

Examining Statistical Influence of Outsourcing Logistic Services as a Strategy on the Performance of 4 and 5 Star-Rated Hotels in Nakuru County

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Abstract: outsourcing of logistic services have been used by many hotels with an aim of outperforming their rivals. However most of the hotels had no statistical basis to say with certainty on how outsourcing of logistic services related to organization performance of hotels. This study was conducted to examine this fact where 4&5 star-rated hotels in Nakuru County were studied. Complexity of logistic services having remained as one of core challenges in star rated hotels, the study was aimed at investigating how well was the logistic services offered by third party to these hotels and the magnitude of its contribution on organization performance on 4&5 star-rated hotels in Nakuru County. Two layers of management i.e. finance officers and operation managers were used as respondents together with 3 walking in customers in each specific hotels being studied. Prior to the real project the researcher did a pilot study at Laikipia county where 5 hotels were studied, which provided data that was used to systematically evaluate the instruments' validity and reliability. Reliability of the instruments was found to have a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.7 on test -pretest technique. A total of 23 hotels were studied. Two sets of questionnaires, one for operation managers and financial officials, the other one for customers were used to gather data. Response rate was 95.8%. Data was analyzed both descriptively and inferentially. Statistical package for social science (SPSS) of version 24.0 computer application was used for the analysis. 5 Likert scale was used in scoring. Where the average scores of the management respondents and the average score of the customers in each specific hotels was summed up to come up with the final scores. The findings of correlation coefficient (0.8061) showed that there existed a strong positive relationship between outsourced logistic services and performance. The findings of regression analysis showed that when one unit of logistic outsourcing services increases it will change the organization performance by 0.32 units. Result also showed that outsourcing logistic services would definitely have some significant change in hotels performance since P value of 0.02 is less than 0.05 i.e. $P < 0.05$. However majority of 49.3% of customers when asked about the quality of products in the studied hotels disagreed that they are of good quality. Furthermore 47.8% of the customers disagreed that the products sold in the studied hotel were of fair price. The researcher recommended that, there is need for hotels to be selective when coming up with BPO firms where they outsource their services from, besides the researcher recommended that hotels should ensure to synchronize the BPO firms to the system and help each other to reduce their costs of operations and own the business together.

Keywords: Outsourcing logistic services strategy, Organization performance of 4 and 5 star-rated hotels, Nakuru County.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

In the 20th century, most hotels pursued the strategy of creating huge hotels which when integrated would own, control and manage, its assets (Hussein, Omar, Noordin & Noormala, (2016). Greer, Youngblood, and Gary (2013) argue that most businesses tended to widen their corporate base, taking advantage of economies of scale in the 1950s and 1960s. Businesses intended to gain profits through diversification, but expansion needed more management, which added

expense. As a result, firms that tried to compete worldwide during 1970s and 1980s were hindered because of lack of adaptability brought on by an extended administrative structure.

Studies from Germany and the US provided a different explanation for the worldwide situation, with the results of the US study showed that the growth in outsourcing of logistic services was as a result of high manufacturing costs producing poor performance (Akanni, Oke&Akpmiemie, 2015) As a result, businesses chose outsourcing of logistic services in an effort to reclaim a superior position of market. In contrast, it was discovered that outsourcing of logistic services was pursued by successful businesses with high revenue diversification in Germany, not just those struggling with high costs, indicating that outsourcing of logistic services was employed as a tactical component in market differentiation to achieve an extra competitive advantage.

Although there was no evidence connecting outsourcing of logistic services to enhanced business performance, the majority of Kenyan 4&5 star- rated hotels have embraced outsourcing of logistic services throughout the years as a means of reducing costs. Outsourcing of logistic services have received attention from the Kenyan government through the Vision 2030 initiative, which named BPO as one of the economic pillars(Owiti, 2014).BPO was included as one of the economic

The top managements of a 4&5 star-rated hotels were under time pressure to do all necessary to create and run a profitable enterprise (Gerlach & Lutz, 2021). According to Giustiniano and Clarioni (2013), outsourcing of logistic services would be done effectively and in an efficient manner by a third party who is a specialist in that field instead of integrating the function in management of the firm. According to Kakabadse and Kakabadse, (2012), who studied competition in the market among various players concluded there is a need to adopt a new approach to gain a competitive advantage to better organization performance.

