

## **Relationship Marketing and Customers' Revisit Intention to Hotels in Calabar, Cross River State**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study focused on relationship marketing and customers' revisit intention to hotels in Calabar, Cross River State. The objective was to investigate the impact of variables such as customer loyalty, customer service, trust establishment, communication, and quality service provision on customers' likelihood to revisit hotels. The study used a cross-sectional survey as its research approach. Primary data was collected from 276 hotel patrons in Calabar using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze and comprehend the data in SPSS 23, while multiple linear regression was used to assess the hypotheses. The study revealed that hotels in Calabar had a higher likelihood of customer retention when they placed a strong emphasis on customer loyalty, attentiveness, reliability, effective communication, and exceptional service. As a result, the investigation indicated, among other findings: Hotels can enhance customer commitment and increase revisit intention by personalizing guest experiences, offering exclusive loyalty rewards, and consistently seeking and incorporating customer feedback to individual preferences. To foster trust and encourage customer repeat patronage, and respond promptly to customers' inquiries, thereby fostering positive engagements that encourage repeat visits.*

**KEYWORDS:** Relationship marketing, Commitment, customer care, customer communication, service quality, revisit intention

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## INTRODUCTION

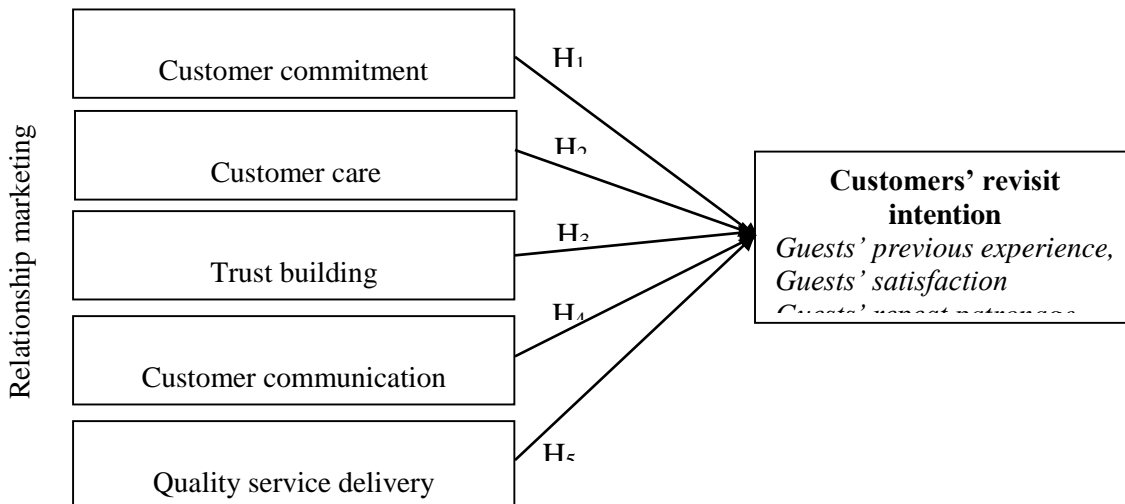
Customers' revisit intention is a pivotal concept in the context of hospitality industry, particularly within hotel establishments. It refers to a customer's inclination or likelihood to return to a specific hotel for future stays, predicated on their prior experiences and overall satisfaction (Li, 2020). This metric serves as a tangible indicator of customer loyalty, reflecting the establishment's ability to meet and even exceed guest expectations. According to Adirestuty (2019), customers' revisit intention is a complex interplay of various factors, encompassing both tangible and intangible elements. These encompass the quality of service, the ambiance and physical infrastructure of the hotel, staff behavior, amenities, pricing, location, and the overall value proposition. Each of these facets contributes to the guest's perception of their experience, ultimately influencing their likelihood of returning. As such, Kim *et al.* (2020) maintained that customers' revisit intention contributes immensely to hotels' financial performance. This is because guests' repeated visits not only contribute to a significant portion of the revenue but also tend to spend more during their stay, as they are more likely to utilize additional services and amenities.

