



PHYSICAL FACILITY ATTRIBUTES AND GUESTS' POST PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR OF HOTEL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT:

This paper examines the relationship between physical facility attributes and post-purchase behavior of hotel guests in Abuja, Nigeria. It focuses on three dimensions of physical facility attributes: aesthetics, ambiance, and amenities, and their impact on two measures of post-purchase behavior: referrals and repeat patronage. The paper employs a quantitative approach with a correlational study design, using a survey questionnaire to collect data from 240 hotel guests. The data is analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the hypotheses. The results reveal a significant positive relationship between aesthetics, ambiance, amenities, and both referrals and repeat patronage. The study found that aesthetics, ambiance, and amenities all play a significant role in shaping guest experiences and driving post-purchase behavior in the hotel industry. By investing in quality aesthetics, ambiance, and amenities, hotels can not only attract new customers but also foster long-term loyalty and sustainable business growth. The paper contributes to the body of knowledge by providing insights into the dynamics of guest satisfaction and loyalty in the hotel industry in Abuja, Nigeria.

KEYWORDS:

Physical Facility Attributes, Aesthetics, Ambiance, Amenities, Post Purchase Behaviour, Referrals, Repeat Purchase



Introduction

The hotel industry, characterized by its dynamism and constant adaptation to shifting consumer preferences, operates in a highly competitive environment (Leonidou, et al., 2015). In this ever-changing landscape, hotels are tasked with not just meeting, but surpassing the expectations of a diverse customer base. The evolution of the hotel industry is a narrative of transformative changes, reacting to shifts in consumer behavior, technological advancements, and global trends (Buhalis, et al., 2019). Research in environmental psychology indicates that aesthetically pleasing environments have a positive impact on individuals' well-being, leading to improved mood, stress reduction, and enhanced cognitive functioning. The ambiance significantly influences individuals' experiences and behaviors within space (Yoshida, and James, 2010). In commercial settings such as restaurants, hotels, or retail spaces, ambiance is often deemed a critical factor influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Amenities, which include additional features or services provided within a hotel beyond its basic function, can range from recreational spaces and technological features to special services that enhance user satisfaction (Jay, 2011). The journey of the hotel industry is not a linear progression but a dynamic adaptation to the ever-evolving landscape of guest expectations and societal demands. The narrative of the hotel industry's evolution extends beyond physical structures to encompass intangible aspects of the guest experience. Modern guests assess value based not only on luxurious amenities but also on authenticity, environmental responsibility, and alignment with their individual values and preferences. In historical times, repeat patronage was common as travelers often followed established routes, and certain inns gained reputations for their hospitality. Repeat business was fostered as travelers frequently used the same routes, leading to the establishment of loyal relationships between innkeepers and guests. With the advent of mass tourism and improved transportation, the concept of guest satisfaction and personalized service gained prominence. The rise of online travel agencies (OTAs) and the internet revolutionized the way people book hotels. Customer reviews and ratings have become influential in shaping perceptions and driving referrals. Sustainable and eco-friendly practices have emerged as important factors for attracting environmentally conscious guests.

The hotel industry in Abuja, Nigeria, flourishes due to the influx of a diverse range of travellers seeking accommodations that span from luxury to economy (Williams, 2008). Amid this thriving marketplace, hotels in Abuja are confronted with a complex challenge: to comprehend and meet the dynamic expectations of their guests. Central to this challenge is the inherent significance of physical facility attributes, which include aesthetics, ambiance, and amenities, in shaping the guest experience. The influence of physical facility attributes on guest experiences and satisfaction has been recognized in academic literature (Shanka, and Taylor, 2013; Ryu, and Han, 2011). However, the relationship between these attributes and the subsequent post-purchase behaviour of guests has not been carried out on hotels in Abuja, this is the gap the study intends to fill. These post-purchase behaviours, such as repeat patronage and referrals, are crucial indicators of a hotel's success and sustainability (Otieno, 2020). This study aspires to find the relationship between Physical Facility Attributes, and Post Purchase Behaviour of Hotels in Abuja, Nigeria. The study hypothesized that:

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aesthetics and Guests' Post Purchase Behaviour

Li and Li, (2022) explores how design aesthetics influences consumers' purchase intention of cultural and creative products from the Palace Museum in China, which is a symbol of Chinese culture and a leader in the cultural and creative industry. The study proposes a moderated mediation model, in which perceived value mediates the effect of design aesthetics on purchase intention, and Chinese traditionality moderates the indirect effect of perceived value. The study collects data from 201 university students in eastern China and uses structural equation modeling and hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypotheses. The results support the hypotheses and show that design aesthetics positively affects purchase intention through perceived value, and that Chinese traditionality strengthens the indirect effect of perceived value.

