

ENHANCING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN AIR TRANSPORTATION IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF MURTALA MUHAMMED INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

BY

OJEKUNLE, K. R. and AGADA, A.A.

Department of Geography, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.

*corresponding author: kokanlawon@unilag.edu.ng

Phone number: 08025225438

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine customer satisfaction in air transportation in Nigeria. Thus, this study assesses the current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport and identifies the key factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation. Also, this study evaluates the effectiveness of existing customer service initiatives at the airport and proposes strategies for improving customer satisfaction and service quality. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted for this study. The findings of this study shows that the current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport is high and that the key factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation include the punctuality and reliability of flight schedules, the efficiency of check-in procedures, the ease of navigation and signage within the airport. Also this study reveals that the existing customer service initiatives at the airport in addressing passenger needs are vastly effective. As revealed by the study, the strategies that can be implemented to enhance customer satisfaction and service quality include increasing the number of staff at peak times, implementing more efficient security check procedures and providing more information and better signage. The study recommended that maintaining high standards of cleanliness and facility maintenance should be prioritized and also investing in comprehensive staff training programs. In addition, implementing and continuously upgrading advanced technologies can streamline operations and improve efficiency.

Key Words: Air transportation, Customer satisfaction, Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Service quality, Aviation.

INTRODUCTION

Air transportation plays a vital role in Nigeria's economy, facilitating both domestic and international travel, trade, and tourism. In line with global trend, air transport industry has become strategically important to Nigeria. Air transportation provides a vital and timely link for moving both people and cargo over its vast terrain as well as to other destinations around the globe. A safe, secure and efficient aviation industry is critical for the support of business, trade, tourism, cultural and social activities which significantly contribute to the country's economic growth and prosperity (Draft National Transport Policy, 2021). The aviation industry is a critical component of the global transportation network, and customer satisfaction within this sector is paramount for its success and sustainability.

Given the fact that air transport is the nation's gateway to the international marketplace, the quality of service in Nigerian airport transport is becoming a major topic for discussion by stakeholders (passengers, investors, government and taxpayers). Adeniran and Fadare (2018) noted that air passengers are asking for more value for their ticket money. Improving and sustaining service quality can no longer be ignored by providers. This encourages private sector involvement, promotes a healthy competition within the industry, and adds positive value to the nation's economy (Nwaogbe et al., 2021).

The growth of the airline industry has provided opportunities as well as challenges to the business entities in this industry. The opportunities arise from the increasing demand for airline services, whereas challenges arise, not only from the high level of competition among the airlines, but also from growing consumer demands for better service (Rahim, 2016). Propositions show that delivering superior service quality is a pre-requisite for success and survival in today's competitive business environment because a superior service quality will, not only delight customers, but also reduce costs by minimizing customer turnover. In this respect, Oghojafor and Adekoya (2015) pointed out that understanding what customers expect is essential to providing desired service quality in the airline industry. The ability to deliver high-quality service to customers is imperative for the sustainability of airline companies in the aviation industry. Customers are the bedrock for success in the aviation industry and meeting their expectations is a major responsibility of airlines service providers. Customers' satisfaction is the stimulating factor to all businesses and managers must strive continuously to identify methods to create

customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is important factor in a competitive business environment like the air transport industry (Adeniran and Fadare, 2018).

It is important to the industry to understand different measures that can be used in assessing service level and customer perception, so as to be able to meet passenger needs and expectations effectively (Rahim, 2016). This can be done by understanding the gap that exists between expectation and perceived experience, for a better customer experience and loyalty.

As the largest and busiest airport in Nigeria, Murtala Muhammed International Airport serves as a critical gateway, connecting the country to various destinations worldwide. However, despite its strategic importance, concerns regarding customer satisfaction persist within the terminal (Nwaogbe et al., 2021). This research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the factors influencing customer satisfaction within the Nigerian aviation industry: a case study of Murtala Muhammed International Airport. Through a combination of quantitative surveys, this study seeks to offer evidence-based recommendations for improving service quality and enhancing the overall travel experience for passengers at the terminal.

The aim of this study is to examine customer satisfaction in air transportation in Nigeria: a case study of Murtala Muhammed International Airport. The specific objectives are to:

- i) Assess the current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport.
- ii) Identify the key factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation.
- iii) Evaluate the effectiveness of existing customer service initiatives at the airport.
- iv) Propose strategies for improving customer satisfaction and service quality at Murtala Muhammed International Airport.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- i) What is the current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport?

