# GUESTS' PERCEPTION, EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION OF WAITING FOR HOTEL SERVICES IN ADO-EKITI, NIGERIA

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*Abstract*

*The purpose of this study is to examine and determine the hotel guests' perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for service. This study proposes that there is a significant effect of guests' perception and experience on their satisfaction of waiting for hotel services. For this purpose, a detailed literature review was examined. Furthermore, 245 questionnaire was applied to 7 hotels guests above the age of 18 in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria through a simple random sample selection technique to test their perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for hotel services scales. Variables related to the survey participants and their relation to each other were tested by linear regression analysis and it was understood that there was a significant relationship between these factors. According to the result of linear regression analysis, it was observed that there was a significant positive relationship between guests' satisfaction vis-à-vis their perception (β=0.677) and experience (β=0.253) of waiting for service.*

*Key words*: guests, perception, experience, satisfaction, hotel services

## INTRODUCTION

An annoying experience for many guests is waiting for a service which may negatively affect the guests' perceptions about that service provider [12]. Nonetheless, once the guests experience such long waiting for the service, their perceptions about that experience with the provider might be affected due to the quality of waiting and service [3]. By these facts, the effect makes the service provider lose both guests and revenue.

However, [1] stated that many businesses assumed that enhancing customers' experiences will reflect positively on the status of the hotels by focusing more directly on creating enjoyable staying experience for guests. This, therefore, sets in increasing competition among hotels seeking to attract new guests as permanent customers. Besides, an essential factor that controls the success of these hospitality businesses is the quality of guests' experiences during inevitable waiting times which could also be a major disadvantage. The price is indefinite when customers lose trust in a hospitality provider. A long waiting time influences customers'

satisfaction with the service provider, and thus give customers a negative experience.

Conversely, the waiting experience could be positive when managed well [4] through demand shifting which could be achieved by customers wait for an activity but not wait in line. Through this, guests can enjoy other activities and then come back to the reserved activity at a specific time to enter. On the other hand, guest satisfaction is significant for a positive service assessment. When customers are happy, the service quality will be highly rated. However, [12] believed that when guests feel they wait for too long for a service, the overall service quality will be considered/rated less than satisfactory. Even if the service quality is impressive, a long wait will affect the final outcome of the experience.

Therefore, enhancing the guest experience is the main challenge for many businesses. In the hospitality industry, businesses seek to enhance guests' experiences through the variety of services offered such as personalizing and customizing. Still, those services are time-dependent.

When guests are not served in an acceptable amount of time, the evaluation of the experience could be negatively influenced and

directly affecting guests' satisfaction. However, many studies suggested that controlling guests' perceptions can alleviate the negative impact of the service delay. Inducing guests' perceptions about the service provider might influence the wait positively [7]. Likewise, waiting during the experience could be positive or negative, thus, understanding guests' perceptions are critical in creating an unforgettable experience.

Guest satisfaction is a major concern for service providers and waiting for service might decrease guest satisfaction about their experience [11]. Service promises might be broken when guests reserve a time and then have to wait [8]. Therefore, many service providers attempt to fill guests' waiting times with activities to make their waiting times enjoyable. Studies revealed that occupied time increases positive wait assessments and reduces perceived boredom. Guests who are joining an activity during the wait experience tend to be more satisfied and less bored [9]. Though, [2] and [11] stated that commonly offered activities might be boring or routine for guests. [5] conducted a study about the waiting experience which they attempted to link the actual length of waiting and guests' time styles (general attitude toward time) to the way they experience the waiting time. When waiting times become longer, guests become passively impatient and less satisfied as they observe the service. Even if the service were perfect, they might not observe that because of the long waiting. Therefore, the duration of wait plays an important role in determining the quality of service [1].

The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of hotel guests' perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for service in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

In order to achieve the general objective, the following specific objectives would be considered: To

(i)profile the personal characteristics of hotel guests' in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

(ii)examine hotel guests' perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for service.

(iii)determine the effect of hotel guests' perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for service.

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were tested;

$H_{01}$: There is a significant effect of guests' perception on their satisfaction of waiting for hotel services.