Breibyand Slåtten (2018) investigates the impact of aesthetic experiential qualities on tourist satisfaction and loyalty in a nature-based tourism context. The study conducts a survey of 1,010 independent tourists who visited a national tourist route in Norway, which combines nature, architecture, design, and art. It uses regression analysis to test the effects of the aesthetic experiential qualities on satisfaction and loyalty, controlling for several demographic and behavioural variables. The research finds that certain aesthetic qualities directly and indirectly affect satisfaction and loyalty. Specifically, scenery, harmony, and genuineness positively influence satisfaction, while cleanliness and genuineness directly affect the intention to revisit. Satisfaction positively impacts all three types of loyalty intentions.

Cuesta-Valiño et al., (2023) explores the effects of the aesthetics, composition, and content of hotel online images on customer booking decisions. It applies a novel methodological approach based on artificial intelligence and computer vision to analyse hotel photo data and develop a prediction model. The study reviews the prior literature on photography computational aesthetics, photography elements and principles, hotel digital images in hotel e-commerce, and hotel photography aesthetic properties effects on booking decisions. It identifies the gaps and limitations of the existing research and proposes a research question and a set of hypotheses.

Marković et al., (2021) explores the significance of various aesthetic elements in high-end Croatian restaurants from the perspective of the guests. An online questionnaire was utilized to gather data. The gathered data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify the importance of various aesthetic elements in these restaurants. A t-test was conducted on an independent sample to compare the perceptions of those who have experienced dining in these restaurants and those who haven't but intend to do so in the future.

Ambiance and Guests' Post Purchase Behaviour

Mousavai, et al., (2015) examines the impact of Electronic Customer Relationship Management (e-CRM) on customer loyalty, with customer satisfaction serving as a mediating variable. It also considered the moderating effect of the hotel's ambiance on the relationship between e-CRM and customer satisfaction, as well as between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. A quantitative approach was employed using a cross-sectional survey method to explore these relationships. Data was gathered from a convenience sample of 384 guests from four and five-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur. The findings indicated a direct and

significant relationship between e-CRM and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, it was revealed that e-CRM positively influences customer loyalty through the mediating role of customer satisfaction.

Jani and Han, (2014) tests a model of hotel guest loyalty that involves personality, satisfaction, image, and ambience. The article uses a self-administered questionnaire to collect data from guests of five-star hotels in Korea. It employs confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling to test the measurement and structural models. The results of the structural equation modeling indicated that extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism among the Big Five Personality Factors significantly affect satisfaction. Satisfaction had a significant impact on hotel image and guests' loyalty. Compared to satisfaction, hotel image had a lesser impact on loyalty as well as being a mediator for the impact of satisfaction on loyalty.

Chiguvi (2017), examines the impact of ambient conditions on customer satisfaction at Debonairs Pizza outlets in Gaborone Botswana. The researchers used a causal research design and a simple random sampling method to collect data from 81 customers at three Debonairs Pizza outlets in Gaborone, Botswana. They used questionnaires with Likert scales to measure the variables and SPSS software to perform regression analysis. The results showed that all three dimensions of the atmosphere had a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction. The researchers suggested that Debonairs Pizza managers should pay more attention to enhancing the atmosphere of their outlets as a way of differentiating themselves from competitors and increasing customer loyalty.

Anguera-Torrell et al., (2021) examines how ambient scents in hotel guest rooms affect customers' emotions. The authors conducted an experiment in a real hotel in Barcelona, where they randomly assigned some participants to a room with a lavender fragrance and others to a room without any fragrance. Both rooms were identical in all other aspects. The authors used a facial recognition software to measure the participants' happiness and emotional valence while they were in the room. The results showed that the participants who experienced the room with the lavender fragrance had higher levels of happiness and positive emotional valence than the participants who experienced the room without any fragrance.

