

Customer Relationship Management Variables and Customer Satisfaction in Selected Restaurants in Ogun State, Nigeria

¹Ajasa, Olatunde A.,
²Kabuoh Margret N., &
³Worimegbe Powel M.
^{1,2&3}Department of Business
Administration and Marketing,
School of Management Sciences,
Babcock University, Ilishan
-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria

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Corresponding Author:
Ajasa, Olatunde A.

Abstract

Customer satisfaction is one of the critical components of marketing that significantly enhances a company's growth especially in the hospitality sector with effective relationship management. However, some organisations pay less attention to relationship management leading to customer dissatisfaction. This study examined the effect of customer relationship management (CRM) in selected restaurants in Ijebu-ode and Abeokuta local governments, Ogun State, Nigeria. The study adopted research philosophy, approach and context. The survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of 749 registered restaurants in Ogun State with 1414 customers of the selected restaurants in Ijebode and Abeokuta. The sample size of 338 was derived through the research advisors table plus 30% attrition rate. Data collection was done via a structured questionnaire with constructs validated through expert review and reliability confirmed through Cronbach's Alpha test which ranged between 0.713- 0.903. The response rate was 100%, ensuring data robustness. Data were analysed using Multiple linear regression analysis at 5% level of significance. The findings revealed that customer relationship management constructs significantly affected the customer satisfaction of selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta Local Government in Ogun State, Nigeria (Adj. R2 = 0.200; F (4,334) = 22.089, p < 0.05). The study therefore recommended that management of restaurants should focus on enhancing CRM dimensions to improve customer satisfaction and overall performance in the restaurant and hospitality sectors, in Ogun State, and Nigeria at large.

Background to the Study

Organisational performance is driven by customer satisfaction. The aim of every firm is to attain customer satisfaction which ignites its success. It reflects a consumer's commitment to repurchase or continue using a brand, signifying a profound emotional connection with it. However, in today's rapidly changing market landscape, various prevailing issues have emerged that challenge traditional notions of customers being dis-satisfied. These complex dynamics underscore the need for brands to adapt and evolve continually. Customer satisfaction is facing unprecedented challenges in today's fast-paced, highly competitive, and technologically advanced marketplace. Increased competition, changing consumer expectations, the impact of social media, technological disruption, demographic shifts, and the need for emotional connection all contribute to these complexities. Customer satisfaction in the restaurant and hospitality industry is a critical topic influenced by various factors, including customer experience, food quality, service perception, and changing consumer preferences. Without a structured approach to managing customer feedback, restaurants may struggle to effectively address complaints and resolve issues, which can result in negative experiences that discourage repeat business. As competition intensifies, it is crucial for restaurants to understand the complexities of customer satisfaction and the challenges associated with it in order to achieve sustained success. Consequently, the absence of effective customer relationship management (CRM) often leads to decreased customer satisfaction. This study, therefore, examined the effect of customer relationship management on customer satisfaction in selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta Local Governments in Ogun State, Nigeria.

According to PwC (2021), 73% of consumers consider customer experience a critical factor influencing their purchasing decisions. Brands that fail to personalize interactions or provide seamless experiences risk losing customer loyalty. The growing expectation for brands to understand and meet individual needs underscores the necessity for businesses to invest in customer experience strategies (Dastane, 2020). The restaurant industry in the United States is characterized by fierce competition, with thousands of dining options available to consumers. Factors such as cuisine variety, ambiance, pricing, and service quality saturate the market, making it challenging for any single restaurant to stand out. In this environment, building customer loyalty requires restaurants to differentiate themselves through unique offerings, exceptional service, and compelling loyalty programs. In Canada, a country renowned for its diverse culinary landscape, several prevailing issues impact customer satisfaction within the restaurant sector. These issues are multifaceted, stemming from shifts in consumer expectations, workforce challenges, technological advancements, and the ongoing effects of global events (Kim & Baker, 2020). Brands that effectively leverage digital platforms to enhance customer engagement and streamline the purchasing process are more likely to experience repeat purchase behaviour (Alshurideh, 2022).