$H_{02}$: There is a significant effect of hotel guests' experience on their satisfaction of waiting for hotel services.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Study area

The study took place in Ado-Ekiti, the capital city of Ekiti State. The city is located within the North Western part of the Benin-Owena River Basin development Area. The population of the region was put at 245,661 with a density of 310 persons per square kilometers [10]. Ado-Ekiti, an ancient city in Nigeria is located between latitudes 7º34′ and 7º41′ North of the Equator and Longitudes 5º 11′ and 5º 61′ East of the Greenwich Meridian, the history of Ado-Ekiti dates back to a period before the advent of Ewi dynasty in 1310 AD. It grew to a town of repute about 700 years ago when the 'Oba Ado' otherwise called the 'Elewi' joined the princely adventure instituted by several children of Oduduwa (from Ile-Ife) to find their own territories [6]. It became the headquarters of the Ekiti Divisional Council in 1916 and rose to the status of a state capital on October 1, 1996. It has a total population of 157,519 people going by the 1991 population census, and 308,656 people, according to the 2006 Housing and population census. With the upsurge in the urbanization trend in the region, the estimated population of the city could be put around 600,000 people.

Geologically, Ado-Ekiti lies entirely within the pre-Cambrian Basement Complex rock group, which underlies much of Nigeria. It falls within Koppen's 'A' climatic belt that is the tropical wet climate. The city is strategically located in Ekiti land at the convergence of major roads forming a radial pattern.

Educationally, Ado-Ekiti is at the forefront. It has about 14 public secondary schools and 4 notable tertiary institutions which are located in the city to give qualitative education to the people.

Economically, Ado-Ekiti is undergoing a tremendous transformation. The commercial banks located in the city boost commercial activities. Hotels and Rest Houses are located strategically in the city which offers recreation and tourism opportunities to people. As a result of economic, social and political transformation that is taking place in Ado-Ekiti in recent times, the city continues to witness physical expansion in terms of buildings, transportation network (roads) duplication of market places, social activities, religious activities and economic activities. The transportation system of the city is operating at a below average level.

## Sampling and Data Collection

The guest sample was selected in seven (7) hotels within Ado-Ekiti. The reason for choosing a wide range of hotels in different destinations was to achieve a reliable and valid research sample of guests whose responses represent an overall picture of perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for hotel services in the study area. The sample consisted of hotels guests, both male and female, above the age of 18. A total of 245 self-administered questionnaire were distributed to guests who lodged in the hotels. This was collected immediately after completion. The sample size was limited to a quota of 35 respondents per hotel. Through a simple random sample selection technique, each hotel guest had an equal chance of being selected for an interview.

## Questionnaire Development and Measures

The questions were mainly prepared on 3 scales. These are hotel guests' perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for service. For that reason, to start with, 5 questions were included in the questionnaire to determine the demographic profile of respondents. Demographic information was sought through close-ended questions. Hotel guests' perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for service scales were measured through an eighteen (18) items respectively on a 5-point Likert ranging from 'strongly disagree = 1' to 'strongly agree = 5'. However, based on [1], these items were further analyzed and then categorised into four types of data: room division (front desk office and lodging/accommodation), food and beverage (breakfast, lunch and dinner), general services (parking facility, laundry room decor, security and gym facility/health care services) and other services (WiFi/Internet, location, newspaper, TV channels, outdoor sitting and communication skills of workers).

## Data Analysis

The data was analysed using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23. In the data, there were no missing values detected and observed that variables were not distributed normally. Thus, the linear regression analysis determined the relationship between a dependent variable and a group of independent variables. It estimates the coefficients of the linear equation, involving one or more independent variables that best predict the value of the dependent variable. The importance of regression analysis to this study is to predict the hotel guests' satisfaction of waiting for hotel service using their experience and perception of waiting for hotel service. The linear regression equation is represented in the explicit form thus:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e \qquad ...Eq.\ 1$$

where:
$Y$ = Guests' satisfaction of waiting for hotel service
$X_1$ = Guests' perception of waiting for hotel service
$X_2$ = Guests' experience of waiting for hotel service
$b_i$ = Coefficient
$a$ = Constant
$e$ = Error term or stochastic disturbance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Demographics of the respondents

Table 1 examined the demographics of the respondents. It was observed that the majority

(68.98%) were males while the females constituted 31.02%, although most of the respondents were married (62.04%). However, 85.31% of the respondents were between the ages of 18-45. When the educational status of the respondents is considered, it has been observed that 59.18% of the respondents was graduated from Polytechnic/University. In terms of the purpose of visiting of respondents in the study area, it was observed that majority of the respondents were on tour (33.47%), holiday (23.67%) and business (21.22%).

