviour entails guaranteeing the confidentiality of customer's privacy, delivering accurate and credible information and communicating effectively with the customer and delivers goods and services that guarantee customer satisfaction (Jalali et al., 2016; Madhani, 2014). Laith (2012) noted that customer relationship and commitment was significantly affected by salesperson's ethical selling behaviour. Certainly, customers will build and maintain more confidence and trust in a person and the organization he or she represents when a salesperson shows high ethical behaviour, (Demirgunes, 2015). Therefore, salesperson's integrity, honesty and diligence will increase trust and customer satisfaction. Therefore, the researchers propose that:

H₁: There is a significant positive relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction.

Salesperson Smart Selling Behaviour

A salesperson's performance is championed by his or her smart selling behaviour or activities (Aqmal et al., 2021). For them, the adoption of salesperson smart selling behaviour will lead to superior sales performance. Undoubtedly, smart selling behaviour boosts the performance of salespeople (Wong & Tan, 2018; Singh & Das, 2013). It involves adaptive selling, (Yi et al., 2021; Wong & Tan, 2018) consultative selling and relationship selling strategies. In view of this, Yazdanpour and Maroofi (2015) posited that the more salespersons adapt selling practices to suit the expectations of customers, the more customer-centric they become. Smart selling is a more viable means of communicating with the customers as the salesperson is able to create unique messages and waver it to suit each customer purchase situation (Roman & Iacobucci, 2009). Embarking on smart selling behaviour grants the salespersons the opportunity to uniquely interact one-to-one with the customers aimed at tailoring available goods and services to their needs and wants (Wong & Tan, 2018). Smart selling reflects the authority and situational considerations of a salesperson to plan and implement a wide range of selling behaviours and activities (Borgh & Schepers, 2017). Ranjbari et al. (2015) noted that customer loyalty is positively influenced by smart salesperson's selling behaviour. A smart salesperson possesses the ingenuity to build and maintain good and long-term relationship with their customers (Aqmal et al., 2021). Interestingly, a salesperson's customer orientation approach has the capability to develop

profitable buyer-seller relationship (Qureshi et al., 2017). According to them, the quality of a salesperson's customer relationship drives his or her relational penetration capability towards the customers aimed at achieving high salesperson performance.

Indeed, smart selling practice refers to salesperson enthusiasm in responding to customer's question as well as paying attention to customer's requests and complaints (Ranjbari et al., 2015). Smart selling behaviour can be improved with accurate and timely engagement in activities that serve to develop knowledge of sales situations and utilize this knowledge in *selling behaviour*. Hence, to practice smart selling effectively, salespeople need an elaborate knowledge structure of sales situations, sales behaviours, and contingencies that link specific behaviours to situations. Salespeople need to be adroit in gathering information about their customers to be able to relate the knowledge acquired in previous sales situations to the current marketing situation (Sangtani & Murshed, 2017). Therefore, the researchers propose that:

H₂: There is a significant positive relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction

In most of the hospitality or service-oriented organizations such as restaurants, salespersons are representatives who are more observable. Ghazian et al. (2016) and Ranjbari et al. (2015) posited that salespersons have lost focus on relationship-oriented marketing approach aimed at building long term and friendly relations with customers. Instead, they resort to the traditional marketing that is short-term and focuses on attracting without retaining customers. Chen and Mau (2009) in their study noted that the salesperson's ethical selling behaviour can play important roles in developing and keeping long-term relations with customers. The salesperson's unethical behaviour in the interaction with customers is the basis for customer dissatisfaction with services and inadequate patronage. Thus, inadequate service providers' understanding about the facial interactions of customers during service delivery is traditionally one of the most significant factors for customer dissatisfaction.

However, customer satisfaction has been perceived to be the main reasons behind customer repurchase behaviour (Hellier et al., 2003). Unequivocally, services are perceived by the customers in terms of quality and trust. How satisfied they feel with the overall service experience is what drives satisfaction. Customer satisfaction after the purchase of a product or service depends on the performance of the offering compared to customer expectation (Kotler et al., 2018). Zeithaml et al. (2018) remarked that there are indeed nuances even though customer satisfaction and service quality may be alternately used. For a customer to experience satisfaction his or her service expectations must match the benefits sought for in the service. In addition, Zeithaml et al. (2018) defined satisfaction as customer's assessment of a product or service performance with customer expectations. If performance is lower than expectation, cognitive dissonance will be the outcome of the service encounter. Cognitive dissonance occurs when there is lopsidedness in customer expectation and performance of products and services (Okolo et al., 2021).