According to Tsuma (2014) in her study on outsourcing of logistic services practices in five stars hotels in Nairobi Challenges like non stability of foreign exchange, inflation, lead time before shipment mentioned as key challenges to five stars hotels despite them outsourcing logistic services from third party This had left the need to examine the statistical influence of outsourcing logistic services as a strategy on organization performance 4&5 star-rated hotels in Nakuru county.

Statement of the Problem

According to Kakabadse and Kakabadse,(2012), reducing operating costs, improving focus on core services, accessing specialized services, free up resources for other business activities, advantages of re-engineering are being expedited, a non-core function becoming too difficult to handle, sharing risks and cash infusion are some of the reasons why businesses outsource services. This study focused on examining statistical influence of outsourcing logistic services as a strategy on organization performance of 4&5 stars rated hotel in Nakuru County.

Hotel industry being one of the tourist enterprise has attracted attention globally. Most of the foreign tourist are cautious on spending and eager to spend every coin in exchange of value for money. Quality of products and prices being some key aspects that most foreign and national tourist consider before they spend in a star - rated hotel. These has called for most of the star rated hotels to outsource logistic services in order to remain competitive. It has also made tourism ministries across the globe to harmonize on way they handle customers in star-rated hotels to ensure their specific countries are able to fetch more foreign currency and boost their GDP. With the current global logistic services complexity. Difficulties in controlling and coordinating logistic activities has remained as a big problem in 4&5 star rated hotels (Klumpp et al, 2013). This study therefore has been done to examine the statistical influence of outsourcing logistic services as a strategy on organization performance of 4&5 star rated hotels in Nakuru County. With an aim of giving recommendations and enabling government in making informed policies on hotel industry and ensuring arrest of the problem.

1.3 Research Questions

How does outsourcing of logistic services as a strategy relates with organization performance of 4 and 5 stars rated hotels in Nakuru County?

II. Literature Review

The section looks at theories as well as empirical findings that connect to the research.

2.1.1 Contingency Theory

The theory was founded by Fred Fiedler in 1964. It is an organization theory .it clearly showed that firms depend upon as an optimal course of action that helps a firm in environmental fitness. According to the theory, organizations are

compelled to use various methods to help them achieve their goals depending on the business environment. The theory conceptualizes how the environmental and organizational elements fit together. Firms may decide to outsource logistic services in order to maintain the operation's stability (Kibuyi, Ndiritu, Carcel& Gil-Alana, 2017).

Because of changes in the operational environment, the organization is exposed to new possibilities and risks; as a result, the organization take advantage of strategies for fending off those threats or seizing those chances. Organizations must adapt to change in order to acquire a competitive advantage. How the organization differentiates its internal factors will depend on the adoption process and the surroundings. This aspect could help to justify the outsourcing choice.

Environmental uncertainty within which hotels operates forces the hotels to outsource logistic services from the third parties who are specialist. This is to ensure stronger environmental fit of their businesses. But despite these efforts, emergencies of some challenges such us logistic control and coordinating problems among other problems emerged. This study therefore examined the statistical influence of outsourcing logistic services as a strategy on organization performance of selected 4&5 stars-rated hotels in Nakuru County to help understand the concept of outsourcing and how it helps the hotels to be well positioned in the operational environment.

2.1.2 Logistics Management Theory

Gioia and Pitre in 1990 authored the logistic management theory .it gives us insight on what is considered as logistic services. The theory designs mechanisms to ensure that level of inventory on materials is controlled, oversee transportation, control procurement as well as enhancing cooperation (Klumpp et al, 2013). As this is a non-core activity that require a lot of time and coordination due to its complexity another hand of an expert is required. This have made most of star-rated hotels in Kenya to outsource the services but despite this attempt problem of complexity of logistics services have consistently affected the hotels. This study aim at evaluating outsourcing of logistic services strategy on organization performance of selected 4&5 stars-rated hotels in Nakuru County. The theory will therefore help in identifying some parameters that are going to be used in the study on logistic services well shown on the conceptual framework.

2.2 Empirical Literature

There are many researches that have been done in relation tologistics services with different scholars. There have not been similar studies conducted yet in line with logistics services in the context of 4 and 5 star-rated hotels and how significantly it has impacted its organization performance. This section gives a relationship of other research work pertinent to study objective. Scholars have looked at the impacts of logistics services strategy on organization performance in different areas.