In Europe, particularly in the United Kingdom, organizations place significant emphasis on brand and customer loyalty, as these are crucial components of their marketing

strategies (Kumar et al., 2021). This comes to play when the customers experience satisfaction. These concepts are evolving in response to contemporary prevailing issues such as digital transformation, changing consumer values, and economic fluctuations. In Asia, particularly in India, customer satisfaction is a pivotal factor in the success and sustainability of businesses in India. With a rapidly growing economy and a diverse consumer base, companies face numerous challenges in cultivating and maintaining customer loyalty (Reddy et al., 2023).

In Nigeria, a rapidly growing market is characterized by a vibrant consumer base and increasing competition, where brand loyalty plays a crucial role in the success of various industries, including the restaurant and hospitality industry (Vásquez, 2020). Nigeria's economy has experienced significant instability, affected by fluctuations in oil prices, inflation, and currency devaluation. This economic uncertainty has profound implications for brand loyalty (Sharma et al., 2022). One of the primary challenge's restaurants face today is the shifting preferences of consumers due to dissatisfaction level. Modern diners are increasingly seeking healthier options, sustainable practices, and locally sourced ingredients. This evolution in consumer values underscores a broader trend toward health consciousness and environmental awareness. According to a study by (Iskamto, 2021; Mahmud, 2021) many Nigerian consumers prioritize value for money over brand loyalty, especially in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has become a cornerstone of modern business strategy, enabling organizations to enhance customer engagement, improve service quality, and foster long-term loyalty. However, despite its importance, various prevailing issues complicate its effective implementation and management. Data quality and integration, customer privacy concerns, the complexity of implementation, evolving customer expectations, omnichannel integration, and measuring ROI pose significant challenges to organizations. To navigate these challenges effectively, businesses must adopt strategic approaches that prioritize data quality, foster transparency, and embrace customer-centric practices. By addressing these issues, organizations can enhance their customer relationship management efforts, ultimately leading to improved customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Many studies have been carried out in the area of Customer Relationship Management and Customer Satisfaction. Previous studies by (Haralayya, 2021; Khan et al., 2022; Sharma et al., 2020), underscore the importance of CRM and its potential to drive customer satisfaction. Additionally, research by Ali et al., (2021); Ilham et al., (2023); Tien et al., (2021) has explored various aspects of CRM in SMEs, contributing valuable insights into customer satisfaction and retention strategies. However, much research has not yet addressed customer relationship management specifically within the scope of restaurants in Ogun State to advance knowledge in this critical area. Key aspects such as customer conflict handling, customer engagement, customer empathy, and customer recognition are identified as areas requiring further exploration (Hamzah & Shamsudin, 2020; Shokouhyar et al., 2020; Supriyanto et al., 2021), with these studies suggesting the need to

fill the identified gaps in Nigeria. Further studies, including (Kim & Kim, 2022; Yi et al., 2021), emphasize the necessity for additional research in diverse contexts to address these gaps and support the generalization of findings.

The statement of problems related to customer satisfaction among restaurants in Ogun State encompasses several issues that impact the overall customer experience. These problems include inconsistent service quality, where fluctuations in service levels can lead to dissatisfaction and erode trust in the brand. Restaurant operators often face resource constraints, limiting their ability to provide timely and effective customer support, which adversely impacts satisfaction levels. Furthermore, inadequate feedback mechanisms and poor complaint resolution processes can leave customers feeling frustrated and dissatisfied (Budur & Poturak, 2021). The aforementioned gives way to the objective of the study.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to determine the effect of customer relationship management on customer loyalty in selected restaurants in Ogun State, Nigeria. To achieve this objective, a research question and research hypothesis were formulated:

Research Questions

In what way do customer relationship management variables affect customer satisfaction?

