NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

TOURISM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND RETENTION: A CASE STUDY OF 4 STAR AND 5 STAR HOTELS INRIFT VALLEY REGION,KENYA.

MASTERS THESIS

GLADYS WATIRI NDUNGU

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Approval of Director of Institute of Graduate Studies

Prof. Dr. K. Hüsnü Can BA ER

**We certify this thesis is satisfactory for the award of the degree of
Master's of science in Tourism and Hospitality Management**

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DECLARATION

I Gladys WatiriNdungu, hereby declare that this dissertation entitled 'THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND RETENTION: ACASESTUDYOF4STARAND5STARHOTELSINRIFTVALLEYREGION, KENYA' has been prepared by myself under the guidance and supervision of PROF. DR. TÜLEN SANER in partial fulfilment of the Near East University, Graduate SchoolofSocialSciencesregulationsanddoesnottothebestofmyknowledgebreach the Law of Copyrights and has been tested for plagiarism and a copy of the result can be found in theThesis.

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND RETENTION: A CASE STUDY OF 4 STAR AND 5 STAR HOTELS INRIFT VALLEY REGION,KENYA

Thehotelandhospitalityindustryareincreasinglybecomingcompetitiveintheglobal businessenvironment.InKenya,thehotelandhospitalindustryhasbeenexperiencing rapidgrowthduetohighnumberoftourists.Althoughthesectorisexperiencingrapid growth and high profitability, many of the players in the industry are experiencing intense competition from their rival firms. As a result, it is important that the players in the industry come up with effective strategies to help them survive in the industry. The current research study examined the relationship between customer satisfaction andcustomerretentioninthehotelandhospitalindustry.Thestudyspecificallysought to determine the relationship between quality of services offered and customer satisfactionandtodeterminetherelationshipbetweenthequalitiesofservicesoffered, customer satisfaction and customer retention in the 4 star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region,Kenya.

Inordertoaccomplishtheaimsandobjectiveoftheresearchstudy,acrossdescriptive studydesignthatusedsurveymethodofdatacollectionwasadoptedforthestudy.The study made use of 138 semi-structured questionnaires that primarily to elicited information from the 4 star and 5-star hotel customers upon consenting. The test the null hypothesis was done using the t- test statistics and analysis of the data collected was done by regression analysis using SPSS v 26.0. The f-statistics analysis, on the other hand, was used in revealing if the R model was statistically significant at 0.05 significancelevel.

Theresultoftheresearchstudyindicatedthatthereisasignificantpositiveassociation betweencustomersatisfactionandcustomerloyalty. It,therefore,goeswithoutsaying that there is an intertwining of customer satisfaction with trust that the customer has on the service provider and the and the commitment that the service provider has in serving employees, which in returns leads to increment in the value of the service offered.

Keywords: customer retention, service quality, customer satisfaction, tourism.

ÖZ

MÜ TER MEMNUN YET VE ELDE MUHAFAZA L K S : KENYA RIFT VALLEY BÖLGES NDE 4 YILDIZLI VE 5 YILDIZLI OTELLER Ç N B R VAKA ÇALI MASI

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AnahtarKelimeler: mü teriyieldetutma, hizmetkalitesi, mü terimemnuniyeti,
turizm.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely and supportive family.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CR- Customer Retention

KAHC-Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers

SERVQUAL- Service quality model.

SPSS- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF WORDS

ANOVA: According to this study, it can be described as a way of finding out the significanceofthestudyresults.Thistestwillhelptheresearcherfigureoutifthereis a need to reject the null hypothesis or fail to reject the nullhypothesis.

Customerretention: Referstotherateatwhichcustomersremainloyaltoaparticular organization.

Customer satisfaction: According to the study is when a person's well-being feels good and pleasure after gaining what he/she expected from either a service or a product.

Customer: It is a person buying either goods or services or both from a business organization. According to this survey, customer can be described as a person who eitherbuysfoodproductsfromahotelorbuyshospitalityservicesfromeithera 4-star hotel or a 5-star hotel in the Great Rift Valley,Kenya.

F-Statistic: According to this survey, it is a ratio between two quantities, that is, customer satisfaction and customer retention that are expected to be roughly equal under the null hypothesis.

Resources: Relative durable units of selection such as, but not limited to employees, knowledge and skills, organizational culture constituting a comparative advantagefor a competitiveadvantage.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences: is statistical software used by the researcher for analyzing survey data so that the researcher may get most out of the research project.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Businesses all over the world, manufacturing and service delivery businesses all-inclusive aim at delivering nothing but the best in terms of not only quality and time efficiency but also cost-effectiveness and flexibility. The reason behind aiming at delivering best quality products and services is to meet or exceed customers' expectation at affordable price (Muchogu, 2016). It remains the fact that customers tend to purchase the brands from the companies where customer satisfaction is given a priority (Odunlami, 2015). In other words, customers' satisfaction is considered a significant factor when it comes to meeting organizations' goals, and it should, therefore, be met optimally for the efficient and effective achievement of the stated goals (Odunlami, 2015). Besides, Odunlami (2015) argued that fulfillment of organizations' customers' satisfaction is integral since customers are a valuable asset in businesses that should be properly kept for continuity of the organization. Customers' needs satisfaction creates room for customer retention opportunity and creation of customer loyalty for patronage continuation. In other words, customer retention dictates the level of organizational achievement in some extent. It implies that failure of repurchasing of the organizations' products or services by the previous customerlowerstheorganization'ssalesandprofitthusnegativelyimpactingtheentire firms' performance. Odunlami (2015) therefore strongly agrees that there is a positive relationshipbetweenthedegreewhichanorganizationretainsitsclientsandthedegree at which these customers get satisfied from the organizations' products and services (Odunlami,2015).Thereasonbehindthepositiverelationshipbetweenthementioned variablesisthatcustomersatisfactioninfluencescustomers'intentionsofrepurchasing a particular product or a service. In contrast, a primary factor for customers to switch to other brands is associated with dissatisfaction of the products purchased (Faizan et al. 2011). Furthermore, Ibojo et al. (2013) argued that organizations who meet customers'needsatagreaterextentareinapositionofnotonlybuildingalong-lasting and favorable customer relationship but also maintain the built relationship with the targetmarketregardlessofthenatureoftheorganization(Ibojoetal.2013).Odunlami (2015)arguesthatcustomersatisfactionisaglobalsubjectmatterthathasgainedalot

of researchers' and practitioners' attention. It is considered a significant factor in ensuring that organizations meet their goals in such a competitive business world where every service industry not only strongly emphasize on customers' quality perceptions but also the quality of the service offered and the consumers' satisfaction (Odunlami, 2015). According to Mugito (2016), the business environment has increasingly become so unstable due to the competition imposed by the many developing industries who are working daily to achieve their annual goals including business continuation, customer retention and increase in profit. Kenya's competitive business environment, which usually leads to business instability, does not exclude Kenya's hospitality industry. The hospitality managers, therefore, have opted to maintain customers' loyalty besides provision of excellent quality products and services (Kibeh, 2013). Zineldine (2006) described a loyal guest as someone who repurchases products and services from the same facility when there is a possibility. Such kind of customer continues to recommend and maintain a positive attitude towards the facility (Zineldine, 2006). Ou et al. (2014) defined customers' loyalty as a customers' long-term commitment to repurchasing a commodity from the same facility with a favorable attitude. Besides, they added that loyal customers often resist pressure from switching to another brand. Furthermore, such a client recommends that the business to new people who were unaware. Anabila & Awunyo (2013) supported the Ou's idea as also added to the matter by giving a statistical outline that an average of 12 people gets to know a new hotel from recommendations from customers who find the hotel favorable. Unlike the 10-20 people who can be told negativity of an organization from a single dissatisfied customer as according to Mattila (2001). Behaviorally, people are different, and this is a notion which made Weiner (2000) argue that there is a high possibility of customers with the right attitude and behavioral commitment, repurchasing from the same business regardless of a prior dissatisfaction. It can, therefore, be argued that people with the right attitude and behavioral commitment are a source of both prosperity and business security. In five years, approximately 50% of customers, on the other hand, are lost by the service businesses due to prior dissatisfied customers (Avcicurt & Dogduby, 2012). Besides, industry's profit can be increased by 30 to 80% by a 5% increase in customer loyalty depending on the type of the organization (Mugito, 2016). Chiu et al. (2002), added that customers' loyalty is key in influencing businesses' long-term financial performance and that loyal customers can substantially increase organization's profits, service industry to be more specific

2

(Chiu et al., 2002). Most of the organizations are, therefore putting more effort in ensuring that they meet their obligations by putting much focus on flexibility, time efficiency, cost-effective and the quality of the products and services offered. In a nutshell, customer satisfaction helps the organization in retaining more customersand improving their services over time. Customer satisfaction is, therefore, important in any institution regardless of the nature of the business. It is customers' judgment on the services and products offered to them. Williams et al. (2003) outlined that customers happiness is associated with customers getting that which the clients desired. In other words, customers get excited when they realize the offer given to them is worth their expectations and they are even more delighted when whatever is served is more than whatever they were promised (Williams, 2003). However, the oppositeisaswelltrue,thatislowerperformancethancustomers'expectationequates to customer disappointment and dissatisfaction hence the increased likelihood of informing other potential customers of the poor- or low-quality services offered (Muchogu,2016).

1.1 ProblemStatement

Retainingcustomersinanyorganizationregardlessofthebusiness'natureisassociated with customer retention and improvement of services offered over time. Customer satisfaction is, therefore, an important business performance determinant all over the world regardless of the nature of the business. Upon service providence, there can be customersatisfactionorcustomerdissatisfactioninreturndependingonthequalityof the service offered equitably to meeting customers' expectations in terms of real service and customers' genuine service execution (Muchogu, 2016). Quality service, therefore, is a vital segment in business offering hospitality services such as hotels. Service industries, including hotels, will automatically have increased customer retention if there is customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is measured by the qualities of the services offered to them. The quality of services is determined by determinantsthatareconsideredvital.Amongthedeterminantsincludebutnotlimited to reliability, responsiveness, empathy and even tangibles (Muchogu, 2016). Customers will opt to remain loyal to a reliable hotel organization, that there istimely deliveryofservices.Besides,theymeasurethequalityofservicesintermsofempathy.