2.2.1Logistics services outsourcing and organization performance

Logistics Support Strategic planning, implementation, and management of the actual transfer of raw materials and completed commodities from the point of origin to the end user is known as outsourcing. Additionally, it refers to obtaining the proper product in the proper quantity at the proper time and location at the proper cost (Giustiniano&Clarioni, 2013). In order to satisfy consumers, logistics management coordinates the flows of resources, work-in-progress, inventories, produced items, and pertinent information from the point of information source to the end user according to the logistic process analysis study done by (Hassan, Lashari& Zafar, 2015).

The beginning of the business in the hotel sector is the acquisition of materials from suppliers to the company and from the company to the clients. The flow of services must be effective and efficient to achieve the goals of client satisfaction.

Route planning, mode selection, and vehicle scheduling are all aspects of transportation. Taking advantage of the economies of scale offered by service providers across a wide range of corporate functions, outsourcing has established itself as a trend that businesses can accept. The realization that internalizing everything does not lead to the effective and efficient use of the limited resources available has occurred inside organizations this was according to (Auma, 2014), who did his study on logistic planning.

It is preferable to hire a specialist who has the necessary skills to handle the non-core functional areas (Boateng &Nagaraju, 2020). The study made clear that diversification of products or services or cost leadership are two ways that businesses may stay competitive. Logistics costs in the value chain activities may be reduced by adding value through cheap pricing, high quality, and amazing services. These costs are finally added to the product and paid for by the

consumer. Hassan, Lashari, and Zafar (2015) Outsourcing logistics enables a company to focus on its primary mission, boost flexibility, and control effective expansion.

Muthengi (2015) opined that from the era of Industrial Revolution, firms had grappled with right strategies to employ to gain competitive advantage and expand markets segments in addition to improving their profits margins. Outsourcing of logistic services had been looked as a cost saving strategy which was also intended to reduce complexity of logistic services by star- rated hotels (Raki, 2013).

According to Hassan, Lashari& Zafar, (2015) in their studies on logistic management in relation to customer satisfaction found out that there is complexity of logistic management, coordinating flow of resources, work in progress inventories and pertinent information from point of information source to the end user. .

From the foregoing, logistic services are key in the hotel industry despite it being a non-core activity. For a firm to experience a competitive advantage within the market, the services need to be provided effectively to the customers. This has led to out sourcing of logistics services externally from professionals. However, examining statistical influence of outsourcing logistic services as a strategy on the organization performance in 4&5 stars-rated hotels in Nakuru County has not yet been done, a gap that this study will seek to address.

2.5 The Conceptual Framework

This section presents conceptual framework that shows the hypothetical relationship between variables under study.

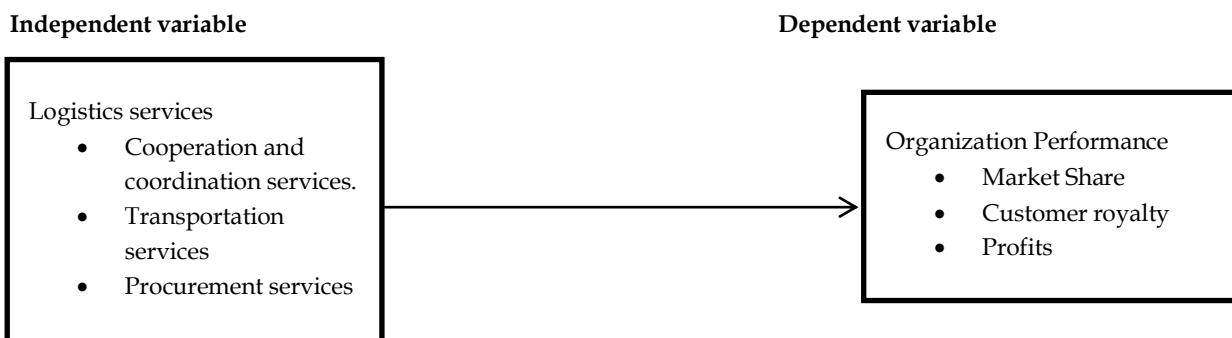


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
 Source: researcher (2023)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design.

This investigation used an ex-post-facto research methodology. This study methodology is utilized when there has already been interaction between the independent and dependent variables. In order to determine how the independent factors, affect the dependent variable, the researcher is unable to modify the independent variables in this case. The study's design was deemed most appropriate because the independent variables (logistic services) had already had some influence on the organization performance of 4&5 stars-rated hotels in Nakuru County, indicating that was examined in retrospect.

