

KOFORIDUA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT



**EVALUATION OF GUESTS' PREFERENCES FOR BUDGET HOTELS IN
THE FANTEAKWA SOUTH MUNICIPALITY.**

BY
HELENA NYARKOA
B204210009

OCTOBER, 2023.

KOFORIDUA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

**EVALUATION OF GUESTS' PREFERENCES FOR BUDGET HOTELS IN
THE FANTEAKWA SOUTH MUNICIPALITY.**

BY
HELENA NYARKOA
B204210009

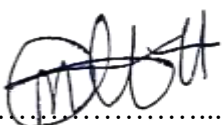
**A PROJECT WORK PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT, FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF TECHNOLOGY (BTECH) IN
HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

OCTOBER, 2023.

STUDENTS' DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project work is the outcome of my own research and that no part has been presented for the award of any other certificate in this University or elsewhere.

HELENA NYARKOA



.....

6/11/2023

.....

[B204210009]

SIGNATURE


DATE

SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATION

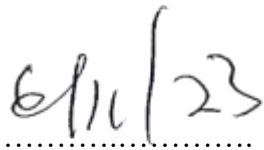
I hereby certify that this project work was supervised in accordance with the University's guidelines for supervision of project work.

DR. JOSEPH AHIMA

[SUPERVISOR]

.....


SIGNATURE

.....


DATE

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to the Lord Almighty who bestowed on me the strength and knowledge to go through my studies. I wish to also dedicate the work to my parents, family members and friends for their support and immense contribution towards my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to acknowledge the unfailing love and mercies of the Almighty God towards me during my studies. Special thanks go to Dr. Joseph Ahima for his countless hours of reflecting, reading, encouraging, patience and direction throughout the writing of this project. I wish to acknowledge the Dean (Faculty of Applied Science and Technology), the Lecturers and Staff of Hospitality Management Department, Koforidua Technical University and my mates for their contribution and assistance towards my studies. I finally wish to acknowledge my parents and family for all the effort and assistance during my studies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STUDENTS’ DECLARATION	i
SUPERVISOR’S CERTIFICATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.4 Specific Objectives	4
1.5 Research Questions	4
1.6 Significance of the Study	5
1.7 Scope of study.....	6
1.8 Organization of the study.....	6
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Introduction.....	7
2.2 Ghana’s Hotel Industry	7
2.3 Budget Hotel Industry.....	8
2.4 Customers’ Choice of Budget Hotels	9
2.4.1 Product/Service	11
2.4.2 Staff.....	12
2.4.3 General Amenities of the hotel	13
2.4.4 Promotion.....	14
2.4.5 Personal Experience.....	15
2.4.6 Location	16
2.4.7 Value for Money	17
2.5 Customer Satisfaction	17
2.6 Customer Loyalty.....	18
2.7 The Relationship Between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty	20

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	22
3.1 Research Design.....	22
3.2 Study Area	22
3.3 Population	24
3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure	24
3.5 Sources of Data	25
3.6 Research Instrument.....	25
3.7 Validity and Reliability of Questionnaire	25
3.8 Data Collection	26
3.9 Data Analysis	26
3.10 Ethical Statement	26
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	28
4.1 Introduction.....	28
4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	28
4.2.1 Gender of Respondents	28
4.2.2 Age of Respondents	29
4.2.3 Marital Status of Respondents	30
4.2.4 Highest Educational Level of Respondents	30
4.2.5 Occupation of Respondents	31
4.2.6 Annual Income of Respondents	32
4.3 Customer Preferences	33
4.3.1 Any Experience Staying in Budget Hotel.....	33
4.3.2 Length of Respondents Stay	34
4.3.3 Main Reason for The Travel	34
4.3.4 Type of Room Preference	35
4.3.5 Room Rate Preference	36
4.3.6 Source of Hotel Information	37
4.3.7 Means of Making Reservations	38
4.4 Hotel Attributes.....	39
4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Product/Service Attribute	39
4.4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Staff Attribute	40
4.4.3 Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Facilities Under General Amenities Attribute ...	42
4.4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Room Facilities Under General Amenities Attribute ..	43
4.4.5 Descriptive Statistics of Room Quality Under General Amenities Attribute	44

4.4.6 Descriptive Statistics of Promotion Attribute	45
4.4.7 Descriptive Statistics of Personal Experience Attribute	46
4.4.8 Descriptive Statistics of Location Attribute.....	47
4.4.9 Descriptive Statistics of Value for Money Attribute	48
4.5 Importance of Hotel Attributes in Relation to Customer Overall Satisfaction	49
4.6 Factors That Influence Customers’ Intentions to Revisit Budget Hotels	51
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	53
5.1 Introduction.....	53
5.2 Summary of Findings.....	53
5.2.1 Objective 1: Investigate the Fundamental Attributes of Budget Hotels that Customers Prefer.....	54
5.2.2 Objective 2: Determine The Importance of Budget Hotel Attributes in Terms of Customer Overall Satisfaction.	56
5.2.3 Objective 3: Examine the Factors That Influence Customers’ Intentions to Revisit Budget Hotels.	57
5.3 Conclusion	57
5.4 Recommendations.....	59
REFERENCES.....	60
APPENDIX.....	65

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents	29
Table 4.2: Age Group of Respondents.....	29
Table 4.3: Marital Status of Respondents	30
Table 4.4: Highest Educational Level of Respondents	31
Table 4.5: Occupation of Respondents	32
Table 4.6: Annual Income of Respondents.....	33
Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics of Product/Service Attribute (N=92)	40
Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics of Staff Attribute (N=92)	41
Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Facilities Under General Amenities Attribute (N=92)	42
Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics of Room Facilities Under General Amenities Attribute (N=92)	43
Table 4.11: Descriptive Statistics of Room Quality Under General Amenities Attribute (N=92)	44
Table 4.12: Descriptive Statistics of Promotion Attribute (N=92)	45
Table 4.13: Descriptive Statistics of Personal Experience Attribute (N=92)	47
Table 4.14: Descriptive Statistics of Location Attribute (N=92).....	48
Table 4.15: Descriptive Statistics of Value for Money Attribute (N=92)	49
Table 4.16: Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Attributes in Relation to Customer Overall Satisfaction (N=92).....	50
Table 4.17: Descriptive Statistics of Factors That Influence Customers' Intentions to Revisit Budget Hotels (N=92)	51

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: Map of Fanteakwa South District (Boamah, 2020).....	23
Figure 4.1: Any Experience Staying in Budget Hotel	33
Figure 4.2: Length of Respondents Stay.....	34
Figure 4.3: The Main Reason for The Travel	35
Figure 4.4: Type of Room Preferred.....	36
Figure 4.5: Room Rate Preferred	37
Figure 4.6: Source of Hotel Information.....	38
Figure 4.7: Means of Making Reservations	39

ABSTRACT

For many people, the choice of budget hotel for accommodation is fundamentally beyond budget concern, but a firm comprehension of these aspects is literally less explored. There has been little research done to understand customers' preferences in selecting budget hotels as a mode of accommodation. The study looked at investigating the fundamental attributes of budget hotels that customers prefer, determining the importance of budget hotel attributes in terms of customer overall satisfaction, and examining the factors that influence customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels. The study employed a descriptive research design and convenience sampling technique, which sampled 100 individuals in the Fanteakwa South Municipality. Data was collected from the respondents using questionnaires and analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. Out of 100 questionnaires distributed, only 92 usable questionnaires were received, representing a response rate of 92.0%. The study revealed that most customers or guests prioritize a clean and comfortable guest room for a more pleasant and relaxing stay, an easy method of making reservations, a car parking space due to the importance of secure parking in urban areas, a fan in the room due to the tropical climate, cleanliness within the hotel compound and rooms due to the fundamental importance of hygiene and sanitation, customer loyalty/repeat business which offers the chance to secure discounted rates, affordable prices, convenient access to the hotel which saves time and enhances the overall travel experience, and a good price range for guest rooms. The study also concluded that value for money is the most prominent factor or attribute, especially when customers decide on selecting budget hotels for their stay and possibly want to repeat their stay in the same accommodation. It was recommended that hoteliers be aware that even though the general amenities, product/service, and staff are not the central factors leading to customers' choice of accommodation, the absence of good product/service and staff, as well as adequate general amenities such as hotel facilities, room facilities, and room quality, will lead to customers' dissatisfaction. They should provide clean and comfortable guest rooms and a variety of facilities in guest rooms to meet customers' needs and make them satisfied. It was also recommended that budget hotel operators should also focus on promotion in the lodging business, such as discount packages for popular events held at the hotel (weddings, honeymoons, festivals, etc.), distributing loyalty cards (VIP cards), giving discounts to online reservation customers, and making attractive advertisements or promotions to attract customers.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Hospitality is the act of welcoming and meeting the basic needs of guests or strangers, primarily in terms of food, drink, and lodging (Montefiore, 2022). A modern definition of hospitality refers to the process of establishing a relationship between a guest and a host. When we talk about the "Hospitality Industry," we usually mean businesses or organizations that provide food, drink, and/or lodging to people who are away from home. The hospitality industry is a broad field within the service industry that includes event planning, lodging, transportation, theme parks, cruise lines, supplementary fields such as medical tourism, and the tourism industry in general (Lashley, 2015). Hospitality industry refers to the services rendered by hotels, restaurants, resorts and entertainment sector of the economy (Montefiore, 2022).

The hospitality industry plays significant roles in many economies, including those of the developing world such as Ghana, where there is increased importance and recognition for the Service sector. The percentage share of the Service sector to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in recent times ranges between 46.3 % in 2018 to 47.2 % in 2019 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020). With the expansion of the service industries, there is a greater need for research into their operations and marketing. The success of the hospitality industry can be seen as one of the key components of Ghana's economic growth (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2015).

The hotel industry is a lucrative venture that offers a variety of services to people, such as lodging, food, entertainment, and health and fitness. It has aided many countries around the world in terms of revenue generation (Smith, 2016). A country's revenue system can function effectively if the hotel industry pays the tax rate that has been

assigned to them (Sukrana, Haque & Jui, 2023). This industry has a large market, which creates fierce competition. Newcomers and established hoteliers compete for survival and expansion in this demanding and challenging industry. The emergence of alternative products raises the level of competition (Lashley, 2015).

According to Pertiwi & Sulistyawati (2020), traditional hotels are lodging establishments such as luxury hotels, resorts, budget hotels, and chalets. However, accommodation providers are no longer confined to typical hotels but also include commercial houses, guest houses, service apartments, homestays, and bed and breakfasts, offering greater possibilities in the hospitality business. Surprisingly, these alternative accommodations also offer short- or medium-term stays. The primary distinction between standard hotels and these alternative accommodations is the restricted and customized service given, which brings guests closer to the local atmosphere (Pertiwi & Sulistyawati, 2020).

Budget hotels, also known as economy hotels, provide cost-effective lodging options for travelers seeking affordable accommodation without compromising on basic amenities and comfort (Li & Wang, 2017). These hotels offer simplified services and fewer frills, focusing on providing a clean and convenient stay for budget-conscious guests (Smith, 2016). While they may not offer luxury amenities, budget hotels often feature essential facilities such as Wi-Fi, basic breakfast, and comfortable bedding (Li & Wang, 2017). Travelers looking to explore a destination on a tight budget can find these hotels to be a practical choice, allowing them to allocate more resources to experiences and activities (Chien & Chen, 2018). The rise of budget hotel chains and online booking platforms has made it easier for travelers to find and compare these budget-friendly options (Li & Wang, 2017). Budget hotels in Ghana are defined as small-scale hotels, lodging houses, motels, resorts, hostels, rest houses, inns, or

guesthouses with affordable room rates beginning at Ninety Ghana Cedis per night (Alhassan & Sakara, 2019). With a focus on value for money, budget hotels in Ghana play a crucial role in promoting tourism by catering to a wide range of travelers, from backpackers to budget-conscious families (Chien & Chen, 2018).

Yang, Huang and Sheng (2017), recent study found that, it is essential for hotels to thoroughly comprehend their guests' behavior, establish and maintain professionalism, be sincere and accurate, and support the market.

1.2 Problem Statement

For many people, the choice of budget hotel for accommodation is fundamentally beyond budget concern, but a firm comprehension of these aspects is literately less explored (Ren et al., 2018). There has been little research done to understand clients' preferences in selecting hospitality services. The information acquired is mostly confined to visitor-related data based on socio-demographic and geographic information provided during guest registration (Mody et al., 2023). Mody et al. (2023) stated that service quality and customer satisfaction at budget hotels were still weak due to a lack of recent studies, particularly in the Eastern region of Ghana.

Meanwhile, according to Yang et al. (2017), research that integrates selection criteria and decision-making for budget hotels has never been done in China. This type of research can be very useful to guide future research in the field as well as provide insight into how customers evaluate key selection criteria for accommodation, particularly for budget accommodation.

Therefore, it is necessary to undertake research to discover and comprehend the customer's desire in selecting a low-cost hotel in order to close this gap. In addition, the

level of satisfaction with the service provided by low-cost hotels is investigated as part of this study. This would aid in the clarification of issues concerning consumers' perceptions of and satisfaction with service quality in order to formulate plans and determine activities to be performed in order to maximize customer satisfaction and promote customer loyalty. This study will concentrate on consumer behavior with the notion that understanding customer behavior in decision-making is critical for marketing managers in order to obtain an advantage in this demanding and competitive hospitality sector.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to evaluate guests' preferences for budget hotels in the Fanteakwa South Municipality.