- ii) What are the primary factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation within Nigeria?
- iii) How effective are the current customer service initiatives at the airport in addressing passenger needs?
- iv) What strategies can be implemented to enhance customer satisfaction and service quality at Murtala Muhammed International Airport?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Hypotheses formulated in the course of this study are stated in null form as follows:

H₀₁: Higher levels of facility maintenance and cleanliness do not correlate with increased customer satisfaction.

H₀₂: Improved staff training and customer interaction skills have not lead to higher passenger satisfaction ratings.

STUDY AREA

Civil aviation is a critical element in Nigeria's transportation system and indeed its economy. Nigeria has twenty (20) airports and many regulated airstrips and heliports; 23 active domestic airlines; 554 licensed pilots; 913 licensed engineers and 1700 cabin personnel (URL 1). Nigeria being Africa's most populous country is an important destination for over 22 foreign carriers. In recent years in Nigeria, domestic and overseas passenger traffic has risen steadily at an average of 10% per annum and Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) Lagos, the Nation's main gateway, accounting for over 60 per cent of the total passenger and aircraft movement (URL 1). The study area is Murtala Muhammed International Airport, located in Lagos, Nigeria. This airport is one of the busiest in the country, serving as a significant hub for both domestic and international flights. The airport's strategic importance and high passenger traffic make it an ideal location for assessing customer satisfaction and identifying areas for improvement in service delivery.

Murtala Muhammed International Airport is situated in Lagos, Nigeria, on the western coast of Africa. Geographically, it lies at approximately 6.5776° N latitude and 3.3219° E longitude (See Figure 1). Lagos is one of Africa's largest and most populous cities, serving as a major economic and transportation hub. The airport's strategic position facilitates significant air traffic between Africa, Europe, and other continents.



Figure 1: Map of Murtala Muhammed International Airport

Source: Vincent 2014

LITERATURE REVIEW

The aviation industry in Nigeria has experienced significant growth in recent years, driven by factors such as economic development, increasing urbanization, and globalization. However, alongside this growth, issues related to infrastructure, service delivery, and customer experience have emerged as pressing concerns. There are numerous problems associated with airline service quality. Some of these problems are lack of schedule integrity, touting, flight cancellation without adequate notice, flight delays, exorbitant airfares, inadequate airport security and lack of in-flight catering among others. Majority of the Nigeria's airlines do not take seriously the issue of quality service provision and this is largely affecting their operations. This could be said to be responsible for the poor performance of some of the airlines, and in some cases, some airlines have stopped operation because of poor service quality, which in turn led to very low patronage and consequently led to dissatisfaction along with poor unsustainable revenue income for their operations (Adamolugbe *et al.*, 2023).

Previous researches in this area have identified various factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation within Nigeria. Studies by Nwaogbe *et al.* (2021), Rahim (2016), and Adeniran and Fadare (2018) have highlighted the importance of service quality, staff behavior, wait times, and facility maintenance in shaping passenger perceptions and experiences. Additionally, researches by Oghojafor and Adekoya (2015) and Aiyegbajeje (2023) have explored the determinants of customer satisfaction and choice of airline among domestic travelers in Nigeria.

In the study titled "Factors Influencing the Airline Decision-Making Process in Planning Pricing Mechanisms in the Nigerian Aviation Industry" by Adamolugbe *et al.* (2023), aimed to explore the key factors that airlines consider when setting their pricing strategies in Nigeria. Utilizing a mixed-method approach that included surveys and interviews with industry professionals, the researchers gathered quantitative and qualitative data to identify significant influences on pricing decisions. The findings revealed that competitive pricing, operational costs, market demand, and regulatory policies are the primary factors shaping airline pricing mechanisms in the Nigerian aviation market.

Aiyegbajeje (2023) conducted a study titled "Assessing the Determinants of Choice of Airline among Domestic Air Travelers in Lagos, Nigeria," with the objective of identifying the key factors that influence passengers' choice of airlines for domestic travel. Using a survey methodology, data were collected from domestic air travelers at Lagos airports. The analysis showed that factors such as ticket prices, flight schedules, airline reputation, and service quality significantly impact travelers' decisions. The study highlighted that passengers prioritize cost-effectiveness and reliability when selecting airlines.