Uslu and Aysal, (2021) explore how the ambience of hotel businesses affects their image and the satisfaction of tourists. The data was collected by using a questionnaire technique, which is a quantitative method of data collection. The population of the study consists of tourists who visit hotel businesses in Alanya. For this purpose, face-to-face questionnaires were administered to tourists and 34 questionnaires with incomplete data were removed from a total of 420 questionnaires, and the analyses of the study were carried out with the remaining 386 questionnaires. According to the results of the study, it was found that hotel ambience had a positive impact on hotel image and tourist satisfaction.

Each study contributes to understanding various aspects of post-purchase behavior and the role of aesthetics or ambience in shaping perceptions and behaviors within the tourism and hospitality industries.

Amenities and Guests' Post Purchase Behaviour

Bilgihan et al. (2016) investigated the importance and satisfaction levels of hotel guests regarding in-room technology amenities in the USA, distinguishing between leisure and business travelers. They utilized an online questionnaire to collect data and found that high-

speed internet access and guest device connectivity were more crucial for business travelers. However, they found no significant difference in overall importance and satisfaction ratings between leisure and business travelers. Heo & Hyun (2015) examined the impact of luxury brand room amenities on customers' willingness to pay in Hong Kong. Using focus group interviews and experimental settings in a luxury hotel, they found that luxury amenities positively influenced customers' willingness to pay and estimation of room rates. Loureiro et al. (2013) applied the S-O-R model to health and wellness tourism, particularly thermal spas in Portugal. They found that the physical environment of spas and personal interest affect customers' emotional responses, with relaxation being more critical than pleasure in creating satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth. Gunasekar & Sudhakar (2019) analyzed online reviews from TripAdvisor.in to understand how different hotel attributes affect customer satisfaction in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. They found that location significantly influenced both satisfied and dissatisfied customers, with luxury hotels generally receiving higher ratings. Ali et al. (2015) explored customer satisfaction in Chinese resort hotels, finding that perceptions of the physical environment indirectly influence satisfaction through price perceptions and consumption emotions. Positive price perceptions and consumption emotions contribute to higher satisfaction levels. Kim et al. (2015) investigated the impact of hotels' green practices and recent amenities on customers' online evaluations and revisit intentions in the US. They found that recent amenities like free Wi-Fi and green initiatives positively influenced overall ratings, revisit intentions, and hotel performance. Each study provides insights into the relationship between hotel amenities and guests' post-purchase behavior, whether through technological offerings, luxury brand amenities, spa experiences, or environmental practices.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Research design is defined as a plan that outlines the type of research to be conducted. It serves as a framework for collecting and analyzing data, guiding the researcher through the research process. The study employs quantitative methods to describe the area of interest and collect numerical data. It utilizes a correlational study design to establish relationships between independent and dependent variables.

Population of the Study

The population under study comprises hotel guests/customers of registered hotels in Abuja, Nigeria. Abuja consists of six (6) area councils namely; Abaji, Abuja Municipal, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kwali and Kuje, each with varying numbers of registered hotels. Though specific information on the number of hotels in each area council is unavailable, an online search yielded the total number of hotels across all councils as 1,132. Therefore, the target population includes hotel guests from all registered hotels across the six area councils.

Sampling Procedures/Sample Size Determination

To ensure representativeness, the sample size is determined to be at least 10% of the entire target population. Due to the large population size, a sample is necessary for research purposes. The sample size is calculated using the Taro Yamene formula, which is suitable for large populations and known sample sizes, with a significance level of 5%.

The formula /calculation shown below;

$$\frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Thus,

n = sample size sought

N = population size

e= level of significance

With the total hotels of 1,132 and at 95% level of confidence (0.05), the sample size is determined as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1,132}{1 + 1,132(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1,132}{1 + 1,132(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{1,132}{1 + 2.83}$$

$$n = \frac{1,132}{3.83}$$

n = 295 hotel guests

Data Collection

The study relies on primary data collection through a survey questionnaire due to its efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The questionnaire consists of three sections: demographic information (Section A), physical facility attributes (Section B), and dependent/moderating variables (Section C). Likert scales are used in Sections B and C. The questionnaire includes a cover page to inform hotel management about the study's purpose and the researcher's background.