H₀: Customer relationship management variables have no significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Review of Literature

The conceptual, empirical and theoretical review of related variables of the study both dependent and independent are reviewed here.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Customer Relationship Management can be defined as a comprehensive approach for creating, maintaining, and expanding customer relationships that enhance business performance and customer satisfaction (Gil-Gomez et al., 2020). According to Wibowo (2023), CRM encompasses strategies, techniques, and technologies used by organisations to manage and analyze customer interactions and data throughout the customer life-cycle, aiming to improve customer service and drive sales growth (Swathi, 2020). According to Kumar (2021), customer relationship management is a strategic approach to managing interactions with customers and potential customers in a way that maximizes the value of that relationship to the company. Additionally, CRM can be viewed as a technology-enabled strategy that focuses on building and maintaining long-term relationships with customers by providing personalized and seamless experiences across all touchpoints (Gupta & Kumar, 2022). Furthermore, Guerola-Navarro et al. (2024) refer to CRM as an organisational approach that integrates information from various customer

touchpoints to optimize customer interactions and achieve long-term customer loyalty (Dastane, 2020). Customer relationship management is characterised by building and maintaining relationships with customers. As stated by Baiyewu (2022), CRM involves developing a positive relationship with customers that will provide a competitive advantage (Al-Hazmi, 2021). This includes understanding customer needs and preferences, as well as providing personalized service and support to build loyalty and trust (Naim & Alqahtani, 2021).

Customer Relationship Management offers several benefits and advantages to organisations. CRM allows organisations to better understand their customers' needs and preferences, providing personalized and targeted experiences. This leads to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately increasing customer retention rates (Guerola-Navarro et al., 2024). By using CRM to track customer interactions and behaviours, organisations can identify cross-selling and upselling opportunities, as well as target new customers more effectively. This can help to increase sales and revenue (Dastane, 2020). While Customer Relationship Management (CRM) offers numerous advantages to organisations, there are also some disadvantages and drawbacks that need to be considered. Implementing a CRM system can be costly, not only in terms of the initial setup but also ongoing maintenance and updates. Organisations need to invest in technology, training, and support, which can be a significant financial burden (Al-Hazmi, 2021). Additionally, integrating CRM systems with existing processes and technologies can be complex and time-consuming. Data migration, system compatibility, and customization may pose challenges, leading to inefficiencies and disruptions in operations (Khlif, 2021). Based on the review of the existing literature, the researchers of this study identify that CRM is a powerful tool that organisations can leverage to enhance customer relationships, drive sales, improve overall operational efficiency, and ultimately enhance customer satisfaction, all which yield increase organisational profitability.

Customer Conflict Handling

Customer conflict handling refers to the process of addressing and resolving disputes or disagreements between a customer and a business. It involves effectively managing and resolving conflicts in a way that preserves the customer relationship and ensures customer satisfaction. This can include identifying the root cause of the conflict, actively listening to the customer's concerns, providing appropriate solutions or compensation, and maintaining professionalism and empathy throughout the resolution process (Simillidou et al., 2020). According to a study by Morgeson III et al. (2020), customer conflict management involves the methods organisations use to handle and resolve disputes or disagreements with customers, aiming to cultivate positive relationships and improve customer satisfaction. Effective customer conflict management involves identifying the sources of conflict, employing appropriate strategies to address issues, and maintaining open communication to ensure customer grievances are resolved satisfactorily (Jeanpert et al., 2021). Customer conflict management is characterized by the proactive identification of conflicts. Successful conflict management begins with the

ability to anticipate potential sources of conflict before they escalate. This involves understanding customer needs and expectations, as well as monitoring interactions for signs of dissatisfaction (Lin et al., 2021). Another characteristic of effective customer conflict management is effective communication. Clear and open communication is crucial in managing customer conflicts. This includes actively listening to customer concerns, acknowledging their feelings, and providing timely and transparent information about how the conflict will be addressed (Yagil, 2021).

Effective customer conflict handling can yield some benefits for both organisations and customers, but there are also potential disadvantages associated with it. To begin with, managing customer conflicts can require significant time and resources (Bambauer-Sachse & Helbling, 2021). Companies may need to invest in training staff, implementing conflict resolution processes, and maintaining customer relationship management systems, which can strain budgets and divert attention from other critical tasks (Li et al., 2021). Customer conflict resolution can be stressful for employees, particularly if they encounter hostile or difficult customers. Over time, this stress can lead to burnout and decreased employee morale, affecting overall productivity and service quality (Gong et al., 2022). Poorly managed conflicts can lead to legal disputes or financial repercussions, especially if customers feel their grievances have not been adequately addressed. This can result in costs related to settlement, legal fees, and damage to the company's reputation (Calmon et al., 2021).