In their research titled "Service Quality and Passenger Satisfaction in Air Transportation in a Developing Economy: Evidence from Nigeria," Nwaogbe et al. (2021) examined how different dimensions of service quality affect passenger satisfaction in Nigeria. Employing a quantitative research design, the study gathered data through structured questionnaires distributed to air travelers. The analysis using statistical methods indicated that reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy are crucial determinants of passenger satisfaction. The findings underscored the importance of continuous service quality improvements to enhance passenger experiences in Nigerian air transportation.

The study by Adeniran and Fadare (2018), titled "Relationship between Passengers' Satisfaction and Service Quality in Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, Nigeria," aimed to investigate the link between service quality and passenger satisfaction. Using a survey-based methodology, data were collected from passengers at Murtala Muhammed International Airport. The findings, analyzed through regression analysis, revealed a strong positive correlation between service quality dimensions—such as tangibles, reliability, and empathy—and overall passenger satisfaction. The study concluded that enhancing service quality is essential for improving passenger satisfaction at the airport.

Rahim (2016) explored "Perceived Service Quality and Customer Loyalty: The Mediating Effect of Passenger Satisfaction in the Nigerian Airline Industry" with the objective of understanding how service quality influences customer loyalty through the mediation of passenger satisfaction. Utilizing a structural equation modeling approach, the study analyzed survey data collected from airline passengers. The findings indicated that high perceived service quality leads to increased passenger satisfaction, which in turn enhances customer loyalty. The study highlighted the critical role of service quality in fostering long-term customer relationships in the airline industry.

In their study "Determinants of Customers' Satisfaction in the Nigerian Aviation Industry Using Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) Model," Oghojafor and Adekoya (2015) sought to identify and rank the factors affecting customer satisfaction in Nigeria's aviation sector. The researchers employed the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) model to analyze survey data collected from airline passengers. The results identified service quality, pricing, safety, and convenience as the top determinants of customer satisfaction. The study emphasized the need for airlines to focus on these key factors to enhance passenger satisfaction.

According to Adeniran & Fadare (2018), key factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation include elements that directly affect passengers' perceptions and experiences. These factors are critical for airlines and airports as they seek to enhance service delivery and customer loyalty.

Several factors have been identified as crucial in influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation. These include:

1. **Service Quality:** The reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles associated with service delivery.
2. **Pricing:** Fair and transparent pricing strategies.
3. **Convenience:** Ease of access to services, flight schedules, and check-in processes.
4. **Customer Service:** The professionalism, friendliness, and efficiency of staff.
5. **Facilities:** Cleanliness, comfort, and availability of amenities. Understanding these key factors is vital for improving customer satisfaction. By focusing on these elements, airlines and airports can implement targeted strategies to enhance passenger experiences, increase satisfaction levels, and build customer loyalty.

Nwaogbe et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of service quality, noting that it directly affects passenger satisfaction in air transportation. Their research highlighted the need for continuous improvements in service quality to meet passenger expectations. Adeniran and Fadare (2018) also stressed that convenience and customer service are significant determinants

of satisfaction at MMIA, suggesting that enhancing these areas could lead to higher satisfaction levels.

Literature Gap

While the studies reviewed provide valuable insights into various aspects of the Nigerian aviation industry and its customer satisfaction dynamics, several gaps remain unaddressed, presenting opportunities for future research. The existing studies largely focus on specific factors such as service quality (Nwaogbe et al., 2021; Adeniran & Fadare, 2018; Rahim, 2016) and pricing mechanisms (Adamolugbe et al., 2023).

There is limited exploration of the impact of technological advancements on customer satisfaction. The advent of digital technologies and innovations like self-service kiosks, mobile check-ins, and advanced security screening technologies can significantly influence passenger experiences, yet these aspects are underexplored in the reviewed literature. Current studies do not extensively analyze how different customer segments (e.g., business travelers, leisure travelers, domestic vs. international passengers) perceive service quality and satisfaction. Understanding these nuances can help in designing targeted service improvements and marketing strategies.

There is a limited examination of how cultural factors influence customer satisfaction and service expectations in the Nigerian aviation industry. Cultural considerations are crucial in understanding customer behavior and preferences in a diverse country like Nigeria. The reviewed literature does not address the impact of environmental sustainability practices on customer satisfaction. As global awareness of environmental issues grows, passengers may increasingly value and expect sustainable practices from airlines and airports.