Data Analysis Techniques

The study employs data analysis techniques involving descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM explores linear relationships between multiple independent variables and single or multiple dependent variables. This method, widely used in social and management sciences, combines features from principal component analysis and multiple regression to estimate complex models without imposing distributional assumptions on the data.

The measurement model is evaluated through indicator loadings, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Indicator loadings ≥ 0.7 are recommended for satisfactory reliability. Composite reliability values between 0.60 and 0.90 are considered acceptable. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be ≥ 0.50 for adequate convergent validity. Discriminant validity is assessed by comparing AVE with squared inter-construct correlations or using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. HTMT values above

0.90 suggest discriminant validity issues. The structural model is evaluated based on the coefficient of determination (R^2), cross-validated redundancy measure Q^2 , and the significance of path coefficients. R^2 values indicate the explanatory power of the model, with values above 0.75 considered strong. The F^2 effect size measures the impact of omitted exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs, with values indicating small, medium, or large effects. Q^2 values above 0 indicate predictive accuracy, with values above 0.50 considered large.

Q^2 values are computed using cross-validated redundancy and cross-validated commonality approaches. The cross-validated redundancy approach, incorporating both path model and structural model estimates, is recommended for predicting omitted data points.

Thus, these data points are formally defined as follows:

$$Q^2 = \frac{Q^2_{\text{included}} - Q^2_{\text{excluded}}}{1 - Q^2_{\text{included}}}$$

Overall, these assessment criteria ensure the reliability, validity, and predictive accuracy of the PLS-SEM model in analyzing the collected data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Questionnaire Response Rate

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Number Administered	295	100
Number Retrieved	261	88.5
Number of Defected Responses	21	0.7
Number used	240	81.4

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Demographic distribution of respondents

Male respondents constitute 48.8% of the sample size with 117 counts while the number of female respondents amounted to 51.3%. 24 respondents which accounted for about 10% of the respondents fall between the age range of 18-24, 171 respondents accounting for 71.3% are within the age range of 25-34 years, 42 respondents (17.5%) are within the ages of 35-49 years while 3 respondents amounting to 1.3% of the respondents are 50 years and above. 184 respondents which accounted for about 76% were married, 38 respondents which constituted 15.8% of the respondents are single while 18 respondents prefer not to disclose their marital status. 16 respondents which comprised 6.7% have high school qualification, 98 respondents accounting for 40.8% of the respondents have college/ technical certifications, 117 respondents which make 48.8% of the respondent have bachelor's degree while 9 respondents have master's degree.

Bivariate Data Analyses

Assessment of the measurement model/Instrument

This segment evaluates the proposed measurement model and research instrument's suitability for the study, focusing on reliability and validity. The model's indicators and their factor loadings were scrutinized, revealing inadequate data capture as some loadings were below the 0.700 threshold. Consequently, items with low loadings were systematically removed, resulting in a refined model with 25 items out of the initial 42. This iterative process enhanced factor loadings, Cronbach alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted.