Given the extant literature review, this study sees customer conflict handling as an approach centered on effective communication, strategic frameworks, and proactive education, to resolve conflicts constructively while improving overall customer experience and satisfaction leading to peaceful co-existence and increased output.

Customer Engagement

Customer engagement refers to the ongoing interactions and relationships that a company has with its customers across various touchpoints and channels. It involves creating meaningful connections, addressing customer needs, and building trust and loyalty (An & Han, 2020). Customer engagement goes beyond just attracting customers; it focuses on fostering long-term relationships and enhancing customer satisfaction (Islam et al., 2020). In today's digital age, customer engagement often involves leveraging technology and data to personalize interactions and deliver a seamless, integrated experience (Abou-Shouk & Soliman, 2021). Customer engagement has become a concept of growing significance in contemporary marketing literature as well as a novel method for fostering consumer value and understanding modern marketing (Naumann et al., 2020). Customer engagement is a critical component of modern business strategies, characterized by various attributes that enable companies to build strong relationships with their customers. One of the foremost characteristics of customer engagement is emotional commitment. Engaged customers often feel a strong emotional connection with the brand, leading to increased loyalty and advocacy (Zheng et al., 2022). Research by Li et al. (2020) indicates that emotional engagement fosters trust and loyalty, which can

significantly enhance customer retention and profitability (Prentice et al., 2020). From the literature review, the researchers stated that customer engagement is creating meaningful experiences that resonate with customers, making them feel valued and understood. It is about fostering a two-way relationship where customers are not just passive buyers but active participants who share their opinions and feedback on the product or service available.

Customer Empathy

Customer empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of customers, to put oneself in the customer's shoes and truly understand their perspective and needs (Pedersen, 2021). It involves actively listening to customers, showing compassion and understanding, and making efforts to address their concerns and provide solutions that meet their needs. Ngo et al. (2020) define customer empathy as the ability to transcend transactional relationships and genuinely understand the needs and emotions of customers. This deep understanding enables businesses to customize their products, services, and communications accordingly. Furthermore, the study emphasizes that recognizing customer emotions can significantly improve service quality and overall customer satisfaction (Chi & Hoang, 2023).

Understanding customer emotions and pain points allows organisations to respond appropriately, fostering open and effective dialogue (Sutanto, 2023). Empathetic businesses can more effectively identify the root causes of customer issues. By understanding customers' perspectives, organisations can develop solutions that address their specific concerns, reducing frustration and dissatisfaction (Wang et al., 2023). Understanding customer needs and emotions can lead to insights that drive innovation. Empathetic businesses are better equipped to create products and services that resonate with customers, enhancing their offerings in competitive markets (Elche et al., 2020). Given the extant review, the researchers observed that customer empathy is the ability to deeply understand and connect with customers on an emotional level. Putting self in customers' position. It means actively listening to customers, acknowledging their challenges, and genuinely caring about their satisfaction.

Adopting a customer empathy approach can yield numerous benefits; however, there are also potential disadvantages that organisations should be aware of. Firstly, implementing a customer empathy strategy often requires significant time and resources. Training employees to understand and practice empathy can be costly and may divert attention from other critical business operations (Mangus et al., 2020). Secondly, Yang et al. (2023) opined that employees tasked with maintaining a high level of customer empathy may experience emotional stress or burnout, particularly in customer service roles where they frequently encounter distressed customers.

Customer Recognition

Customer recognition refers to the acknowledgment and appreciation of customers as individuals, often through personalized interactions and tailored experiences (Ikenna et

al., 2021). It involves understanding customers' preferences, behaviours, and contributions, which can enhance their sense of loyalty and belonging to a brand. According to He et al. (2022), customer recognition involves identifying and acknowledging customers by name, understanding their preferences, and celebrating their milestones, such as anniversaries or birthdays. This personal touch helps create stronger emotional bonds between the customer and the brand (Wei et al., 2022). Customer recognition plays a vital role in satisfying customers, and it is characterized by the ability to personalize interactions, recognize customers by their names, and understand their preferences, allowing businesses to tailor experiences that align with individual needs (Wei et al., 2022). From the perspective of this study researchers, customer recognition can also be defined as the means of understanding who your customers are, remembering their preferences, and showing that you value their loyalty and support. In essence, customer recognition is about building meaningful relationships that go beyond mere transactions, demonstrating that you truly care about your customers as unique individuals.