Though, past studies reviewed offer valuable insights, there remains a gap in the literature concerning a comprehensive examination of customer satisfaction specifically at Murtala Muhammed International Airport. This study seeks to address this gap by focusing specifically on the current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport, identifying key factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transport, and proposing practical solutions to enhance their satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

The main source of data for this study is primary data, collected directly from passengers at Murtala Muhammed International Airport through structured questionnaires. In addition, secondary data were collected from textbooks, journals articles, internet etc.

The research design for this study is a cross-sectional survey based on primary data collection using questionnaires. The questionnaire was designed to measure various dimensions of customer satisfaction, including service quality, facility cleanliness, and staff behaviour. The population of the study comprises all customers traveling in and out of Murtala Muhammed International Airport. Given the high volume of passengers and the continuous flow of travelers, the population is considered infinite. This includes both domestic and international passengers, encompassing a wide range of demographics and travel purposes.

Given the infinite nature of the population, a convenience sampling technique was used to select respondents. Convenience sampling involves selecting participants who are readily available and willing to participate, making it practical for large, busy environments like airports (Etikan et al., 2016). To ensure a representative sample, a total of 400 passengers were surveyed, which provides a sufficient sample size for statistical analysis and generalizability (Cochran, 1977).

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted with a small sample of passengers. Validity was assessed through content and construct validity checks, ensuring the questionnaire accurately measures customer satisfaction. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha to test internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Inclusion Criteria

Participants must be passengers who have traveled through Murtala Muhammed International Airport within the past six months. This criterion ensures that respondents have recent experiences and relevant insights into the current state of customer satisfaction at the terminal (Patton, 2015).

Exclusion Criteria

Passengers under the age of 18 and those who are not proficient in English will be excluded from the study to ensure comprehension and accuracy of responses. This exclusion helps maintain the reliability and validity of the collected data (Creswell, 2014).

The theoretical background for this study was developed around two major theories: Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory and SERVQUAL Model

Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory

Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory was propounded by Richard L. Oliver in 1980. This theory suggests that customer satisfaction is determined by the difference between prior expectations and actual performance. If the performance exceeds expectations (positive disconfirmation), the customer is satisfied. If it falls short (negative disconfirmation), the customer is dissatisfied. The theory highlights the importance of managing customer expectations and delivering quality service that meets or exceeds those expectations (Oliver, 1980).

In the context of air transportation in Nigeria, Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory is applied to understand how passengers' satisfaction is influenced by their pre-flight expectations and their actual travel experiences. For instance, if passengers expect timely flights, courteous staff, and clean facilities, and these expectations are met or exceeded, they are likely to be satisfied. However, if there are delays, poor customer service, or unclean facilities, passengers experience negative disconfirmation, leading to dissatisfaction (Adeniran & Fadare, 2018; Nwaogbe et al., 2021). Therefore, airlines and airport authorities in Nigeria need to focus on understanding and managing passenger expectations to improve satisfaction levels.

SERVQUAL Model

The SERVQUAL model was developed by A. Parasuraman, Valarie Zeithaml, and Leonard Berry in 1985. It identifies five key dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The model measures the gap between customer expectations and perceptions of service across these dimensions. By analyzing these gaps, businesses can identify areas for improvement and enhance overall service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Applying the SERVQUAL model to air transportation in Nigeria, service providers can assess and improve various dimensions of their service. For example, tangibles might include the cleanliness and comfort of airport facilities, reliability could pertain to on-time departures and arrivals, responsiveness might involve promptness in addressing customer inquiries, assurance could relate to the competence and courtesy of the staff, and empathy could be about the personalized attention given to passengers. By focusing on these dimensions, Nigerian airports and airlines can systematically improve service quality, leading to higher customer satisfaction (Adeniran & Fadare, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Five-point rating system surveys were used by the researcher to gather details to analyse the data. Thus, there are three aspects to data analysis and display. The first part of data processing involved the analysis and presentation of respondents' bio data, the second part of data processing involved the analysis and presentation of research questions using tables of frequency distributions and percentages while the third method of data processing involves the use of linear regression to test the hypotheses of study.

Table 1: Distribution of Questionnaire

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Returned and completely filled	264	66

Unreturned/ Not completely filled	136	34
Total	400	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

As shown in Table 1, four hundred copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents. 264 copies were filled completely and returned to the researcher representing 66% while 136 copies representing 34% were not returned and not filled completely. Therefore, 264 copies of questionnaire were used as 100% in the course of this analysis.