Assessment of the Structural Path Model and Hypotheses Testing

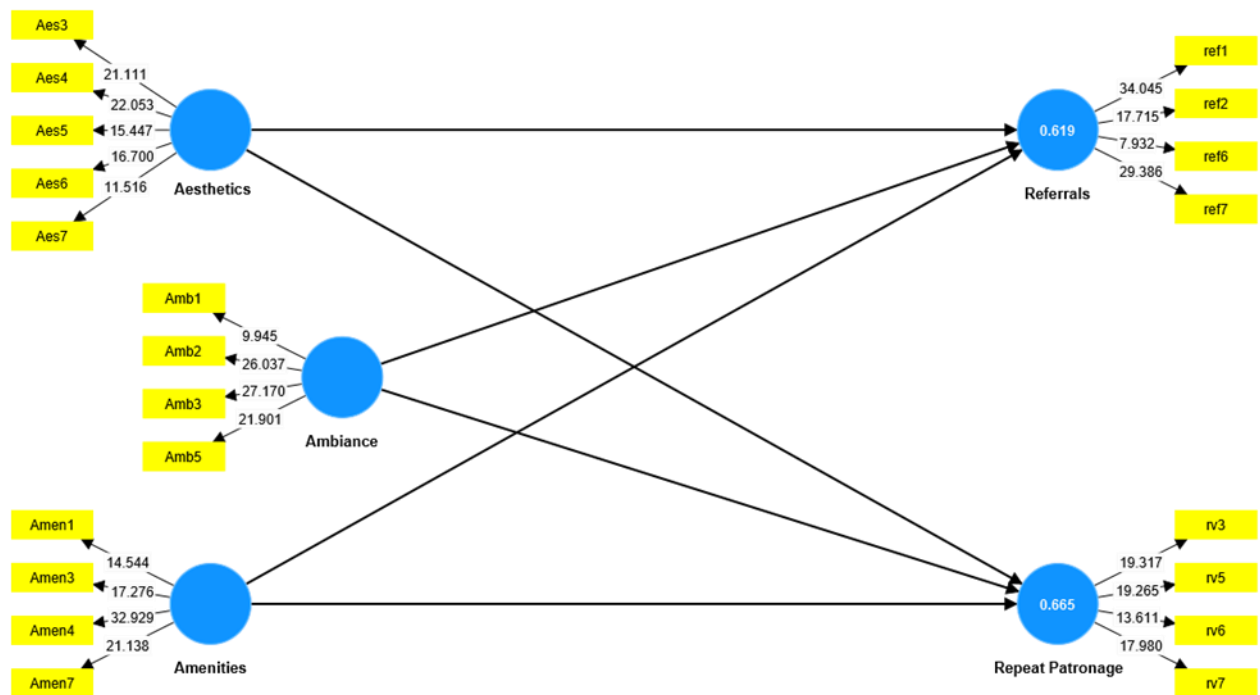


Fig 1: Figure 4 3: Structural Path Model with factor loadings and AVE of the constructs

Source: Smart PLS output, 2024

Table 3Path Analysis of physical facility attributes and post purchase behaviour of hotels

S/n	Hypothesized Path	Path Coefficient (β)	P-Value	Standard Error	T Value	Decisions	Effect size
1.	Aesthetics -> Ref	0.508	0.000*	0.111	4.572	Supported	Large
2.	Ambiance -> Ref	0.412	0.001*	0.109	3.790	Supported	Large

3.	Amenities -> Ref	0.334	0.000*	0.12	2.281	Supported	Large
4	Aesthetics -> RP	0.275	0.000*	0.096	1.981	Supported	Large
5	Ambiance -> RP	0.364	0.000*	0.094	3.856	Supported	Large
6	Amenities -> RP	0.320	0.000*	0.087	3.675	Supported	Large

*P<0.05

Source: The Researcher's Computation (2024).

The table above showed the path analysis result for the second objective of the study which investigated the relationship between the dimensions of physical facility attributes and post purchase behaviour. Specifically, the result showed that there is a positive relationship between the three dimensions of physical facility attributes and two measures of post purchase behaviour as follows;

The first structural path showed that there is a positive relationship between aesthetics and referrals (Ref) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.508 at $P0.00 < 0.05$ and T-Value $4.572 > 1.96$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The second structural path showed that there is a positive relationship between ambience and referrals (Ref) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.412 at $P0.001 < 0.05$ and T-Value $3.790 > 1.96$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The third structural path showed that there is a positive relationship between amenities and referrals (Ref) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.334 at $P0.00 < 0.05$ and T-Value $2.281 > 1.96$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The fourth structural path showed that there is a positive relationship between aesthetics and repeat patronage (RP) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.275 at $P0.00 < 0.05$ and T-Value $1.981 > 1.96$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The fifth structural path showed that there is a positive relationship between ambience and repeat patronage (RP) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.364 at $P0.00 < 0.05$ and T-Value $3.856 > 1.96$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The sixth structural path showed that there is a positive relationship between amenities and repeat patronage (RP) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.320 at $P0.00 < 0.05$ and T-Value $3.675 > 1.96$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The results proved the existence of significant positive between the dimensions of physical facility attributes and post purchase behaviour of hotels in Abuja, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

This study sought to evaluate physical facility attributes and guests' post purchase behaviour of hotels in Abuja, Nigeria. The central goal of the study was to examine the relationship between physical facility attributes and guests' post purchase behaviour. While the study adopted Aesthetics, Ambiance and Amenities as the dimensions of hotel physical attributes, Referrals and Repeat patronage were adopted as the measures of post purchase behaviour.