Customers expect empathy in cases where there are complicated situations. The idea is as well supported by Muchogu (2016) who quoted from India's study findings that besidessecurityandaccuracy,promptnessoftheservicedeliveringisaswellof

importance to customers' expectations of quality service (Muchogu, 2016). Regionally, Africa to be specific, the issue of customer satisfaction remains a major determinant factor for customer loyalty. A study conducted on Nigeria to determine the relationship of customer satisfaction and customer retention among the bank customers in Oyo, in Oyo state, concluded that there is a room for customer retention aslongasthereiseffectivecustomersatisfaction.NarrowingitdowntoKenya,astudy by Muchogu (2016) also outlined the importance of customer satisfaction regardless of the nature of the business. Muchogu (2016), however, outlined that in as much as companies are endeavor trying as much as they can to have a competitive advantage by building customer loyalty, not all customers get satisfied. Furthermore, even for those satisfied customers, they may at times change their suppliers because of cost-effectiveness, sampling a new product in the market or seeking an alternative intimes when their favorite brands are unavailable. Bowen and Brown (2001), however, still insisted on customer extreme satisfaction to retain them in the long run (Bowen& Brown,2001).Forthehotelfoodsandbeverages'standardsarethemajorcontributing factorsforcustomerretention.Kenyaasacountryisauniqueoneonitsownowingto itsterrain,severalgamereservesandnationalparks,andthebeachexperiences.Itcan, therefore, be concluded that visitors may opt to visit a hotel for two main reasons that is leisure or business (Muchogu, 2016). The Kenyan Hospitality industry isextremely dynamicandever-evolving.It,therefore,goeswithoutsayingthatsuchanindustryhas greatly evolved over recent years. There have been increasing accommodation requests in various parts of the country for safari from all over the world. There has been a tremendous increase in the number of international visitors not only in the city of Nairobi located in the Nairobi Region but also in the Rift Valley region. The increased number of international visitors has tremendously imposed a gap when it comes to accommodation, and it has greatly resulted to the increased number of not onlyrestaurantsbutalsohotelsandcateringservicesnationwideandattheRiftValley Region in particular. In ensuring that organizations earn themselves a brand loyalty, they, therefore, focus on setting up strategies that will meet or exceed customers' expectations hence increasing their chances of getting loyal customers (Muchogu, 2016).Amongthestrategiesincludethe5-starqualityratingsystemwhereahotelwith a 5-star rating is much above average, 4 star is above average, 3 star is considered average,2starsbelowaverageand1starmuchbelowaverage.Thehotelratingsystem hasanimpactonhotels'earningsandperformance.Itisevidentthathotelsthathave

higher ratings have not only more amenities but better amenities as well that ensures quality service to their customers. Hotels which are rated 4 to 5 stars have more than nineamenitiesandhavehigh-endamenitiesincludingbutnotlimitedtoSpas,Saunas, and Casinos that cater for the more discerning customers (Makindi&Obwayere, 2015). Customers visiting 5-star hotels in the Rift Valley region such as Elephant bedroom camp, Olarro hotel, Angama Mara, Julia's River camp, Kentania hotels, Sierra spring Hotels and resorts, among others are normally referred by previous customers. The 5-stars outlined several special services offered such as availability of pool, gym, rooms with private balcony, rooms with great views, good for families, offering free breakfasts, free parking services among other adorable services as according to the customers' expectations. There are 189 registered hotels in Kenya as according to the Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers (KAHC) as of 2020. And outof the 189 hotels, 46 of them are from the Rift Valley region. Examples of 4-star hotels in Rift Valley on the other side include, but not limited to Enashipai resort and spa, Keekorok Lodge -Sun Africa hotels, Delegacy resort, NaivashaKongoni Lodge, Grand Winston Hotel, Ziwa Bush Lodge, The Alps Hotel, The Ole-Ken Hotel, and East mark Hotels among others. Despite the notable positive reviews from satisfied customersfrombooththe4starand5-starhotelsinRiftValleyRegion,noresearchhas been done to determine the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention.Itisthereforeworthyofconductingthissurveytodeterminetherelationship giventhefactthatachievementofcustomersloyaltyisassociatedtocustomersbelieve that the services offered are the best and meets their needs fully. It was therefore worthy to conduct the survey to determine the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention among the rift valley region's 4 star and 5-star hotels, inKenya.

1.2 ResearchQuestions

Whatistherelationshipbetweencustomersatisfactionandcustomerretentioninthe4 star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region,Kenya?

What is the quality of services offered and customer satisfaction in the 4-star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya?

1.3 Research Objectives

This section will be sub classified into two sections that is the broad objective andthe specific objective sessions as outlinedbelow.

1.3.1 Broad Objective

To determine the relationship between customer satisfaction, service quality and customer retention in the 4-star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya.

1.3.2 SpecificObjectives

To examine the impact of customer satisfaction on customer retention, in the 4 star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya.

To determine the relationship between the quality of services offered and customer satisfaction in the 4-star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya.

1.4 Hypotheses

This section presents that hypothesis utilized in this research.

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention in the 4 star and 5star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya.

Alternative Hypothesis 1

There is a relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention in the 4 star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no relationship between the quality of services offered and customer satisfaction in the 4 star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya.

Alternative Hypothesis 2

There is a relationship between the quality of services offered and customer satisfaction in the 4 star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya.

1.5 Significance of theStudy

The research study will be useful in assessingthe relationship between two dependent variables that includes customer satisfaction and service quality and other dependent variables. The entire study exploration will be based on the previous researchers' and explorers' notion that there is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction, service quality, and customer retention more so in the service industry, hotel industry to be specific. The study will not only be of benefit to the academic fraternitybut also to the hospital industry's operating managers and entrepreneurs inclusive. The survey findings will be of benefit in adding to the body of knowledge on the relationship between customer satisfaction, service quality, and customer retention in the hospitalityindustrysector.Suchknowledgetogetherwiththerecommendationswill

be useful to the above-mentioned administrative authorities, that is operational managersandeventheentrepreneursinanunderstandingofthecustomers'perception towards the quality of service offered and the impact it has on their attitude towards repurchasing the services offered by these 4-star and 5-star hotels in the region in context. Besides, the research will form a basis for other service-providing industries in the nation, including the bank organizations, network service providers such as Safaricom and Airtel. Furthermore, the survey findings can be further extended to the other hotels in the remaining seven geographical regions and be of importance to the service and sub-service industries. Last but not least is that the survey's findings can be considered as a foundation in building servicestrategies.

CHAPTER 2

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section of the research project reviews pieces of literature that is relevant to the specific objectives. The impacts that customer satisfaction has on customer retention and the relationship between customers' level of satisfaction and the quality of the servicesofferedinthe4-starand5-starhotelsoftheGreatRiftValleyRegion,Kenya.

2.2 ServiceQuality

Service quality is a major consideration for the management of hotel industry when designing appropriate marketing programs that can enable them to gain a competitive edge in the market. Service quality can determine the level customer satisfaction in a hotelandhospitalitysector.Itisanimportantstrategythatplayersinthehotelindustry can use to improve their competitiveness in the business environment and enhance their performance in the industry. Muchogu (2016) defined Service quality as the client's view of service quality wellness in meeting of surpassing the client's desires (Muchogu2016).Inherstudy,shequotedMartin(1999)'sconceptsofservicequality whooutlinedthatseveralattributesconstitutecharacteristicsofaservicehencemaking evaluation of service performanceharder.

Anotheraspectofservicetoputintoconsiderationisitscomplexityindelivery.There is different uniqueness in how every employee in an organization delivers the similar service to be delivered. The uniqueness of service delivery is not only dependent on who is being served by whom but is also dependent on other external factors. This outlines how different clients could end up with totally different experiences with a similar employee in different times of the day. The consistent need of meeting customer's expectations in almost all the organizations call forth for consequent manager understands of customer's thoughts of how their needs should be satisfied through genuine understanding of their perceptions. According to Muchogu (2016) managers are considered being at a superior position on matters of their customers' needs and wants satisfaction upon unmistakably distinguishing and comprehending customers' prerequisites (Muchogu,2016).

According to (Muchogu, 2016) Majority of the services and products offered in the hotel and hospitality industry is often intangible. Services offered are intangible in

nature hence difficulty in quantifying whatever is offered to the customers. There is a likelihood of a first timer client in failing to see the value of a service. Theexperience may however not be only applicable to the first timer client only but also to other clients as well. This is due to the fact that client's take on the value of a service delivered is affected by several factors that may not be constant to all the clients. Besides, several clients would end up with several experiences with a similar service from a similarorganization.

2.3 CustomerSatisfaction

The satisfaction of the customer needs is a major consideration for many of the companies in the hospitality and hotel sector. The customers are highly regarded by organization and the management should emphasize on meeting the needs of the customers. Customer is normally considered a judgment made by then customer concerning an item or a service offered on how well it meets the clients' expectations or desires. Literature has it that clients tend to be contented and happy whenever they get whatever was promised (Muchogu, 2016). The contentment can be defined as satisfactory or delightful that is when the offer is equal the expectations or when whateverisservedismorethanwhattheyexpectedrespectively.Dissatisfactioncomes

when the client is served services that he/she considers them of low quality compared towhattheclientexpected.Itisamajorfactorthatcanleadtofailureofthecustomers   to become loyal and purchase the products of an organization. This normally happens when the performance is lower than the clients' expectation. There is a likelihood of dissatisfied customers discouraging others to avoid purchasing the products of an organization.Itisthereforecriticalforeveryorganization'smanagementtoeffectively understandthefactorsthathasaninfluenceincustomersatisfactionhenceassistingin

decision making and designing appropriate products fitting the customers' preference (Gibson,2005).

Critical attention to customer's preference, likings and criticism is taken into consideration by the markets as this guide them in products and service development andimprovement.However,itisbelievedtoincreasethechancesoflandingonaloyal client who is not only moved by the quality of product or service offered but by the quantity of satisfaction as well. According to Gibson (2005) customer satisfaction plays a major role in creating brand loyalty from the satisfied customers. It is due to this reason that many organizations put much focus on meeting and exceeding customer'sexpectation.Itshouldhoweverbenotedthatcustomersatisfactiondoesnot

necessarily lead to customer loyalty. An organization that puts much focus on customer satisfaction tends to be at increased chances sourcing satisfied customers who may not necessarily shop for an alternative hence putting such a particular organization ahead of the competition.

2.4 CustomerLoyalty

It is noted that having appropriate customer loyalty programs can lead to improved competitiveness of companies in the global business environment. Taking behavioral classification of customer loyalty into consideration, it can simply mean customers purchasing continuously from one or few specific suppliers regardless of the product or service being delivered by a variety of suppliers in the customers' vicinity. Secondly, behavioral definition of customer loyalty can be outlined by an increased amountofproductpurchasesoranincreasedfrequencyinpurchasingthesaidproduct orserviceofferedinaparticularspecificplace.Moreover,customerloyaltycouldalso denote improved relationship between the customer and the serviceprovider.

Besidesqualityserviceandcustomersatisfaction,theaspectofcustomerloyaltycomes intoplayaswell.Achievementofcustomerloyaltyisnormallyevidentuponcontinual customers' belief that a specific product or service offered is of the best quality. That is a product or service that meets the customers' needs orwants.

Customer satisfaction can be characterized as either in terms of customers' attitude towardsaparticularproductorserviceoffered.Secondly,customersatisfactioncanbe defined based on customers' behavioral ways. Taking customer satisfaction as an attitude, it can simply be outlined as a combination of feelings that creates overall customers' commitment to a particular product or service offered. Measurement of customers' feelings also known as customer satisfaction helps in determination of customer'sloyalty.