Customer Satisfaction

According to Ginting et al. (2023), customer satisfaction is defined as the consumer's overall reaction to the purchase experience, influenced by their pre-purchase expectations and the outcome of their purchase or service encounter. If the experience meets or exceeds expectations, satisfaction occurs; if not, dissatisfaction is the result (Khan et al., 2022). Sharma et al. (2020) describe customer satisfaction as an emotional response to a product or service that reflects how the customer feels about the experience, suggesting that satisfaction encompasses both cognitive evaluations and emotional reactions to the consumption experience. This definition highlights that customer satisfaction is fundamentally an emotional response, underscoring the importance of feelings and perceptions in evaluating satisfaction and indicating that customer emotions play a significant role in their overall experience with a product or service. Furthermore, by stating that satisfaction reflects how the customer feels, the definition acknowledges the subjective nature of customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction offers several significant advantages to organisations. Customer satisfaction is increasingly recognized as a vital driver of success in today's competitive business environment (Aripin, 2023). Satisfied customers are more likely to remain loyal to a brand. Loyalty translates to repeat purchases, which are typically less expensive to achieve than acquiring new customers. According to Budur and Poturak (2021), organisations that prioritize customer satisfaction can foster deeper customer loyalty, leading to increased lifetime value. High customer satisfaction can lead to improved revenue performance. Customer satisfaction, while often viewed as beneficial for organisations, can have certain disadvantages and challenges associated with an excessive focus on it. High levels of customer satisfaction frequently require significant investment in product quality, customer service, and fulfillment processes, which can strain financial resources (Packard & Berger, 2021). As noted by Nguyen et al. (2020), the expenses associated with continuously upgrading services or products to meet or exceed

customer expectations can be a considerable burden, particularly for small or medium-sized enterprises. From the review of existing literature, the researchers opined that customer satisfaction is the measure of how well a customer's expectations are met by a product or service, reflecting their overall experience and level of fulfillment which enhances their retention rate towards the product, service or the brand.

Customer Relationship Management (CMR) and Customer Satisfaction

Different studies have been conducted on CMR and customer satisfaction with varied results. Nur (2021) found that customer relationship management through continuity marketing, one to one marketing, and partnering programs had a significant and simultaneous effect on customer satisfaction at BPJS Ketenagakerjaan in Indonesia. Also, Adeiza et al. (2022) found that customer relationship management has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, while customer satisfaction partially mediates the CRM and customer loyalty relationship. The study further provides substantial results to practitioners to realize the role of developing a CRM strategy in the Nigerian banking industry. Similarly, Haryandika and Santra (2021) found that the effect of CRM on customer satisfaction was significant, the effect of satisfaction on customer loyalty was significant, and the effect of CRM on customer loyalty was significant. Zaato et al. (2023) found a significant impact of delivery accuracy on both brand loyalty and customer satisfaction, as well as the influence of delivery pricing on customer satisfaction and the role of information quality in enhancing brand loyalty and satisfaction. Carolina and Yasa (2019) found that continuity of marketing, one-to-one marketing, and partnering programs significantly and positively impacted customer satisfaction. Among variables, one-to-one marketing had the most substantial influence on customer satisfaction. Additionally, customer satisfaction positively and significantly influenced customer loyalty. In the same vein, Okechukwu et al. (2023) found that there is a significant positive impact of customer orientation on customer satisfaction and identified key relational elements essential for service delivery to commercial bank customers in Southeast Nigeria.

Customer Satisfaction Theory

Customer Satisfaction Theory, propounded by Kotler in 1971, is an essential concept in marketing and business management that seeks to measure and understand customer satisfaction levels, which in turn affect customer loyalty, retention, and overall business success. This theory posits that high levels of customer satisfaction led to brand loyalty. Satisfied customers are more likely to repeat purchases and recommend the brand to others. The theory highlights the importance of meeting or exceeding customer expectations to foster loyalty. Kotler's ideas paved the way for a more structured approach to understanding customer satisfaction in relation to marketing strategies (Kotler, 1994). Recent research has continued to build upon the foundational principles established by Kotler and others, expanding the understanding of customer satisfaction in various contexts. One of the core assumptions of Customer Satisfaction Theory is that satisfaction is significantly influenced by the comparison between customer expectations and perceived performance. This assumption posits that customers enter into

transactions with certain expectations regarding the quality and performance of products or services.