The results showed that; There is a positive relationship between aesthetics and referrals (Ref) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.508 at $P0.00 < 0.05$ and T-Value

4.572 > 1.96. The second structural path showed that there is a positive relationship between ambiance and referrals (Ref) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.412 at $P0.001 < 0.05$ and T-Value 3.790 > 1.96. The third structural path showed that there is a positive relationship between amenities and referrals (Ref) of hotels in Abuja with path coefficient (β) value of 0.334 at $P0.00 < 0.05$ and T-Value 2.281 > 1.96.

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This finding is in agreement with Gursoy and Lu's (2018) who investigated the antecedents and outcomes of aesthetics in the hotel context. The study identifies several antecedents that contribute to the aesthetics of hotels. These include architectural design, interior decor, lighting, and overall ambiance. Architectural design is highlighted as a key antecedent, emphasizing the importance of the physical structure in shaping the aesthetic appeal of hotels; thereby establishing a significant link between aesthetics and guest satisfaction. It was found that Positive aesthetics contribute to higher levels of guest satisfaction.

Similarly, Lee et al (2010) in their study identified several factors that contribute to a hotel's green image to include environmental management practices, eco-friendly facilities, and the promotion of green activities. These factors collectively shape how consumers perceive a hotel's commitment to sustainability. They argued based on their findings that a positive green image significantly influences consumers' attitudes toward a hotel and will be more willing to pay a premium for eco-friendly services. Lin and Mattila (2010) in their study also revealed that the presence of ambient scent has a significant impact on consumers' emotional responses which consequently would positively influence consumers' loyalty intentions.

Conclusion and Summary of Findings

In conclusion, the comprehensive analysis of physical facility attributes and guests' post-purchase behavior in the hotel industry in Abuja, Nigeria, reveals significant insights into the dynamics of guest satisfaction and loyalty. The study delves into three key dimensions of physical facility attributes: aesthetics, ambiance, and amenities, and their impact on two measures of post-purchase behavior: referrals and repeat patronage. The findings underscore a robust positive relationship between aesthetics, ambiance, amenities, and both referrals and repeat patronage. Specifically, guests' perceptions of the visual appeal, atmosphere, and comfort of hotel spaces significantly influence their likelihood to recommend the hotel to others and their intention to revisit. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of guest satisfaction in shaping post-purchase behavior, emphasizing the role of physical facility attributes in enhancing overall guest experience and fostering loyalty.

These findings align with existing literature in the field, which emphasizes the pivotal role of physical environment in shaping guest perceptions and behaviors within the hospitality industry. Studies cited in the research demonstrate a consistent pattern of positive associations between various aspects of physical facilities and guest satisfaction, reaffirming

the importance of investing in quality aesthetics, ambiance, and amenities to drive positive post-purchase outcomes. Furthermore, the study contributes to the body of knowledge by focusing on the specific context of the hotel industry in Abuja, Nigeria, thereby providing valuable insights for hotel managers and stakeholders in the region. By understanding the nuanced preferences and expectations of guests in Abuja, hoteliers can tailor their offerings to better meet customer needs and enhance overall guest satisfaction.

In summary, the findings underscore the critical role of physical facility attributes in shaping guest experiences and driving post-purchase behavior in the hotel industry.

Recommendations

1. Hoteliers should invest in quality aesthetics, ambiance, and amenities, to attract new customers and also foster long-term loyalty and sustainable business growth.
2. It is recommended that hoteliers should as a matter of priority consistently improve the quality of room facilities to fashionable taste for continuous attraction of guests.
3. Hotel management should integrate modern technology when designing their facility layouts. One of such is to implement cutting-edge technology for room controls, entertainment systems, and guest services, offer high-speed Wi-Fi and ensure seamless connectivity throughout the hotel.
4. Invest in stylish and comfortable furniture that serves as both functional and decorative elements should be incorporated into their strategy for creating unique ambience to their guests. This could help build favourable guests' perception.
5. Hotel managers should implement smart lighting solutions that allow guests to customize the ambience in their rooms. This could be done by adopting the use of energy-efficient LED lighting for both functionality and aesthetics.
5. Check up on guests, proffer discounts and also give information on service additions.

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