Maintaining customer loyalty may take a considerable amount of time as loyalty is normally acquired over a given amount of time. Customer loyalty calls forth service providers' effort of going out of the way and seek to understand and address the customers' need. This therefore calls forth for the business managers to set up strategies and intervention that their implementation would keep the existing guests satisfied and happy so that they may not leave for competitor's products. Literature hasitthatthereislikelihoodofcontinualbehaviorofcustomerbuyingfromaspecific service provider when they are contented with the quality level of the service being provided (Hofman-Kohlmeyer,2016).

According to Hofman-Kohlmeyer (2016), it is outlined that managers are using differentloyaltyprogramswhicharemeanttoutilizebothfinancialandpsychological factors in impacting customers in order to maintain long-term loyalty. In his study, it was outlined that managers have started incorporating effective components besides the financial incentives. This is because financial incentives only have not been seen to guarantee a long-term relationship (Hofman-Kohlmeyer,2016).

In her study, Hofman-Kohlmeyer (2016) outlined that there has been gross and wide acknowledgement of the concept of customer loyalty in influencing the performance of companies globally in the last couple of years. Besides, she noted that there is increasedawarenessoftheexistingpositiverelationshipbetweencustomerloyaltyand company's profitability. The increased company's profits are directly proportional to the increased number of loyal customers. This makes companies build a long-lasting relationship with their satisfied customers given that there is significant association between attachment of customers and their loyalty to a company and the company's generation of higher profits. Despite customer satisfaction, it is still notable that some customers may be hard to earn their loyalty. This has resulted into entrepreneurs are looking for progressive tools to maintain both customer satisfaction and their interest that would result in regular purchases. There is generally a significant association between the quality of service offered and customer satisfaction. Besides, there is notableassociationbetweencustomersatisfactionandcustomerreferralinthatclients who get their desires fulfilled tend to prescribe similar product or the brand to others in need of it (Hofman-Kohlmeyer,2016).

AccordingtoHofman-Kohlmeyer(2016)thereislesslikelihoodofsatisfiedcustomers to change to other brands. Give the mentioned significant correlation between service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, it calls forth for critical understanding of both the service quality, customer satisfaction and how they would influence the loyalty of a givencustomer.

Inhisstudy,Vinod(2011)outlinedthatthereisnotablesignificantassociationbetween successful loyalty programs and conversion of satisfied customers to loyalcustomers. The relationship has resulted to protection of market shares over time (Vinod, 2011). Several literatures have been designed to provide an outlook of different approaches on customer loyalty improvement. Customer loyalty program tools have been developed basing on literature to aid with customer retention. This calls forth for managers to identify important factors that would lead to a successfulprogram.

Different pieces of literatures have focused on analyzing the definitions of customer loyalty to bring forth intense understanding of its concept. Besides definition, there is an intense outline of the customer loyalty programs. Last but not least, previously outlined pieces of literature have laid down some directives that could be valuable to managers. There are several approaches when it comes to customer loyalty. Two of themarewelldefinedandoutlinedbyTabakuandZerellari(2015).Intheirstudy,they outlinedbehavioralandattitudinalcustomerloyalty.Thebehavioralapproachoutlines customers' continual behavior of purchasing a product or service in a particular supplier or service provider. Attitudinal customer loyalty on the other hand isbrought forth by a developed psychological connection between the customer and with the productorservicedeliveredhenceresultingintocomponentsofpreferencethatwould   not only lead to a customers' positive attitude but also commitment aswell.

Customer loyalty has been brought into limelight by several researchers. Ludin& Cheng(2014)forexampledescribedcustomerloyaltyasacustomer-brandcontinuous relationship. In their report they described customer loyalty as the customers' resistance to switching brands regardless of any problem or any situation that can be encountered during the entire business progress. Moreover, they described customer loyaltyastherepeatedpurchaseofaparticularproduct,brandorservicefromaspecific place. According to Varela-Neira et al. (2010), customer loyalty is linked to several benefits including an increased number of purchases from the loyal customers and newly referred customers and lower price sensitivity. Last but not least, loyalty of the customers is known to reduce marketing costs as it leadsto.

2.5 Association between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Retention

Customers' satisfaction with regards to hotels' products and services can vary from onehoteltoanotherorfromoneguestareatoanotherinthesamehotelfacility(Berry, 2010). Customers' satisfaction from the Consistent fulfilment of services offered by a hoteltoitscustomersresulttocustomers'satisfactionhencecustomerloyaltyinreturn. This notion is supported by the attraction theory developed in the year 1965, which argues that persons' attraction to another is based on physical appearance. According to Mugito (2016), customers' perception of hotels' physical features such as food recreation facilities and easy accessibility may greatly impact the loyalty of the customers (Mugito, 2016). Customer retention, on the other hand, can be defined as the rate at which customers remain loyal to a particular organization. Oliver 1997

definesloyaltyasafuturedeepcommitmentofrebuyingorre-patronizingaparticular

preferable product or service despite the external influence by the marketing efforts whicharepotentiallyknowntohaveadirectimpactinchangingcustomers'switching behavior(Oliver,1997).Thesedefinitionshaveresultedinseveralresearchersbuilding up loyalty models such as the service quality model, value model, satisfaction model and integrative model. Zethmal (2000) while in the discussion of the Service Quality Model outlined a direct correlation between the relationships of the variables in the context.Thatisservicequality,customersatisfactionandcustomerretention.Sweeney et al. (1991) discussed Value Model and outlined a direct link between the value of serviceofferedinthehotelindustryandcustomerretention.Customersatisfactionwas found to directly influence customer loyalty by Hallowell (1996), in the discussion of the Satisfaction model. Last but not least, Integrative model as well is another model that is of interest. It outlined a correlation between the quality of the service offered, the value of the service offered and the customer satisfaction that satisfaction and the customers'loyalty.Summinguptheideasofallthemodelsasmentionedabove,there isasignificantmultivariaterelationshipbetweenthequalityoftheserviceoffered,the value of the service offered and customers' satisfaction and their intentions of repurchasingasimilarproduct.AccordingtoCroninetal.(2000),boththequalityand the value of the service offered together with customer satisfaction are the significant variablesthatformthebuildingblocksofcustomerloyalty.Theliteratureoutlinesthat customer satisfaction positively impacts the loyalty of the customers of a particular product or service. World Trade Organization's definition of customer satisfaction as quoted by Kangogo et al. (2013) and Mugito (2016) as the customers' well-being and pleasure resulting from gaining the expectation from a purchased product or service. Mugito (2016) added that customers' satisfaction is viewed as a personal assessment usually done by a customer after purchasing either a product or service. Customers' expectationsandexperienceafterconsumptionofthepurchasedproductorserviceare amongthesignificantfactorsthatimpactcustomersatisfaction.Customerloyaltymay as well be impacted by relationship satisfaction. Survival of relationship satisfaction isonlyinthepresenceoftrustinthecustomerrelationship.Awell-establishedtrustin the customer relationship leads to customer loyalty. According to Aamir et al.(2010), customer satisfaction is at its peak when there is a strong relationship between the customer and the service provider. The effective relationship allows the customer to believe in the service provider. A buildup of trust from the service provider due tothe consistent, timely delivering or services and products culminates to customersgetting

satisfiedwhichinreturnresultstocustomerretentionandloyalty(Mugito,2016).The literature outlines two dimensions of customer retention in a hotel industry; that is, behavioral and attitudinal inherent customer loyalty (Ward & Chua, 2007). Besides, Bataineh et al. (2015) outlined a strong and positive significance of 62.9% for the impact of customer satisfaction on customer retention. Similar results of significantly positive effect are outlined by Bricci et al. (2016). In a nutshell, the study revealed positivecustomersatisfaction'simpactoncustomerloyalty.It,therefore,goeswithout sayingthatthereisanintertwiningofcustomersatisfactionwithtrustthatthecustomer has on the service provider and the and the commitment that the service provider has inservingemployees,whichinreturnsleadstoproduct'svalueorthevalueofaservice offered perceived by the customer. The guest's loyalty is greatly impacted by how he/she will perceive the value of the product or the service offered. Several factors, however,influencethecustomers'loyalty.Amongthefactorsincludetheleveloftrust, level of commitment in the hotel facilities, level of communication in the hotel facilities, level of complaint handling in the hotel facilities, gender where men are believed to have a stronger relationship between satisfaction and repurchasing as comparedtotheiroppositegender.Customersatisfactioncanbeinfluencedby,age,as well as the level of income, image, physical environment and price and in return, affects customer loyalty (Mugito, 2016). Commitment, there are two commitment types, that is effective and calculative. Service provider-customer commitment is described by the affective commitment, whereas the vice-versa is described by calculativecommitment.Gounaris(2005)outlinedthatthereisadesireforacontinued relationship after affective commitment when the relationship is enjoyable; hence the customer experiencing a sense of loyalty in return. On the other hand, customer can get emotionally attached to a particular brand purchased by the affectively committed customers. These ideas were summed up by Matilla (2006) and outlined that the mentioned emotions help in creating customers' sense of belonging and customers' personal identification with the hotels' product. Gender is one of the personal factors affecting customers' satisfaction which is indirectly having an impact on customer loyalty.Menareconsideredlessemotiveascomparedtowomen.Thereisalikelihood of women repurchasing a particular product or service whenever they are adequately emotionally attached, or there is the enjoyment of social experience with service or product. Men, on the other hand, consider repurchasing a product or a service or a particularbrandafterithassatisfieditsfunction(Cryetal.,2007).Imageimpacts

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loyalty indirectly by influencing customer's perception of the goods and services offered by a particular hospitality industry (Muchogu, 2016). According to Gamet (1997), customers visiting a particular hotel industry assess both the quality and the leveloftheserviceprovidedbyusingthehotel'sphysicalenvironment.Servicescapes or built environment in other words as according to Bitner (1991) may include things such as décor, artifacts, spatial layout and ambience that may influence customers satisfaction hence impact on the customer's repurchasingbehavior.

When we engage in a discussion involving customer satisfaction and customers repurchase behavior, we rarely miss talking about the impact of customers' expectations on customer satisfaction that, in return, impacts customer loyalty. Notably, Yongchaitrakool (2014) outlined a significant relationship between customer's evaluation and customers' value expectation of the delivered service. AccordingtoYongchaitrakool,(2014)'sargument,twolevelsofcustomerexpectation arediscussed,thatisthedesiredexpectationwhichcansimplybedefinedasthedesired customer's expectation from the service provider. Adequate expectations, on theother hand, are the acceptable service performance to the customers (Yongchaitrakool, 2014).Customerexpectationcanbedefinedasbeliefsonservicedeliveryservingasa standard against the performance done. Besides, customer expectation can as well be developedfromhearingsofaparticularproductorservicefromothers(Williametal., 2016). Awara and Anyadighibe (2014) argue that customers are less satisfied if the product or service offered does not meet their expectation. On the other hand, it is more feasible for such customers to get satisfied once the products or service offered to meet theirexpectations.