1.4 Specific Objectives

- i. To investigate the fundamental attributes of budget hotels that customers prefer.
- ii. To determine the importance of budget hotel attributes in terms of overall customer satisfaction.
- iii. To examine the factors that influence customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What are the fundamental attributes of budget hotels that customers prefer?
- ii. What are the importance of budget hotel attributes in terms of overall customer satisfaction?

- iii. What are the factors that influence customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will look into many elements that may influence customers' decisions about hotel services. The findings of this study may be useful to hoteliers, particularly hotel management, in determining their development policy in order to motivate, support, and respond to their potential consumers in the most effective manner.

Furthermore, the findings of this study may serve as a guideline in establishing methods to improve and develop budget accommodation resources to their full potential in order to service tenant needs and gain customer loyalty. Theoretically, this study is meant for strategic management practitioners, academicians, managerial personnel, and students to provide a body of knowledge that can be applied in business processes as well as to contribute to the literature on the issue. Moreover, this study aims to provide information on essential concerns in order to preserve and develop the hotel industry in general, and budget hotels in particular. The success of budget hotels will also contribute to the nation's earnings via the hospitality and tourism industries.

Empirically, this study will provide a theoretical foundation for hotels to employ in problem-solving decisions, with an understanding of their customers' preferences rather than simply reacting to consumer dissatisfactions.

This study may cover research gaps in understanding the key decision-making processes underlying choice behavior and assist future researchers in their attempts to further assess this subject.

1.7 Scope of study

The survey will include respondents who have been in budget hotels during a self-sponsored trip and their choice to stay in the same lodging on their future trip. This study will focus on self-sponsored clients who make key decisions entirely on their own and are not bound by employment restrictions. Respondents will also be requested to limit their responses to their most recent trip in order to better recall their experience. The study will be conducted in the Fantekwa South Municipality, primarily among working adults from various government and commercial companies.

1.8 Organization of the study

This aspect of the project will show the components under every chapter in the research work. The project work will comprise of five (5) independent but interrelated chapters. Chapter one will provide a general overview of the entire study, that is background of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope, limitations and organization of the study. Chapter two will deal with the review of related literature. Chapter three will provide an in-depth discussion of the methodology adopted for the research. Chapter four will present the results and discussion of the study. Finally, chapter five will summarize the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations will be made base on the findings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Some reviewed literature of the study will be discussed. The review will highlight on the following sub headings; Ghana's Hotel Industry, Budget Hotel Industry, Factors Influencing Customers' Choice of Budget Hotels, Customer Satisfaction, and Customer Loyalty.

2.2 Ghana's Hotel Industry

According to Britannica Encyclopaedia, hotel is defined as a building that provides accommodation service, which may include meals, as well as other services to the traveling public on a commercial basis (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021). Tourism industry in Ghana had been nominated as a significant segment by the Ghana Government (Adu-Ampong, 2018). Accommodation services provided by hotels became a paramount segment of tourism industry (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2015).

Ghana hotel industry's progression and performance depended heavily on the growth and performance of other Ghanaian economic subdivisions, particularly manufacturing and services besides tourism industry (Agyeiwaah, 2013). On the other hand, the availability of leisureliness and useable income of domestic and international travellers determine the growth of this industry (Mody et al., 2023). In Ghana, hotel business caters for business people, leisure travellers and tourists. However, recently there are trends for the industry to further expand to cater for expatriates and extended stay customers (Agyeiwaah, 2013). International arrivals were estimated to increase by 5% from 980,141 persons in 2017 to 1,029,148 in 2018 while corresponding receipts was

estimated to increase by 5.1% from US\$1,854.8 Million in 2017 to US\$1,947.5 Million in 2018 and contributing 4.9% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Ghana Tourism Statistics, 2019).

2.3 Budget Hotel Industry

A budget hotel has never been easy to define due to its dynamic nature of entities over a period of time (Ren et al., 2018). The term "budget hotel" appears mainly to act as a catch-all term in order to pronounce a variety of accommodation categories offerings at proportionately lesser rates than the industry standards (Başarangil, 2018).

Within the budget hotels definition, properties registered as resort, hotel, rest house, lodging house, hostel, motel, inn, chalet or guesthouse can be summed up as budget hotel (Alhassan & Sakara, 2019; Rahman & Nordin, 2018). In term of length of stay, an average stay could reach four consecutive nights with room rate as low as GHC 90 on average (Alhassan & Sakara, 2019).

Universally, the budget hotel sector has undertaken rapid expansion during the past few decades due to the deviations in lifestyle and values, as well as the increased level of value perception and complexity in accommodation choice (Ren et al., 2018). In China, budget hotel industry demonstrated different product features with their Western counterparts influenced by remarkable different cultural values (Yang et al., 2017).

From industry's point of view, budget hotels and chalets falls within the small and medium sized industry in the service and hospitality category (Rahman & Nordin, 2018). This industry significantly contributes to overall tourism industry in Ghana. It also provides job opportunities for executives, technical, clerical and general workers as reported by Ministry of Tourism Ghana.

According to Agyeiwaah (2013), professionals such as engineers, lawyers, doctors, and accountants who have very limited knowledge on hospitality business commonly operate budget hotels particularly in Ghana. Despite lacking business skills and experience in the hotel business, there are very little attention from the government to assist budget hotel entrepreneurs (Agyeiwaah, 2013).

Moreover, Ghana is lacking in law that can control home-sharing platform even though there are laws that ban residential properties from being utilized for commercial activities offering substitute product, this situation hits hotel industry especially budget hotels as home sharing offering likely similar rates as the budget hotels (Leng, 2016). By offering some alternative package of benefits, mostly centred on being simpler, cheaper, smaller or more convenient, disruptive innovation such as AirBnB intensifies competition in accommodation sector (Guttentag & Smith, 2017).

In order to remain competitive, hoteliers need to better understand the needs of their patrons, but unfortunately there are very limited study carried out on this subject (Lei, Nicolau & Wang, 2019; Mody et al., 2023; Richard & Masud, 2016).

2.4 Customers' Choice of Budget Hotels

Several studies have been conducted on how customers come to their decision in choosing their accommodation to stay, numerous findings pointing out different attributes that indicates this area of study has long been an interest to researchers. For the purpose of this study, research on customers' general perception and behaviour towards product and services has been reviewed by focusing on hospitality industry, specifically on budget hotel industry.

A study by Pertiwi and Sulistyawati (2020) identified four factors that may influence tourists' choice of accommodation. Reportedly, tourists prefer alternative accommodations to hotels due to four major factors, namely (a) value for money, (b) living atmosphere, (c) guest-host relationship and (d) local touch. However, study by Pertiwi and Sulistyawati (2020) pointed out that value for money is identified as the most prominent factor especially for price-sensitive tourists. This is supported by a study in Thailand pointing out that price became the main consideration for tourist in choosing their accommodation (Chuanchom et al., 2021).

Type of travellers may influence how hotel consumers make their hotel selection. Study on women's accommodation preference showed that attributes such as staff attitude, room design, safety and security are among the important factors that influence their choice (Linchi Kwok, 2016). A study by Mody et al. (2023), showed that selection factor for hotel's guest can be classified into four segments, namely trust, verification by self-experience or by others, hotel promotion or price and hotel product. Verification and self-experience turned out to be the most significant factor.

Meanwhile, in Ghana, study revealed that customers' choices are largely influenced by their traditional beliefs and religion (Richard & Masud, 2016). Richard and Masud (2016) pointed out that between cultural, social, personal and psychological factors, cultural factor plays a strong role for hotel consumers in making their selection of hotel service. Before the final purchase, customers evaluated various alternatives guided by informal information they can retrieve or receive. These factors include cost, location, social, security, professional relationship and cultural factors influencing customers' selection of hotel, and customers' in Ghana are strongly influenced by culture in patronage of hotel service (Richard & Masud, 2016).

According to Başarangil (2018), budget hotel is another segment within hospitality industry with lower rates in general but not limited to this criterion only. As this study attempts to focus more on budget hotels, there are some expectations for budget hotel features that may differ from what those upper-tier hotels can offer.

This study is prepared according to the procedure used by Rahimi & Kozak (2017), focusing on budget hotels, in order to explore the relationship between consumers decisions on selecting budget hotels for their stay and the possibility of them repeating their stay in the same accommodation. These attributes are namely *product/service, staff, general amenities of the hotel, promotion, personal experience, location, and value for money*. These hotel factors are critical among customer's perception towards hospitality industry for their satisfaction as suggested (Bello & Bello, 2021). Customer's satisfaction is considered fulfilled when their overall experience turns out exceeding their expectation (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017).

2.4.1 Product/Service

Product is the core element of the marketing strategy that retailers can offer unique attributes that differentiates their product from their competitors. Product is characterized by quality, design, features, brand name and sizes (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017).

Product is anything that can be offered to a market for attention, use, acquisition, or consumption that might satisfy a want or need (Mody et al., 2023). It is a tangible item, service, idea, person, place, or any combination of goods and/or services offered to meet and satisfy the needs, wants, and requirements of consumers. Hence, a product is something tangible or intangible that can be offered for purchase or use by consumers. A tangible product is one that consumers can actually touch, such as food and

beverages. An intangible product is a service that cannot be touched, such as room service (AbuKhalifeh & Mat Som, 2016).

The products of budget hotel are very simple; the core products are the guest room, and related service, budget hotel also provide simple food and beverage, for instance, 7 Days Inn in China provide bedtime milk for customers for free (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017).

2.4.2 Staff

Staff is essential in service delivery. Staff factors is one factor that influence customer's satisfaction. Sometimes, the best food may not seem equally delicious if the waitress is in a sour mood but a smile always helps. Intensive training for the human resources on how to handle customers and how to deal with contingencies is crucial the success of business (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017).

Staffs refer to the service employees who produce and deliver the service and they strongly influence the customer's perception. Every time the employees/staffs come into contact with a customer, an impression is made immediately. Make sure it is a good impression by having properly trained, the reputation of the hotel rests in the hands of well-motivated staffs who are with a good attitude (AbuKhalifeh & Mat Som, 2016).

The basic element to any service provision is the use of appropriate staff and people. Engaging the right staff and people and training them appropriately in the delivery of their service is basic necessary if the organization wants to obtain a form of competitive advantage (Walker, 2021). The employees who have directed interact with customers affect decision making of customers. Staff should have service knowledge, appropriate interpersonal skills, and good attitude to provide the service that consumers are paying for (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017).

2.4.3 General Amenities of the hotel

According to Bello & Bello (2021), the other perspective on customer satisfaction is the side elements that deal with how the service or product are received such as the decoration, atmosphere, flexibility, availability, interactions with the service and conveniences of the location provider. In this study, we intend to measure customer satisfaction in relation to hotel service based on actual patrons' experience.

Living atmosphere is one of major factor linked to tourist satisfaction during their stay in Rangamati, Bangladesh (Mahmod, Alam & Das, 2020). As cost of accommodation becomes one of the most prominent expenses contributing to the total cost of their visit, tourist expects the best experience during their stay.

A study in the uplands of Bali, Indonesia indicates that homely atmosphere, was the main reason for customers' inclination in choosing alternative accommodation rather than traditional hotels (Pertwi and Sulistyawati, 2020). Alternative accommodation provides new competitive environment into hospitality industry, Airbnb as hotel substitute, depending on traveller characteristic and other attributes such as cleanliness, reputation, location, service quality and values (Guttentag & Smith, 2017).

General Amenities can be associated with room qualities, hotel facilities and room facilities (AbuKhalifeh & Mat Som, 2016; Bello & Bello, 2021). Among these factors, AbuKhalifeh & Mat Som (2016) found that availability of International Direct Dial (IDD) service becomes an important factor for hotel's customer to consider in choosing hotels, but recent study by Bello & Bello (2021), discovered that bed/mattress comfort becomes the most significant attribute under personal experiences among travellers in hotels, Nigeria. Along with development of communication technologies, IDD service

is no longer an attractive offer, replaced by high quality Wi-Fi service, together with other in-room facilities in fulfilling customers' needs (Kaliappen & Hilman, 2017).

2.4.4 Promotion

Promotion is a plan with the objective to increase sales of product or services within a short period; it helps to stimulate customers to make decisions of buying a product or service in the market (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017). Effective promotional campaigns can significantly enhance a hotel's brand visibility and recognition, attracting a wider audience and increasing its market share (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Well-executed promotions can stimulate demand during off-peak seasons, helping to maintain consistent revenue streams (Leng, 2016). Additionally, promotions provide opportunities to showcase new amenities, services, or renovations, giving the hotel a competitive edge (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017). Promotions encourage repeat visits and customer loyalty, as guests are more likely to return to a hotel that consistently offers value through promotional offers (Sukrana, Haque & Jui, 2023). Lastly, a well-crafted promotion can foster positive word-of-mouth marketing, as satisfied guests share their experiences with friends and family, further expanding the hotel's reach (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

It plays three vital roles: providing needed information and advice, persuading target customers of the merits of a specific product, and encouraging them to take action at specific times (Bello & Bello, 2021).