The supporters of Customer Satisfaction Theory provide a diverse range of insights that enhance our understanding of customer satisfaction in various settings. Oliver is one key figure in the discussion of customer satisfaction. His research focuses on the antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction. Oliver proposed a comprehensive model of customer satisfaction that encompasses cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions, establishing a multi-faceted perspective on satisfaction. His work has laid the groundwork for understanding how consumer attitudes impact satisfaction and loyalty, influencing both researchers and practitioners (Fu & Juan, 2017). Similarly, Anderson et al. (1994) conducted extensive research on customer satisfaction and loyalty, focusing on the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI). Their work integrates various aspects of customer satisfaction, loyalty, and business performance, revealing how satisfaction directly correlates with customer retention and long-term profitability. Their research underscores the importance of measuring customer satisfaction as a key performance indicator for businesses. The supporters of Customer Satisfaction Theory provide a diverse range of insights that enhance our understanding of customer satisfaction in various settings.

Customer Satisfaction Theory has served as a foundational framework in marketing and consumer behaviour, it has also faced criticism. These critiques often highlight limitations, oversights, and the evolving landscape of consumer expectations and experiences. One major critique of Customer Satisfaction Theory is that it tends to overemphasise satisfaction as a standalone metric for assessing customer loyalty and business success. Critics argue that satisfaction does not always translate into loyalty; customers may express satisfaction but still choose to switch to competitors for various reasons, including price or convenience (Kotler, 2011).

Methodology

This study adopted a positivist research philosophy. Positivist research emphasizes the use of objective measurements and quantifiable data, which enhances the scientific rigor of the study. This study employed a quantitative research approach to investigate the effect of CRM on brand loyalty. The justification for adopting a quantitative approach is justified by the nature of the research objectives, which require the collection and analysis of numerical data to draw statistical inferences and establish patterns or correlations.

The survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of 749 registered restaurants in Ogun State with 1414 customers of the selected restaurants in Ijebode and Abeokuta. The sample size of 338 was derived through the research advisors table plus 30% attrition rate. Data collection was done via a structured questionnaire with constructs validated through expert review and reliability confirmed through Cronbach's Alpha test which ranged between 0.713- 0.903. The response rate was 100%, ensuring data robustness. Data were analysed using Multiple linear regression analysis at 5% level of significance.

Sample Size Determination

The total sample size for this study was calculated using the research advisor table. When the actual population size of the researcher was not listed on the table, the researcher used the nearest available value from the listed population sizes (Vidal-Ayuso et al., 2023). According to the research advisor table, a sample size of 260 was recommended. To address potential non-response, an attrition rate of 30% was factored into the sample size. This 30% adjustment is commonly used in statistical analyses to enhance the confidence level of the findings. Consequently, 30% of 260 is 78, resulting in a revised sample size of $(260 + 78 = 338)$. The proportional distribution of the sample size is detailed below.

Table 1: Appropriation of the Sample Size

| Name of Firms for the study | Number of Customers per Firm | Proportional Calculation | Sample size per firm |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Royal Mandarin | 120 | $(120 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 29 |
| Diamond Dumplings | 130 | $(130 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 31 |
| The Mayfair Executives | 129 | $(129 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 31 |
| Kroyal Restaurant | 125 | $(125 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 30 |
| Dalish Restaurant | 150 | $(150 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 36 |
| Sansbuka | 140 | $(140 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 33 |
| South Kitchen and Lounge | 175 | $(175 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 42 |
| So Fresh Opic | 165 | $(165 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 39 |
| De Delight Food Palace | 150 | $(150 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 36 |
| Aroso Foods | 130 | $(130 \div 1414) \times 338 =$ | 31 |
| TOTAL | 1414 | | 338 |

Source: Human Resource Department of the restaurants (2024)

Sampling Technique

The study utilized a simple random sampling technique for selecting participants. This approach is justified as it guarantees that each customer within the sampling frame has an equal opportunity to be included in the study. This method of selection minimizes bias and improves the representativeness of the sample, thereby increasing the generalizability of the findings to the larger customer population of the selected restaurants.