Satisfaction could mean having the feelings of delight, happiness, fulfillment, contentment, pleasure, relief and euphoria (Khan & Hussain, 2003). The degree of customer satisfaction is the outcome of customer's evaluation of the service quality expectation in relation to the perceived service quality. In addition, the distinction is that in measuring customer satisfaction, the actual experience of the customer is the basis of assessments. Zeithaml et al. (2018) noted that satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a function of customer perception or feelings about services. If the customers are satisfied with the quality of services rendered to them, they will surrender their loyalty and will consequently embark on repurchase behaviour. This repeat purchase behaviour will eventually lead to goodwill and overall profitability for the company.

Further, heightened competition among organizations has led to greater emphasis on, and commitment towards achieving customer satisfaction (Zhong & Moon, 2020; Adewale, 2016). There are an increasing number of companies that started recognizing the importance of customer satisfaction for future business operations. In attempting to increase customer satisfaction it is necessary to understand what the customer wants before they realize it themselves. One major challenge that companies are facing today is how to improve customer satisfaction which is a way that companies differentiate themselves from competitors (Okolo et al., 2015; Egboro, 2015; Switala et al., 2019).

Salesperson Efficient Service Delivery

Ricarhado and Wade (2002) remarked that efficiency is the comparison of what is actually produced or performed with what can be achieved with the same consumption of resources (man, money, material, machine and time). It is an all-important factor in the determination of customer satisfaction. In terms of service delivery, efficiency relates to the use of all inputs in producing any given output, including personnel time and energy. However, efficient service delivery refers to the optimization of resources in order to best serve each person in that economic state (Ricarhado & Wade, 2002). It is an important factor in determination of customer satisfaction. There is no specific threshold that determines efficient service delivery in an organization, but, indications include goods being produced at the lowest possible cost and labor being performed with the greatest possible output (Upadhaya et al., 2014). This is relevant to the Nigerian service industry. Richard (2009) supported to the foregoing with the assertion that efficient service delivery refers to the ability to render a quality service without wasting materials, time, or energy. The foregoing was echoed by Daft (2000) who asserted that efficient service delivery is a component of business that defines the interaction between providers and clients where the provider offers a service, whether that is information or a task, and the client either finds value or loses value as a result. This implies that good service delivery provides clients with an increase in value. It is also critical for the long-term competitiveness and profitability of organizations.

Efficient service delivery has been linked to timely delivery too. In the services sector, success starts with on-time, on-budget project delivery – and that happens more easily when sales, service delivery, and finance are all on the same page (Bennet, 2014). The ability of the organization to manage salesperson's delivery time is a testament of organizational performance as delays in output may lead to setbacks and customer dissatisfaction. Service delivery time can be measured with absenteeism, late-coming, leaving before dismissal, inadequate work focus etc. (Lean Construction Institute, 2014). Additionally, customer satisfaction is one of the most

important components in a customer's decision to keep or switch a product or service provider and this is a function of the service delivery rate of the organization (Lemon, 2002).

Furthermore, service delivery which is a component of organizational performance is dependent on customer satisfaction as it indicates 'where', 'when' and 'how' the service is delivered to the customer. Some generalization within service types is possible for different services and service providers and managers may have to consider this in its design as the service delivery process can be broken down into service encounters (Colgate & Danaher, 2000). Thus, the power to deliver optimal service quality will gain the service firms competitive advantages among others in the same industry. Service delivery is an aspect of business that underpins the interaction between providers and clients where the provider offers a service, and it could be an information or task (Tax et al., 2013). The jobs of offering the services are assigned to salespersons and the performance on the job matters a lot. The performance of salespersons is important to organizational performance, not only in the service sector but also in other sectors. Services are to be provided effectively and efficiently to handle many customers demand and better performance gives satisfaction to the customers.