Realizing the enormous potential and value of customers' revisits, hotel organizations are prioritizing the implementation of marketing strategies with the intention of encouraging guests' revisit intention. According to the reports of extant scholars, relationship marketing is one of such marketing strategies used by hotels (Lee & Kim, 2022; Gupta & Sharma, 2019; Aksoy & Yilmaz, 2020). As an innovative marketing practice, relationship marketing encompasses a firm's efforts at establishing, nurturing, promoting, maintaining and encouraging value-laden relationships with customers to ensure future business interactions in order to maximize customers' lifetime value (Hosseini & Mohammadi, 2021). In response to fierce competition in the hospitality industry, hotels are resorting to relationship marketing strategies to prevent business failures. Also, the proliferation of online booking platforms, the emergence of alternative accommodation options, and the global reach of hospitality chains have all intensified the battle for market share (Ngubane & Dlamini, 2018). Establishing and nurturing strong relationships with guests in such a competitive situation has become paramount. Hotels are hence resorting to relationship marketing to differentiate themselves and cultivate a loyal customer base that transcends the transient nature of one-time transactions. Despite the prevalence and popularity of the relationship marketing practice in marketing literature, its fullest application is still lacking in the hotel industry (Okoro & Udechukwu, 2020). One of the foremost barriers to the implementation of relationship marketing practices in Nigerian hotels is the inadequacy of technological infrastructure (Ojo &

Adegoke, 2019). Effective relationship marketing heavily relies on customer relationship management (CRM) systems, data analytics, and other digital tools. The lack of robust technological platforms inhibits the collection, storage, and analysis of customer data, thereby hampering personalized communication and targeted marketing efforts. Another significant impediment to the implementation of relationship marketing in Nigerian hotels is the shortage of adequately trained personnel in the Nigerian hotel industry (Adeleke & Ademola, 2021). Relationship marketing requires proficient staff capable of handling customer interactions effectively, interpreting data, and utilizing CRM systems. Insufficient training and awareness regarding these practices result in missed opportunities for hotels to cultivate strong, enduring customer relationships. These deficiencies lead to a myriad of adverse consequences on customers' revisit intentions, ultimately hindering sustainable growth and profitability. Against this backdrop, this study was conducted to determine the most effective ways of implementing relationship marketing strategies to enhance customers' revisit intention towards hotels in Calabar.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

The study was built on the conceptual framework as depicted below



**FIG. 1:** Conceptual model showing relationship marketing and customer revisit intention to hotels in Calabar

**Source:** Researcher's conceptualization from literature review (2023)

### **Theoretical foundation of the study**

The relationship investment model was used to underpin relationship marketing and customers' revisit intention to hotels.

### **Relationship investment model**

The relationship investment model, introduced by Rusbult et al. (1998), is a theory that aims to explain the factors that contribute to commitment in romantic relationships. It seeks to understand why some persons choose to remain in a relationship while others decide to end it. The degree of commitment a person has towards a relationship is expected to increase in direct proportion to their level of satisfaction with the connection, their perception that there are few alternative options to the partnership, and the extent of their investment in the relationship (Rusbult et al., 1998). This idea posits that when partners cultivate more profound emotional connections, their attention shifts from the present moment to the future of the relationship, and their inclination to sustain it intensifies (Segal & Fraley, 2016). The investment model posits that commitment and persistence in romantic relationships are driven by three factors: satisfaction level, investment quantity, and quality of alternatives (Rusbult et al., 1998). Client satisfaction in the hotel sector is largely influenced by the quality of service and overall experience. When guests are satisfied with their stay, they are more likely to form a positive emotional attachment to the hotel, which can lead to increased revisit intentions.

### **Relationship marketing**

Relationship marketing in the context of hotels refers to the strategies and practices implemented by hotels to build and maintain long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with their guests (Neneh & Lategan, 2023). This approach focuses on understanding and meeting the individual needs and preferences of guests, thereby fostering loyalty and repeat business. For Ali and Shahzadi (2023), relationship marketing in hotels is a customer-centric approach that emphasizes the importance of creating strong, personalized connections with guests. It involves ongoing communication, understanding guest preferences, and delivering exceptional service to build trust and loyalty, ultimately leading to repeat bookings and positive word-of-mouth. Also, Wamalwa and Chimucheka (2023) viewed relationship marketing as a strategic approach that prioritizes the development of long-term relationships with guests. This involves leveraging data and technology to gain insights into guest behavior and preferences, tailoring services and experiences to meet individual needs, and engaging in personalized communication to enhance guest satisfaction and retention. Similarly, Agyei-mensah and Agyeiwaa (2023) defined it as a comprehensive strategy aimed at cultivating enduring connections with guests. It involves creating memorable

experiences, actively seeking feedback, and using guest information to anticipate and exceed expectations.