Table 1. Demographics of the respondents

|  | Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age (Years) | 18 – 25 | 58 | 23.67 |
|  | 26 – 35 | 79 | 32.24 |
|  | 36 – 45 | 72 | 29.39 |
|  | ≥ 46 | 36 | 14.69 |
| Sex | Male | 169 | 68.98 |
|  | Female | 76 | 31.02 |
| Marital Status | Not Married | 152 | 62.04 |
|  | Married | 93 | 37.96 |
| Education | Secondary School | 10 | 4.08 |
|  | National Diploma | 54 | 22.04 |
|  | Higher National Diploma | 71 | 28.98 |
|  | University Degree | 74 | 30.20 |
|  | Post Graduate | 36 | 14.69 |
| Purpose of Visiting | Holiday | 58 | 23.67 |
|  | Conference | 37 | 15.10 |
|  | Business | 52 | 21.22 |
|  | Family and Friends | 16 | 6.53 |
|  | Tour group | 82 | 33.47 |

Spurce: Field Survey, 2018.

**Perception, experience and satisfaction of respondents waiting for hotel services**

Table 2 presents the perception, experience and satisfaction of respondents waiting for hotel services.
The respondents have high perception of workers communication skills (M=4.72), location (M=4.18), laundry room décor (M=4.16), television channels (M=4.04) and gym facility/health care services (M=4.01). The respondents have a high experience of lunch (M=4.5), television channels (M=4.33), location (M=4.3), gym facility/health care services (M=4.24), laundry room décor (M=4.17) and outdoor sitting (M=4.16). However, newspaper (M=4.92), front desk office (M=4.9), breakfast (M=4.69), gym facility/health care services (M=4.67) and parking facility (M=4.66).

Table 2. Perception, experience and satisfaction of respondents waiting for hotel services.

| Hotel services | Perception | Experience | Satisfaction |
|---|---|---|---|
| Front desk office | 3.86 | 3.91 | 4.90 |
| Lodging/ Accommodation | 3.26 | 4.11 | 4.15 |
| Breakfast | 3.60 | 3.70 | 4.69 |
| Lunch | 2.92 | 4.50 | 4.17 |
| Dinner | 2.47 | 3.63 | 4.42 |
| Parking facility | 3.68 | 3.68 | 4.66 |
| Laundry room décor | 4.16 | 4.17 | 4.09 |
| Security | 3.10 | 3.43 | 4.41 |
| Gym facility/Health care services | 4.01 | 4.24 | 4.67 |
| Wifi/Internet | 3.84 | 4.03 | 4.16 |
| Location | 4.18 | 4.30 | 4.53 |
| Newspaper | 3.21 | 3.77 | 4.92 |
| Television channels | 4.04 | 4.33 | 4.43 |
| Outdoor sitting | 3.27 | 4.16 | 4.50 |
| Workers Communication skills | 4.72 | 3.87 | 4.55 |

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

**Perception, experience and satisfaction of respondents waiting for categories hotel services.**

Table 3 presents the perception, experience and satisfaction of respondents waiting for categories hotel services.
The respondents have a higher perception (M=3.88) and experience (M=4.08) of other services such as WiFi/Internet, location, newspaper, TV channels, outdoor sitting and communication skills of workers while having a higher experience of food and beverage (M=4.52) such as breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Table 3. Perception, experience and satisfaction of respondents waiting for categories hotel services.

| Hotel Services Categories | Perception | Experience | Satisfaction |
|---|---|---|---|
| Food and Beverage | 3.56 | 4.01 | 4.52 |
| Room Division | 3.00 | 3.94 | 4.43 |
| General Services | 3.74 | 3.88 | 4.46 |
| Other Services | 3.88 | 4.08 | 4.51 |
| **Grand Mean** | **3.54** | **3.98** | **4.48** |