The active promotion activities in budget hotel are as follows: make advertisement on TV, internet, newspapers and website, etc.; offer packages for regular customers who do visit the hotel more often. Also offer packages for popular events at your hotel e.g. if your hotel is regularly booked for weddings and honeymoons, offer discounted rates

or deals; take reservation online and get special discount; the use of social media (Social media is free. Millions of people use different forms of social media each day so it's a huge opportunity for you to make your mark and reach a wide audience) etc. (Peng, Xinyuan and Matilla, 2015).

2.4.5 Personal Experience

Experience is used to refer to the past events, knowledge, and feelings that make up someone's life or character. An experience is something that you do or that happens to you, especially something important that affects you (www.collinsdictionary.com).

The travel industry is dominated by customer service, and hotel businesses live and die by the satisfaction of their guests. As customer demands grow, so does the complexity of delivering an experience they'll be happy with (Ren et al., 2016). When it comes to pleasing guests, 'personalization' is as buzzed as a word can get, but for good reason; there's no excuse not to be taking a more focused approach to customer interaction (Walker, 2021).

However, optimizing the guest experience and ensuring guest expectations are met is a constantly evolving challenge for hoteliers (Myo, Khalifa & Aye, 2019). With a veritable banquet of options at their fingertips, travellers are demanding more than ever before. It makes life harder for hotels, but also gives them a greater opportunity to deliver an experience guests will never forget. The collection and use of customer data will allow a hotel to effectively personalize their service for guests (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017).

It is believed that hotel management typically receives guest comments from two groups of guests: dissatisfied guests whose expectations were not met by the hotel services and facilities and delighted guests whose expectations were exceeded by the

hotel services and facilities (Ratnayaka, Kumara & Silva, 2020). Therefore, comments from the two extreme groups of the hotel guest views on the functionality and comfort of the facilities and amenities, and the quality of the service rendered to them represents how they will recommend the hotel to their relatives and other friends or people in general (Ratnayaka, Kumara & Silva, 2020).

2.4.6 Location

A study carried out in Johannesburg recognized that hotel geographical location contributing towards its demand (Rogerson, 2014). This is agreed by (Bello & Bello, 2021; Mody et al., 2023) as location plays an important factor for customer in making their decision to select the hotel.

Location of the property is also identified as a key factor influencing customers' preference for accommodation service (Chuanom et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2017). Budget hotels as the name suggests focus on potential tenants that are tight on their budget. Study by Chuanom et al. (2021) found that different location of the budget hotel may attract different types of tenant either holiday maker or day-trippers. The author also suggested that, different marketing plan should be applied to different types of customers.

Budget hotel services are considered as "place-sensitive" service (Mody et al., 2023). Therefore, different location attracting different market segments requires different approach. For customers on business trip, they will heavily emphasize on accessibility, distance to business centre or the availability of restaurant nearby. For tourists, they may prefer a hotel in close proximity to tourist attractions (Yang et al., 2017).

Additionally, according to Chuanom et al. (2021), in some cases, a location populated by senior citizens who have relatives or friends living afar can be an advantage to

hoteliers as it may attract potential customers who are relatives of them visiting and needing a place to stay.

2.4.7 Value for Money

A study conducted by Mahmud, Alam & Das (2020), indicates that the cost of staying turns out to be the most important factor for tourists to consider in choosing their accommodation. Meanwhile, a research conducted in Nigeria concludes that, value for money is the second most important consideration for choices of budget hotel, as travelers prefer to stay for more than one night in the accommodation which costs less (Bello & Bello, 2021). In order to put reasonable price range for maximum profit, but at the same time paying adequate attention on competitiveness, hoteliers should consider value for money into their business strategies (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017).

There are also several other factors that influence hotel selection by customers in literature, but this study will only be focusing on seven (7) major attributes that are product/service, staff, general amenities of the hotel, promotion, personal experience, location, and value for money.

2.5 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has become an area of interest in academic research for quite some time. It is one of the most important criteria for determining the quality brought to customers through the product or service and the complementary services (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017). Satisfaction is identified as an evaluation on customer's experience with the service or product as it is supposed to be compared to prior expectations (Bello & Bello, 2021).

In general, a customer can be considered dissatisfied once his actual experience turns to displeasure compared to his initial expectation (Mody et al., 2023). From hospitality and tourism perspectives, patrons are tourists or travellers utilizing and experiencing the services purchased. Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are the key elements in the accomplishment of the market concept execution. Satisfied customers are more probable to return if the service provided attains or surpasses their anticipations (Cheng et al., 2018).

Customer's decision-making is like a "black box" which shows the interactions of the stimuli but what actually is in customers' mind is hard to anticipate. Besides, positive experience also plays an important role in influencing customers' choice of accommodation and subsequently the success of a hotel business (Mody et al., 2023). Customers tend to use their own or other peoples' previous experience or information from word of mouth rather than official advertisement (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017).

2.6 Customer Loyalty

In this literature, it is well recognized that customer satisfaction is an integral part of the necessities in evolving their loyalty. Organizations must know how to handle arising issues and properly resolve them so that the arrangement will retain the hotel-patrons' relationship.

Customer loyalty can be defined as passionately involved commitment to regularly re-buy or re-patronize services or goods from the similar service providers in the future (Cheng et al., 2018). It can cause repetitive patronage of the same hotel.

In order to remain in the business, providing high quality service must always become top priority for service providers. Excellent service quality and facility are identified as

one of important factor to increase customer loyalty (Bello & Bello, 2021). Managers in service industry frequently use customer satisfaction to predict repeat patronage that will lead to loyalty (Arslan, 2020).

Increasing the level of customers' satisfaction not only brings the satisfied customers for revisit, but they will also recommend to others (Mahmod, Alam & Das, 2020). Understanding customer satisfaction is too subjective to be measured, however post purchase behaviour will be determined by hotel attributes that make patrons feel that service quality received is worth what they pay for (Bello & Bello, 2021).

An excellent quality of service and facility offered to patrons are perceived as hotel's capability to gain competitive advantage, differentiate themselves from competitors, turn customers into loyal patrons, escalate business performance and attract new customers (Bello & Bello, 2021; Mody et al., 2023). A favourable corporate image is considered as prime contributor for repeat patronage (Ren et al., 2018).

Hoteliers need to recognize the hotel attributes that most probably stimulates customers' choice intention. Bello & Bello (2021) indicate that, repeat patrons are closely related to their initial experience with the hotel's service quality. Therefore, it is important to understand patrons' need that corresponds to a various set of satisfactions.

Word of mouth advertising aided by customer's satisfaction can be very effective to develop hotel-customer relationship that is crucial to the success of hospitality business (Yang et al., 2017). Failure to pay sufficient attention to those hotel attributes that are most influential in attracting attention of patrons may lead to negative evaluation to the hotel, eventually decreasing the possibility of repeat patronage by the customers.

Therefore, understanding relative importance of hotel attributes in hotel choice is very important.

2.7 The Relationship Between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Cheng et al. (2018) indicated that, in order to maintain relationship with customers, budget hotel has to think about customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, since these two factors determine whether the company's relationship with customers is tight or stable.

Customer satisfaction is the starting point to build customer loyalty; it is a loyalty stock that will improve image of corporate, therefore a long-term relationship (Gandolfo, 2010). Customers' satisfaction affects customers' loyalty directly. In business activities, companies make great effort to improve customers' satisfaction, reducing customer dissatisfaction, attracting new customers, and maintaining existing customers. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction is more than a reaction to the actual performance quality of a product or service. It is affected by prior expectations regarding the level of quality (Mody et al., 2023).

Gandolfo (2010) stated that there is a connection between customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and profitability. Customer satisfaction improves profitability increased. However, there are some customers who will never be satisfied or will never be profitable to the product or service of budget hotel, the corporate should not waste energy and budget to satisfy all customers, the customers should focus on are the customers who can satisfy in a profitable way (Bello & Bello, 2021).

According to Ren et al. (2018) stated that, the objective of providing value to customers continuously and more effectively than competitors is to have and to retain highly

satisfied customers. Satisfaction has been widely studied as a predictor of customer loyalty (Mody et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2017). Satisfaction has a strong positive effect on customer loyalty intentions across a wide range of product and service categories (Rahimi & Kozak, 2017). Arslan (2020) indicated that, it is an important factor for a long-term relationship between a firm and a customer.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The descriptive survey design would be used by the researcher in this investigation. A descriptive survey is research that gathers data to identify or illustrate relationships and depict circumstances as they actually are. It is done without any prior experimentation to determine what to alter. It is carried out with no effect or intervention on any variable being researched (Ampofo, 2020). This study would investigate various elements, including product or service, staff, hotel facilities, hotel location, promotion, personal experience, and value for money, all of which may influence hotel consumers' likelihood of repeat patronage.

3.2 Study Area

The Fanteakwa South District is one of the 261 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies in Ghana and forms part of the 33 Municipalities and Districts in Eastern Region. The Fanteakwa South District is carved out of the Fanteakwa North District as one of the 38 newly created and upgraded Districts in 2018. Created with LI 2345, the Fanteakwa South District Assembly has its capital as Osino. The District lies at the central part of the Eastern Region with a total land area of 803 square kilometers. It shares boundaries with Fanteakwa North District to the north, Kwahu South District to the north-west, East Akim Municipal and Atiwa East District to the south and Yilo Krobo Municipal and Lower Manya Krobo Municipal to the east. The current population of the Fanteakwa South District from 2021 PHC is 58,987, Males constitute 28,857 while as females are 28,130. Figure 3.1 below showing the map of Fanteakwa South District (Boamah, 2020).

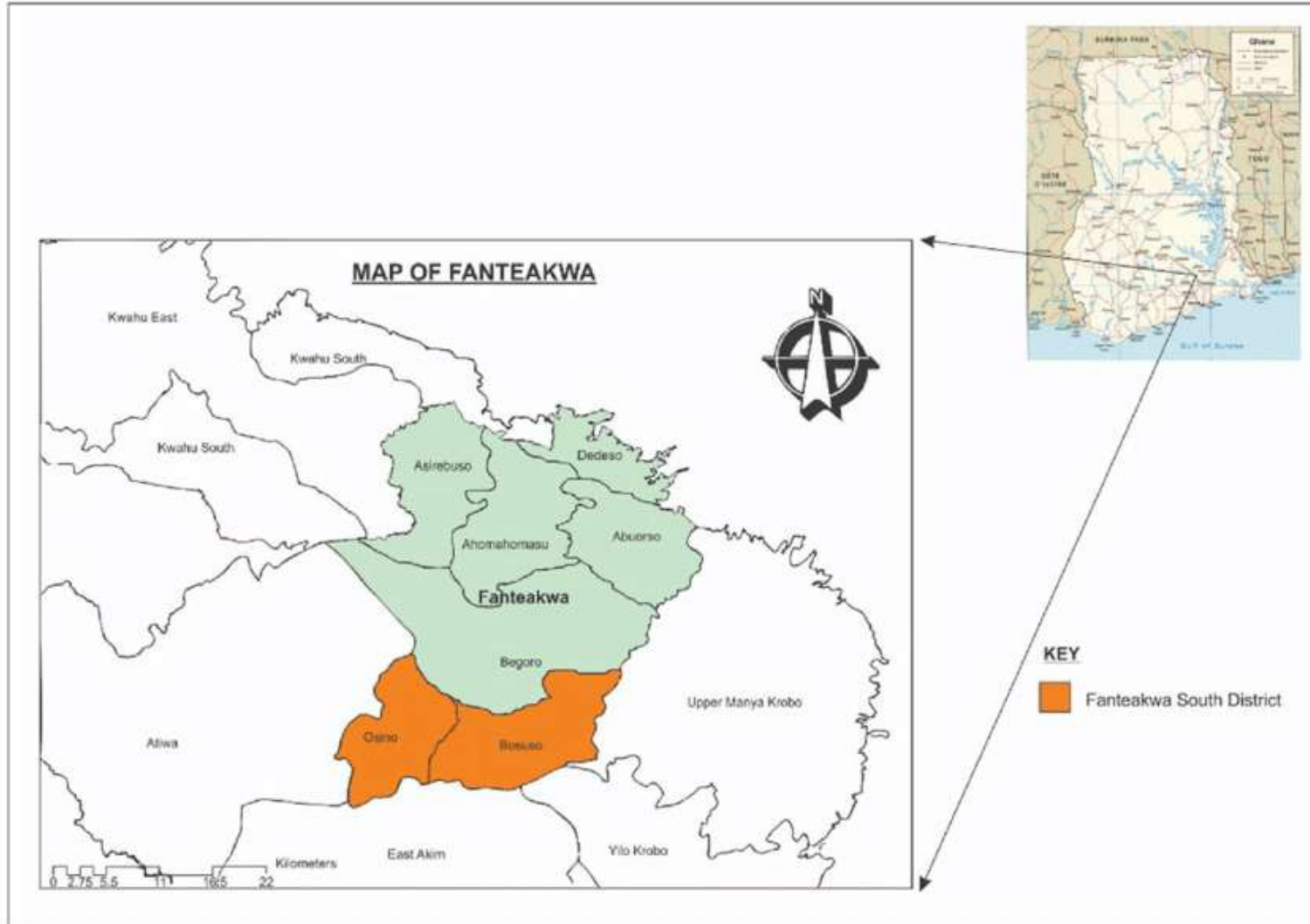


Figure 3.1: Map of Fanteakwa South District (Boamah, 2020).