Furthermore, Rnaweera and Prabhu (2003), agrees that there is greater retention for satisfied customers. The issue in context has been of great concern to several researchers. From Mohsan et al. (2011), dissemination of information about a particularproductbythecustomersisgreatlyinfluencedbythecustomers'satisfaction, bearing in mind that happiest customers disseminate products' information with ease. Guo et al. (2009) outlines that the most necessary foundation for a service delivery organization is customer satisfaction. Lin and Wu as well are in support of the idea. They outlined that there is a likelihood of unsatisfied customers not establishing a long-lastingrelationshipwiththecompany.Poorservicesthatcannotmeetcustomers' expectation lead to customer dissatisfaction (Rust &Zahorik 1993). In a nutshell, amongtheessentialpreconditionsforeconomicsurvivalforservicedelivery

companies include building up long-lasting relationships with customers. And in gaining a strategic advantage and survival of the service delivery companies in the today's ever-increasing competitive environment, customer retention is believed tobe the most powerful weapons that can be employed by the companies in theirfight.

2.6 The Relationship between Service Quality and CustomerRetention

Inhotelindustry,servicequalityisconsideredastheleadingfactorsthatcaninfluence theabilityofthecustomerstopurchasetheproductsandservicesofferedbytheplayers in the industry. The service quality in hotel industry can be measured using various metrics that include the level of customer satisfaction, the hotel bookings, occupancy rates, and feedbacks from the client (Rnaweera and Prabhu, 2003). Many research studies have attempted to assess the relationship between the service quality and the customer retention in the hotel industry. For example, research by Mohsam et al. (2011) indicated the quality of service in the hotel industry is an important factor that canhelpretainthecustomersinthissector.Manycustomersareinterestedinapositive experience and often prefer to participate in activities that can make them attracted to the same company and continue using its products over a long period oftime.

In the face of the current global competition businesswise, it is imperative that the hospitality industry puts the subject matter in place for continual organizational success. It is with at most importance that the matter of service quality be considered as it is a factor that is known to give room for consumer retention. Hotel, being a serviceindustry,significantemphasisisputonthequalityoftheservicedeliveredand   the association that is there between the quality of service and consumer satisfaction. Theissueincomahavingraisedamajorconcernamongtheresearchers,itisclearthat matterhasbeenstudiedbeforeandthelaidoutlinefromthepreviousresearchesisthat   some of the researchers ended up concluding that service quality as an important customer satisfaction' indicator. Oliver (2000) was as well into the idea of customer satisfaction being a core philosophy of core marketing strategy. He added that brand loyalty might be as a result of customersatisfaction.

2.7 TheoreticalFramework

ThestudywillemployaServiceQualityModel.Itisamongthemostpopularmultiple service quality models developed by three known gurus in the field of marketing.The three developers were Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry. Development of the model happened in the 1980 century, 1980 to be specific. It was developed during thetimes

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when quality and products were becoming a pivotal concern. It sought to identify the gaps in existence in case of lower quality services are delivered. The importance of servicegotmoreinterestingintheeightieswhenthequalityofservicesdeliveredcould not be quantified. This resulted to the development of the SERVQUALModel to help in mitigating the issue behind difficulty in measuring and quantifying quality of services offered to customers (Ravichandran et al., 2010).

The model is primarily a qualitative analysis approach that seeks to outline what is to bemeasuredupondeterminingthecustomer'ssatisfactionandtheservicequality.For example,ifasatisfactionsurveyismainlydependentonthetransactionsmadebetween supplier and the buyer, generic measurement of environmental factors is taken into account when measuring the observedquality.

The framework is also known as a gap analysis framework in that it is used for exposure and addressing of shortcomings in the service industry. It outlines a comparison between the expected quality service that was to be delivered and the service quality that has actually been experienced. The model measures customer experiences based on their perceptions. It entails external analysis of the customers' needs in relation to the experienced service quality. The model's focus is oncustomer needs and not on the model's measuring system or the perception of the organization (Ravichandran et al., 2010).

There is strict gap monitoring between customer expectation and the customers' experience of the actual service experience that's need to be taken into account when determining the needs of a customer.

SERVQUAL Model takes expectancy pattern of the quality service into account. The pattern outlines the difference between customers' expectations and perceptions. It outlines the gap difference in quality that is in existence between the customers' expectation and the customers' actual experience form the service delivered (Ravichandran et al., 2010).

Given the advantages, the SERVQUAL Model enables organization mangers and the administration unit department at large in learning on the factors that play a role in formulation of the customer's expectancy pattern. This may help in improvement of the organization before taking expectancy pattern into account (Ravichandran et al., 2010).

The SERVQUAL model was developed following studies done exclusively among three companies; telecommunications banking and maintenance companies. The

studies involved analysis done on the customers' perception and experience of the services offered in the here mentioned companies (Ravichandran et al., 2010). The studies led to development of 10 dimensions which include: Reliability (the extent of accurateness and honesty of the service offered), Responsiveness (the organizations promptness' and adequate response to the customers' questions or complaints), Competence (organizations' competence in ensuring quality service is offered to its clients), Access (the promptness and easiness of a client in contacting the right department when in need). Courtesy (the extent of organizations' employees' politeness to customers), Communication (the extent of maintaining and sharing of a clear honest and prompt information with the customers), Credibility (the organization'sextentofsharingabelievableandreliablemessagewithitscustomers), Security (ensuring customer's trust to the services provided) the proper access of the between the customer and, Knowing the customer (the organization's' extent of establishment of a personal approach with the customer including offering effective and prompt response to customers' needs and wishes) and Tangibles (the extent of decoration and how habitable a service offering environment looks like. This may includetheextentofattractivenessofstaffs'clothesoruniforms)(Ravichandranetal., 2010).

The five identified GAPs in SERVQUAL model that are likelyto be identified during analysis of customer's experience with a particular service offered include the knowledge gap, the standards gap, delivery gap, communications gap andsatisfaction gap (Ravichandran et al.,2010).

Conclusively, the models outline a direct correlation between the relationship of quality of service offered, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Figure 2.1

Service Quality Model (Parasuraman, Zeithaml& Berry, 1985)
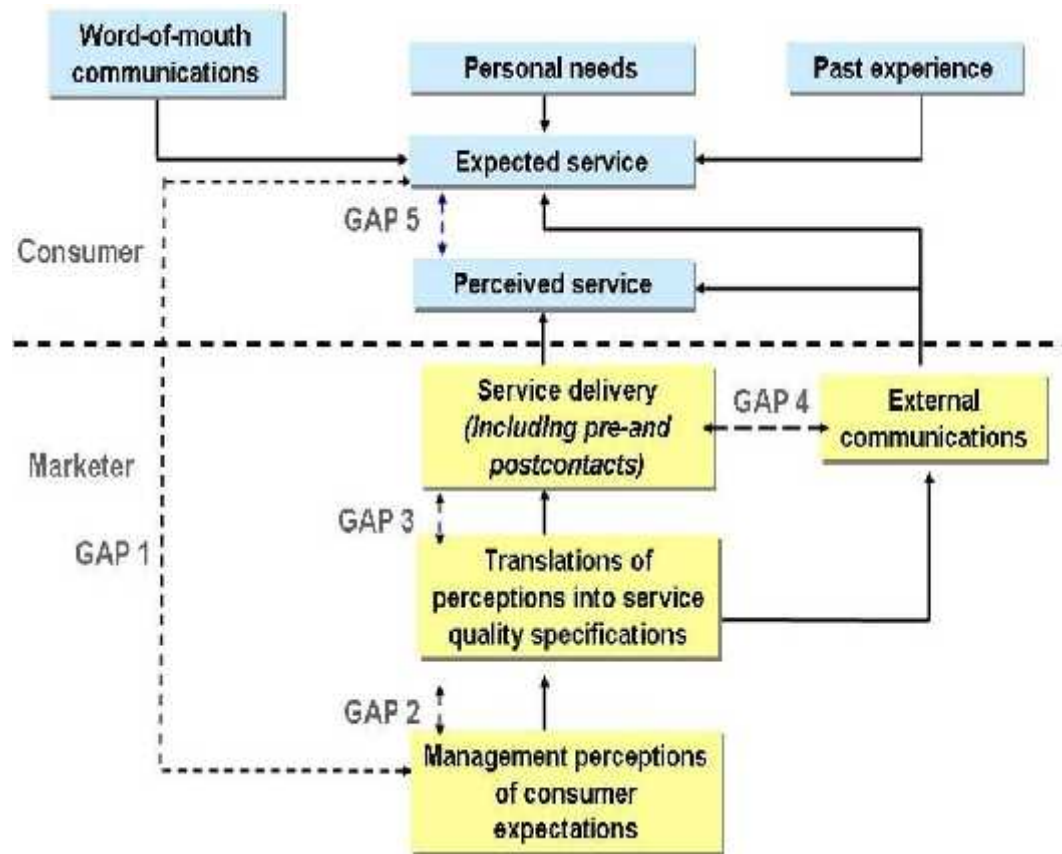
2.8 ConceptualFramework

This section shows the conceptual framework that has been utilized in this study.

Figure 2.2

Conceptual Framework (Author's concept)

IndependentVariables   DependentVariable   Outcome

Product Service
- Quality
- Value

Customer attitudinal factors
- Perception

Hotel facility factors
- Level oftrust
- Level of commitment
- Levelof

Customer satisfaction Quality of services

Customer retention.