Empirical Review

Giacobbe et al. (2006) reviewed the contingency approach to adaptive selling behaviour, sales performance, selling situations and salesperson characteristics in Nigeria. The study used descriptive and regression analysis and found that effective salespeople detected more cues, particularly nonverbal cues when viewing a recorded sales interaction. Similarly, the relationships reported between empathy and selling effectiveness suggested that information acquisition skills improved selling effectiveness.

Also, Davis (2008) studied the impact of salesperson's leadership as salesperson's interactive behaviour on sales performance in Nova Southwestern University, USA. The main objective of the study was to determine the firm performance sequel to salesperson's empathetic listening attribute in the course of customer interaction. The study used ordinary least square regression and found that salesperson's behavioural factors have positive effect on sales performance.

Roman and de Maya, (2005) examined the relationship outcomes of perceived ethical sales behaviour and customer's perspective in Middle East University of Malaysia. The determination of ethical sales behaviour's direct consequences was the purpose of the study. The study utilized a correlation analysis and found that salesperson's ethical selling behaviour positively affects customer satisfaction and trust. Also, how customer loyalty had effect on ethical sales behaviour in the Chinese life insurance industry was investigated by Chen and Mau (2009). The main objective of this study is to establish customer trust as an important mediating determinant between the salesperson's ethical sales behaviour and customer loyalty. The study adopting ordinary least square revealed that ethical sales behaviour plays a major role in affecting customer trust and customer commitment as it has positive effects on customer trust and positive effects on customer commitment. The study also observed that the effect on customer trust is stronger than its effect on customer commitment.

Ethical sales behaviour, relationship quality and customer loyalty in Mid-Eastern Kingdom of Jordan was investigated by Laith (2012). The purpose of this study was to develop a conceptual framework to investigate

the relationship between ethical sales behaviour, relationship quality, and customer loyalty. The proposed model was tested on the data collected from 217 bank customers. The reliability and validity of the multi-item scales and the hypothesized relationships were tested using structural equation modeling technique with the aid of AMOS 7.0. Result revealed that ethical behaviour increased customer loyalty in the bank. Although the impact was not direct, it was mediated by customer trust and commitment to the bank. It was also found that customer commitment to the bank was impacted by customer trust.

Kennedy et al. (2001) conducted a study on consumers' trust of salesperson and manufacturer. The main objective of the study is to evaluate the adaptive selling Behaviour in Korean Automobile sales Representative. The study employed descriptive statistics and the result revealed that customer satisfaction with the salesperson increased significantly when the customer felt the salesperson had been fair in the transaction, which is associated to ethical sales behaviour.

In Jimma Ethiopia, the effect of customer satisfaction on the banking services of deposit money bank was investigated by Belay and Ebisa (2012). The finding revealed that the smooth delivery of the banking services was hindered. Network problem was main issue in the check clearing operations. Also, the delay on the loan approval was the major problem in the loan operations. Responses from respondents were that the benefits obtained from the electronic banking services were limited. Also, in Ethiopian banking sector, Mesay (2012) investigated service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty. The dimensions of service quality were revealed to have a positive relationship with customer satisfaction and in the study.

Theoretical Review

Theories provide the rational basis, for explaining or interpreting the results of research and relationship between the problem and a given theory (Agbaeze, 2004). The behaviours that salespersons show in contact with customers have enlarged theoretical underpinnings. But this study is mainly anchored on the disconfirmation theory of consumer satisfaction. This implies that the disconfirmation theory of consumer satisfaction best fit this study.

Disconfirmation Theory of Consumer Satisfaction

Disconfirmation Theory of Consumer Satisfaction was developed or conceptualized by *Oliver*, Richard L. in 1980. Customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction is the difference between product or service performance and the expectation of customers. Of course, both brands and services managers frown at negative disconfirmation knowing fully that it is catastrophic to customer satisfaction (Okolo et al., 2021). The theory of disconfirmation proposes that the outcome of product or service satisfaction is a measure of product or service perceived performance and disconfirmation (Ardabili & Daryani, 2012). Both expectation disconfirmation (ED) and desire disconfirmations (DD) are used to describe customer satisfaction (Khalifa & Liu, 2002). The disconfirmation is positive when a product performs beyond customer expectations (Almsalam, 2014). However, negative disconfirmation occurs when performance disfigures expectations and this leads to dissatisfaction.