3.3 Population

The target population of this study would consist of people who have experience staying in hotels in the Fanteakwa South District, Eastern Region of Ghana, at their own expense. Therefore, anyone who has been a hotel guest for the past six (6) months would be eligible to take part in this survey. This criterion would ensure that their memory of the subject matter is still fresh (Stratton, 2021). There are around 50,000 budget hotels in Ghana, providing over 15 million rooms for travelers and creating more jobs (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2015); the entire Ghanaian population would be too vast to quantify. Therefore, this population would be limited to individuals who live in the Fanteakwa South District, specifically those who work in the private or public sectors, as well as those who are self-employed, because they are expected to earn a certain amount of money in order to fund their lodging expenses.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

For this study, the target population is those who have had the experience of staying overnight or more in a hotel, specifically a budget hotel. Out of 58,987 people in the Fanteakwa South District, 66.6 percent are self-employed without employees, 3.7 percent are contributing family workers, 2.1 percent are casual workers, and 0.4 percent are domestic employees (househelps). The private informal sector is the largest employer in the municipality, employing 88.6 percent of the population, followed by the public sector with 6.0 percent (GSS, 2020). Convenience sampling is chosen since it is easier for the researcher to meet them face-to-face and they are willing to participate in the survey (Stratton, 2021). This survey method is chosen for its simplicity in describing the behavior of budget hotel customers via direct engagement with the target population, which may represent a larger number. The sample is chosen as they are

easily accessible by the researcher to obtain maximum response rate and useable data. Hence, 100 people are chosen as the study's sample, based on the convenient sampling method.

3.5 Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary data would be used for the study. The primary data would be obtained from the sample of respondents with experience staying in hotels during their self-sponsored trip and their preference to return to the same accommodation on their next trip. However, the secondary data would be obtained from textbooks, books, journals, articles, and the internet.

3.6 Research Instrument

The research instrument that would be used is a questionnaire. The questionnaire employed would be divided into three parts. The initial part would be designed to retrieve general information related to the guest profile, such as education level, age, income level, etc. This is to identify a guest's demographic characteristics, which may affect the decision in accommodation selection. The second part would consist of questions on a guest's tendency to select a particular hotel. The third part would comprise attributes based on literature reviews that are relevant to this subject.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Questionnaire

Validity in research is the degree of stability exhibited when measurements are repeated under identical conditions. Reliability means that the responses to the questionnaire were consistent (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017). The researcher would be following some steps in order to ensure the validity of the data. The questions would

be formulated in simple language for easy understanding. The researcher would give the questionnaire to the supervisor to scrutinize to ensure its validity. This would help clarify portions where participants would not understand.

3.8 Data Collection

Data would be collected from a self-administered questionnaire survey over a 14-day period. The sample for this study would include self-financed travelers and local and foreign workers. Short interviews are also carried out with selective respondents depending on their readiness to respond to find out more information regarding their response. Respondents who complete the questionnaire will be given some snacks as a small token of appreciation.

3.9 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics applied for this study include sample frequency and mean rating, calculated based on respondents' travel profiles and demographics established from the seven (7) hotel attributes. The data would be analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 27 and Microsoft Excel. The results would be expressed in terms of frequency and percentages and presented using tables and bar graphs. The purpose of the data analysis was to determine whether there is a significant difference between the demographics and the selection factors for accommodation. Percentage and mean values describe the profile of respondents.

3.10 Ethical Statement

The researcher would ensure that participants are made aware of the purpose of the study so that they can express their concerns and participate freely. The statement of

the research purpose, the description of any potential risks or discomforts, the description of potential benefits, and the description of confidentiality would be assured to the respondents. The researcher would assure them not to reveal their identity to anyone.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses data from research findings and data retrieved from completed questionnaires. Factors influencing customers decisions to become loyal customers of the accommodation are identified through descriptive data in this chapter. The impacts of demographic characteristics on attributes are displayed in tables and figures drawn from the findings, with some discussion.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This shows the demographic data from the research. Out of 100 questionnaires distributed, only 92 usable questionnaires were received, representing a response rate of 92.0%.

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

Gender is a non-essential category which instead is repeatedly performed based on societal norms (Morgenroth & Ryan, 2018). Data was collected on the gender of respondents in order to determine the proportion of the respondents who are males and the proportion of respondents who are females. Table 4.1 below showed that more than half of the respondents representing 53.3% were male, while 46.7% of total respondents were female. This finding is in support of a similar study by Quartey & Amankwah, (2016), who stated that the demand for budget hotels might be linked to business travel, where male business travelers often seek economical yet comfortable lodging options.

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	49	53.3
Female	43	46.7
Total	92	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.2.2 Age of Respondents

Data was collected on the age of respondents in order to determine the age group of the respondents that participated in the survey the most. Table 4.2 below revealed that more than half of the respondents representing 57.6% were between the ages of 18 and 30 years. Followed by 32.6% of the total respondents who were between the ages of 31 and 50 years, and the remaining 9.8% were aged from 51 years and above. This corresponds with the study of Amuquandoh, Otoo and Asante (2016), who discovered that the age group between 18 and 30 years old often prefers budget hotels in Ghana due to financial constraints, which is common among young adults who are typically students or early in their careers. These individuals seek cost-effective lodging options that allow them to allocate more of their limited resources to exploration and experiences.

Table 4.2: Age Group of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percent (%)
18 – 30 years	53	57.6
31 – 50 years	30	32.6
51 years and above	9	9.8
Total	92	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.2.3 Marital Status of Respondents

Data was collected on the marital status of respondents in order to determine the marital status of the respondents that participated in the survey the most. According to Table 4.3 below; more than half of the total respondents representing 58.7% were single, followed by 32.6% of the total respondents were married, and the remaining 8.7% of the total respondents were divorced. This finding is in line with Acheampong (2017), who found out that most singles often prefer budget hotels in Ghana due to their cost-effectiveness and affordability, aligning with the financial considerations of solo travelers.

Table 4.3: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent (%)
Single	54	58.7
Married	30	32.6
Divorced	8	8.7
Total	92	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.2.4 Highest Educational Level of Respondents

Data was collected on the highest educational level of respondents in order to determine the respondents' educational background that participated in the survey the most. From Table 4.4 below, it was revealed that 34.8% of the respondents had obtained secondary education as their highest level of education so far, followed by 28.3% of the total respondents who had obtained degrees and 26.1% of the total respondents who had also obtained diplomas. Followed by 6.5% of the total respondents who had primary education as their highest level of education, and the remaining 4.3% of the total

respondents had obtained no formal education. The study did not record respondents who had obtained either a Master's or a PhD. This corresponds with the finding of Ren et al. (2018), investigating accommodation experiences in budget hotels.

Table 4.4: Highest Educational Level of Respondents

Highest Educational Level	Frequency	Percent (%)
No Formal Education	4	4.3
Primary	6	6.5
Secondary	32	34.8
Diploma	24	26.1
Degree	26	28.3
Total	92	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.2.5 Occupation of Respondents

Data was collected on the occupation of respondents in order to determine the respondents' working sector that participated in the survey the most. According to Table 4.5 below, 43.5% of the total respondents were private sector workers, while 23.9% of the total respondents were self-employed workers. Followed by government workers, representing 20.7% of the total respondents, and 7.6% of the total respondents were also students. 3.2% of the respondents were others (e.g., apprentices), and the remaining 1.1% were retired. Private sector workers in Ghana often prefer budget hotels due to their affordability, which aligns with their budget-conscious travel needs, as highlighted in the research of Boateng and Oduro (2018).

Table 4.5: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percent (%)
Government Worker	19	20.7
Private Sector	40	43.5
Self-Employed	22	23.9
Retired	1	1.1
Student	7	7.6
Others	3	3.2
Total	92	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.2.6 Annual Income of Respondents

Data was collected on the annual income of respondents in order to determine the annual income of the respondents that participated in the survey the most. From Table 4.6 below, more than half of the respondents representing 52.2%, earned less than GHC12,000 annually, followed by 38.0% of the total respondents who earned between GHC12,000 and GHC24,000 annually. 7.6% of the total respondents also earned between GHC24,000 and GHC36,000 annually, and the remaining 2.2% earned over GHC36,000 annually. This outcome confirms a study by Adjei and Awuah (2018), who stated that individuals with lower annual incomes often opt for budget hotels in Ghana due to their affordability, allowing them to allocate more of their limited resources to other essential expenses during their travels. These budget accommodations meet the cost-conscious needs of local and regional tourists, providing a balance between reasonable pricing and basic comfort.

Table 4.6: Annual Income of Respondents

Annual Income (in GHC)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Under 12,000	48	52.2
12,000 – 24,000	35	38.0
24,001 – 36,000	7	7.6
Over 36,000	2	2.2
Total	92	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.3 Customer Preferences

4.3.1 Any Experience Staying in Budget Hotel

Data was collected from respondents on whether they had any experience staying in a budget hotel. According to Figure 4.1 below, it was the entire respondents representing 100.00%, responded ‘Yes’ when asked if they have had any experience staying in a budget hotel.

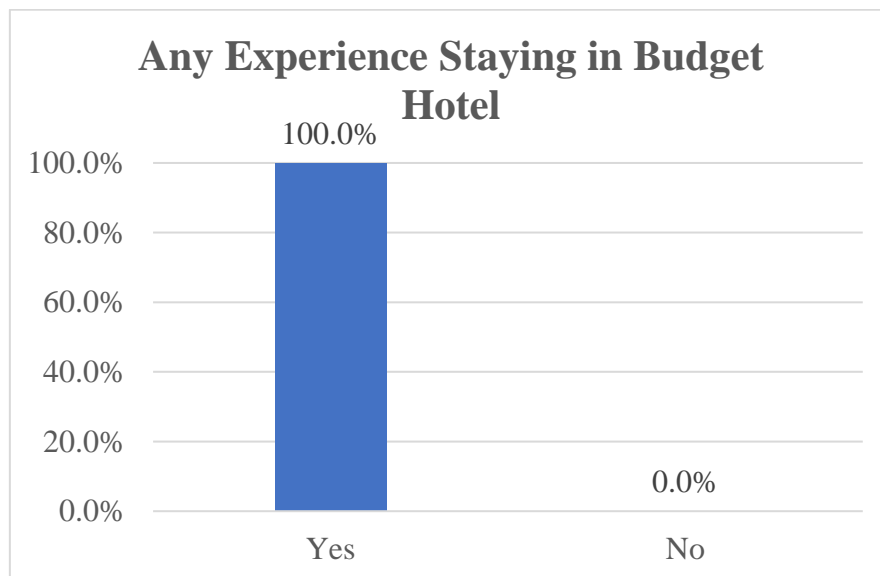


Figure 4.1: Any Experience Staying in Budget Hotel

4.3.2 Length of Respondents Stay

Data was collected from respondents on how long they usually spend staying at a budget hotel. According to Figure 4.2 below, it was discovered that more than half of respondents representing 52.2%, usually stayed for 1–2 days only during their travel. Followed by 26.1% of the total respondents who usually stayed for 3–4 days, while 13.0% of the total respondents also usually stayed for 5–6 days. The remaining 8.7% usually stayed for more than 6 days. This finding agrees with a similar study by Nkrumah (2016), who stated that people often stay for 1-2 days in budget hotels in Ghana due to their transient nature, as many travelers visit for short business trips or weekend getaways, making short stays more common.

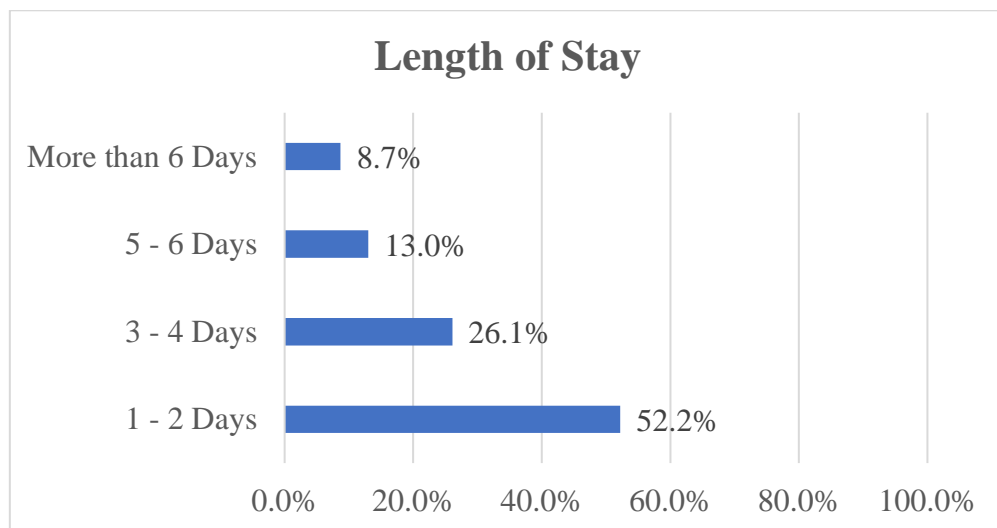


Figure 4.2: Length of Respondents Stay

4.3.3 Main Reason for The Travel

Data was collected from respondents when they were asked about the main reason for their travel. From Figure 4.3 below, it was revealed that 32.6% of the respondents travelled for vacation, followed by 25.0% who travelled to visit friends or relatives, 19.6% travelled for business, 13.0% travelled to attend conferences or workshops, 6.5% travelled to check up on their health, and the remaining 3.3% also travelled for other

matters. Travelers choose budget hotels in Ghana for vacation due to the desire to explore its diverse culture, rich history, and stunning natural landscapes, as highlighted in a webpage by the Ghana Tourism Authority (2021).

