

**ENTREPRENEURIAL VALUE CREATION AND MARKETING SUCCESS OF LUXURY HOTELS
IN PORT HARCOURT.**

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between Entrepreneurial Value Creation and Marketing Success of Luxury Hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Entrepreneurial value creation was operationalized through innovative value and customer value, while marketing success was measured by sales growth and market share growth. The research was anchored on the Resource-Based View (RBV). A descriptive survey research design was employed, and data were collected using structured questionnaire administered to managers and staff of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt. Out of 90 copies of questionnaire distributed, 87 were retrieved, and 84 were found valid for analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that innovative value significantly relate with sales growth and market share growth. Similarly, customer value significantly impacts sales growth and, to a lesser degree, market share growth, suggesting that delivering superior experiences, personalized services, and value-for-money enhances patronage and repeat business. The study concluded that entrepreneurial value creation is a critical driver of marketing success in luxury hotels. It recommended that managers prioritize continuous innovation, customer-centered service delivery, staff training, and digital marketing strategies to sustain competitiveness.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Value Creation; Innovative Value; Customer Value; Marketing Success; Sales Growth and Market Share Growth.*

Introduction

The global luxury hospitality industry has witnessed significant growth, driven by increasing consumer demand for premium experiences, personalized services, and high-end accommodations (Pizam, 2019). Luxury hotels distinguish themselves by offering exclusive services, state-of-the-art facilities, and exceptional customer experiences that justify premium pricing (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2020). In emerging economies such as Nigeria, the luxury hotel sector is expanding due to rapid urbanization, economic growth, and rising disposable incomes among affluent travelers and business executives (Ojo, 2021). Port Harcourt has experienced increasing investments in luxury hotels, fueled by its status as an oil-rich city attracting expatriates, corporate travelers, and high-net-worth individuals (Adebayo & Williams, 2022). However, sustaining competitiveness and achieving continuous growth in this sector require a strategic focus on entrepreneurial value creation.

Entrepreneurial value creation is the process through which businesses generate competitive advantage by offering unique and innovative solutions that enhance customer satisfaction and drive business growth (Hitt, et al., 2017). Additionally, entrepreneurial value creation involves the development of innovative value and customer value, which are essential for differentiating brands and enhancing market positioning (Hoskisson et al., 2018). In the luxury hospitality sector, this concept encompasses two key dimensions: innovative value and customer value. These dimensions

play a crucial role in differentiating luxury hotels, strengthening brand loyalty, and ensuring long-term profitability.

Innovative value refers to the adoption of new service concepts, technology-driven enhancements, and unique hospitality experiences that increase customer satisfaction and loyalty (Schumpeter, 1934; Bharadwaj, 2020). In contrast, customer value focuses on delivering superior experiences through quality services, exclusivity, and brand prestige, which influence guests' willingness to pay premium prices (Zeithaml, 1988; Kim & Mauborgne, 2019). Luxury hotels that effectively create and communicate value to their customers can achieve a strong competitive advantage and long-term sustainability (Porter, 1985).

Marketing success reflects the effectiveness of a firm's marketing strategies in achieving business objectives such as brand recognition, customer acquisition, revenue growth, and market expansion (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Additionally, marketing success is the firm's ability to attract and retain customers through effective marketing initiatives (Rust, et al., 2004). Marketing success is often measured by sales growth and market share growth (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Sales growth reflects the ability of a hotel to attract and retain high-value customers through effective branding, service innovation, and superior guest experiences (Berry, et al., 2002). Market share growth, on the other hand, indicates a hotel's ability to outperform competitors and expand its customer base by leveraging strategic marketing initiatives (Aaker, 2018). In an increasingly saturated market, luxury hotels must continually innovate and enhance customer value to drive both sales and market dominance (Chathoth et al., 2016).

Despite the growing importance of entrepreneurial value creation in the hospitality sector, limited research has been conducted on its direct impact on marketing success, particularly within the Rivers State. While previous studies have examined service innovation in hotels (Ottenbacher & Gnoth, 2005) and customer experience management (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), there is a gap in understanding how innovative value and customer value contribute to sales growth and market share growth in luxury hotels in Port Harcourt. Furthermore, existing studies on luxury hotel performance have largely focused on global markets, with insufficient empirical evidence from emerging economies (Ezeuduji, 2015). This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between entrepreneurial value creation and marketing success of luxury hotel industry in Port Harcourt.

Statement of the Problem

The global luxury hospitality industry thrives on exclusivity, superior customer experiences, and premium service offerings (Kotler, et. al. 2020). However, despite significant investments in facilities and branding, many luxury hotels struggle to achieve consistent marketing success, particularly in emerging markets like Nigeria (Adebayo & Williams, 2022). The challenges of stagnant sales growth, declining customer loyalty, and increasing competition have raised concerns about the sustainability of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, a key economic hub in Nigeria. In an era where customer expectations are evolving rapidly, traditional marketing strategies seem insufficient in securing long-term competitive advantage.