.3 Target Population

All senior operation managers and financial officers in selected 4&5 star-rated hotels in Nakuru County be targeted by the study. The County has 473 star-rated hotels where 204 are one star, 86 hotels are two stars rated, 158 are three stars rated, and four stars rated are 15 while five stars rated were 10. In this regard, 25 operation managers and financial managers were targeted by the study. Besides 3 walking in customers per hotel also formed part of our respondents. This implies that a total of five respondents per hotel was targeted in the 4 stars and 5 stars hotels targeted. The study therefore targeted 125 respondents.

Table 1: Target Population

Hotel ratings	Total number of hotels
Four stars	15

Five stars	10
Total	25

Source: TRA 2023

3.4 Sample size and Sampling techniques

In this study, proportionate sampling technique was utilized. The starting point in applying the sampling technique was determining the number of hotels to participate in the study (25). The hotels in the county was categorized into 2 sub-sets according to the star-rating (four stars and five stars hotels). The purpose of grouping the hotels into 2 categories was to guarantee the desired distribution among selected sub-groups of the population. The ideal sample size from a population of 25 elements is 24 according to the Krejci and Morgan (1970) table of determining sample sizes. This represented a sampling fraction (n/N) of .96 or 96%. In this regard, 96% of hotels in each sub-population was selected using simple random sampling. This entailed writing names of all hotels in a given sub-population on pieces of paper. These papers were folded, placed in a container then 96% of the papers were drawn randomly.

Table 2: Sample Size

Hotel ratings	Total number of hotels(4 and 5 star)	Sampled hotels	Sample size(OM)	Sample size(FO)	Sample size(C)
Four Star	15	14	14	14	42
Five Star	10	10	10	10	30
Total	25	24	24	24	72

Source: TRA 2023

3.5 Research Instrument

In this study, data from the respondents was obtained with the aid of sets of questionnaires. A structured questionnaire as well as a 5-point Likert scale items for operation managers, financial officers and walking in customers were utilized in data collection from the respondents. The Likert scales measured the level of agreement or disagreement. Five levels selected were (Strongly disagree-1, disagree-2, neutral-3, agree-4, strongly agree-5)

3.6 Validity of Instruments

A reference check was made on the study objectives as well as related issues which arose from the literature review to guarantee that all the items used in the questionnaire were reliable and valid. To guarantee face validity, the questionnaires were reviewed by experts in the Department of finance, School of Business and Economics, Mount Kenya University. Ambiguous items were rephrased and modified to avoid vagueness before utilizing them for data collection. To ensure construct validity of the questionnaires, a pilot study was carried out in 5 star rated hotels in Laikipia County. This was to ascertain that the questionnaires gather the information sought by the study.

3.7 Reliability of instruments

The researcher used the coefficient of stability method to determine the reliability of the questionnaire for operation managers. This involved administration of the instruments in 5 hotels in Laikipia County. They were re-administered in the same hotels after two weeks. Results generated by Likert scale items in the two instrument administrations to the same respondents was correlated using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.7 established.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

For this study, only primary sources were used to collect data. The researcher sought for a permit to carry out the research from the National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) after obtaining a letter of introduction from the Graduate School of Mount Kenya University. Upon obtaining the permit, the researcher sought for clearance from Nakuru County regulatory Authority. For effective administration of the questionnaires, a personal visit was made by the researcher to all the hotels that were sampled. The researcher made consultations with the operation manager and financial officer and briefed them on the intended research and the kind of data required. This ensured that the respondents had full knowledge about the study. Dates and venue for administration of questionnaires were set in consultation with the respondents. On the material day, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the respondents and gave them ample time to fill them. After one week, the researcher collected the filled questionnaires.