Analysis

Restatement of Research Objective and Research Question

Objective One: Examine the effect of customer relationship management variables on customer satisfaction.

Research question one: In what way do customer relationship management variables affect customer satisfaction?

The objective of the study sought to examine the effect of customer relationship management variables on customer satisfaction.

The respondents were asked to express their opinions on different questions asked in the questionnaire on the study variables (IV) Six-point Likert type scale was used to analyse their responses. These points formed the weights for calculating the score for each item. The findings were presented in various tables followed with an analysis and interpretation. The descriptive statistics for customer satisfaction was presented also followed with the interpretations as well which could not be presented here due to limited pages required.

Restatement of Research Hypothesis

H₀: Customer relationship management variables have no significant effect on customer satisfaction.

In the hypothesis, CRM has no significant effect on customer satisfaction. CRM dimensions are independent variables, while the customer satisfaction was dependent variable. Data for CRM were generated by adding together scores of responses from all the items under each practice to generate independent scores for each practice. Data for customer satisfaction was generated by adding together the responses of all items under the variable to create the index. The results of the analysis and parameter estimates obtained are presented in table2 below:

Table 2: Summary of multiple regression between customer relationship management variables and customer satisfaction in selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local governments, Ogun State, Nigeria.

| N | Model | B | Sig. | T | ANOVA (Sig.) | R | Adj. R ² | F (4,334) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|------|--------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| 338 | (Constant) | 2.344 | .000 | 6.807 | 0.000 ^b | 0.457 ^a | 0.200 | 22.089 |
| | Customer Conflict Handling | .091 | .143 | 1.469 | | | | |
| | Customer Engagement | .104 | .228 | 1.207 | | | | |
| | Customer Empathy | .364 | .000 | 5.672 | | | | |
| | Customer Recognition | -.035 | .658 | -0.443 | | | | |
| Predictors: (Constant), Customer Conflict Handling, Customer Engagement, Customer Empathy, Customer Recognition, Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction | | | | | | | | |

Source: Authors' Computation, 2025

Table 2 shows the multiple regression analysis results for the variables of customer relationship management variables on customer satisfaction in selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local governments, Ogun state, Nigeria. The results showed that of all the variables in customer relationship management, only customer empathy ($\beta = 0.364$, $t = 5.672$, $p < 0.05$) has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction in selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local governments, Ogun State, Nigeria, while the other sub-variables, customer conflict handling ($\beta = 0.091$, $t = 1.469$, $p > 0.05$),

customer engagement ($\beta = 0.104, t = 1.207, p > 0.05$), have positive but insignificant effects, and customer recognition ($\beta = -0.035, t = -0.443, p > 0.05$) is the only factor that showed a negative and insignificant effect on customer satisfaction. This implies that, while customer conflict handling and customer engagement slightly improve customer satisfaction, customer empathy serves as the most important determinant of customer satisfaction.

The R value of 0.457 supports this result, indicating that customer relationship management has a positive relationship with customer satisfaction in selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local governments, Ogun State, Nigeria. The coefficient of multiple determination, $Adj R^2 = 0.200$ indicated that about 20% variation in such restaurants can be accounted for by the customer relationship management, while the remaining 80% changes that occur are accounted for by other variables not captured in the model. The predictive and prescriptive multiple regression models are thus expressed:

$$CS = 2.344 + 0.091CCH + 0.104CE + 0.364CEM - 0.035CR + U_i \text{---Eqn(i) (Predictive Model)}$$

$$CS = 2.344 + 0.364CEM + U_i \text{---Eqn(ii) (Prescriptive Model)}$$

Where:

- CS = Customer Satisfaction
- CCH = Customer Conflict Handling
- CE = Customer Engagement
- CEM = Customer Empathy
- CR = Customer Recognition