By fostering a sense of belonging and trust, hotels can encourage repeat visits and turn satisfied guests into brand advocates. Also, by focusing on personalized experiences and attentive service, hotels can create a positive and memorable stay for guests (Kumah & Klutsey, 2023). This encourages them to return for future stays, leading to a higher rate of repeat business. This is important because loyal customers are more likely to book directly with the hotel rather than through third-party booking platforms. This reduces commission costs and increases the hotel's revenue per booking. Furthermore, Gürbüz and Özkan (2023) maintained that satisfied guests who have developed a strong relationship with a hotel are more likely to recommend it to friends and family. Positive word-of-mouth marketing is a powerful tool in attracting new guests without incurring additional marketing expenses. In addition, guests who have established a positive relationship with a hotel are more likely to spend more on additional services, such as dining, spa treatments, and other amenities. This increases the guest's lifetime value to the hotel (Nair & Tahir, 2023).

### **Customers' revisit intention**

Revisit intention refers to a customer's inclination to make a future reservation at the same hotel after their current stay. Yeboah et al. (2020) state that it serves as a significant measure of customer satisfaction and loyalty within the hotel industry. According to Wlue and Adjepong (2019), customer revisit intention refers to the likelihood that a customer would choose the same hotel for their future visits in a certain location. This illustrates the level of client satisfaction and the probability of their future patronage. Various factors, such as the service quality, amenities, location, and cost-effectiveness, influence this objective. Repeat customers are more inclined to make larger purchases. These returning customers considerably contribute to a hotel's profitability. Furthermore, apart from the expenses incurred on accommodations, individuals often allocate funds for other amenities such as dining and services throughout their stay (Diop & Thiam, 2019).

Furthermore, as stated by Jallow et al. (2020), loyal consumers are more likely to recommend the hotel to their acquaintances. When it comes to attracting new customers, this kind of word-of-mouth advertising is quite valuable. To enhance the hotel's online reputation and attract new guests, it is crucial to have favorable reviews and ratings published on the Internet. To optimize cost-efficiency, it is advisable to use subtle promotional techniques in order to attract repeat business from contented customers (Ngwira & Akanbi, 2018; Kibet & Koech, 2022). Hotels can

focus its resources on providing exceptional experiences to its existing customer base. In addition, a high rate of customer revisit intention sets a hotel apart from its competitors (Ahmed *et al.*, 2021). It indicates that the hotel is consistently meeting or exceeding guest expectations. This competitive advantage can be leveraged in marketing efforts to attract a larger share of the market. It also helps in identifying areas that may need improvement, whether it's in terms of service quality, amenities, or other aspects of the guest experience.

### **Customer commitment and customers' revisit intention**

Customer commitment is a multifaceted process that lies at the heart of any successful business organization. It encompasses a strategic approach aimed at cultivating long-term relationships and deepening connections with customers (Kumi & Adjei, 2018). This commitment extends beyond mere transactions and transforms into a genuine emotional bond. This emotional connection forms the foundation for sustained loyalty and engagement, which is central to customer commitment, as a result of delivery of exceptional value. This value proposition goes beyond the product or service itself (Zardoubi & Mustafa, 2018). It encompasses the entire experience that a customer has with a brand. This includes aspects such as customer service, product quality, ease of use, and even intangibles like brand reputation and trustworthiness. By consistently providing value that exceeds customer expectations, businesses are able to establish a reputation for reliability and excellence. Also, Akgün and Yılmaz (2019) maintained that customer commitment necessitates a deep understanding of customer needs and preferences. This involves actively listening to feedback, conducting market research, and staying attuned to changing trends and demands. By doing so, businesses can adapt and evolve to meet the evolving needs of their customer base. This adaptability is crucial in maintaining relevance in a dynamic and competitive market landscape.