3.9 Data Analysis

The collected data was coded for analyses after editing and checking whether all items were responded to as expected. Quantitative data was analyzed with aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer package version 24.0. SPSS aided in generating tables, percentages and graphs that assisted in making interpretations and deriving conclusions. Tables, percentages and graphs generated made interpretation easy and convenient in giving an idea of the problem being studied and hence discussion of the findings. Qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis by organizing the data into emergent themes, patterns and sub-topics. Descriptive analyses were done using percentages, frequencies and means to summarize the data. Inferential statistics involved correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. Average score from management respondents and average scores from walking in customers were added per hotel to come up with scores for both independent and dependent variables.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

In this study, data was collected after seeking permission from NACOSTI and clearance from the hotel regulation authority in Nakuru County. The researcher consulted the operation managers and financial officers and brief them on the intended research and the kind of data required. This ensured that the operation managers and financial officers of the sampled hotels had full knowledge about the study hence they were able to make an informed consent. The anonymity of the respondents were guaranteed by requesting the respondents to avoid indicating their names and those of their hotels on the questionnaires. The researcher gave an assurance that data provided would be used for the research purpose only. Requirement for respondents' voluntary participation was considered although the researcher encouraged all the respondents to take part in the study. The researcher assured the respondents that the collected data would be treated with confidentiality and the information would be analyzed for academic purpose only.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Correlation between logistic services strategy and organization performance of 4 and 5 star-rated hotels

Table 1: Correlation between logistic services scores and performance scores

HOTEL NO	ORGANIZATION PERFORMANCE SCORES (Y)	OUTSOURCED LOGISTIC SERVICES SCORES(X)
1	55	33
2	45	26
3	52	30
4	72	45
5	58	27
6	64	40
7	62	39
8	57	37
9	66	42
10	58	27
11	53	31
12	65	41

13	58	32
14	57	38
15	67	43
16	52	29
17	58	29
18	62	40
19	66	42
20	61	44
21	58	40
22	60	39
23	59	38

From the calculation of Pearson correlation coefficient between organization performance scores and outsourced logistic services scores it is clear that there exists a positive correlation between the two variable hence increase in outsourced logistic services scores will lead to an increase in organization performance scores. It is also clear that there exists a strong correlation between the two variable which is 0.8061. It is therefore advisable for the 4 & 5 rated hotels to look on ways of improving on outsourcing of logistic services in order to improve their organization performance. The P-Value is < .00001. The result is significant at $p < .05$

4.2 Regression analysis between logistics services strategy and organization performance of 4 and 5 star-rated hotels

Multiple regression analysis to establish how outsourcing services scores related with organization performance scores in the whole model. The study included outsourcing of other non-core services but extracted only outsourcing of logistic service. The intention was to show the contribution of outsourcing logistic services on organization performance of the studied hotels.

Table 2: Logistic services strategy and organization performance of 4 and 5 star hotels

Predictor	Coefficient	Estimate	Standard Error	t-statistic	p-value
Constant	a	22.71	4.03	5.64	0
logistic services scores	X1	0.32	0.13	2.51	0.02

Data Summary

Groups	N	Mean	<u>Std. Dev.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>
Logistics Strategy	23	36.1739	6.0727	1.2662

ANOVA SUMMARY

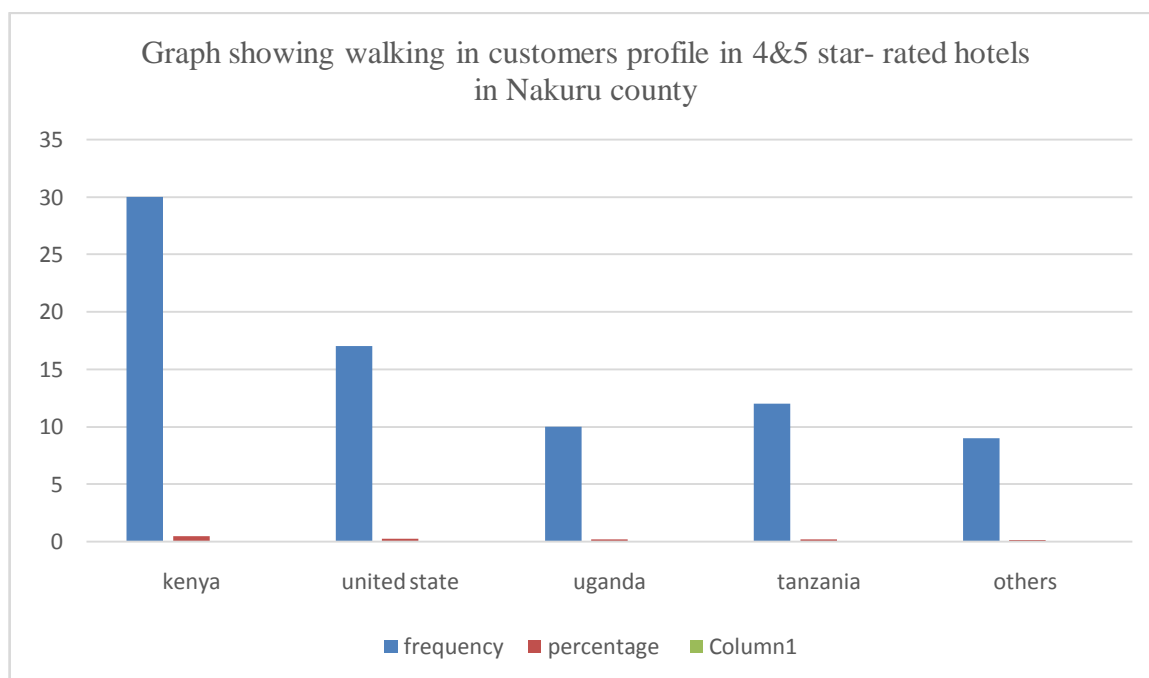
Source	Degrees of Freedom DF	Sum of Squares SS	Mean Square MS	F-Stat	P-Value
Between Groups	3	1876.8994	625.6331	13.9121	0
Within Groups	88	3957.3868	44.9703		
Total:	91	5834.2861			