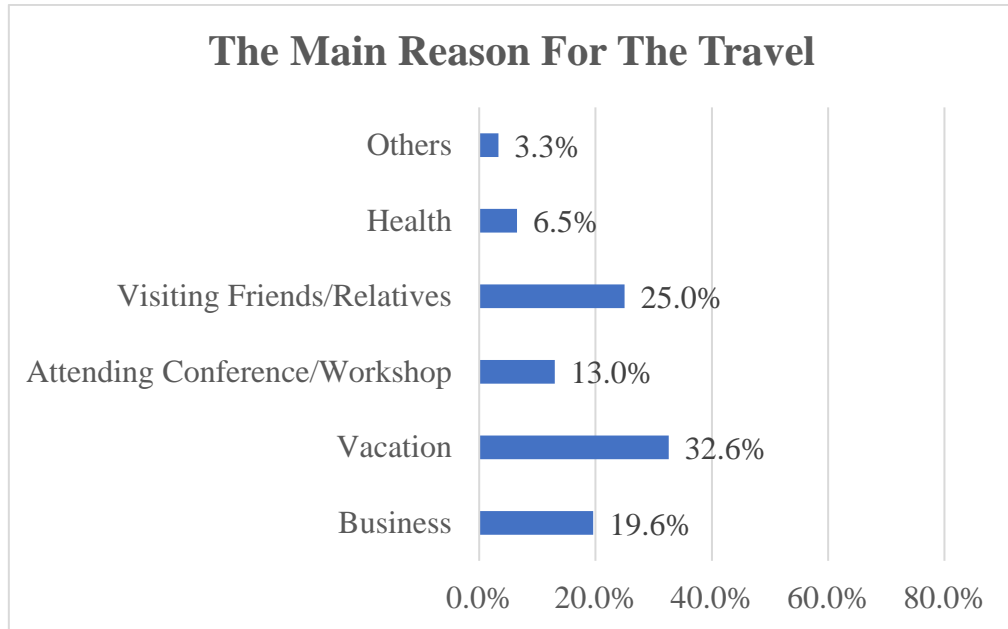


Figure 4.3: The Main Reason for The Travel

4.3.4 Type of Room Preference

Data was collected from respondents concerning the type of room they preferred when they visited budget hotels. According to Figure 4.4 below, it was indicated that 46.7% of the respondents preferred a single bed room, followed by 27.2% of the respondents who preferred a double bed room, 17.4% also preferred a queen-size bed room, and the remaining 8.7% preferred a king-size bed room. This finding is in support of a study by Adu-Gyamfi (2015), who found out that many travelers in budget hotels in Ghana prefer single-bed rooms due to cost-saving considerations, as these rooms are typically more affordable than double-bed options, aligning with their budget-conscious choices. Additionally, solo travelers often find single-bed rooms more suitable for their needs, offering adequate space and comfort during their stay (Adu-Gyamfi, 2015).

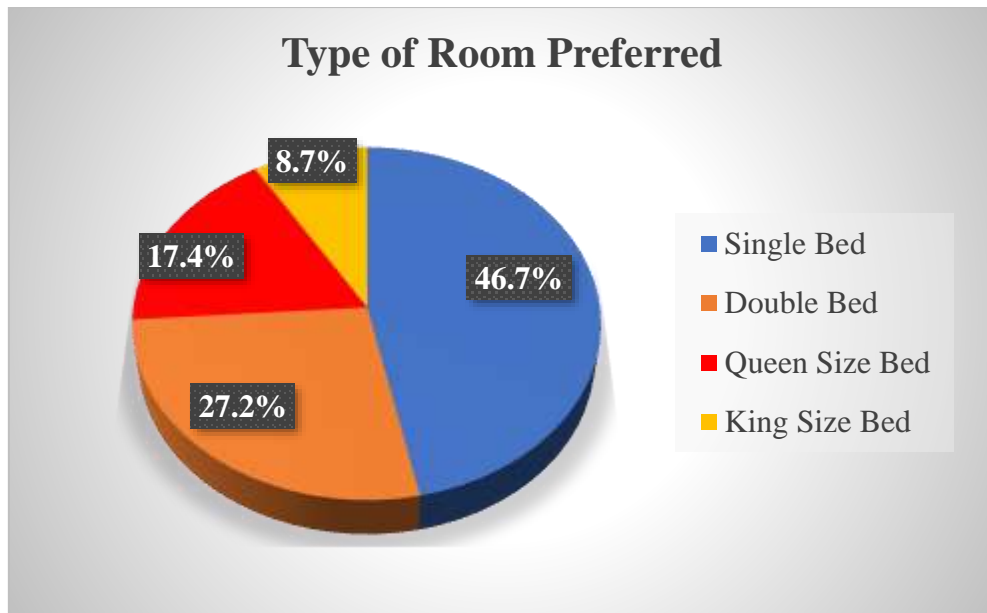


Figure 4.4: Type of Room Preferred

4.3.5 Room Rate Preference

Data was collected from respondents concerning the type of room rate they preferred when they visited budget hotels. According to Figure 4.5 below, it was revealed that more than half of the respondents representing 59.8%, preferred a room rate less than GHC 100, followed by 21.7% who preferred the ones ranging from GHC100 to GHC200, and the remaining 18.5% preferred the ones ranging from GHC201 to GHC300. The study did not record respondents who preferred rooms that cost more than GHC300. In Ghana, many travelers prefer budget hotels with room rates less than GHC 100 due to their cost-conscious nature, seeking affordable accommodations without straining their budgets, as highlighted in research by Acheampong (2017).

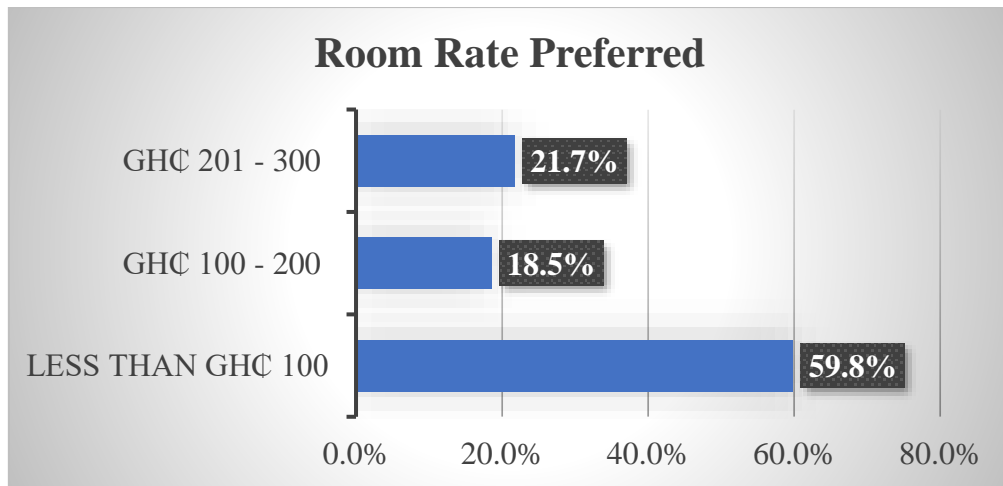


Figure 4.5: Room Rate Preferred

4.3.6 Source of Hotel Information

Data was collected from respondents concerning how they got information about the hotel or their source of information about the hotel. From Figure 4.6 below, it was shown that 45.7% of the respondents obtained the hotel's information from their friends or relatives, followed by 22.8% who obtained the hotel's information from social media, 18.5% obtained the hotel's information from travel agencies, and the remaining 13.0% also obtained the hotel's information from the hotel website. The study did not record respondents who obtained the hotel's information from newspapers. This finding corresponds with a similar study by Rahman and Nordin (2018), who discovered that people often seek information about hotels from friends or relatives due to the inherent trust and reliability associated with personal recommendations. This source of information offers a sense of authenticity and firsthand experience, which influences decision-making (Rahman and Nordin, 2018).

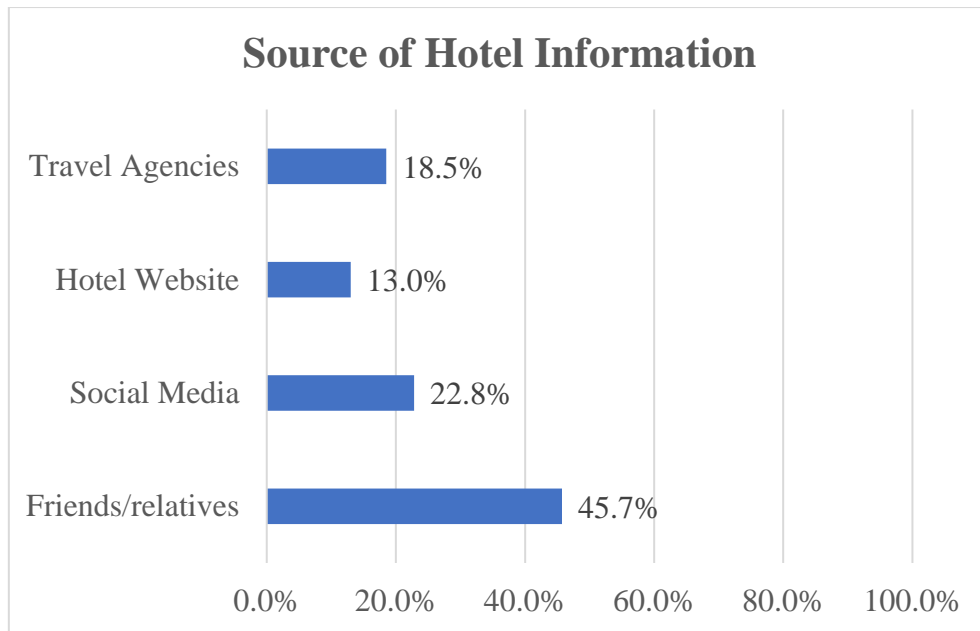


Figure 4.6: Source of Hotel Information

4.3.7 Means of Making Reservations

Data was collected from respondents concerning how they make or book reservations at the hotel. According to Figure 4.7 below, it was revealed that more than half of the respondents representing 57.6%, used to make reservations by telephone. Followed by 19.5% who used to make reservations by other means (e.g., walk-in to the premises), 9.9% used to make reservations through the hotel website, and 7.6% used to make reservations through travel agencies. The remaining 5.4% also used to make reservations through the hotel’s email. In budget hotels in Ghana, people often made reservations by telephone due to limited internet access and online booking platforms, which were not as prevalent as in more developed regions, as stated in a survey by the Ghana Statistical Service (2018). Additionally, many potential guests preferred direct communication to clarify booking details and ensure room availability, as a personal touch was valued (Yeboah, 2015).

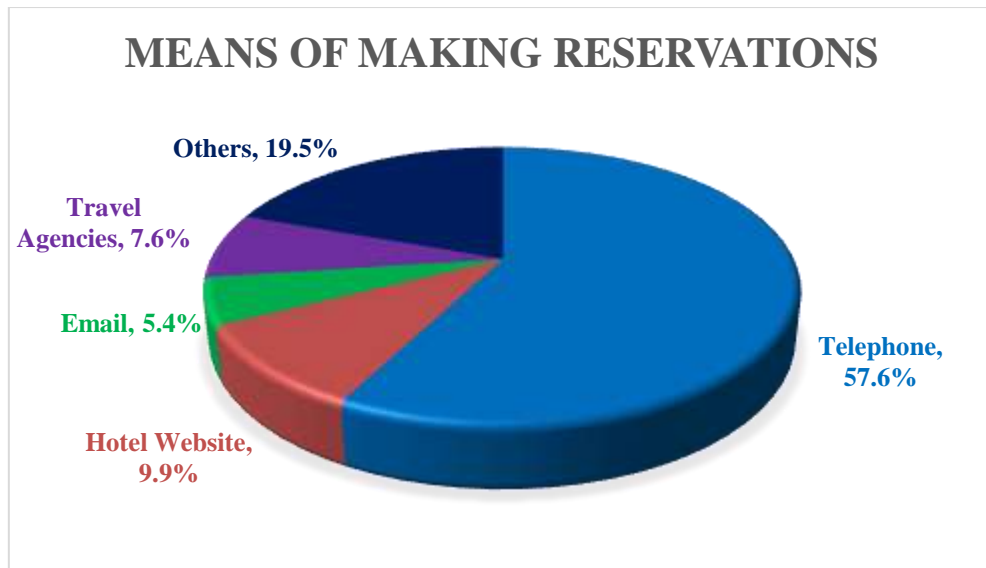


Figure 4.7: Means of Making Reservations

4.4 Hotel Attributes

This section discussed findings from the survey according to attributes such as product or service, staff, general amenities of the hotel (which are divided into hotel facilities, room facilities, and room quality), promotion, personal experience, location, and value for money. All data was retrieved from a 5-point scale: 1 = Not at all important; 2 = Slightly Important; 3 = Important; 4 = Fairly Important; 5 = Very Important, as adopted in the questionnaire.