Survey participants Bio data

Table 2: Survey participants Bio data

Bio data	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	156	59.1
Female	108	40.9
Total	264	100
Age		
20 – 30 years	152	57.6
31 – 40 years	82	31
41 – 50years	30	11.4
Total	264	100
Marital Status		
Single	100	37.9
Married	164	62.1
Total	264	100

Educational Qualifications		
OND/NCE	36	13.6
HND/BSc	52	19.7
MSc /MBA	176	66.7
Total	264	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 above shows the analysis of respondents' bio data where majority of the survey participants (59.1%) were male, while 40.9% were female. Majority of the respondents (57.6%) were within the age group of 21 – 30 years, followed by age group 31 – 40 (31%). This shows that the majority of the survey participants were at their youthful age.

As shown in Table 2, majority of the survey participants were married (62.1%), while 37.9% were single at the time when this research was carried out. Moreover, majority of the respondents (66.7%) were holders of MSc /MBA followed by holders of HND/BSc (19.7%) while 13.6% hold an OND/NCE. This indicates that the majority of survey participants sampled possess adequate academic training.

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport?

Table 3: Relevant Statements in Questionnaire that answer Research Question 1

The current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport

Item	The current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
1.	The overall experience at Murtala Muhammed International Airport meets my expectations.	(80) 30.3%	(104) 39.3%	(40) 15.2%	(20) 7.6%	(20) 7.6%	(264) 100%

2.	The airport staff are courteous and helpful.	(116) 44%	(48) 18.2%	(56) 21.2%	(32) 12.1%	(12) 4.5%	(264) 100%
3.	The waiting times at security checks are reasonable.	(198) 75%	(66) 25%	0 0	0 0	0 0	(264) 100%
4.	I am satisfied with the cleanliness and hygiene standards at the airport.	(152) 57.6%	(36) 13.6%	(12) 4.5%	(48) 18.2%	(16) 6.1%	(264) 100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Note: Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Undecided = U, Disagree = D and Strongly Disagree =SD.

On the overall experience at Murtala Muhammed International Airport, according to Table 3 eighty (80) survey participants (i.e. 30.3%) strongly agreed that it meets their expectations, 104 survey participants (39.3%) agreed, 40 survey participants (15.2%) were undecided, 20 survey participants (7.6%) disagreed while another 20 survey participants (7.6%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the overall experience at Murtala Muhammed International Airport meets customers' expectations.

Also, one hundred and sixteen (116) survey participants (i.e. 43.9%) strongly agreed that the airport staff are courteous and helpful, 48 survey participants (18.2% agreed), 56 survey participants (22.1%) were undecided, 32 survey participants (12.1%) disagreed where 12 survey participants (4.5%) strongly disagreed. This shows that the airport staff are courteous and helpful. Similarly, one hundred and sixteen (198) survey participants (i.e. 75%) strongly agreed that the waiting times at security checks are reasonable while 66 survey participants (25%) agreed. This implies that waiting times at security checks are reasonable.

Furthermore, one hundred and fifty two (152) survey participants (i.e. 57.6%) strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the cleanliness and hygiene standards at the airport, 36 survey participants (6%) agreed, 12 survey participants (4.5%) were undecided, 48 survey participants (18.2%) disagreed where 16 survey participants (6.1%) strongly disagreed. This implies that customers are satisfied with the cleanliness and hygiene standards at the airport.

Research Question 2: What is the primary factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation within Nigeria?

Table 4: Relevant Statements in Questionnaire that answer Research Question 2

Item	The key factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation.	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
5.	The efficiency of check-in procedures impacts my overall satisfaction	(140) 53%	(48) 18.2%	(12) 4.5%	(48) 18.2%	(16) 6.1%	(264) 100%
6.	The availability and quality of food and beverages at the airport affect my satisfaction	(88) 33.3%	(160) 60.6%	0 0	0 0	(16) 6.1%	(264) 100%
7.	The ease of navigation and signage within the airport influence my satisfaction	(100) 37.9%	(112) 42.4%	(24) 9.1%	(16) 6.1%	(12) 4.5%	(264) 100%
8.	The punctuality and reliability of flight schedules affect my satisfaction	(144) 54.6%	(96) 36.4%	(8) 3%	(8) 3%	(8) 3%	(264) 100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