Customer biographic factors
- Age
- Typ eof

Intervening Variables
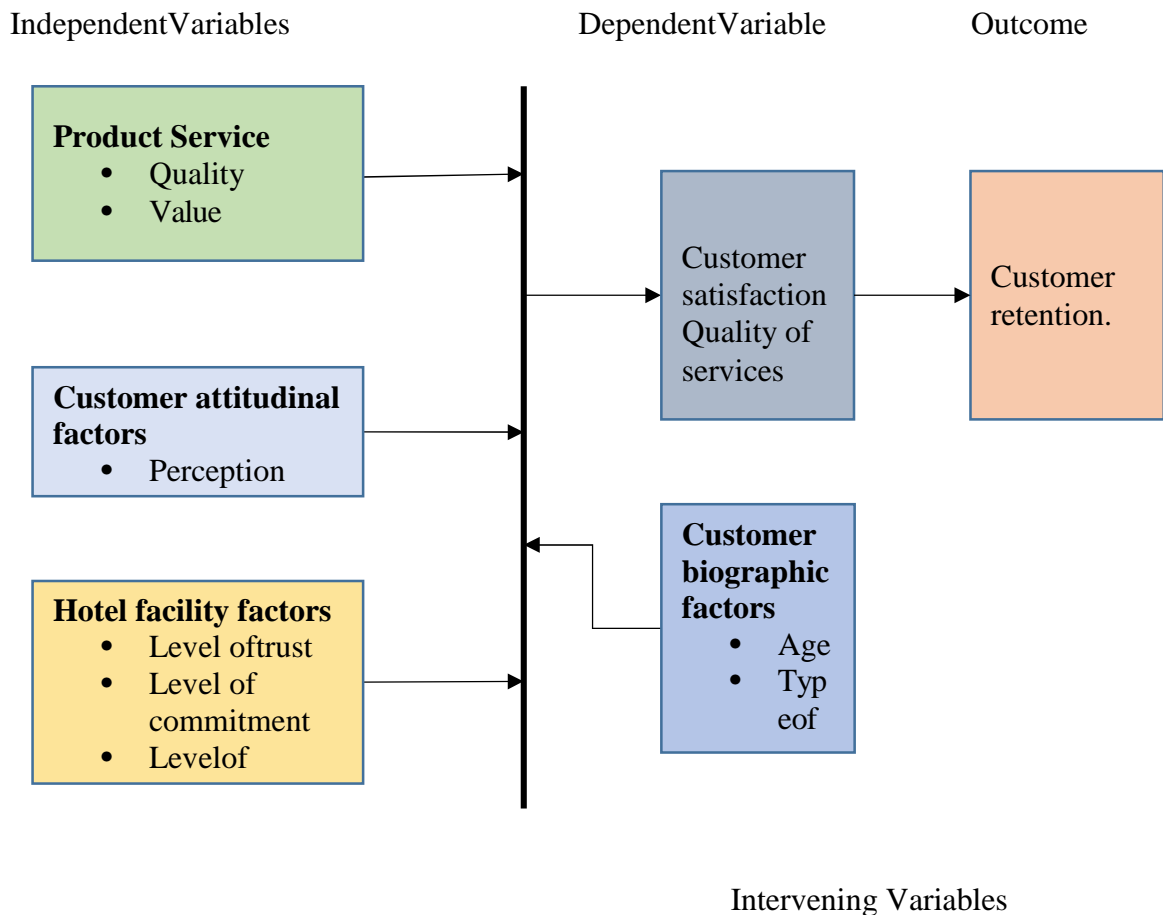
The research study has two dependent variables that include customer satisfaction which are influenced by three independent variables, namely; product or service factors, customer attitudinal factors and hotel facility factors resulting in customer retention.Thebiographiccustomerfactorswhichincludecustomers'age,sexandlevel of income, are the interveningvariables.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Thischapterdidnotonlyoutlinethestudydesignthatwillbeemployedintheresearch project but also describes the targeted population as well. It outlines the exploration arrangement.Itinvolvesasuckingexplanationofhowtheinformationwillbegathered that is the research tool to be used during the pre-testing and the actual datacollection process, who will give out the information needed; the study population. And where the information will be gathered; the study area. Besides, it is a concise sample size calculation. Furthermore, it is an outline of the research instrument. Last but notleast, the section has outlined the data analysis techniques to be used and ethical consideration.

3.2 ResearchDesign

Research design has maintained its meaning despite the different definitions from differentresearchers.Sekaran(2013)defineditasasequencedecisionmakingchoices that are coherently intertwined. The researcher employed a cross-sectionaldescriptive study design to assess the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retentioninthe4starand5starratedhotelsintheGreatRiftValleyRegion.Research

designoutlinesthebasicmethodologyutilizedbyresearcherstoaddresstheirresearch

questions. It will involve the customers attending the mentioned hotels. Customers' perception is what was used to measure the level of customer satisfaction. This was knowntobeanidealresearchdesignasitdidnotonlyseektocollectanddescribethe data but also determined the relationship between the variables that is; customer satisfaction and customer retention. Service quality which is another dependent variable was assessed through the feedbacks from the clients. Besides, a number of previous studies used a similar design and ended up with significant findings where the specific objectives were sufficiently achieved. Examples of such researchers include Watiki (2014) and Musyoka (2013), among others. In essence, the research is based on two hypotheses that revolve around the customer's satisfaction and the service quality in the hotel industry. The research design was, therefore, aconnection

study that demonstrated the degree of relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention.

3.3 StudyPopulation

AccordingtoSkaran(2013),thepopulationcanbedefinedasagroup,eventsorthings of the principal investigator's interest that he/she wishes to study. According to the study, the targeted population was the Great Rift Valley region's five star and 4-star hotel visitors. There are 189 registered hotels in Kenya as according to the Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers (KAHC) as of 2020. And out of the 189 hotels, 46 of themarefromtheRiftValleyregion.AccordingtotheTourismRegulatoryAuthority, boththesouthandthenorthriftoftheGreatRiftValleyregionhostatotalof284star and 5-star hotels. There are five 5-star hotels in total, while the remaining 23 hotels are4-star.Twenty-twoofthetwenty-three4-starhotelsisfoundatthesouthriftwhile the remaining one is found at the north rift. The five 5-star hotels have a total room occupancy of 267 while the 4-star hotels have total room occupancy of 1043. In total both the 4 star and 5-star hotels have total room occupancy of 1310, giving 20% population distribution for the 5 star and 80% population distribution for the 4-star hotels.Thestudytherefore,involvedallthevisitorsthatwereaged18yearsandabove whoconsentedtoparticipateinthestudyanditexcludedallthenon-consentingguests attending the 4 star and 5-starhotels.

3.4 Sampling

The study used both multi-stage and convenience sampling, given that the number of hotels in each of the two categories was a bit high, and the allocated time for the research was as well limited. Besides, the research was self-funding hence the use of theabove-mentionedsamplingtechniqueswhichensuredefficientmanagementofthe allocated funds. Random sampling giving every study objects the same chance for participation. According to Gravetter&Forzano (2015), convenience sampling was appropriateinthisstudyasitinvolvedtheelementsthatwereinapositionofaccessing the shared Google form link in the various social media platforms including WhatsApp, Facebook, twitter, and Instagram during the actual data collection period. Furthermore, the convenience sampling technique gave the principal investigator a chanceofsavingontimeasitgaveanopportunitytothosewhowerereadilyavailable duringdata collection. It was observed to be the most preferred sampling method as it is not only easy but also cheap to conduct as well (Gravetter&Forzano,2015).

Moreover, Guterman (2015), considered it as the most convenient sampling method for a service industry review as it tends to give data with regards to the most recent activities.

3.5 Sample SizeDetermination

ThesamplesizewasestimatedthroughpoweranalysisthatwasformulatedbyFischers et al.,(1991).

$$n = z^2 pq / d^2$$

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.9 \times (1 - 0.9)}{(0.05)^2}$$

$=138$

Where;

n = the desired sample size

z=thenormalstandarddeviation.Setat1.96,whichcorrespondstoa95%confidence interval.

p = the proportion of the target population with desired characteristics set at 90% or 0.9

q = 0.1 (that is 1-0.9).

d = degree of accuracy desired set at 0.05

138 is, therefore, the total sample size and is represented as below.

Table 3.1

Total Sample Size

Stratification	The number of rooms to be occupied.	Percentage Distribution	Sample size calculated
5-Star Hotels	267	20%	28
4-Star Hotels	1043	80%	110
Total	1310	100%	138

3.6 Data CollectionMethod

The study utilized Google forms as the study tool for data collection. The researcher developed questionnaires was converted into Google form comprising of different sections, four sections to be specific. The first section sought to find the participants general demographic data, including age bracket, education level and gender. The remaining three sections comprised of questions that sought to find the customers' perception with regards to the quality of service delivered to them. This was followed by the third section named as section C where it was comprised of questions which sought to find customers' satisfaction status and lastly is the relationship of their satisfaction and their loyalty, and the remaining sections included questions that will seektofindinformationthathelpedinternalizingthespecificresearchobjectives.The questions were developed to seek the participants' perception of quality service and how their perception was related to their loyalty. The questionnaires were online administered as outlined by the research procedure outlinedbelow.

3.7 ResearchProcedures

Thissectionpresentsthestagesoftheresearchprocedure,startingfromthepilotstudy to the analysis and presentation of data.

3.7.1 Pilot Study

Following approval of the research project's proposal by the Near East University Ethicscommitteeandtheresearchprojectsupervisor,pre-testingofthequestionnaires was done which involved those who attend the four-star and five-star hotels in the Great Rift Valley Region. Those who met the eligibility criteria were urged to take part in in the pilot study. They were asked to go through then informed consent with explanation, and then voluntarily participate in the pilot study by filling in the questionnaire.Thepre-testinginvolvedthirteenconsentingparticipantswhowereina position of accessing the online questionnaire in the form of Google form shared in varioussocialmediagroups.AccordingtoTrakulmaykeeetal.(2013),apilotstudyis considered a vital step prior to actual data collection. It helps in examining both the questionnaires' reliability and effectiveness that certify quality survey. Moreover, it helps in making necessary amendments for a better understanding of the participants during the actualstudy.

3.7.2 Validity and Reliability of the ResearchTool

This section discusses the reliability of the research tool, as well as its validity.

3.7.2.1 Validity.

The validity of the questionnaire was determined through a test-retest. The process involved measuring the relationship between two variables that is customer satisfaction and customer retention, hence ensuring validity which involved the useof aqualityquestionnairederivedfromoneoftheservicequalitiesmodels.Accordingto this research, the questionnaire was adopted from previously done researches (Muchogu, 2016) that produced significant findings and then modified. It was designedandtargetedtomeasurewhattheprincipalinvestigatorwantedtoassess.The questionnaire was thoroughly researched and was based on existing knowledge with regards to customer satisfaction and customerretention.

3.7.2.2 Reliability.

It is the research tool's ability to produce similar consistent results even after multiple trials. Reliability answers the stability of scores during the second administration of the study tool. In establishing the reliability of the study tool that is during the actual data collection; the researcher ensured that the results are not only precise but also stable and reproducible as well. The principal investigator put circumstances consistentasmuchashecould.Moreover,onlytheparticipantswhomettheinclusion criteria were recruited hence ensuring that all the participants were not only supplied with the same information but were tasted under the same conditions as well. Lastbut not least, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used in determining the study questionnaires'reliability.

3.7.3 Data CollectionProcedure

The data collection was done online given the COVID-19 pandemic. It was therefore done using Google forms with structured questionnaires upon validation process. The researcher started with a write-up to the regional administration unit seeking for permission to reach out to the potential study participants. After the permission was granted, obtaining participant's consent followed and the actual data collection commenced. The questionnaire was divided into different sections for the collection of different information starting with the demographic, followed by questionsderived from the two specific study objectives. The questionnaire was availed online in different social media forums where all the consenting participants that met the inclusion criteria participated in the studyvoluntarily.

3.7.4 Data Analysis andPresentation

TestingthenullhypothesiswasdoneusingboththeAnovaandt-statisticsandanalysis of the collected data which will be collected was done by regression analysis using SPSS v 26.0. The value of R2 revealed if customer satisfaction and customer quality could independently account for a considerable amount of percentage of thecustomer retention variation. The f-statistics analysis, on the other hand, was used in revealing if the R model would statistically be significant at 0.05 significancelevel.

Y = 0 + 1X1 + 2X2 +

Whereby: Y = Customer retention (CR);

X1 = Customer satisfaction (CS);

X2= Service quality (SQ);

0, 1, 2, =Regression model coefficients.

= Error Term.