4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Product/Service Attribute

This section discussed the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under the product/service attribute when patronizing budget hotels. The items were a clean and comfortable guest room, a good atmosphere in the guest room, a choice of room type for customers, a good quality of product in the guest room, size of the guest room, and a consistent service standard, as shown in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics of Product/Service Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Clean and comfortable guest room	4.14	0.951
Size of guest room	2.81	1.462
Choice of room type for customers	3.34	1.144
Consistent service standard	3.85	1.054
Good atmosphere in guest room	3.32	1.074
Good quality of product in guest room	3.30	1.249

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

According to Table 4.7, the respondents indicated that “a clean and comfortable guest room”, with a mean of 4.14, was most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “a consistent service standard”, with a mean of 3.85; “a choice of room type for customers”, with a mean of 3.34; “a good atmosphere in the guest room”, with a mean of 3.32; and “a good quality of product in the guest room”, with a mean of 3.30. Furthermore, the respondents also revealed that “size of guest room”, with a mean of 2.81, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. This finding is in support of a study by Adjei and Awuah (2018), who discovered that people in Ghana, like travelers worldwide, prioritize clean and comfortable guest rooms in budget hotels for a more pleasant and relaxing stay. Cleanliness enhances the overall guest experience, promoting a sense of well-being and satisfaction (Koroglu, 2015).

4.4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Staff Attribute

This section discussed the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under the staff attribute when patronizing budget hotels. The items were: staff are polite and friendly; staff are helpful; staff understand

your request; staff have multi-lingual skills; staff provide efficient service; check-in and check-out are efficient; and ease of making reservations, as shown in Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics of Staff Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Staff are polite and friendly	4.20	1.030
Staff are helpful	3.88	0.988
Staff understand your request	3.39	1.121
Staff have multi-lingual skills	2.67	1.186
Staff provide efficient service	4.04	1.068
Check-in/check-out are efficient	3.42	1.124
Ease of making reservations	4.22	1.180

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

According to Table 4.8, it was recorded that “ease of making reservations”, with a mean of 4.22, was most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “staff are polite and friendly”, with a mean of 4.20; “staff provide efficient service”, with a mean of 4.04; “staff are helpful”, with a mean of 3.88; “check-in/check-out are efficient”, with a mean of 3.42; and “staff understand your request”, with a mean of 3.39. Lastly, the respondents also showed that “staff have multi-lingual skills”, with a mean of 2.67, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. This corresponds with a research by Chien and Chen (2018), who suggested that a straightforward booking system can significantly influence guests' decisions when selecting budget accommodations, highlighting the importance of streamlined reservation processes in the hospitality industry. In Ghana, people prefer an ease of making reservations in budget hotels due to the convenience it offers, allowing for hassle-free booking and planning of their trips (Quartey & Amankwah, 2016).

4.4.3 Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Facilities Under General Amenities Attribute

This section discussed the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under hotel facilities (the first part under the general amenities attribute) when patronizing budget hotels. The items were credit card acceptance, swimming pool, fitness centre, seminar/conference room, restaurant, pool table, and car parking, as shown in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Facilities Under General Amenities Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Credit card acceptance	2.43	1.322
Swimming pool	1.99	1.294
Fitness centre	1.86	1.150
Seminar/Conference room	1.49	0.941
Restaurant	3.16	1.155
Pool table	1.92	1.061
Car parking	3.42	1.124

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

From Table 4.9, it was revealed that “car parking”, with a mean of 3.42, was most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “a restaurant”, with a mean of 3.16; “credit card acceptance”, with a mean of 2.43; “a swimming pool”, with a mean of 1.99; “a pool table”, with a mean of 1.92; and “a fitness centre”, with a mean of 1.86. Furthermore, the respondents also indicated that “a seminar/conference room”, with a mean of 1.49, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. This outcome is in line with a study by Ren et al. (2018), who discovered that people often prefer budget hotels with car parking facilities due to the importance of secure parking in urban areas, as it safeguards their vehicles against theft and damage.

4.4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Room Facilities Under General Amenities Attribute

This section discussed the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under room facilities (the second part under the general amenities attribute) when patronizing budget hotels. The items were air conditioning, a fan, a television, a refrigerator, Wi-Fi internet access, a hot shower, a mosquito net, and a safety box, as shown in Table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics of Room Facilities Under General Amenities Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Air conditioning	2.41	1.412
Fan	4.17	1.022
Television	3.79	1.190
Refrigerator	3.32	1.253
Wi-Fi internet access in room	2.11	1.442
Hot shower	1.89	1.117
Mosquito Net	2.08	1.301
Safety box	2.55	1.297

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

According to Table 4.10, it was indicated that “a fan”, with a mean of 4.17, was most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “a television”, with a mean of 3.79; “a refrigerator”, with a mean of 3.32; “a safety box”, with a mean of 2.55; and “air conditioning”, with a mean of 2.41. “Wi-Fi internet access in room”, with a mean of 2.11 was the next item considered by respondents, followed by “a mosquito net”, with a mean of 2.08. Lastly, the respondents also revealed that “a hot shower”, with a mean of 1.89, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. This finding is in support with a study by Sukrana, Haque and Jui (2023), who found out that many travelers prefer having a fan due to the tropical climate, as it helps

maintain a comfortable room temperature without the expense of air conditioning. Additionally, having a television is favored for entertainment and staying informed about local news or international broadcasts during their stay.

4.4.5 Descriptive Statistics of Room Quality Under General Amenities Attribute

This section discussed the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under room quality (the last part under the general amenities attribute) when patronizing budget hotels. The items were hotel and room cleanliness, room quietness, room comfort, bed/mattress/pillow comfort, and room odour, as shown in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11: Descriptive Statistics of Room Quality Under General Amenities Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hotel and room cleanliness	4.65	0.727
Room quietness	3.84	0.925
Room comfort	4.35	0.882
Bed /mattress /pillow comfort	3.94	0.960
Room odour	4.38	0.788

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

From Table 4.11, it was showed that “hotel and room cleanliness”, with a mean of 4.65, was most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “room odour”, with a mean of 4.38; “room comfort”, with a mean of 4.35; and “bed/mattress/pillow comfort”, with a mean of 3.94. Furthermore, the respondents also indicated that “room quietness”, with a mean of 3.84, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. This corresponds with a study by Adjei (2018), who stated that guests prioritize cleanliness within the hotel compound and rooms due to the

fundamental importance of hygiene and sanitation. Clean surroundings and well-maintained rooms contribute to a positive guest experience and are essential for health and safety considerations (Teye & Sirikiyi, 2016).

4.4.6 Descriptive Statistics of Promotion Attribute

This section discusses the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under the promotion attribute when patronizing budget hotels. The items were customer loyalty/repeat business; making advertisements on TV, the internet, newspapers, and websites, etc.; strong brand difference; online reservations getting discounts; loyalty cards (VIP cards) getting more discounts; and discount packages for popular events held at the hotel (weddings, honeymoons, festivals, etc.), as shown in Table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12: Descriptive Statistics of Promotion Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Customer loyalty/repeat business	4.51	0.818
Making advertisement on TV, the internet, newspapers and website, etc.	3.49	0.797
Strong brand difference	3.47	0.786
Online reservations getting discounts	4.01	1.045
Loyalty card (VIP card) gets more discounts	3.23	1.031
Discount packages for popular events held at the hotel (weddings, honeymoons, festivals, etc.)	4.43	0.845

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

According to Table 4.12, it was revealed that “customer loyalty/repeat business”, with a mean of 4.51, was most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “discount packages for popular events held at the hotel (e.g., weddings, honeymoons, festivals, etc.)”, with a mean of 4.43; “online reservations getting discounts”, with a mean of 4.01; “making advertisements on TV, the internet, newspapers, websites, etc.”, with a mean of 3.49; and “strong brand difference”, with a mean of 3.47. Finally, the respondents also showed that “loyalty card (VIP card) gets more discounts”, with a mean of 3.23, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. This finding confirms a study by Lei, Nicolau and Wang (2019), who discovered that most guests prioritize customer loyalty and repeat business promotions in budget hotels because it offers them the chance to secure discounted rates, complimentary services, and other incentives on subsequent stays, contributing to cost savings. Moreover, loyalty programs create a sense of appreciation and recognition, strengthening the emotional connection between guests and the hotel brand and ultimately driving repeat business (Sönmez, Yaman & Sevil, 2018).

4.4.7 Descriptive Statistics of Personal Experience Attribute

This section discussed the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under the personal experience attribute when patronizing budget hotels. The items were good facilities, staff with good attitudes, attractive outdoor surroundings, affordable prices, and an appealing hotel atmosphere and decoration, as shown in Table 4.13 below.

Table 4.13: Descriptive Statistics of Personal Experience Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Good facilities	4.04	1.036
Staff with good attitudes	3.62	0.829
Attractive outdoor surroundings	3.86	0.960
Affordable Prices	4.79	0.531
Appealing hotel atmosphere and decoration	3.12	0.887

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

From Table 4.13, it was indicated that “affordable prices”, with a mean of 4.79, were most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “good facilities”, with a mean of 4.04; “attractive outdoor surroundings”, with a mean of 3.86; and “staff with good attitudes”, with a mean of 3.62. Lastly, the respondents also revealed that “appealing hotel atmosphere and decoration”, with a mean of 3.12, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. This corresponds with a study by Smith (2016), who found out that people prioritize affordable prices in budget hotels primarily to maximize their travel budget for other experiences. Affordability allows travelers to allocate resources to activities, dining, and attractions, enhancing the overall quality of their trip. This preference aligns with the cost-conscious mindset of many modern travelers seeking value for their money (Yang, Huang & Shen, 2017).

4.4.8 Descriptive Statistics of Location Attribute

This section discussed the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under the location attribute when patronizing budget hotels. The items were convenient access to the hotel, close to a mountain, close to a shopping mall or area, convenient transportation, and enough parking space, as shown in Table 4.14 below.

Table 4.14: Descriptive Statistics of Location Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Convenient access to the hotel	4.72	0.635
Close to a mountain	2.83	1.389
Close to a shopping mall / area	3.55	0.903
Convenient transportation	4.62	0.722
Enough parking space	3.76	1.354

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

According to Table 4.14, it was revealed that “convenient access to the hotel”, with a mean of 4.72, was most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “convenient transportation”, with a mean of 4.62; “enough parking space”, with a mean of 3.76; and “close to a shopping mall or area”, with a mean of 3.55. Furthermore, the respondents also showed that “close to a mountain”, with a mean of 2.83, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. People prioritize convenient access to budget hotels in terms of location because it saves time and enhances their overall travel experience, reducing the need for extensive transportation, as highlighted in research by Chien and Chen (2018). This preference aligns with the growing trend of travelers valuing convenience in their choice of accommodation (Xiang et al., 2017).

4.4.9 Descriptive Statistics of Value for Money Attribute

This section discussed the findings from the survey and the level of importance respondents placed on the items under the value for money attribute when patronizing budget hotels. The items were reasonable price, good price range for guest rooms, consistent price policy, room value for money, hotel food and beverage, and hotel providing comfort ambience, as shown in Table 4.15 below.

Table 4.15: Descriptive Statistics of Value for Money Attribute (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reasonable price	4.34	0.812
Good price range for guest rooms	4.68	0.648
Consistent price policy	3.63	0.848
Room value for money	4.10	0.907
Hotel food and beverage	4.63	0.647
Hotel providing comfort ambience	3.98	1.144

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

From Table 4.15, it was discovered that “good price range for guest rooms”, with a mean of 4.68, was most preferred by customers as important. This was followed by “hotel food and beverage”, with a mean of 4.63; “reasonable price”, with a mean of 4.34; “room value for money”, with a mean of 4.10; and “hotel providing comfort ambience”, with a mean of 3.98. Lastly, the respondents indicated that “consistent price policy”, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.63, was the least important item preferred by customers among the other items. This corresponds with a study by Li and Wang (2017), who stated that people prioritize a good price range for guest rooms in budget hotels because affordability is a key consideration for budget-conscious travelers, allowing them to allocate their resources to other aspects of their trip.

4.5 Importance of Hotel Attributes in Relation to Customer Overall Satisfaction

This section discussed the level of importance of hotel attributes, namely product or service, staff, general amenities of the hotel, promotion, personal experience, location, and value for money, in relation to overall customer satisfaction, as shown in Table 4.16 below. The data was retrieved from a 5-point scale: 1 = not at all important; 2 =

slightly important; 3 = important; 4 = fairly important; and 5 = very important, as adopted in the questionnaire.

Table 4.16: Descriptive Statistics of Hotel Attributes in Relation to Customer Overall Satisfaction (N=92)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Product/Service	3.62	1.019
Staff	3.23	1.334
General Amenities of the hotel	3.68	0.951
Promotion	4.04	1.136
Personal Experience	4.05	0.930
Location	4.26	0.832
Value For Money	4.59	0.782

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

According to Table 4.16, it was revealed that the “value for money attribute”, with a mean of 4.59, was most preferred by customers as important in relation to customer overall satisfaction. This was followed by “location attribute”, with a mean of 4.26; “personal experience attribute”, with a mean of 4.05; “promotion attribute”, with a mean of 4.04; “general amenities of the hotel attribute”, with a mean of 3.68; and “product/service attribute”, with a mean of 3.62. Furthermore, the respondents also indicated that “staff attribute”, with a mean of 3.23, was the least important attribute preferred by customers among the other attributes. This finding is in support of a study by Ren et al. (2018), who discovered that people often prioritize value for money in budget hotels as it allows them to make the most of their travel budget by saving on accommodation costs, enabling them to allocate resources to other aspects of their trip. Research indicates that travelers are increasingly seeking affordable yet comfortable options, ensuring they get the best value from their spending (Acheampong, 2017).