As shown in Table 4, one hundred and forty (140) survey participants (i.e. 53%) strongly agreed that the efficiency of check-in procedures impacts their overall satisfaction, 48 survey participants (18.2%) agreed, 12 survey participants (4.5%) were undecided, 48 survey participants (18.2%) disagreed where 16 survey participants (6.1%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the efficiency of check-in procedures impacts customers' overall satisfaction

Besides, eighty eight (88) survey participants (i.e. 33.3%) strongly agreed that the availability and quality of food and beverages at the airport affect their satisfaction, 160 survey participants (60.6%) agreed while 16 survey participants (6.1%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the availability and quality of food and beverages at the airport affect customers' satisfaction.

Furthermore, hundred (100) survey participants (i.e. 37.9%) strongly agreed that the ease of navigation and signage within the airport influence their satisfaction, 112 survey participants (42.4%) agreed, 24 survey participants (9.1%) were undecided, 16 survey participants (6.1%) disagreed while 12 survey participants (4.5%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the ease of navigation and signage within the airport influence customer' satisfaction.

In addition, one hundred and forty four (144) survey participants (i.e. 54.6%) strongly agreed that the punctuality and reliability of flight schedules affect their satisfaction, 96 survey participants (36.4% agreed), 8 survey participants (3%) were undecided, 8 survey participants (3%) disagreed and likewise 8 survey participants (3%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the punctuality and reliability of flight schedules affect customer's satisfaction.

Research Question 3: How effective are the current customer service initiatives at the airport in addressing passenger needs?

Table 5: Relevant Statements in Questionnaire that answer Research Question 3

Item	The effectiveness of existing customer service initiatives at the airport.	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
9.	The customer service desks are easily accessible and helpful.	(72) 27.3%	(112) 42.4%	(40) 15.2%	(16) 6.1%	(24) 9.1%	(264) 100%
10.	The airport's complaint resolution process is efficient.	(152) 57.6%	(36) 13.6%	(12) 4.5%	(48) 18.2%	(16) 6.1%	(264) 100%
11.	The lost and found services at the airport are effective	(100) 30.3%	(104) 39.3%	(40) 15.2%	(20) 7.6%	(20) 7.6%	(264) 100%
12.	The airport's information services (e.g., website, information kiosks) provide clear and accurate information	(88) 33.3%	(160) 60.6%	0 0	0 0	(16) 6.1%	(264) 100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

As shown in Table 5, Seventy two (72) survey participants (i.e. 27.3%) strongly agreed that customer service desks are easily accessible and helpful, 112 survey participants (42.4%) agreed, 40 survey participants (15.2%) were undecided, 16 survey participants (6.1%) disagreed where 24 survey participants (9.1%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the customer service desks are easily accessible and helpful.

Also, one hundred and fifty two (152) survey participants (i.e. 57.6%) strongly agreed that the airport's complaint resolution process is efficient, 36 survey participants (13.6%) agreed, 12 survey participants (4.5%) were undecided, 48 survey participants (18.2%) disagreed while 16 survey participants (6.1%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the airport's complaint resolution process is efficient.

One hundred (100) survey participants (30.3%) strongly agreed that the lost and found services at the airport are effective, 104 survey participants (39.3%) agreed, 40 survey participants (15.2%) were undecided, 20 survey participants (7.6%) disagreed while another 20 survey participants (7.6%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the lost and found services at the airport are effective.

Also, eighty eight (88) survey participants (33.3%) strongly agreed that the airport's information services provide clear and accurate information, 160 survey participants (60.6%) agreed while 4 survey participants (6.1%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the airport's information services (e.g., website, information kiosks) provide clear and accurate information.

Research Question 4: What strategies can be implemented to enhance customer satisfaction and service quality at Murtala Muhammed International Airport?