The quartet of disconfirmation, expectations, performance and satisfaction are the four fundamental constructs used to describe the disconfirmation theory. Satisfaction is considered as an end in itself being consumer's psychological disposition after the purchase and consumption or use of a product or service. In other words, it is a consumer's state of mind that results from his or her comparison of the rewards expected and costs incurred in relation to the anticipated consequences of product or service purchase. When performance meets the expectation of customers, confirmation or neural disconfirmation is said to happen.

The assumption of the theory is that when product or service perceived performance goes beyond or below expectation or desire, there is positive disconfirmation or negative disconfirmation and the customer is satisfied or dissatisfied respectively. In other words, when performance is higher than expectation, satisfaction will take place. On the other hand, when performance is lower than expectation, dissatisfaction will take place. This theory is relevant to this study because it will help to explain and guide salespersons and restaurants owners to be conscious on some unethical behaviours that can contribute to customer dissatisfaction with services.

Methodology

Survey method was adopted by the research by administering structured questionnaire to gather primary data from customers of selected restaurants in Enugu metropolis. The scope was anchored on salesperson selling behaviour and customer satisfaction. The population comprises customers of Coal City Garden Restaurant, Emily Restaurant, 9'Ja Food, 042 Garden Restaurant, De Dome Enugu, Revelry Restaurants, Dolphin Restaurant, The Gates, Octopus Chinese Restaurant, and Lugard Crescent Restaurant; which is unknown. The judgmental sampling was adopted for selecting the respondents in the study. Instrument used for data collection was primarily questionnaire. Out of the 384 copies of the questionnaire that were distributed, 300 copies were returned. Content validity was used to determine the validity of the instrument. Research experts modified and made the necessary correction so that the instrument can measure adequately. The value of the test of reliability is 0.784 which was conducted using Cronbach's alpha which indicated that there is internal consistency of the instrument. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS; Version 22).

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

The data obtained from the field study were presented and analyzed with descriptive statistics to provide answers to the research questions while the corresponding hypotheses were tested with Pearson's correlation at 0.05 alpha levels.

Table 1. Coded responses on the relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction

S / N o	Questionnaire items	Str on gl y ag re e	A g r e e	Neu tral	Di sa gr ee	Str on gl y dis agr ee	T o t a l (F r e q)
		Fr eq	F r e q	Fre q	Fr eq	Fre q	
1	The salesperson provided me service in a very neat environment	14 5	9 6	35	15	09	3 0 0
2	The salesperson helped me in making the choice of food I wanted	14 1	9 4	31	21	13	3 0 0
3	The salesperson told me the truth about the cost of a eating in their restaurant	13 9	1 1 5	25	10	11	3 0 0
4	I was satisfied because the salesperson provided water, serviette, towel, toothpick	14 8	8 9	41	14	08	3 0 0

5	I was satisfied because the salesperson provided me with immediate and fast service	13 6	1 2 0	31	08	05	3 0 0
6	I was satisfied and had a memorable experience because the salesperson treated me as his best friend	14 4	1 1 2	22	12	10	3 0 0
TOTAL		85 3	6 2 6	185	80	56	1 8 0 0

Source: fieldwork, 2020

In table 1, based on responses 853 indicated strongly, agree, 626 indicated agree, 185 indicated neutrality, 80 indicated disagree, while 56 indicated strongly disagree. This implies that salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services has a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction.

4.1. Hypothesis One

H1: There is a significant relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Salesperson Ethical Selling Behaviour	4.2189	1.04103	900
Customer Satisfaction	4.1589	0.95615	900

Table 3. Correlations

		Salesperson Ethical Selling Behaviour	Customer Satisfaction
Salesperson Ethical Selling Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1	0.975**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	900	900
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.975**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	900	900

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

The above table 2 shows descriptive statistic of the relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. The mean value of salesperson ethical selling behaviour is 4.2189; while the standard deviation is 1.04103. Also, the mean value of customer satisfaction with services is 4.1589; while the standard deviation is 0.95615. By careful observation of standard deviation value, it can be said that there is about the same variability of data points amongst dependent and independent variables. This implies that salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services has a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction.