4.6 Factors That Influence Customers' Intentions to Revisit Budget Hotels

This section discussed findings from the survey according to the level of agreement on factors that influence customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels during their next visit. The factors were "I will come back to this same budget hotel again", "I will recommend the same budget hotel to other people", "I will tell others of the hotel's quality", and "I will share the pleasure of staying at this budget hotel with others", as shown in Table 4.17 below.

Table 4.17: Descriptive Statistics of Factors That Influence Customers' Intentions to Revisit Budget Hotels (N=92)

Statement	D(%)	U(%)	A(%)	Mean	S.D
I will come back to this same budget hotel again.	6(6.5)	35(38.0)	51(55.4)	2.49	0.620
I will recommend the same budget hotel to other people.	5(5.4)	26(28.3)	61(66.3)	2.61	0.592
I will tell others of the hotel's quality.	1(1.1)	17(18.5)	74(80.4)	2.79	0.433
I will share the pleasure staying experience about this budget hotel with others.	6(6.5)	24(26.1)	62(67.4)	2.61	0.611

Use this scale: D – Disagree; U – Uncertain; A – Agree; Mean; and S.D – Standard Deviation.

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

From Table 4.17, it was indicated that the majority of the respondents representing 80.4% with a mean of 2.79, agreed to the statement "I will tell others of the hotel's quality", as a factor that influences customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels. This was followed by 67.4% of the respondents with a mean of 2.61 who agreed to the statement "I will share the pleasure staying experience about this budget hotel with others", and 66.3% of the respondents with a mean of 2.61 also agreed to the statement "I will recommend the same budget hotel to other people". Lastly, 55.4% of the

respondents, with a mean of 2.49, agreed to the statement “I will come back to this same budget hotel again”, as the least factor that influenced customers’ intentions to revisit budget hotels. This corresponds with a study by Sönmez, Yaman and Sevil (2018), who stated that positive recommendations create a sense of trust and credibility, assuring potential guests of the hotel's quality and value for money, which significantly impacts their decision to return. This reflects the power of social influence and highlights how a positive experience can lead to brand loyalty and repeat business, especially in the budget hotel segment (Koroglu, 2015).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the findings, conclusions drawn, and recommendations made based on the study of the evaluation of guests' preferences for budget hotels in the Fantekwa South Municipality.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The demographic profile of respondents captured in the study was gender, age, marital status, highest level of education, occupation, and annual income. The results showed that more than half of the respondents involved in the study were male, representing 53.3 percent. The study further revealed that more than half of the respondents representing 57.6 percent, were between the ages of 18 and 30 years, followed by 32.6 percent being those between the ages of 31 and 50 years. Also, more than half of the respondents were single, representing 58.7 percent. The highest educational level of respondents was also captured in the study. It was shown that 34.8 percent of the respondents involved in the study had obtained secondary education as their highest level of education so far, followed by 28.3 percent of the respondents who had obtained degrees. Moreover, it was indicated that 43.5 percent of the respondents were private sector workers, followed by 23.9 percent who were self-employed workers, and 20.7 percent were government workers. The study further considered respondents' annual income. The results revealed that more than half of the respondents representing 52.2 percent, earned less than GHC12,000 annually, followed by 38.0 percent who earned between GHC12,000 and GHC24,000 annually.

Customer preferences and experiences when choosing a budget hotel were also captured in the study. It was discovered that the entire population of respondents involved in the study have had experience staying in a budget hotel. It was also indicated that more than half of the respondents representing 52.2 percent, usually stayed for 1–2 days only during their travel, followed by 26.1 percent, who usually stayed for 3–4 days. Moreover, it was also revealed that 32.6 percent of the respondents travelled for vacation, followed by 25.0 percent who travelled to visit friends or relatives. The study further discovered that 46.7 percent of the respondents preferred a single-bed room, followed by 27.2 percent who preferred a double-bed room. Next, it was revealed that more than half of the respondents representing 59.8 percent, preferred a room rate less than GHC 100, followed by 21.7 percent who preferred the ones ranging from GHC100 to GHC200. The study also captured the source of information about the budget hotel obtained by respondents. The results showed that 45.7 percent of the respondents obtained the hotel's information from their friends or relatives, followed by 22.8 percent who obtained the hotel's information from social media. Furthermore, the study again indicated that more than half of the respondents representing 57.6 percent, used to make reservations by the telephone, followed by 19.5 percent who used to make reservations by other means (e.g., walk-in to the premises).

5.2.1 Objective 1: Investigate the Fundamental Attributes of Budget Hotels that Customers Prefer.

According to the study, the following hotel attributes were used: product or service, staff, general amenities of the hotel, promotion, personal experience, location, and value for money.

With regards to the product or service attribute, it was revealed that “a clean and comfortable guest room”, with a mean of 4.14, was most preferred by customers as important, while “the size of the guest room”, with a mean of 2.81, was the least important item preferred by customers.

With respect to the staff attribute, it was recorded that “ease of making reservations”, with a mean of 4.22, was most preferred by customers as important, while “staff have multi-lingual skills”, with a mean of 2.67, was the least important item preferred by customers.

In terms of the general amenities of the hotel attribute, it was divided into three (3) parts, namely hotel facilities, room facilities, and room quality.

- Hotel facilities: It was revealed that “car parking”, with a mean of 3.42, was most preferred by customers as important, while “a seminar/conference room”, with a mean of 1.49, was the least important item preferred by customers.
- Room facilities: It was indicated that “a fan”, with a mean of 4.17, was most preferred by customers as important, while “a hot shower”, with a mean of 1.89, was the least important item preferred by customers.
- Room quality: It was revealed that “hotel and room cleanliness”, with a mean of 4.65, was most preferred by customers as important, while “room quietness”, with a mean of 3.84, was the least important item preferred by customers.

With regards to the promotion attribute, it was discovered that “customer loyalty/repeat business”, with a mean of 4.51, was most preferred by customers as important, while “loyalty card (VIP card) gets more discounts”, with a mean of 3.23, was the least important item preferred by customers.

In terms of the personal experience attribute, it was recorded that “affordable prices”, with a mean of 4.79, was most preferred by customers as important, while “appealing hotel atmosphere and decoration”, with a mean of 3.12, was the least important item preferred by customers.

With respect to the location attribute, it was revealed that “convenient access to the hotel”, with a mean of 4.72, was most preferred by customers as important, while “close to a mountain”, with a mean of 2.83, was the least important item preferred by customers.

And finally, with regards to the value for money attribute, it was indicated that “good price range for guest rooms”, with a mean of 4.68, was most preferred by customers as important, while “consistent price policy”, with a mean of 3.63, was the least important item preferred by customers.

5.2.2 Objective 2: Determine The Importance of Budget Hotel Attributes in Terms of Customer Overall Satisfaction.

The study discussed the level of importance of the hotel attributes, namely product or service, staff, general amenities of the hotel, promotion, personal experience, location, and value for money, in relation to customer overall satisfaction. It was revealed that the “value for money attribute”, with a mean of 4.59, was most preferred by customers as important in relation to customer overall satisfaction. And “staff attribute”, with a mean of 3.23, was seen as the least important attribute preferred by customers among the other attributes.

5.2.3 Objective 3: Examine the Factors That Influence Customers' Intentions to Revisit Budget Hotels.

The study again discussed the level of agreement on factors that influence customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels during their next visit. The factors were "I will come back to this same budget hotel again", "I will recommend the same budget hotel to other people", "I will tell others of the hotel's quality", and "I will share the pleasure of staying at this budget hotel with others". It was discovered that "I will tell others of the hotel's quality", with a mean of 2.79, was the most agreed-upon factor by customers as a factor that influences customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels. And "I will come back to this same budget hotel again", with a mean of 2.49, was seen as the least agreed factor that influenced customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels.

5.3 Conclusion

The study examined guests' preferences for budget hotels in the Fantekwa South Municipality. The study revealed that the term "budget hotel" appeared mainly to act as a catch-all term in order to pronounce a variety of accommodation categories offerings at proportionately lesser rates than the industry standards. Within the budget hotel definition, properties registered as resorts, hotels, rest houses, lodging houses, hostels, motels, inns, chalets, or guesthouses were summed up as budget hotels. Data was gathered from 92 individuals (participants) who lived in the Fantekwa South District.

Based on the first objective, thus investigating the fundamental attributes of budget hotels that customers prefer. The study used seven (7) hotel attributes focusing on budget hotels in order to explore the relationship between consumers' decisions to select budget hotels for their stay and, possibly, their decision to repeat their stay in the same

accommodation. Those attributes were namely, product or service, staff, general amenities of the hotel, promotion, personal experience, location, and value for money. The study concluded that most customers or guests prioritize a clean and comfortable guest room for a more pleasant and relaxing stay, an easy method of making reservations, a car parking space due to the importance of secure parking in urban areas, a fan in the room due to the tropical climate, cleanliness within the hotel compound and rooms due to the fundamental importance of hygiene and sanitation, customer loyalty/repeat business which offers the chance to secure discounted rates, affordable prices, convenient access to the hotel which saves time and enhances the overall travel experience, and a good price range for guest rooms.

According to the second objective, thus determining the importance of budget hotel attributes in terms of customer overall satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is considered fulfilled when their overall experience exceeds their expectations. Satisfied customers are more likely to return if the service provided meets or exceeds their expectations. Satisfaction has a strong positive effect on customer loyalty intentions across a wide range of product and service categories. The researcher concluded that value for money was identified as the most prominent factor or attribute, especially when customers decide on selecting budget hotels for their stay and possibly want to repeat their stay in the same accommodation.

And finally, with the last objective, thus examining the factors that influence customers' intentions to revisit budget hotels during their next visit. Once customers' requirements in relation to hotel attributes were clearly identified and understood, hoteliers would have been more likely to be capable of anticipating their desires and needs. Satisfied customers were likely to repeat their stay and spread favorable word of mouth to other potential customers. Knowing how customers perceive the hotel's quality of overall

service and facility would also enhance business performance, enhance the business image, and attract new customers. Increasing the level of customers' satisfaction not only brings satisfied customers back, but they will also recommend it to others.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. Hoteliers should be aware that even though the general amenities, product/service, and staff are not the central factors leading to customers' choice of accommodation, the absence of good product/service and staff, as well as adequate general amenities such as hotel facilities, room facilities, and room quality, will lead to customers' dissatisfaction. They should provide clean and comfortable guest rooms and a variety of facilities in guest rooms to meet customers' needs and make them satisfied.
2. Budget hotel operators should also focus on promotion in the lodging business, such as discount packages for popular events held at the hotel (weddings, honeymoons, festivals, etc.), distributing loyalty cards (VIP cards), giving discounts to online reservation customers, and making attractive advertisements or promotions to attract customers.
3. Budget hotel operators should also make their prices affordable and in a good price range for guest rooms so that their customers can patronize them. And they must also put in place measures that will help the customers conveniently have access to the hotel location.
4. The results obtained from this study should serve as a source of information for future studies in related fields.

REFERENCES

- AbuKhalifeh, A. N., & Mat Som, A. P. (2016). Customer perceptions of service quality in luxury hotels in Jordan. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts (JTHCA)*, 8(2), 36-44.
- Acheampong, T. (2017). Perceived service quality and customer loyalty in a budget hotel in Kumasi, Ghana. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Sports*, 30-43.
- Adjei, E. (2018). Hotel guests' perception of cleanliness and its impact on repeat business: A case study of Ghana. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 71, 14-21.
- Adjei, F. O., & Awuah, J. B. (2018). Determinants of Budget Hotel Selection in Ghana: A Qualitative Approach. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Systems*, 11(1), 1-10.
- Adu-Ampong, E. (2018). Tourism and national economic development planning in Ghana, 1964–2014. *International Development Planning Review*, 40(1), 75-95.
- Adu-Gyamfi, J. (2015). Motivations and Constraints to Tourism Development in Africa: An Exploratory Study. *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing*, 4(3), 241-261.
- Agyeiwaah, E. (2013). Volunteer tourists' motivations for choosing homestay in the Kumasi Metropolis of Ghana. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 2(3), 1-11.
- Alhassan, F., & Sakara, A. (2019). Factors influencing market segmentation in the hotel industry. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 2(9), 1-16.
- Ampofo, A. J. (2020). Constraints factors to maintenance of government senior high school buildings in Wa Municipal. *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*, 2(3), 139-160.
- Amuquandoh, F. E., Otoo, F. E., & Asante, B. O. (2016). A Comparative Study of the Factors Influencing Youth Travel Behavior: Evidence from Kumasi, Ghana. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 4(1), 62-76.
- Arslan, I. K. (2020). The importance of creating customer loyalty in achieving sustainable competitive advantage. *Eurasian Journal of Business and Management*, 8(1), 11-20.
- Başarangil, İ. (2018). The relationships between the factors affecting perceived service quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions among theme park visitors. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 18(4), 415-428.