Furthermore, Tan and Abdullah (2019) observed that consistency is another key pillar of customer commitment, because it builds trust and reliability, assuring customers that they can depend on the brand to meet their needs time and time again. This level of reliability is what sets committed businesses apart from their competitors. Moreover, customer commitment involves a proactive approach to addressing issues and concerns (Samb & Thiam, 2020). When problems arise, businesses that are committed to their customers take swift action to resolve them. Demonstrating such behavior indicates your concern for the customer and provides an opportunity to create a positive image, especially in challenging situations. Customers are more inclined to engage in repeat purchases when their requirements are promptly and efficiently fulfilled. Based on the above perspective, client loyalty is a crucial relationship marketing tactic that enhances the probability of visitors choosing to revisit a certain hotel. A study conducted by Aksoy and Yılmaz

(2020) discovered that customer commitment has a substantial impact on the probability of consumers returning to Turkish hotels. The findings align with the research conducted by Ngubane and Dlamini (2018), which demonstrated that customer commitment significantly enhanced customer retention in the hotel industry in South Africa.

**Ho1:** Customer commitment has no significant effect on customers' revisit intention to hotels in Calabar.

### **Customer care and customers' revisit intention**

Customer care refers to the strategies and practices implemented by businesses to build and maintain positive relationships with their customers. It involves providing excellent service, addressing customer needs and concerns, and creating a positive overall experience (Faye & Diagne, 2020). According to Khoza and Khoza (2020), customer care is the proactive approach taken by businesses to anticipate and meet the needs of their customers. This involves actively seeking out opportunities to provide assistance, offer valuable information, and ensure a smooth and satisfactory experience. It goes beyond simply reacting to customer inquiries or complaints and focuses on creating a positive customer journey from the outset. For Ahmad and Faiz (2021), customer care emphasizes personalized interactions with customers. This means understanding individual preferences, histories, and needs, and tailoring communication and service accordingly. It involves using customer data and insights to offer targeted recommendations, special offers, and relevant information, fostering a sense of valued partnership between the business and the customer. Also, Kilonzo and Kwekason (2021) maintained that customer care extends beyond immediate transactions and aims to establish and nurture long-term relationships. It involves ongoing engagement, regular follow-ups, and a commitment to customer satisfaction over time.

According to Mensah et al. (2021), customer care involves prioritizing the satisfaction of clients by addressing their desires, needs, and grievances, with the aim of fostering loyalty and mutual advantage. Consistently providing customer care services foster customer loyalty. The study conducted by Gupta and Sharma (2019) on customer service in Indian budget hotels revealed a substantial boost in customer loyalty, providing strong support for this notion. This viewpoint aligns with the research conducted by Lee and Kim (2022), which revealed that exceptional customer service has a substantial impact on the probability of South Koreans choosing to revisit luxury hotels.

**Ho2:** Customer care has no significant effect on customers' revisit intention to hotels in Calabar.

### **Trust building and customers' revisit intention**

Relationship marketers use the concept of "trust building" to refer to the actions undertaken to establish a sense of ease and confidence among customers while engaging with a business or brand (Gbolahan & Ajagbe, 2021). Trustworthiness entails consistently fulfilling commitments, providing superior products or services, and maintaining transparency and integrity in all interactions. In the views of Yıldırım and Güçlü (2022), trust building is the strategic effort made by a company to cultivate a strong, positive perception in the minds of its customers. This is achieved by consistently meeting or exceeding customer expectations, communicating openly, and demonstrating integrity in business practices. For Tan and Nguno (2022), trust building involves the development of a mutual belief in the dependability and honesty of the business-customer relationship. It entails consistent, transparent communication, delivering on promises, and resolving issues or conflicts promptly and satisfactorily. Also, Diallo (2022) maintained that trust building in relationship marketing is the process of establishing a strong emotional connection between a brand and its customers. It is achieved through consistent, positive interactions that reinforce the customers' confidence in the brand's reliability, quality, and integrity.

Furthermore, as highlighted by Joof and Yaffa (2022), trust serves as the fundamental basis for establishing a prosperous relationship between customers and companies. The reason for this is that repeat business is more probable when customers have confidence in a brand's ability to fulfill their needs. Trust, as defined by Neneh and Lategan (2023), diminishes the perceived level of risk associated with a transaction. Individuals are inclined to allocate their financial resources and exert their energy towards a brand they trust, since they expect a favorable outcome in terms of their investment. This perspective is supported by a study done by Chen and Lin (2019). The research revealed a robust association between the development of trust and customer loyalty towards hotels in Taiwan. The study conducted by Gupta and Sharma (2019) on budget-friendly accommodations in India revealed that the establishment of trust has a substantial impact on customer loyalty, providing strong support for this viewpoint.