- a. Dependent Variable: Organization Performance
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Logistics Services Strategy

The table provides the estimates of how many scores organization performance will increase with when one unit of independent variable increases. In our study when one unit of logistic outsourcing services increases it will change the organization performance by 0.32 units. The table also clearly shows that outsourcing logistic services will definitely have some significant change in organization performance since P value of 0.02 is less than 0.05 i.e. $P < 0.05$

The outsourcing of logistic services had the greatest contribution compared to other factors that were considered in this study hence must be given greatest priority by hotels studied in order to improve their organization performance .

At 0.05 level of significance the data confirms independency of the independent variable in the study since P value = 0 which is less than 0.05 i.e. $p < 0.05$. Besides F statistics of 13.9121 is big enough to show that there exists independency of variable under study.



The study showed that majority of the customers who responded to this study at 43.5% were Kenyan, 24.6% were from United States, 14.5% from Uganda, 17.4% from Tanzania and 13% from other countries.

4.3Table 3: Customers’ response on the outcome of outsourcing of logistic services by 4&5 star-rated hotels

Logistic services aspects	SD-1 f	D-2 f	N-3 f	A-4 f	SA-5 f	Chi Square	P>CHSQ
Services and products sold are of fair prices	3	33	10	20	3	47.449	P<0.0001
You can refer another client to this hotel	10	7	16	30	6	28.174	P<0.0001
Lead time taken to be served was excellent	9	27	2	20	11	27.739	P<0.0001
the quality of service and products is good	4	34	0	30	1	81.217	P<0.0001
There is improved service reliability and flexibility	1	8	6	37	17	58.464	P<0.0001

Source: Research data (2023)

Majority of 49.3% of the customers who responded to the study disagreed that the hotels offered quality products and services. Besides majority of 47.8% disagreed that the hotels under study offered products and services at fair prices.

V. CONCLUSION

Outsourcing of logistic services have led to increase in profits, customer satisfaction, organization effectiveness and reduction of operation costs among other things. There is need for hotels to be selective when coming up with BPO firms where they outsource their services from, besides the hotels should ensure to synchronize the BPO firms to the system and help each other to reduce their costs of operations and own the business together. This will help to improve the quality of services and products offered where the customers disagreed at 49.3% that they do receive quality products and services. It will also help to offer fair prices of their products which majority of customers at 47.8% disagreed that they offer fair prices.

VI. RECOMMENDATION OF THE STUDY

There is need for hotels to be selective when coming up with BPO firms where they outsource their services from, besides the hotels should ensure to synchronize the firms to the system and help each other to reduce their costs of operations and own the business together. This will help to improve the quality of services and products offered where the customers disagreed at 49.3% that they do receive quality products and services. It will also help to offer fair prices of their products which majority of customers at 47.8% disagreed that they offer fair prices.

VII.SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The researcher also proposes for further research to be done on profile of customers visiting 4&5 star rated hotels in order to establish the specific personalized services that is required to give guests a lasting impression in those hotels basing on their culture, needs and expectations this will help to sought out issue to do with quality of services and customer satisfaction.

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