Table 6: Relevant Statements in Questionnaire that answer Research Question 4

Item	Strategies for improving customer satisfaction and service quality at Murtala Muhammed International Airport.	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
13.	Increasing the number of staff at peak times would improve customer satisfaction	(196) 74.2%	(68) 25.8%	0 0	0 0	0 0	(264) 100%
14.	The dramatic drop in demand for passenger air transport due to the COVID-19 pandemic and containment measures is threatening the jobs availability.	(140) 53%	(48) 18.2%	(12) 4.5%	(48) 18.2%	(16) 6.1%	(264) 100%

15.	Providing more information and better signage would improve customer satisfaction.	(88) 33.3%	(160) 60.6%	0 0	0 0	(16) 6.1%	(264) 100%
16.	Implementing more efficient security check procedures would improve the passenger experience.	(100) 37.9%	(112) 42.4%	(24) 9.1%	(16) 6.1%	(12) 4.5%	(264) 100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 6 above shows that one hundred and ninety six (196) survey participants (i.e. 74.2%) strongly agreed that increasing the number of staff at peak times would improve customer satisfaction while 68 survey participants (25.8%) agreed. This implies that increasing the number of staff at peak times would improve customer satisfaction.

One hundred and forty (140) survey participants (i.e. 53%) strongly agreed that the dramatic drop in demand for passenger air transport due to the COVID-19 pandemic and containment measures is threatening the jobs availability, 48 survey participants (18.2%) agreed, 12 survey participants (4.5%) were undecided, 48 survey participants (18.2%) disagreed where 16 survey participants (6.1%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the dramatic drop in demand for passenger air transport due to the COVID-19 pandemic and containment measures is threatening the jobs availability.

Eighty eight (88) survey participants (i.e. 33.3%) strongly agreed that providing more information and better signage would improve customer satisfaction, 160 survey participants (60.6%) agreed where 16 survey participants (6.1%) strongly disagreed. This implies that providing more information and better signage would improve customer satisfaction

Table 6 also shows that one hundred (100) survey participants (i.e. 37.9%) strongly agreed that implementing more efficient security check procedures would improve the passenger experience, 112 survey participants (42.4%) agreed, 24 survey participants (9.1%) were undecided, 16 survey participants (6.1%) disagreed while 12 survey participants (4.5%) strongly disagreed. This implies that implementing more efficient security check procedures would improve the passenger experience.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: Higher levels of facility maintenance and cleanliness do not correlate with increased customer satisfaction.

Level of Significance (α): 0.05

Decision Rule: Reject H₀ if p-value is less than the specified level of significance.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation analysis showing the relationship between higher levels of facility maintenance and cleanliness and increased customer satisfaction

VARIABLES		HIGHER LEVELS OF FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND CLEANLINESS	INCREASED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
HIGHER LEVELS OF FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND CLEANLINESS	Pearson Correlation		
		1	.796(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.019
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	6001.400	4132.200
	Covariance	3000.200	268.400
INCREASED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	N	264	264
	Pearson Correlation		
		.796(*)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	4132.200	2242.800
	Covariance	268.400	448.300
	N	264	264

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In Table 7, the Pearson Correlation shows 0.796, Sum of Squares and Cross-products indicates 6001.400 while covariance results reveal 3000.200.

Interpretation: Thus, the result of Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.79$) at 5% level of significance shows that higher levels of facility maintenance and cleanliness relates with

increased customer satisfaction. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted and therefore it is concluded that higher levels of facility maintenance and cleanliness correlate with increased customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2:

H₀₂: Improved staff training and customer interaction skills have not lead to higher passenger satisfaction ratings.

Level of Significance (α): 0.05

Decision Rule: Reject H₀ if p-value is less than the specified level of significance.

Table 8: Regression analysis showing how improved staff training and customer interaction skills has led to higher passenger satisfaction ratings.

Mode 1	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t		Sig.		95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	B	Std. Error
1 (Constant)	17.902	21.304		.840	.462			49.898	85.702
Improved Staff Training and Customer Interaction Skills	.787	.152	.948	5.184	.014			.304	.004

a Dependent Variable: Higher Passenger Satisfaction Ratings

Interpretation: Thus, the relationship between variable x and y based on the result of regression analysis is defined as $y = 17.9 + 0.78x + 0.15$ where the result of P value of 0.004 also shows improved staff training and customer interaction skills on higher passenger satisfaction ratings is significant

Decision: Decision: Since, all variables were found to be significantly associated (with p-values less than 0.05) in table 8, null hypothesis is rejected where alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that improved staff training and customer interaction skills have led to higher passenger satisfaction ratings.