**Ho3:** Trust building has no significant effect on customers' revisit intention to hotels.

### **Customer communication and customers' revisit intention**

Customer communication, as defined within the context of relationship marketing, refers to the ongoing exchange of information and dialogue between a business and its customers (Ali & Shahzadi, 2023). There are several methods in which this might occur, including face-to-face



meetings, surveys, social media platforms, email, and telephone discussions. According to Wamalwa and Chimucheka (2023), customer communication involves establishing, cultivating, and enhancing relationships with customers via meaningful and pertinent interactions. The objective of customer communication, as stated by Agyei-mensah and Agyeiwaa (2023), is to provide a superior experience for consumers via every touchpoint and engagement between companies and their customers. To foster trust and loyalty, it is crucial to attentively consider client feedback, effectively address concerns, and provide personalized solutions. This extends beyond the dissemination of information on products or services. Kumah and Klutsey (2023) provided an additional definition of customer communication as the exchange of information between a firm and its customers, with the goal of creating strong, mutually beneficial relationships.. To effectively understand and fulfill the unique needs and preferences of customers, it utilizes suitable and prompt communication methods, such as personalized emails, active engagement on social media, and interactions with customer support

Gürbüz and Özkan (2023) observed that effective communication with clients demonstrates integrity, reliability, and a genuine commitment to meeting their needs. Customers are more likely to trust a firm when they perceive that their views are significant. Establishing trust with customers is crucial for cultivating enduring connections and guaranteeing their repeat patronage. Furthermore, as stated by Nair and Tahir (2023), engaging in discussion allows a firm to get insights into its customers' preferences, aversions, anticipations, and challenges. If you need to ensure that your products or services are well suited for your target audience, acquiring this data is essential. Customers are more likely to choose your firm over competitors if you exhibit a genuine appreciation for their feedback and possess the adaptability to evolve with current trends. Based on the above perspective, customer communication serves as a crucial relationship-marketing tactics to enhance the probability of visitors returning to a certain hotel. The hypothesis is supported by a study conducted by Hosseini and Mohammadi (2021), which provides evidence that effective customer communication has a substantial impact on fostering loyalty towards mid-range hotels in Iran. In their study, Ngubane and Dlamini (2018) discovered a strong correlation between customer communication and customer retention in the South African hotel sector, providing support for this viewpoint.

**Ho4:** Customer communication has no significant effect on customers' revisit intention to hotels in Calabar.

### **Quality service delivery and customers' revisit intention**

Quality service delivery in the context of relationship marketing refers to consistently meeting or exceeding customers' expectations in terms of the services offered (Ndour & Ndiaye, 2023). It involves providing a high level of satisfaction and value to customers throughout their interactions with a business. According to Jobe and Saho (2023), quality service delivery means consistently providing services that meet or exceed customer expectations. It involves maintaining high standards and ensuring that every customer interaction is a positive and satisfactory experience. In the views of Mburu and Bett (2023), quality service delivery is centered on understanding and meeting the unique needs and preferences of individual customers. It involves personalized attention, customized solutions, and a genuine commitment to the wellbeing and satisfaction of the customer. Likewise, Kumi and Adjei (2018) submitted that quality service delivery involves delivering services in a timely and reliable manner. This means honoring commitments, meeting deadlines, and being dependable in all interactions with customers.

Furthermore, Akgün and Yılmaz (2019) maintained that quality service delivery ensures that customers have positive experiences every time they interact with the business. This positive experience leaves a lasting impression and encourages customers to return. They associate the business with satisfaction, which makes them more inclined to choose it over competitors. The foregoing viewpoint suggests that as a relationship marketing practice, quality service delivery plays a crucial role in encouraging customers' revisit intentions towards hotels. This viewpoint is substantiated by the study carried out by Aksoy and Yılmaz (2020). The research revealed a positive correlation between the provision of high-quality service and consumer loyalty towards Turkish hotels. The study conducted by Gupta and Sharma (2019) supports the idea by demonstrating that affordable hotels in India had a significant boost in customer loyalty as a result of constantly providing excellent service.