3.8 EthicalConsiderations

Research approval together with the research questionnaire was sought from the Near East University Ethics committee and the research project's supervisor. Upon approval, the principal investigator sought permission to engage the potential participants from the Great Rift Valley region's administration unit. Information obtained from this research was treated with the utmost confidentiality by not disclosing the "respondent's" identity throughout the entire study period. Given that the data was collected online, the email that was used to formulate the questions form the research questionnaire was highly protected by a lockable password. Besides, it was well secured with recovery emails and recovery phone to ensure safeness of the data. The research report hard copies were stored and will be stored lockable drawers for the next 5 years of research relevance. The keys of the lockable drawers will continue being under principal investigator's control. The soft copies, on the other hand, were stored in a password locked drive.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The study aimed at determining the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer retention in the 4 star and 5-star hotels in Rift Valley Region, Kenya. The studyhadaresponsiverateof92.75%.Theresponserateisconsideredreasonablerate as it surpasses 80% (Fincham, 2008). Besides, the rate concurs with Mugenda&Mugenda's insights on palatability of a hypothesis for examination and reporting. In their article, they outlined that an extraordinary study response rate should be 60%, oncetheratereaches70%isconsideredawesome.Aresponserateof92.75%therefore wassurprisingforanexamination.Thehighresponseratecouldberelatedtotheonline survey data collection method where the respondents answered the questions ate their ownconvenience.

Thechapterseekstopresenttheresultsandfindingsofthespecificobjectives.Besides, results for the respondents' socio-demographic data areincluded.

4.2 Socio-Demographic Data

This section of the study presents the socio-demographic features of the datagathered and utilized.

4.2.1 GenderDistribution

Majority of the participants 56.3% (n=82) were female and the remaining 43.8% (n=56) were male. The gender distribution of the respondents is shown in the Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1.

Table 4.1

Gender distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	82	56%
Male	56	44%
Total	138	100%

Figure 4.1

Gender of the Respondents
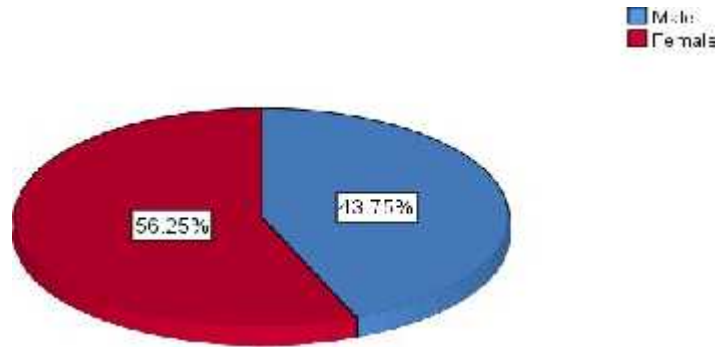
4.2.2 EducationalLevel

With regards to the educational level slightly more than half of the participants50.8% (n=71) were university graduates. While the remaining respondents were as follows; 38.3% (n=50) and 9.4% (n=12) were masters and PhD holders respectively. Only 5 respondents(1.6%)hadhighschoolastheirhighestlevelofeducation.Theeducational level of the respondents is shown in the Table 4.2 and Tigure4.2.

Table 4.2

Educational Level of The Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
University Graduate	71	51%
Master's	50	38%
PhD	12	9%
High School	5	2%
Total	138	100%

Figure 4.2

Education Level of The Respondents
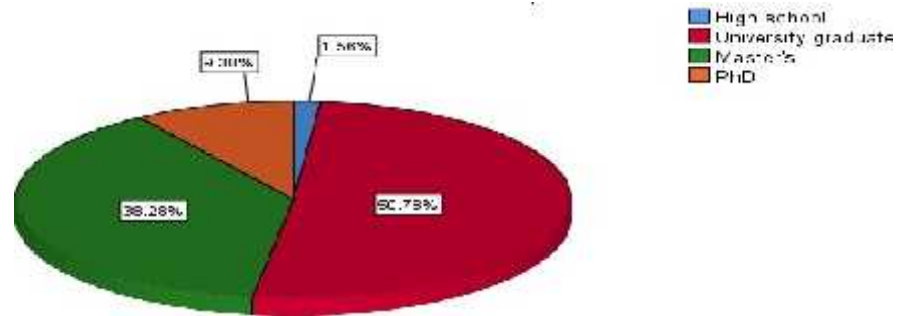
4.2.3 AgeGroup

Most of the participants lied in the age group of 26-35 years of age. The remaining participantsfellontheotheragegroupsasoutlined;17.2%(n=22),27.3%(n=35),and 11.7% (n=17) in the 18-25 years, 36-45 years and above 45 years respectively. Graphical presentation is as outlined in the Table 4.3 and Figure4.3.

Table 4.3

Age Group Distribution

Age (years)	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	22	17%
26-35	66	44%
36-45	35	27%
46 and above	17	12%
	138	100%

Figure 4.3

Age Group of The Respondents
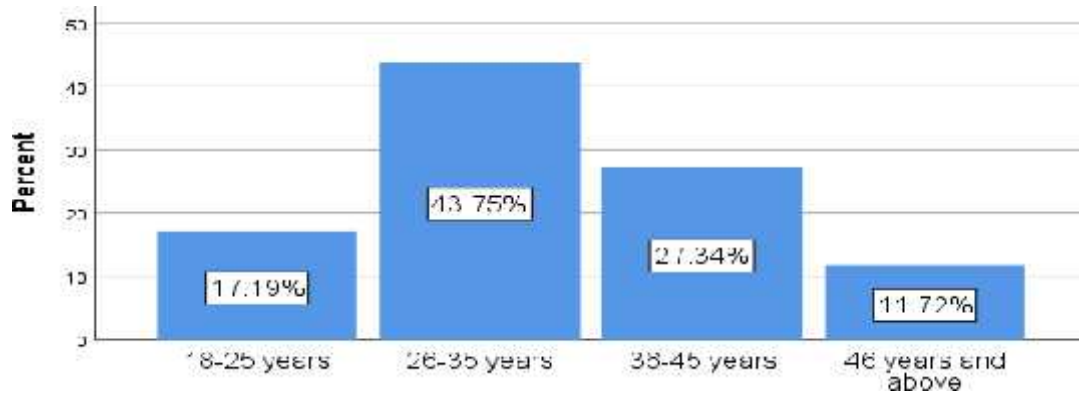
4.2.4 MaritalStatus

Most of the participants 48.4% (n=68) were single on matters of marital status, while 42.2%(n=56),weremarried,5.5%(n=8)weredivorcedandtheremaining3.9%(n=6) were widowed. The marital status of the respondents is shown in the Table 4.4 and Figure4.4.

Table 4.4

Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	68	48%
Married	56	42%
Divorced	8	5%
Widowed	6	4%
Total	138	100%

Figure 4.4

Respondents' Marital Status
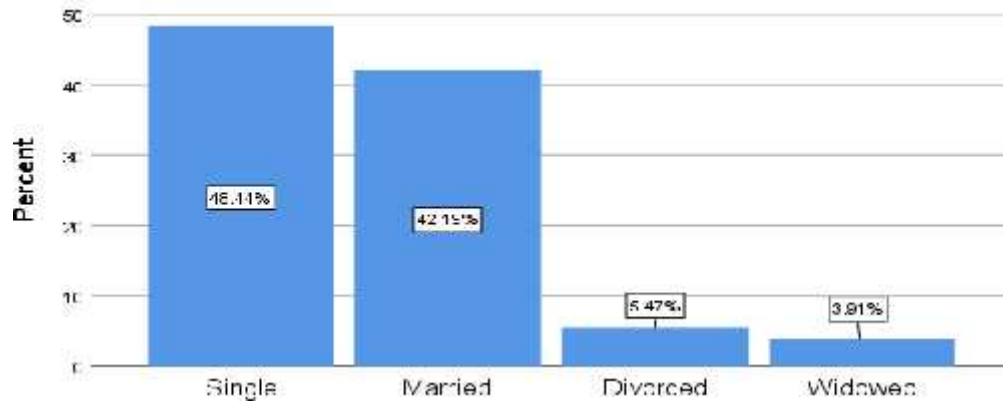
4.2.5 Nationalities

Majority 79.7% (n=108) were Africans, 11.7% (n=17) were Europeans, 4.7% (n=5) wereAustraliansand3.9%(n=8)werefromtheUnitedKingdom.Thenationalitiesof   the respondents are shown in the Table 4.5 and Figure4.5.

Table 4.5

Nationality of the Respondents

Nationalities	Frequency	Percentage
African	108	80%
European	17	12%
United Kingdom	8	5%
Australia	5	4%
Total	138	100%

Figure 4.5

Nationality of the Respondents
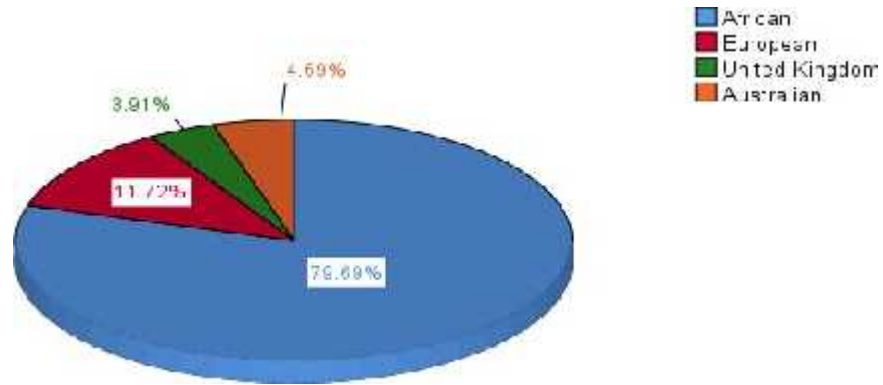
Four-star hotels and lodges hosted majority 78.1% (n=105) of the participants and 21.9% (n=33) had visited Five-star hotels. Sarova Mara Game Camp a 4-star and FairmontMaraSafariLodge4-starequallyrecordedthehighestnumber14.1%(n=18)   of respondents while Lake Elementaita Serena Camp a 5-star hosted the least number of respondents 1.6% (n=2).

Figure 4.6

Name of the Hotel Visited
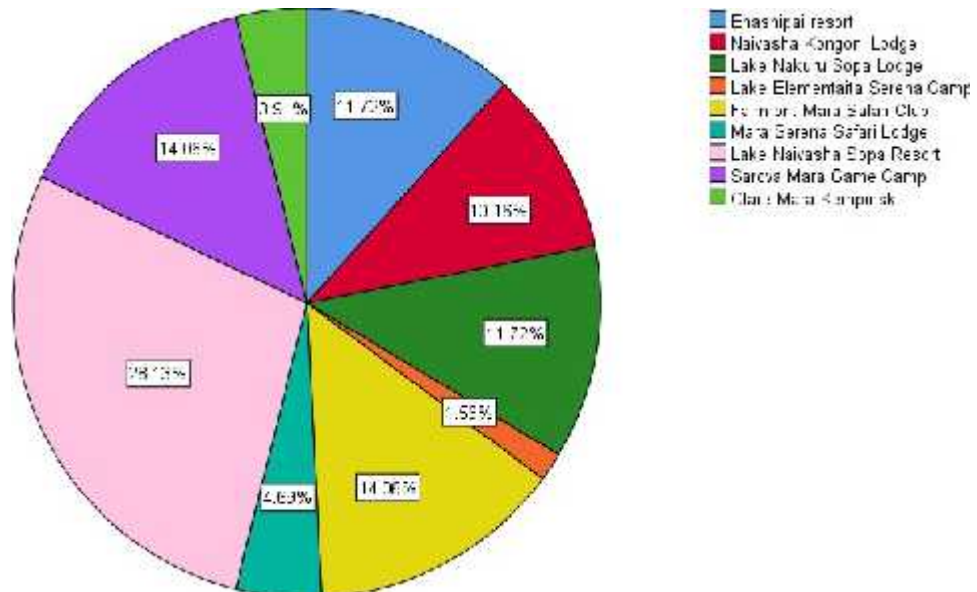
4.3 The Service QualityVariable

Service quality was one of the areas that the research investigated in an attempt to come up with findings to determine its impacts on the customer satisfaction. The quality of service in hotel industry should be maintained to enable the existing customer remain loyal to the services offered and attract new customers to use the same services. This section of the data collection involved a 5 Likert questions that were designed to assess the customers' extent of agreement on their feeling about the level of quality of services offered in the hotel they visited. Consistency of the five Likert scale questions was evident as performance of reliability test revealed a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.919 which is acceptable given that the reliability values lie between 0 and 1 and Cooper and Schindler (2008) outlined 0.7 to be a satisfactory unwavering quality coefficient.