- Bello, Y. O., & Bello, M. B. (2021). Hotel attributes and customer's choice behavior: evidence from port Harcourt city, Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education Research*, 7(2), 181-193.
- Boamah, M. (2020). Assessing the Effect of Ghana School Feeding Programme Implementation at Fantekwa South District (Doctoral dissertation, University of Cape Coast).
- Boateng, C., & Oduro, A. D. (2018). An investigation of the role of tourism infrastructure in enhancing the competitiveness of hotels in Ghana. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 21(12), 1346-1361.
- Cheng, B. L., Gan, C. C., Imrie, B. C., & Mansori, S. (2018). Service recovery, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty: evidence from Malaysia's hotel industry. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, IJQSS-09-2017-0081.
- Chien, G. C., & Chen, C. F. (2018). What drives tourists' purchase intentions of budget hotels? *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 23(3), 249-262.
- Chuanchom, J., Popichit, N., Tanachant, A., & Srisorn, W. (2021). Factors Influencing Thai Tourists' Decision Making to Choose Dvaravati Civilization for Tourist Attractions. *Journal of Multidisciplinary in Social Sciences*, 17(1), 28-36.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). Validity and reliability. In *Research methods in education* (pp. 245-284). Routledge.
- Ghana Statistical Service. (2018). Ghana Living Standards Survey Round 7 (GLSS7). Retrieved from <https://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/glss7/MainReport.pdf>
- Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) (2020). Rebased 2013-2019 Annual Gross Domestic Product. April 2020 Edition.
- Ghana Tourism Authority (2015). UNWTO Boss endorses Ghana as preferred tourist destination.
- Ghana Tourism Authority. (2021). Ghana Tourism: The Year of Return. <https://www.touringghana.com/ghana-tourism-the-year-of-return/>
- Ghana Tourism Statistics (2019). Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture. Programme based budget estimates for 2019.
- Guttentag, D. A., & Smith, S. L. (2017). Assessing Airbnb as a disruptive innovation relative to hotels: Substitution and comparative performance expectations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 64, 1-10.

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/personal-experience>. Retrieved on the 16th June, 2023.

Kaliappen, N., & Hilman, H. (2017). Competitive strategies, market orientation types and innovation strategies: finding the strategic fit. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, 13(3), 257-261.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing Management*. Pearson.

Koroglu, R. (2015). Measuring Service Quality of Budget Hotels in Antalya. *International Journal of Contemporary Economics and Administrative Sciences*, 5(1), 82-96.

Lashley, C. (2015). Hospitality and hospitableness. *Research in Hospitality Management*, 5:1, 1-7.

Lei, S. S. I., Nicolau, J. L., & Wang, D. (2019). The impact of distribution channels on budget hotel performance. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 81, 141-149.

Leng, T. A. (2016). Home sharing requires regulation, says Budget Hotel Association | Edge. Retrieved June 16, 2023, from <https://www.edgeprop.my/content/880051/home-sharingrequires-regulation-says-budgethotel-association>.

Li, X., & Wang, D. (2017). Budget hotel attributes in consumers' purchasing decisions. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 23(2), 163-177.

Linchi Kwok, K. L. X. (2016). Article information: *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 28(10), 2156–2177.

Mahmod, S., Alam, M.S, & Das, S. (2020). Factors affecting tourists' satisfaction: An empirical study on Rangamati as a tourism destination. *Hospitality & Tourism Review*, 1(1), 35-47.

Mody, M. A., Jung, S., Dogru, T., & Suess, C. (2023). How do consumers select between hotels and Airbnb? A hierarchy of importance in accommodation choice. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 35(4), 1191-1218.

Montefiore, A. (2022). Hospitality: Its Functions and Limitations. *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 89(1), 115-131.

- Myo, Y. N., Khalifa, G. S., & Aye, T. T. (2019). The impact of service quality on customer loyalty of Myanmar hospitality industry: the mediating role of customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Management and Human Science (IJMHS)*, 3(3), 1-11.
- Nkrumah, I. (2016). Understanding Budget Hotel Demand Characteristics in the City of Accra. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Ghana.
- Peng J., Xinyuan, Z. and Matilla, A. (2015). Improving business management in budget hotels, *International journal of hospitality management*, Vol. (49), 139-148.
- Pertiwi, P. R., & Sulistyawati, A. S. (2020). Factors of Influence in Choosing Accommodation: A Study with Reference to Mas Village, an Artistic Heritage Village in Ubud-Bali. *Journal of Business on Hospitality and Tourism*, 6(1), 27-42.
- Quartey, P., & Amankwah, D. (2016). Business tourists' satisfaction with budget hotels in Accra, Ghana. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and Hospitality Research*, 10(3), 305-322.
- Rahimi, R. & Kozak, M. (2017). Impact of customer relationship management on customer satisfaction: the case of a budget hotel chain. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 9(2) 31-40.
- Rahman, N. A. A., & Nordin, N. (2018). Challenges and Potentials of a Budget Hotel: A Case Study of Mesra Hotel. *International Journal of Business and Technopreneurship*, 339-346.
- Ratnayaka, R. M., Kumara, P. A. P. S., & Silva, M. W. S. W. (2020). Impact of Organizational Citizenship Behavior on Perceived Service Quality in Hotel Industry. *Journal of the University of Ruhuna*, 7(1), 25.
- Ren, L., Qiu, H., Ma, C., & Lin, P. M. C. (2018). Investigating accommodation experience in budget hotels. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(7), 2662–2679.
- Ren, L., Qiu, H., Wang, P., & Lin, P. M. (2016). Exploring customer experience with budget hotels: Dimensionality and satisfaction. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 52, 13-23.
- Richard, A., & Masud, I. (2016). Factors Influencing Consumer Choice. *Journal of the Society of Dairy Technology*, 45(4), 112–116.
- Rogerson, J. M. (2014). Hotel location in Africa's world class city: The case of Johannesburg, South Africa, 25(25), 181–196.

- Smith, S. L. J. (2016). Budget Hotels: Addressing the Void in the Tourism and Hospitality Literature. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 1(2), 114-125.
- Sönmez, S. F., Yaman, D., & Sevil, T. (2018). The impact of loyalty program membership on hotel guests' sociodemographic and trip characteristics. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 35(8), 949-961.
- Stratton, S. J. (2021). Population research: convenience sampling strategies. *Prehospital and disaster Medicine*, 36(4), 373-374.
- Sukrana, B., Haque, T., & Jui, F. I. (2023). Factors Affecting Bangladeshi Travelers' Selection of Hotels. *International Journal of Science and Business*, 25(1), 124-138.
- Teye, V., & Sirikiyi, J. (2016). The role of hotel cleanliness and physical appearance on customer satisfaction and retention. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development*, 5(9), 164-172.
- The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (2021). Hotel | Britannica.com. Retrieved June 16, 2023, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/hotel>
- Walker, J. R. (2021). *Introduction to hospitality*. United Kingdom: Pearson.
- Xiang, Z., Du, Q., Ma, Y., & Fan, W. (2017). A Comparative Analysis of Major Online Review Platforms: Implications for Social Media Analytics in Hospitality and Tourism. *Tourism Management*, 58, 51-65.
- Yang, S., Huang, S., & Shen, G. (2017). Modelling Chinese consumer choice behavior with budget accommodation services. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 11(3), 341-354.
- Yeboah, M. (2015). Customer Relationship Management and Customer Loyalty in Budget Hotels in Accra, Ghana. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, 4(4), 31-43.

APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE
KOFORIDUA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALTY MANAGEMENT
TOPIC: EVALUATION OF GUESTS' PREFERENCES FOR BUDGET
HOTELS IN THE FANTEAKWA SOUTH MUNICIPALITY.

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire is part of a study aimed at gathering information on the above topic. Information gathered from you will be treated as confidential and for academic purpose only. Thank you.

Instruction: Tick in the appropriate box [] where necessary and provide information to the following statements.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

1. Gender:

Male [] Female []

2. Age Group (years):

18 – 30 [] 31 – 50 [] 51 and above []

3. Marital Status:

Single [] Married [] Divorced []

4. Highest Education:

No Formal Education [] Primary [] Secondary [] Diploma []
Degree [] Others (please specify).....

5. Occupation:

Government Worker [] Private Sector [] Self-Employed []
Retired [] Student []
Others (please specify).....

6. Annual Income (in GHC)
 Under 12,000 [] 12,000 - 24,000 [] 24,001 - 36,000 [] Over
 36,000 []

SECTION B: CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR

This section outlines customer behaviour and experiences when choosing a budget hotel.

7. Do you have any experience staying in a budget hotel?
 Yes [] No []
8. If yes, how long do you normally stay at a budget hotel during one visit?
 1 – 2 days [] 3 – 4 days [] 5 – 6 days [] More than 6 days []
9. How often do you stay at a budget hotel per year?
 Once [] 2 – 3 times [] 4 – 6 times [] More than 4 times []
10. If you decide to stay in a budget hotel, what is the main reason for your travel?
 Business [] Leisure [] Attending Conference []
 Visiting friends/relatives [] Health []
 Others (please specify).....
11. What type of room do you prefer?
 Single Bed [] Double Bed [] Queen Size Bed [] King Size Bed []
12. Which room rate do you normally choose?
 Less than GHC 50 [] GHC 50 – GHC 100 [] GHC 101 – GHC 200 []
 More than GHC 200 []
13. Where do you get prior information about the hotel? (Select all that apply)
 Friends/relatives [] Social Media [] Hotel Website []
 Newspapers [] Travel Agencies []
 Others (Please specify)
14. How do you normally make your reservation? (Select all that apply)
 Telephone [] Hotel Website [] Email [] Travel Agencies []
 Others (Please specify)

SECTION C: IMPORTANT FACTORS RELATED TO PURCHASE DECISION

15. Please rate the level of importance on the following fundamental attributes when choosing a budget hotel. **Using the following scale:** 1 = Not at all important; 2 = Slightly Important; 3 = Important; 4 = Fairly Important; 5 = Very Important.

FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTES	1	2	3	4	5
PRODUCT/SERVICE					
Clean and comfortable guest room					
Size of guest room					
Choice of room type for customers					
Consistent service standard					
Good atmosphere in guest room					
Good quality of product in guest room					
STAFF					
Staff are polite and friendly					
Staff are helpful					
Staff understand your request					
Staff have multi-lingual skill					
Staff provide efficient service					
Check in/check out are efficient					
Ease of making reservations					
GENERAL AMENITIES OF THE HOTEL					
Hotel Facilities					
Credit card acceptance					
Swimming pool					
Fitness centre					
Seminar/Conference room					
Restaurant					
Pool table					
Car parking					

GENERAL AMENITIES CONT'	1	2	3	4	5
Room Facility					
Air conditioning					
Fan					
Television					
Refrigerator					
Wi-Fi internet access in room					
Hot shower					
Mosquito Net					
Safety box					
Room Quality					
Hotel and room cleanliness					
Room quietness					
Room comfort					
Bed /mattress /pillow comfort					
Room odour					
PROMOTION					
Customer loyalty/repeat business					
Making advertisement on TV, internet, newspapers and website, etc.					
Strong brand difference					
Online reservations getting discounts					
Loyalty card (VIP card) gets more discounts					
Discount packages for popular events held at the hotel (weddings, honeymoons, festivals, etc.)					
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE					
Good facilities					
Staff have good attitudes					
Attractive outdoor surroundings					
Appealing hotel atmosphere and decoration					
Affordable prices					

LOCATION	1	2	3	4	5
Convenient access to the hotel					
Close to mountain/beach/jungle					
Close to shopping mall / area					
Convenient transportation with signs					
Enough parking area					
VALUE FOR MONEY					
Reasonable price					
Good price range for guest room					
Consistent price policy					
Room value for money					
Hotel food and beverage					
Hotel provide comfort ambience					

16. Please rate the level of importance on the following attributes in relation to customer overall satisfaction when choosing a budget hotel.

Using the following scale: 1 = Not at all important; 2 = Slightly Important; 3 = Important; 4 = Fairly Important; 5 = Very Important.

ATTRIBUTES	1	2	3	4	5
Product/Service					
Staff					
General Amenities Of The Hotel					
Promotion					
Personal Experience					
Location					
Value For Money					

SECTION D: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CUSTOMERS' REVISIT INTENTION

17. Please rate the extent of your agreement on the following items on a 5-point scale. (Please tick your answer) **1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; and 5 = Strongly Agree.**

Please think of your most recent self-sponsored travel to a BUDGET HOTEL:

FACTORS	1	2	3	4	5
I will come back to this same hotel again.					
I will recommend the same hotel to other people.					
I will tell others of the hotel's quality.					
I will share the pleasure staying experience about this hotel with others.					

Thank you for your cooperation.



Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author: **Edward Asante**
Assignment title: **KTU STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS**
Submission title: **Copy of Helena Project Work**
File name: **Helena_Project_Work.docx**
File size: **418.32K**
Page count: **66**
Word count: **15,233**
Character count: **85,356**
Submission date: **30-Oct-2023 09:44AM (UTC+0000)**
Submission ID: **2200653333**

KOFORIDUA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT



BY ALL STUDY OF CREDIT PROGRAMS FOR BACHELOR DEGREE IN
THE PANTANUASHAHO MUNICIPALITY.

BY
HELENA NYARHOL
LECTURER

OCTOBER, 2023



Copy of Helena Project Work

ORIGINALITY REPORT

11 %

SIMILARITY INDEX

10 %

INTERNET SOURCES

2 %

PUBLICATIONS

4 %

STUDENT PAPERS

MATCH ALL SOURCES (ONLY SELECTED SOURCE PRINTED)

4%

★ ir.uew.edu.gh:8080

Internet Source

Exclude quotes

Exclude matches

Exclude bibliography