**Ho5:** Quality service delivery has no significant effect on customers' revisit intention to hotels in Calabar.

### **METHODOLOGY**

A cross-sectional survey research approach was used in this study. Reducing expenses was a major benefit of this study's strategy. The study was able to gather data from a representative sample of the population once using a cross-sectional research approach, rather than a protracted longitudinal study that would have collected data across months or years.

**Population and sample**

The study was focused on hotel visitors in Calabar, Cross River State. The precise population estimate was uncertain due to the inaccessibility of trustworthy information for all guests of Calabar hotels. Therefore, the study used the Topman sampling approach to ascertain the appropriate sample size. The following is the

Topman formula:  $n = \frac{Z^2Pq}{e^2}$  Where n: Sample size required

Z: Tabular statistical unit (1.96)

P: Probability of positive response (0.72)

q: Probability of negative response (0.28)

e: Margin of error (5 percent)

To determine the probabilities of positive and negative responses, the researcher conducted a pilot survey by randomly interviewing 50 respondents at Marina Resort, a tourism hotspot for tourists and fun-seekers. These respondents were asked to identify whether or not they were regular guests at hotels in Calabar. Out of the 50 respondents interviewed, 36 respondents representing 72 percent said they patronized hotels in Calabar on a regular basis, while 14 respondents representing 28 percent said that they were not interested in patronizing hotel services. From the survey, the probability of positive responses (P) obtained was 72 percent (0.72), while the probability of negative responses (q) was 28 percent (0.28). By simply substituting the figures into the Topman formula, we have:

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{1.96^2(0.72 \times 0.28)}{0.05^2} = \frac{3.8416(0.2016)}{0.0025} \\ &= \frac{0.7745}{0.0025} = 309.8 \\ n &= 310 \text{ hotel customers approximately} \end{aligned}$$

To select individual hotel guests to participate in the questionnaire survey in this study, the researcher adopted convenience-sampling technique. This is because the target population figure was unknown, and it was impossible for the researcher to assemble all hotel customers in Calabar in one particular location to participate in the survey. Also, given that there are over 200 hotels in Calabar Metropolis (Hotels.ng, 2021), the study could not obtain data from every hotel customer; therefore, the researcher targeted the customers of 5 popular hotels in Calabar to obtain data for the study. The hotels included: Transcorp Hotels, Monty Suites Hotel, Jacaranda Suites, Chennel

View Hotels, and Axari Hotels. To include customers of the selected hotels into the questionnaire survey, the researcher assembled a 3-member team of enumerators to visit the premises of these hotels for questionnaire administration. Customers found within the premises of these hotels were administered copies of the questionnaire after obtaining their participation consent. In doing so, the convenience sampling technique ensured that only respondents who were actually hotel customers were included in the questionnaire survey

### **Sources and method of data collection**

The research instrument used in the study was a questionnaire that employed five-point Likert scales. The survey was divided into two sections: Section A, which gathered demographic data, and Section B, which included statements based on the study's variables, such as consumers' loyalty, attentiveness, confidence, communication, service quality, and intention to revisit. In order to assess the opinions of the participants, we used a five-point Likert scale. Specifically, we assigned a value of 5 points to the response option "Strongly Agree" (SA), 4 points to "Agree" (A), 3 points to "Undecided" (U), 2 points to "Disagree" (D), and 1 point to "Strongly Disagree" (SD).

### **Questionnaire reliability and Data Analytical method**

We used the Split-Halves Method to ensure precision. For every particular test administration, this approach yields a one-of-a-kind reliability estimate. A small subset of respondents participated in a pilot research that informed this split-half approach. The participants' answers to the instrument's questions were split evenly in half, with the odd-numbered things going on one side and the even-numbered ones on the other. Hence, the correlation coefficient that was found between the two parts of the survey had to be adjusted. To implement the change, the Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula was used. A correction was made to the split-halves correlation estimate so that the overall test reliability could be estimated.

The Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula may be written as Where:

$PXX||$  = the reliability coefficient for the whole test

$PXX'$  = the split-half correlation.