Table 4.6

Service Quality Variable Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.920	.919	18

The findings in this section of the questionnaire sought to give an account of the researchers' aim in determining the effects of the quality of services offered to customer retention.

Likert scale was designed that 1 be the strongest and 5 be the weakest. The average mean of the findings was 1.29. It is therefore evident that the respondents were more positive on matters of the quality of services that was offered in the 4 star and 5-star hotels.

Table 4.7

Service Quality Variable Standard Deviation and Means Of The Responses

No	The feeling about the level of quality of the services offered in the current hotel.	Mean	Standard deviation

34

1	The hotel has a good-looking facility including good looking bedrooms, good looking poolside bars among others.	1.17	0.379
2	The hotel has visually appealing physical features such as swimming pools, appealing environment, among other features.	1.20	0.436
3	The hotel has visually appealing materials that are related to the service delivered. Among the materials include visually appealing pamphlets.	1.32	0.546
4	The hotel has neat appearing employees that are appealing to look at.	1.21	0.428
5	The hotel delivers its services timely without delay such that it reminds and tells clients exactly when services will be delivered and never disappoints.	1.33	0.534
6	The hotel shows sincere interest in helping customer's problems.	1.25	0.502
7	The hotel offers quality services right at the first time and does not need a second chance for rectification.	1.32	0.588
8	The hotel values error-free records and always reminds the customers to ascertain the correctness of the information given, for example, during making payments so as to minimize errors during receipts generation.	1.35	0.622
9	The hotel always gives prompt services; that is, they are always timely and quick to respond.	1.30	0.583
10	The hotel employees are always willing to help their customersandneverclaimtobetoobusywhenitcomes to time to respond to their clients' requests.	1.23	0.494
11	The hotel employees' behavior instills confidence to the customers such that customers can confidently believe in them.	1.24	0.448
12	The hotel employees are empathic in answering customers' questions.	1.34	0.507

13	The hotel employees are constantly courteous with their customers.	1.30	0.508
14	You feel at peace when transacting with the hotel due to the trust you have in them with the security of yourmoney.	1.27	0.497
15	The hotel's employees are ever courteous, willing and empathic to help their customers such as answering customers' questions.	1.27	0.447
16	The hotel has attentive employees who give personal attention to their customers.	1.38	0.575
17	The hotel's employees understand customer's specific needs.	1.39	0.643
18	The hotel has convenient operating hours for its customers.	1.31	0.543
	Average	1.29	

4.4 Customer SatisfactionVariable

Data collection involved 5 Likert questions designed to assess the customers' extent of agreement on their satisfaction with the hotel they visited. Reliability test revealed a consistency in questions as evidenced by a higher Cronbach's alpha value of 0.931 while the cut off point for reliability is 0.7.

Table 4.8

Customer Satisfaction Variable Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.930	.931	17

Table 4.9

Customer Satisfaction Findings

NO	Extent of agreement with customer satisfaction in the hotel.	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	The hotel has great and fascinating physical facilities.	1.30	0.566

2	The hotel has functional equipment.	1.23	0.494
3	You are satisfied with the employees' courtesy.	1.24	0.529
4	The hotel has employees who are professional.	1.30	0.593
5	You are satisfied with the hotel employees' flexibility with regards to serving their customers.	1.32	0.546
6	You are satisfied with the hotel's way of prompt problem solution and prompt attention offered by the employees' needs.	1.32	0.560
7	You are satisfied with the employees' interest in problem-solving.	1.25	0.435
8	The hotel offers its services consistently and rarely do clients get disappointed because of missing some services.	1.29	0.504
9	You are satisfied with the way employees understand customers' specific needs.	1.29	0.488
10	You are satisfied with the hotels' convenient operating hours.	1.32	0.531
11	You are satisfied with the hotels' security procedure.	1.20	0.476
12	You are satisfied with the attention from the employees and the way the employees are concerned with your interests as a customer.	1.34	0.536
13	You are satisfied with the way the hotel offers its services in a timely manner.	1.30	0.511
14	The hotel's employees are neat and nice-looking in a professional way.	1.18	0.405
15	The hotel offers its services consistently.	1.27	0.494
16	The hotel has clear records.	1.26	0.536
17	The hotel has a clear communication channel.	1.27	0.528
	Average	1.28	0.514

According to Aamir et al. (2010), customer satisfaction is at its peak when there is a strongrelationshipbetweenthecustomerandtheserviceprovider.Similarfindingsare

evident with the current study as it is evident that neatness of employees, a clear communication channel, hotel's security procedures, employees' prompt problem solvingandemployee'scourtesyrecordedthelowestmeanse.g.,1.18,1.27,and1.20. This outlines that most of the respondents were strongly in agreement with the statements that outlined a strong relationship between the customer and the service provider hence leading to respondents' (customers')satisfaction.

4.5 Customer Retention Variable

From the findings all the statements chosen to determine customers retention likelihood, recorded a rating of less than 2. Meaning that majority were strongly in agreement that they would only check another hotel upon realizing that the favorite one is fully booked (mean=1.40), respondents would consider booking other hotels of similar brands that are outside rift valley region (μ=1.45) and that majority of the respondents were strongly in agreement that they would bother checking other offers inothercompetinghotelsastheyconsideritawayofcompetition(μ=1.49).Theother statementshadtherespondentsreportingameanof1.50andabovebutwereallbelow 2.ThecurrentfindingsaresimilartothosereportedbyMugito(2016),whichoutlined thatcustomers'perceptionofhotels'physicalfeaturessuchasfoodrecreationfacilities and easy accessibility would lead to customer satisfaction and may greatly impact the loyaltyofthecustomers(Mugito,2016).Thefactthatwehavetheaveragemeanofall thestatementsoutliningthecustomerretentionas1.54andnotexactly1,marrieswith Mugito's findings in his 2016 study. He outlined that customer satisfaction is viewed as a personal assessment usually done by a customer after purchasing either aproduct or service. It is therefore evident that not everyone will be strongly in agreement with everystatementthatwasmeanttoassesscustomersatisfactionandhencethevariation.

Table 4.10

Customer Retention Findings

No.	Extent of agreement of the hotel affects customers' loyalty to seeking services in the same facility.	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	I am in a position of tolerating some problems in the hotel.	1.55	0.938
2	I haven't booked any other hotel in the great rift valley region.	1.63	0.964

3	I happen to only check another hotel when this one is fully booked and cannot accommodate more.	1.40	0.746
4	Amfondofcomingtothesamehoteleveniftherates are increased.	1.57	0.851
5	Iwouldconsiderbookingotherhotelsofthesame brands in other destinations such as NairobiCounty.	1.45	0.772
6	I don't consider the special offers in other hotels as I consider them a way of competition.	1.49	0.803
7	When booking, I consider price as the last option.	1.67	1.028
	Average	1.54	0.872

4.6 InferentialStatistics

Thissectionofthechaptersoughttounderstandtheinferentialstatisticalfindings.The two independent variables that their relationship was tested include the quality of service and customer satisfaction.

4.6.1 Correlation of IndependentVariables

Quality of service offered in the hotels was seen to significantly affect the customer satisfaction. (P-value=0.818). Customer satisfaction and customer retention were significantly associated (p- value of 0.581). The findings were similar to earlier findings by Cronin et al. (2000). In their findings, they outlined that both the quality and the value of the service offered together with customer satisfaction are the significant variables that form the building blocks of customer loyalty.

Table 4.11

Correlation of Independent Variables

Correlations				
Correlations		Service quality	Customer satisfaction	Customer Retention
Service quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.818**	.596**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	138	138	138
Customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.818**	1	.581**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.000

	N	138	138	138
Customer Retention	Pearson Correlation	.596**	.581**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	138	138	138
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).				

4.6.2 RegressionCoefficients

4.6.2.1 RModel.

Table 4.12

R Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.618a	.382	.372	.54503
a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer satisfaction, Service quality				

This outlines that 38.2% of the dependent variable customer retention is explained by the independent variables Service quality and Customer satisfaction.

4.6.2.2 Multiple Linear RegressionModel.

Table 4.13

Multiple Linear Regression Model

Coefficients								
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-.122	.195		-.628	.531	-.508	.264
	Service quality	.741	.249	.364	2.976	.004	.248	1.234
	Customer satisfaction	.552	.238	.284	2.324	.022	.082	1.022
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Retention								

The linear Regression analysis was then used to confirm the relative significance of the two independent variables; Quality of service variables on customer loyalty.

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$

$\beta_0 = -.122, \quad \beta_1 = .741, \quad \beta_2 = .552 \text{ and } \varepsilon = .195$

Therefore, Y = -0.122 + 0.741X1 + 0.552X2 + 0.195

Customer retention= -0.122 + 0.741(Service quality) + 0.552 (Customer satisfaction) + 0.195

The multiple linear regression model outlined above indicate a negative relationship betweenthedependentvariable(Customerretention)andthetwoindependentvariable qualityofserviceandcustomersatisfaction.Aunitchangeinservicequalityresultsin 0.741 units decrease in customer retention and a unit change in customer satisfaction results to 0.552 units decrease in customerretention.

4.6.2.3 T Test.

4.6.2.3.1 QualityService.

$H_0 = \beta_1 = 0, \; H_a = \beta_1 > 0$

Test statistic, t= 2.976

P-Value = 0.004

Thep-Valueis< α-Value(0.05),wethereforerejectthenullhypothesis.Itistherefore, evident that service quality has a significant positive relationship with customer retention.

4.6.2.3.2 Customer Satisfaction.

$H_0 = \beta_2 = 0, \; H_a = \beta_2 > 0$

Test statistic, t= 2.324

P-Value = 0.022

The p-Value is > α-Value (0.05), we therefore fail to reject the null hypothesis. It is therefore, evident that customer satisfaction has no significant positive relationship with customer retention.