Also, Table 3 shows the Pearson correlation coefficient for salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. The correlation shows 0.975. This value indicates that correlation coefficient is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that there is a significant positive relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction ($r = 0.975$). The computed correlation coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = 0.195$ with 228 degree of freedom ($df\ n-2$) at alpha level for a two-tailed test ($r = 0.975, p < 0.05$).

Table 4. Coded responses on the relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction

S / N o	Questionnaire items	Str on gl y ag re e	A g r e e	Neu tral	Di sa gr ee	Str on gl y dis agr ee	T o t al (F r e q)
		Fr eq	F r e q	Fre q	Fr eq	Fre q	
1	The salesperson was quick in gave me the information I needed about the food I wanted	14 3	1 0 0	28	19	10	3 0 0
2	The salesperson was neatly dressed and the eating environment was also very neat	13 7	1 0 4	30	14	15	3 0 0

3	The salesperson was quick in introducing their available drinks while I was eating	15 0	9 9	23	21	07	3 0 0
4	I was satisfied because the restaurant salesperson did not delay in providing me with their service	14 6	9 7	33	14	10	3 0 0
5	I was satisfied because the food was delicious and the convinced me in buying food for my family	14 1	1 0 5	31	18	05	3 0 0
6	I was satisfied and had a memorable experience because I got what I wanted and the salesperson gave me the reasons while their restaurant is better than others and why I should revisit them	13 3	1 1 9	28	10	10	3 0 0
TOTAL		85 0	6 2 4	173	96	57	1 8 0 0

Source: fieldwork, 2020

In table 4, based on responses 850 indicated strongly, agree, 624 indicated agree, 173 indicated neutrality, 96 indicated disagree, while 57 indicated strongly disagree. This implies that salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services has a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction.

4.1.1. Hypothesis Two

H2: There is a significant relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Salesperson Smart Selling Behaviour	4.1611	1.05026	900
Customer Satisfaction	4.1878	0.98558	900

Table 6. Correlations

		Salesperson Smart Selling Behaviour	Customer Satisfaction
Salesperson Smart Selling Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	1	0.979**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	900	900
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.979**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	900	900

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

The above table 5 shows descriptive statistic of the relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. The mean value of salesperson smart selling behaviour is 4.1611; while the standard deviation is 1.05026. Also, the mean value of customer satisfaction with services is 4.1878; while the standard deviation is 0.98558. By careful observation of standard deviation value, it can be said that there is about the same variability of data points amongst dependent and independent

variables. This implies that salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services has a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction.

Also, Table 6 shows the Pearson correlation coefficient for salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. The correlation shows 0.979. This value indicates that correlation coefficient is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that there is a significant positive relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction ($r = 0.979$). The computed correlation coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = 0.195$ with 228 degree of freedom (df n-2) at alpha level for a two-tailed test ($r = 0.979, p < 0.05$).

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. This is in agreement with the study conducted by Hazrati et al. (2012) that revealed that customer's satisfaction was significantly influenced by the salesperson ethical behaviour. Similarly, the finding is in line with Tolba et al. (2015) who found that ethical sales behaviour had a significant effect on both customer satisfaction and loyalty. In line also, Wedatama & Sukaatmadja (2019) in their study found that salesperson ethical behaviour significantly had a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

Also, it was revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. In support of this finding, smart selling customer-oriented sales behavior was revealed to have positively influenced on customer satisfaction in the study done by Yi et al. (2021). Also, findings of the study conducted by Ranjbari et al. (2015) indicated that there is a significant relationship between salespeople's interactive behavior and customer satisfaction.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to ascertain the relationship between salesperson's behaviour and customer satisfaction of services in the hospitality industry, particularly the restaurants in Enugu metropolis. This study has attempted to focus on salesperson ethical selling behaviour and salesperson smart selling behaviour as the main constructs for customer satisfaction with services in restaurants. On the basis of correlation test, the study result revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between salesperson ethical selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. Similarly, it was revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between salesperson smart selling behaviour in delivering services and customer satisfaction. Thus, restaurant managers and management are advised to put more emphasis on salesperson behaviour to help them attract and retain more customers than competitors. As a matter of fact, customers expect high satisfaction from the services rendered. Therefore, salespersons' consistent demonstration shrewdness and ethical principles that include sharpness, respect, honesty and fairness are likely to enable restaurants to stay competitive and improve performances on the long-term.

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