**The Correlation between the two halves:**

$$r = \frac{N \sum H_o H_e - \sum H_o \sum H_e}{\sqrt{N \sum H_o^2 - (\sum H_o)^2} \sqrt{N \sum H_e^2 - (\sum H_e)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{75(1438) - (233)(318)}{\sqrt{75(1091) - (233)^2} \sqrt{75(2052) - (318)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{33756}{38121.337}$$

$$r = 0.885$$

**Denotations:**

Let odd half be denoted as  $H_o$

Let even half be denoted as  $H_e$

Therefore; the split half correlation (PXX') = 0.885

Hence:

$$PXX'' = \frac{2(0.885)}{1 + 0.885} = \frac{1.770}{1.885} = 0.939$$

The instrument's trustworthiness has been established based on its strong Spearman-Brown Prophecy correlation value of 0.939. According to this approach, a number within the range of 0.5 to 1 is considered to be credible. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used to conduct hypothesis testing. Data analysis and interpretation included the use of descriptive statistics, namely basic percentages and frequency tables. Below is the expression for the multiple linear regression model: The equation is represented as  $Y = a + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + e$ . Where:

$Y =$  Dependent variable (customers' revisit intention)

$a =$  The intercept

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5 =$  Coefficients of the independent variable

X = Independent variable (relationship marketing)  
 e Error margin (5 percent). Hence, X<sub>1</sub> = Customer commitment X<sub>2</sub> = Customer care, X<sub>3</sub> = Trust-building, X<sub>4</sub> = Customer communication, X<sub>5</sub> = Quality service delivery

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table1:** Model summary of the effect of relationship marketing on customers’ revisit intention to hotels in Calabar, Cross River State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.614 <sup>a</sup>	.426	.416	2.31909

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer commitment, customer care, trust building, customer communication and quality service delivery

**Table 2:** ANOVA<sup>a</sup> of the effect of relationship marketing on customers’ revisit intention to hotels in Calabar, Cross River State

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	998.147	5	199.629	40.118	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1343.491	270	4.976		
	Total	2341.638	275			

a. Dependent Variable: Customers’ revisit intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer commitment, customer care, trusts building, customer communication and quality service delivery

**Table 3:** Coefficients<sup>a</sup> of the effect of relationship marketing on customers' revisit intention to hotels in Calabar, Cross River State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	16.042	.827		19.403	.000
Customer commitment	.344	.073	.332	4.720	.000
Customer care	.345	.087	.309	3.980	.000
Trust building	.234	.028	.411	3.652	.002
Customer communication	.321	.159	.408	7.762	.016
Quality service delivery	.538	.086	.360	6.262	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customers' revisit intention

### Interpretation of result

The impact of relationship marketing on customers' inclination to return to hotels in Calabar, Cross River State is seen in Tables 1, 2, and 3, which provide the results of a multiple linear regression analysis. Table1, the model summary, demonstrates a significant effect (61.4%, as shown in the R column) of the independent variable (relationship marketing) on the dependent variable (customers' revisit intention). The independent variable (relationship marketing) has an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.426, indicating that it accounts for 42.6% of the variability in the dependent variable (customers' revisit intention). Assuming all other factors remain constant, the deployment of relationship marketing tactics has a 42.6% effect on customers' inclination to revisit hotels in Calabar for every one unit change. The regression model presents compelling evidence that relationship marketing has a significant effect on customers' intention to revisit hotels in Calabar, Cross River State.

This is demonstrated by the F-test (40.118,  $P < 0.05$ ) statistic in Table 2, indicating that the independent variable's overall prediction of the dependent variable is statistically significant.

The coefficients for each dimension of relationship marketing are shown in Table 3. This table is valuable for forecasting the dependent variable, which in this instance is the inclination of customers to return. The table clearly indicates that each of the five relationship marketing dimensions analyzed - customer commitment, customer care, trust building, customer

communication, and quality service delivery - significantly predicted customers' intention to return to hotels in Calabar, as evidenced by the positive t-test values and p-values below the 0.05 margin of error. The likelihood of customers returning to hotels in Calabar is favorably and directly associated with these relationship-marketing characteristics. The standardized beta coefficient column in Table 3 displays the individual contributions of each independent variable to the model. The table demonstrates that the model's most significant contribution (beta = 0.411, or 41.1% of the total) was due to the establishment of trust. Next, we engage in conversations with clients, whose beta coefficient is 0.408 (equivalent to 40.8%). However, customer service had the smallest impact on the model, representing just 30.9% of the overall contribution. The Sig. column in Table 3 indicates that all independent variables evaluated had p-values below the 0.05 threshold, indicating statistical significance. Therefore, it can be inferred that hotels in Calabar, Cross River State, have the potential to significantly enhance customer loyalty and increase the likelihood of repeat business by prioritizing customer commitment, care, trust, communication, and high-quality service.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The findings of hypothesis one demonstrated that the amount of commitment shown by customers had a significant effect on the likelihood of their returning to hotels in Calabar. This assertion is supported by a research conducted by Aksoy and Yilmaz (2020), which revealed that clients exhibit a higher likelihood of revisiting Turkish hotels when they demonstrate a strong commitment to doing so. The findings are consistent with the study conducted by Ngubane and Dlamini (2018), which revealed that customer commitment has a significant positive impact on customer retention in the South African hotel industry.