The outlined findings confirm our -ve value in our multiple regression model (Y = -0.122 + 0.741X1 + 0.552X2 + 0.195). When the two independent variables are combined, it is evident that there is a negative relationship between the dependent variable (Customer retention) and the two independent variables, quality of service and customer satisfaction.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Thestudyassessedtherelationshipbetweenservicequality,customersatisfactionand customer retention among the customers in 4-star to 5-star hotels of the Great Rift Valley. In this section therefore, there is an outline the summary of the findings. Besides,thereisaconclusionandstudyrecommendationsderivedfromtheconclusion and the entirestudy.

5.1 Summary

The study had a reasonable responsive rate of 92.75%. Majority of the participants 56.3% were female and 79.7% were Africans. Slightly more than half of the participants 50.8% were university graduates. Most of the participants lied in the age group of 26-35 years of age, 48.4% were single, Four-star hotels and lodges hosted majority 78.1%. Sarova Mara Game Camp a 4-star and Fairmont Mara Safari Lodge 4-star equally recorded the highest number 14.1%.

Quality of service offered in the hotels was seen to significantly affect the customer satisfaction. (P-value=0.818). Customer satisfaction and customer retention were significantly associated (p- value of 0.581). According to the findings of R model, 38.2% of the dependent variable, customer retention, is explained by the independent variables, Service quality and Customer satisfaction.

Under Service quality and customer satisfaction, a strong relationship was observed where quality service to customer satisfaction had a mean of 1.29 meaning that majority of the respondents were strongly in agreement that quality service leads to customer satisfaction.

The linear Regression analysis was then used to confirm the relative significance of the two independent variables; Quality of service variables and customer loyalty. The model indicated a negative relationship between the dependent variable (Customer retention) and the two independent variable quality of service and customer satisfaction.

5.2 Conclusions

In a nutshell, the study revealed positive customer satisfaction's impact on customer loyalty. It, therefore, goes without saying that there is an intertwining of customer

satisfaction with trust that the customer has on the service provider and the and the commitment that the service provider has in serving employees, which in return leads to product's value or the value of a service offered perceived by the customer. The guest'sloyaltyisgreatlyimpactedbyhowhe/shewillperceivethevalueoftheservice offered. Majority of the consumers acknowledged that the services offered are of quality and which led to their satisfaction and hence loyalty as evidenced by average means of 1.29, 1.28 and 1.67 respectively. The average means were more than one meaning that the services or the resources were not 100% perfect but were less than twomeaningthatmajoritywereinagreementofqualityservice,customersatisfaction and customerretention.

5.3 Recommendations

Hotel management should continue paying attention on ensuring quality services are offered by ensuring quality and effective customer-employee relationships.

Hotel management should invest on employees' competence as this would greatly improve the hospitality process hence improving customer perception consecutively. Ensuring employees' competence would results to clean, and organized hospitality areas that would improve customers' perception hence their retentions.

Customersatisfactionsurveysandfeedbacksarerecommendedastheywouldhelpthe management capture and study customers' negative feedback promptly henceemploy implementation strategies earlyenough.

Last but not least the hotel management are recommended to investing in customer loyalty programs including giving out offers on special occasions as a sign of recognizing and valuing its customers. This will ensure that customer's feel attached to the hotel hence their retention and loyalty.

5.4 Study limitations and Areas for And Future ResearchImprovement

There was limited time available. Besides, there was use of convenience sampling as a result of the given large number of hotels that qualified the inclusion criteria in the Great Rift Valley. Another research or use of probability sampling would give everyoneachanceofparticipatinginthestudyhencevariedresponsesduetospreading out the distribution of the studyquestionnaire.

The research aimed at assessing relationship of service quality, customer satisfaction andcustomerretentioninonly4starand5-starhotelsinasingleregion,itisadvisable that future studies be done among the other remaining starrates.

Last but not least the study as well provides room for further studies to be conducted at the tourism industry as they fall in the same category with hospitality.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND RETENTION: A CASE STUDY OF 4 STAR AND 5 STAR HOTELS IN RIFT VALLEY REGION, KENYA.

Instructions

Read keenly and understand every instruction of every question and answer appropriately.

In case of any clarification, feel free to ask.

Do not produce any confidential information anywhere that you may wish not to provide.

SECTION A: Demographics of the participant

(Please tick where necessary)

Gender:

Male()   Female ( )

Nationality:

Asian( )   United Kingdom ()   North American()   European   ()

African ( )   Australian ( )   South American( )   Russian()   Other's(please specify ....)

Marital status:

Single ( )   Married ( )   Divorced ()   Widowed ( )

Age   bracket:

18-25 ( )

26-35   ( )

36-45   ( )

46-55   ( )

56-64   ( )

65 and above ( )

Highest   Education   Level:

PhD()   Master's()   University Graduate()   High School ()

SECTION B: QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE MAIN STUDY OBJECTIVES

This section of the questionnaire seeks to find customer's view with regards to the quality of the services offered to them, their satisfaction and how the satisfaction is related to loyalty. It is therefore divided into further three subsections, and you are therefore urged to read the statements keenly and provide answers accordingly according to your extent of agreement.

SA=STRONGLYAGREE,A=AGREE,N=NEUTRAL,D=DISAGREEandSD= STRONGLY DISAGREE.

SERVICE QUALITY

NO	Thefollowingstatementsoutlinehowtofeelabout the level of quality of the services offered in the currenthotelyouareat.Kindlyreadthestatements and tick (✓) appropriately	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	The hotel has a good-looking facility including good looking bedrooms, good looking poolside bars among others.					
2	The hotel has visually appealing physical features such as swimming pools, appealing environment, among other features.					
3	The hotel has visually appealing materials that are related to the service delivered. Among the materials include visually appealing pamphlets.					
4	The hotel has neat appearing employees that are appealing to look at.					
5	The hotel delivers its services timely without delay such that it reminds and tells clients exactly when services will be delivered and never disappoints.					
6	The hotel shows sincere interest inhelping customer's problems.					
7	The hotel offers quality services right at the first time and does not need a second chance for rectification.					

8	The hotel values error-free records and always reminds the customers to ascertain the correctness of the information given, for example, during making payments so as to minimize errors during receipts generation.					
9	The hotel always gives prompt services; that is, they are always timely and quick to respond.					
10	The hotel employees are always willing to help their customers and never claim to be too busywhen it comes to time to respond to their clients' requests.					
11	The hotel employees' behavior instills confidence to the customers such that customers can confidently believe in them.					
12	The hotel employees are empathic in answering customers' questions.					
13	The hotel employees are constantly courteous with their customers.					
14	You feel at peace when transacting with the hotel due to the trust you have in them with the security of your money.					
15	The hotel's employees are ever courteous, willing and empathic to help their customers such as answering customers' questions.					
16	The hotel has attentive employees who give personal attention to their customers.					
17	The hotel's employees understand customer's specific needs.					
18	The hotel has convenient operating hours for its customers.					

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

NO	Kindly indicate the extent of agreement with the following statements with regards to customer satisfaction in the hotel.	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	The hotel has great and fascinating physical facilities.					
2	The hotel has functional equipment.					
3	You are satisfied with the employees' courtesy.					
4	The hotel has employees who are professional.					
5	You are satisfied with the hotelemployees' flexibility with regards to serving theircustomers.					
6	You are satisfied with the hotel's way of prompt problem solution and prompt attention offered by the employees' needs.					
7	You are satisfied with the employees'interestin problem-solving.					
8	The hotel offers its services consistently and rarely do clients get disappointed because of missing some services.					
9	You are satisfied with the way employees understand customers' specific needs.					
10.	You are satisfied with the hotels' convenient operating hours.					
11	You are satisfied with the hotels' security procedure.					
12	You are satisfied with the attention fromthe employees and the way the employees are concerned with your interests as a customer.					
13	You are satisfied with the way the hotel offers its services in a timely manner.					
14	The hotel's employees are neat and nice-looking in a professional way.					

15	The hotel offers its services consistently.					
16	The hotel has clear records.					
17	The hotel has a clear communication channel.					

CUSTOMER RETENTION

NO	Please tick against your extent of agreement of the following statements with regards to how the hotel affects your loyalty to seeking services in the same facility.	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I am in a position of tolerating some problems in the hotel.					
2	I haven't booked any other hotel in the great rift valley region.					
3	I happen to only check another hotel when this one is fully booked and cannot accommodate more.					
4	Am fond of coming to the same hotel even if the rates are increased.					
5	Iwouldconsiderbookingotherhotelsofthesame brands in other destinations such as Nairobicounty.					
6	I don't consider the special offers in other hotels as I consider them a way of competition.					
7	When booking, I consider price as the last option.					

Thanks for your kind attention and corporation to fill this questionnaire.

Best regards, GLADYS WATIRI NDUNGU.

Invitation to Take Part in the Study

Tourism Management Program

Dear Respondent,

RE: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a Master Student from faculty of Tourism Management, Near East University, NorthernCyprus;Iamconductingresearchtitled"THERELATIONSHIPBETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND RETENTION: A CASE STUDY OF 4 STAR AND 5 STAR HOTELS IN THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY REGION, KENYA".The attached questionnaire is a survey question to determine the level of Customer SatisfactionandintentiontorevisithotelServices;Ialsoseektofindoutthechallenges and strategies to employ to get desired results as a Tourism Managementstudent.
Kindly answer all the questions carefully. All information you provide will be strictly confidential and used for academic purposes only.

Thank you for your time and response.
Gladys WatiriNdungu

Appendix C
Informed ConsentForm

The relationship between customer satisfaction and retention: a case study of 5-star and 4-star hotels in the Great Rift Valley Region,Kenya.

Participant Information and Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

This research is aimed at investigating the relationship between customer satisfaction andretentionthroughthequalityoftheservicesoffered,customersatisfactionandhow satisfaction is related to loyalty. By completing the survey below, you agree to participate in thesurvey.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Your credentials will not be shared with anyone other than the research team. The data collected during this study will be used for academic research purposes only and will be presented only in national / internationalacademicmeetingsandorpublications.Youcanwithdrawfromthework   at any time by contacting us. If you withdraw from the study, all data collected from you will be deleted from our database and the data related to you will not be used in thestudy.Ifyouhaveanyquestionsorconcernsregardingthisissue,pleasecontactus at the following contactinformation.

Gladys WatiriNdungu

Master's Student in Faculty of Tourism   Prof. Dr. Tulen Saner,

Management,   Near East University

Near East University   Department of Tourism and Hotel

Tel: +905338736036   Management,

Email: watirigladys95@gmail.com   E-mail: tulen.saner@neu.edu.tr

Appendix D
Ethics CommitteeReport

YAKIN DOĞU ÜNIVERSITESI

BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMALAR ETİK KURULU

09.08.2021

Dear Gladys Watiri Ndungu,

Your application titled "The Relationship Between Customer Satisfaction And Retention: A Case Study Of 4-Star And 5-Star Hotels In Rift Valley Region, Kenya" with the application number NEU/SS/2021/973 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Karol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

Note: If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.

Appendix E
Similarity Report

Ndungu