The regression model shows that holding customer relationship management variables to a constant zero, customer satisfaction would be 2.344 which is positive. In the predictive model, it is seen that of the variables, only customer empathy is positive and significant, so the management of the restaurants cannot afford to downplay that variable, which is why it is included in the prescriptive model. The results of the regression analysis, as seen in the prescriptive model, indicated that when customer empathy is improved by one unit, customer satisfaction would also increase by 0.364 and vice versa. This implies that an increase in customer empathy would lead to an increase in the rate of customer satisfaction in selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local governments, Ogun State, Nigeria. Also, the F-statistic ($df = 4, 334$) = 22.089 at $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) indicated that the overall model is significant in predicting the effect of customer relationship management variables on customer satisfaction which implies that customer relationship management variables, with particular emphasis on customer empathy, are an important determinants of customer satisfaction in the selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local governments, Ogun State, Nigeria. The result suggests that selected restaurants should pay more attention to developing customer empathy to improve the customer satisfaction in the selected restaurants. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) which states that customer relationship management variables have no significant effect on customer satisfaction in selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local governments, Ogun State, Nigeria, was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Following the rejection of the null hypothesis, it is evident that customer relationship management has a positive significant effect on customer satisfaction in selected restaurants in Ogun State Nigeria. The result is supported by Nur (2021) who found that customer relationship management through continuity marketing, one to one marketing, and partnering programs had a significant and simultaneous effect on customer satisfaction at BPJS Ketenagakerjaan in Indonesia. Also, the study of Adeiza et al. (2022) found that customer relationship management has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, while customer satisfaction partially mediates the CRM and customer loyalty relationship. The study further provides substantial results to practitioners to realize the role of developing a CRM strategy in the Nigerian banking industry. Similarly, Haryandika and Santra (2021) found that the effect of CRM on customer satisfaction was significant, the effect of satisfaction on customer loyalty was significant, and the effect of CRM on customer loyalty was significant. Zaato et al. (2023) found a significant impact of delivery accuracy on both brand loyalty and customer satisfaction, as well as the influence of delivery pricing on customer satisfaction and the role of information quality in enhancing brand loyalty and satisfaction. Carolina and Yasa (2019) found that continuity of marketing, one-to-one marketing, and partnering programs significantly and positively impacted customer satisfaction. Among variables, one-to-one marketing had the most substantial influence on customer satisfaction.

Theoretically, Customer Satisfaction Theory, propounded by Philip Kotler in 1971, is an essential concept in marketing and business management that seeks to measure and understand customer satisfaction levels which in turn affect customer loyalty, retention, and overall business success. This theory posits that high levels of customer satisfaction led to brand loyalty. Satisfied customers are more likely to repeat purchases and recommend the brand to others. The theory highlights the importance of meeting or exceeding customer expectations to foster loyalty. One of the core assumptions of Customer Satisfaction Theory is that satisfaction is significantly influenced by the comparison between customer expectations and perceived performance. This assumption posits that customers enter into transactions with certain expectations regarding the quality and performance of products or services. Customer satisfaction theory is very much in alignment with this study.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study investigated the effect of customer relationship management on brand loyalty of selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local government areas, Ogun State, Nigeria. The study examined the effect of customer relationship management dimensions using customer conflict handling, customer engagement, customer empathy & customer recognition, and brand loyalty on customer satisfaction, the study found that CRM dimensions have a significant effect on customer satisfaction of selected restaurants in Ijebu-Ode and Abeokuta local government areas, Ogun State, Nigeria.

The study made few recommendations:

1. The findings of this study suggest the need for a comprehensive approach to cultivate a supportive ecosystem for restaurants. This involves collaboration among management, academia, government, industry regulators, and society as a whole.
2. management should implement robust CRM systems that allow for the collection and analysis of customer data. This technology should enable personalized interactions, track customer behaviour, and facilitate communication across various channels. Investing in advanced CRM solutions can enhance customer insights and improve relationship-building efforts.
3. Based on the results of the study, management should prioritise delivering exceptional customer experiences at every touchpoint. Train employees in customer service best practices and create processes that encourage customer feedback. A commitment to a positive customer experience and recognition fosters brand loyalty, as satisfied customers are more likely to develop an emotional connection with the brand.

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