Based on the evaluation of hypotheses two, the study demonstrated that hotels in Calabar that provided exceptional customer service were much more inclined to attract repeat customers. The study conducted by Gupta and Sharma (2019) revealed a robust correlation between customer service and customer loyalty in low-cost hotels in India. The findings align with the study conducted by Lee and Kim (2022), indicating a significant of customer service and the probability of visitors returning in high-end hotels in South Korea. Hoteliers that invest in staff training, devise strategies to provide exceptional service, and exert effort to create a welcoming atmosphere are more likely to experience enhanced customer loyalty and recurring business.



The findings of the third hypothesis revealed that consumers are more inclined to revisit Calabar hotels after developing a sense of trust in them. The research conducted by Chen and Lin (2019) in the Taiwanese hotel business supports the notion that trust is closely linked to customer loyalty. The assertion is robustly substantiated by the investigation conducted by Gupta and Sharma (2019), which revealed a significant and positive effect of trust and customer loyalty in Indian budget hotels.

During the fourth hypothesis test, we discovered that the probability of a customer returning to the Calabar Hotel was much greater when they had direct communication with the hotel. In line with our research, Hosseini and Mohammadi (2021) discovered a considerable impact of effective customer communication on the loyalty of consumers towards mid-range Iranian hotels. Ngubane and Dlamini (2018) discovered further evidence that corroborates this perspective. It indicates that effective customer communication had a crucial impact in enhancing client retention within the South African hotel industry.

Finally, the test findings for hypothesis five indicated that customers' happiness with the quality of service they received had a significant effect on customers' revisit intention to hotels in Calabar. Aksoy and Yilmaz (2020) discovered comparable results, indicating that clients are more inclined to revisit Turkish hotels when they get exceptional treatment. Providing evidence for this idea is the study conducted by Gupta and Sharma (2019), which discovered that budget hotels in India had an increase in customer loyalty after improvements in their service.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The objective of this study was to assess the effectiveness of relationship marketing in enhancing the probability of repeat visits by visitors to hotels in Calabar. The study revealed that customers' likelihood to revisit hotels in Calabar was favorably influenced by many areas of relationship marketing that were examined, including customer commitment, customer care, trust establishment, customer communication, and quality service provision. The findings have shown the need of relationship marketing for contemporary Nigerian hotels in order to attract and retain repeat clients.

### **Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations are suggested for possible implementation:

1. Hotels can enhance customer commitment and increase revisit intention in competitive times by personalizing guest experiences, offering exclusive loyalty rewards, and consistently seeking and incorporating customer feedback to tailor services to individual preferences.
2. Hotels can improve customers' revisit intention by implementing personalized customer care services, such as proactive communication to address individual needs and preferences. Additionally, incorporating feedback mechanisms and promptly resolving issues through attentive customer service fosters a positive experience, increasing the likelihood of guests returning for future stays.
3. To foster trust and encourage customer repeat patronage, hotels should prioritize transparent communication, showcasing honest customer reviews, and implementing stringent hygiene protocols to prove to customers that services are delivered according to global best practices. These measures will influence customers to trust the capacity of hotels to meet their hospitality needs on a consistent basis, thereby encouraging repeat visits.
4. Hotels should maintain fully functional and robust channels of communication, including social media in order to foster a sense of community, share exclusive promotions, and respond promptly to customers' inquiries, thereby fostering positive engagements that encourage repeat visits.
5. Hotel managers need to consistently improve service delivery by re-training staff, upgrading their facilities, and including innovative service solutions to enable customers to enjoy remarkable service experiences capable of encouraging future re-visits. Creating memorable experiences and fostering a genuine connection with guests not only enhances their current stay but also encourages them to choose the hotel for future visits

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