Summary of Findings

In the course of investigating the enhancing customer satisfaction in air transportation in Nigeria: A Case Study of Murtala Muhammed International Airport, it was summarized from the findings of the study that:

- i) The current level of customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport is high with majority of the respondents agreeing that the waiting times at security checks are reasonable, the overall experience at Murtala Muhammed International Airport meets their expectations and they are satisfied with the cleanliness and hygiene standards at the airport.
- ii) The key factors influencing customer satisfaction in air transportation include the punctuality and reliability of flight schedules, the efficiency of check-in procedures, the ease of navigation and signage within the airport and the availability and quality of food and beverages at the airport.
- iii) The existing customer service initiatives at the airport in addressing passenger needs are vastly effective with majority of the respondents assenting that the airport's complaint resolution process is efficient, the airport's information services provide clear and accurate information and the lost and found services at the airport are effective.
- iv) The strategies that can be implemented to enhance customer satisfaction and service quality at Murtala Muhammed International Airport include increasing the number of staff at peak times, implementing more efficient security check procedures and providing more information and better signage.
- v) Higher levels of facility maintenance and cleanliness correlate with increased customer satisfaction.
- vi) Improved staff training and customer interaction skills have led to higher passenger satisfaction ratings.

CONCLUSION

The study on enhancing customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport reveals critical factors that significantly influence passenger satisfaction. Higher levels of facility maintenance and cleanliness, improved staff training and customer interaction skills, decreased wait times at security checkpoints and baggage handling areas, and the implementation of advanced technology and streamlined processes all positively impact customer satisfaction. The findings are consistent with existing literature, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a clean and well-maintained environment, investing in staff training, optimizing operational efficiency, and leveraging technology to enhance the passenger experience. As airports continue to face increasing passenger numbers, these strategies become even more crucial. By prioritizing these areas, Murtala Muhammed International Airport can achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction, ultimately leading to increased passenger loyalty and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to enhance customer satisfaction at Murtala Muhammed International Airport:

- i) Firstly, maintaining high standard of cleanliness and facility maintenance should be prioritized. Regular inspections and prompt responses to maintenance issues can ensure a pleasant environment for passengers.
- ii) Secondly, investing in comprehensive staff training programs focusing on customer service and interaction skills is essential. Well-trained staff can significantly enhance the passenger experience through effective communication and assistance.
- iii) Thirdly, efforts should be made to reduce wait times at security checkpoints and baggage handling areas. This can be achieved through better resource allocation, process optimization, and the use of advanced technologies.
- iv) Lastly, implementing and continuously upgrading advanced technologies can streamline operations and improve efficiency. Automated check-in systems, real-time information displays, and efficient baggage handling systems are examples of how technology can

enhance the passenger experience. These recommendations, if implemented, can lead to significant improvements in customer satisfaction, fostering a positive reputation and increased passenger loyalty for Murtala Muhammed International Airport.

REFERENCES

- Adamolugbe, L. T., Akpudo, C. U., Stephens, M. S., & Enyinda, C. A. (2023). Factors influencing the airline decision-making process in planning pricing mechanisms in the Nigerian aviation industry. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 7(11), 752–762.
- Adeniran, O., & Fadare, S. O. (2018). Relationship between Passengers' Satisfaction and Service Quality in Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, Nigeria. *Int. J. Res. Ind. Eng*, 7(3), 349–369.
- Aiyegbaje, F. O. (2023). Assessing the determinants of choice of airline among domestic air travelers in Lagos, Nigeria. *Ghana Journal of Geography*, 15(1), 130–155.
- Cochran, W. G. (1977). *Sampling Techniques* (3rd Ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4.
- National Transport Policy for Nigeria (2021). *Draft Document*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Transportation.
- Nwaogbe, O. R., Ogwude, I. C., A, E. E., & Pius, A. (2021). Service quality and passenger satisfaction in air transportation in a developing economy: Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Aviation Technology and Engineering*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.7771/2159-6670.1207>
- Oghojafor, B. E., & Adekoya, A. G. (2015). Determinants of Customers' Satisfaction in the Nigerian Aviation Industry Using Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) Model. *AUDCE*, 10(4), 107–126.

- Oliver, R. L. (1980). A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 17(4), 460-469.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1985). A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of Marketing*, 49(4), 41-50.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rahim, A. G. (2016). Perceived service quality and customer loyalty: The mediating effect of passenger satisfaction in the Nigerian airline industry. *International Journal of Management and Economics*, 52(1), 94–117.
- Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2, 53-55.
- URL 1: Industry Overview (2025, January 23). Retrieved from <https://ncaa.gov.ng/about/industry-overview/>