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

**Effect of Hotel Guests' Perception and Experience on Satisfaction of Waiting for Service**

The linear equation explained the regression results of the effect of hotel guests' experience and perception on the satisfaction of waiting for service.
The regression results are presented below:

$$Y = 7.238 + 0.677X_2{}^{***} + 0.253X_1{}^{***} + e$$
$$(1.619) \quad (3.564) \quad\quad (8.978)$$

R Square value = 0.792; F value = 140.935[***]

*Note:* *** = $(\alpha_{0.01})$;

Figures in parenthesis are t-ratios.

The result in the model above showed that there was a significant relationship between guests' satisfaction (Y) vis-à-vis their experience $(X_1)$ and perception $(X_2)$ of waiting for service respectively.

The results revealed that guests' perception is a critical factor influencing guests' satisfaction of waiting for service. Interestingly, the coefficient and t-statistics indicated that guests' perception has a statistically significant positive relationship on guests' satisfaction. The slope value of 0.677 means that for a unit change in guests' perception, on the average, the probability of having enhanced guests' satisfaction of waiting for service would increase by 67.7 percent.

Furthermore, the equation shows that the coefficient for guests' experience is 0.253. The implication of this is that for every additional one percent in guests' experience it is expected that guests' satisfaction would increase by an average of 23.3%.

The R-Square is the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (guests' satisfaction of waiting for service) which can be predicted from the independent variables (guests' perception and experience of waiting for service). This value indicates that 79.2% of the variance in guests' satisfaction of waiting for service can be predicted from the variables guests' perception and experience of waiting for service.

## CONCLUSIONS

The perception, experience and satisfaction measures in the studied tourism and hospitality service providers involve various aspect that helps them in determining the quality of services they render to their consumers. Based on this, the study concluded that the majority of the hotel guests were tourists, males, married and were between the ages of 18 - 45 years. They are also graduates from either the Polytechnic or a University. However, guests have a high perception, experience and satisfaction levels of waiting for hotel services. Nevertheless, the satisfaction level of the hotel guests was higher than their perception and experience of waiting for hotel services while their experience was higher than their perception. This leads to the fact that the hotel guests were much satisfied despite their level of perception and experience of waiting for hotel services in the studied area. The hotel guests' perception and experience significantly have a positive influence on their satisfaction of waiting for hotel services.

In all, this study had addressed and made contributions to research on the effect of hotel guests' perception and experience on their satisfaction of waiting for hotel services. This information will be of great assistance in the design of tourism and hospitality service providers' strategies, programmes interventions and its implementation in the studied area. By these, the designed strategies and programmes will minimize the waiting time and engage customers in different activities at the property to make their waiting experience pleasurable because several factors such as the type of service, quality of service and the capacity of the location play an important role in the delays. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made towards ensuring better hotel guests' perception, experience and satisfaction of waiting for service in the studied area of tourism and hospitality.

(i)Preferences of potential guest should be scaled and identified. Through the scaling and identification of guests' preferences, the hotels will lessen the waiting for services and deliver a high quality of services to meet their positive perceptions, better experiences and great expectations.

(ii)The hotel should improve their services in terms of speed, performance, and quality. By improving their services, the rate of guests' satisfaction will increase and positive perceptions, better experiences and great expectations will be met.

(iii)The hotels should improve their quality of services through collective capacity building and training programmes of employees to enhance their performance, efficiency and effectiveness towards increasing their guests' positive perceptions, better experiences,

higher satisfaction and great expectations of their respective hotels in the study area

As it is in almost all studies, there are some limitations in this study too. First, all data were

obtained from a single destination (Ado-Ekiti). This means that the results may not be generalized i.e. the sample consisted of a total of 245 respondents only. The second limitation was related to the sample selection. This research only includes hotels in a city which offers recreation and tourism opportunities to people. Therefore, future studies should focus on different locations and other tourism sites with a wider range of hotels. This would be helpful in validating the findings of this research.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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