More specifically, luxury hotels in Port Harcourt face difficulties in achieving sustainable sales growth and expanding their market share due to poor differentiation, lack of innovation, and weak customer engagement (Ojo, 2021). Many hotels struggle to create unique value propositions, leading to a price-driven competitive landscape where customers base their choices primarily on cost rather than brand loyalty or perceived exclusivity (Kim, et al., 2019). This issue is further exacerbated by inconsistent service quality, inadequate use of digital marketing, and weak customer retention strategies, resulting in low repeat patronage and poor word-of-mouth marketing (Ezeuduji, 2015).

A critical factor influencing this poor marketing success is the failure of many luxury hotels to integrate Entrepreneurial Value Creation (EVC) strategies into their business models. Entrepreneurial value creation comprising innovative value and customer value has been identified

as a key driver of competitive advantage in the luxury hospitality industry (Hoskisson et al., 2018). Unfortunately, many luxury hotels in Port Harcourt have not fully embraced entrepreneurial value creation, leading to a gap between customer expectations and the value delivered. This has resulted in low customer retention rates, reduced brand differentiation, and declining marketing success.

Given these challenges, this study seeks to explore how Entrepreneurial Value Creation can enhance the marketing success of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt by addressing issues of stagnant sales growth and limited market share expansion.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of entrepreneurial value creation and marketing success of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt shown in figure 1.1 below. The conceptual framework shows the predictor variable of the study and its dimensions as well as the criterion variable and its measures.

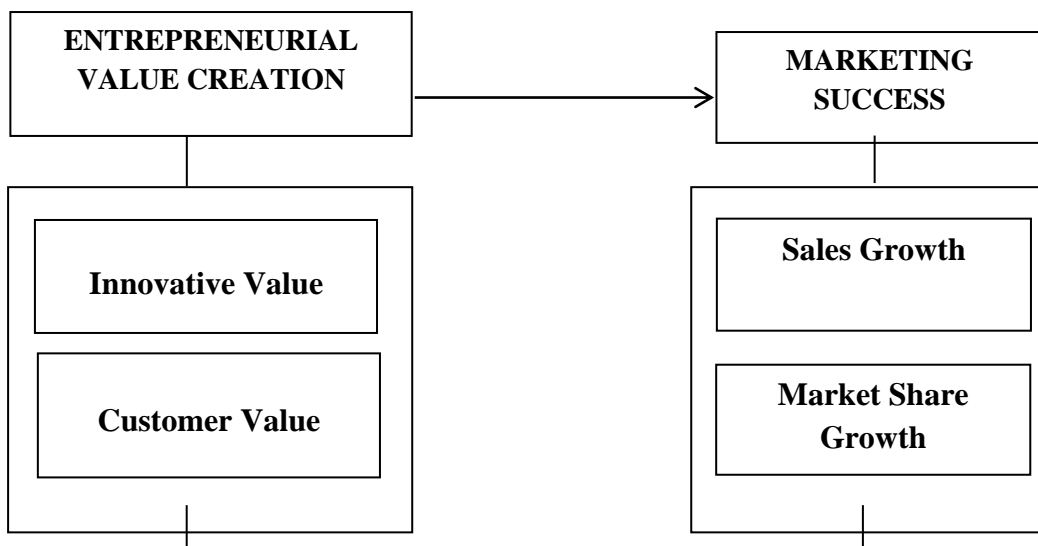


Figure.1.1: Conceptual framework of entrepreneurial value creation and sales performance
Sources: Morris et al (2002); Nwekeala (2023).

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship Entrepreneurial Value Creation and Marketing Success of Luxury Hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The specific objectives of this study include:

- a) examine the relationship between innovative value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- b) ascertain the relationship between innovative value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- c) determine the relationship between customer value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- d) examine the relationship between customer value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Research Questions

Attempts were made to answer the following research questions:

- a) How does innovative value relate with sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?

- b) How does innovative value relate with market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?
- c) How does customer value relate with sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?
- d) How does customer value relate with market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide this study:

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between innovative value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between innovative value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between customer value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between customer value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Concept of Entrepreneurial Value Creation

Entrepreneurial Value Creation (EVC) is a central theme in entrepreneurship and strategic management, yet scholars differ in their interpretations of its meaning, scope, and implications. At its core, EVC refers to the process by which entrepreneurs develop and deliver unique, innovative, and customer-centric solutions that generate economic, social, or competitive advantages (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2017). However, the definition and application of this concept vary depending on the perspective from which it is analyzed. Some scholars emphasize economic value creation, others focus on innovation-driven differentiation, while a third group underscores the role of customer value in shaping competitive advantage. A critical analysis of these viewpoints provides a more holistic understanding of EVC. Foss and Klein (2012) argued that while economic value is a measurable outcome, entrepreneurial value creation extends beyond financial gains to include intangible assets such as brand equity, innovation capacity, and customer relationships. Similarly, Sarasvathy (2001) highlighted the role of effectuation, where entrepreneurs create value not merely by exploiting market opportunities but by actively shaping market conditions through innovative decision-making.

A competing school of thought emphasizes the innovation-centric nature of entrepreneurial value creation, arguing that true value is derived from the ability to develop novel solutions that differentiate businesses from competitors (Teece, 2010; Bharadwaj, 2020). Teece (2010) defines EVC as the capacity of an organization to generate and sustain competitive advantage through continuous innovation, intellectual property, and dynamic capabilities. This view aligns with resource-based theory (RBT), which asserts that firms with unique, hard-to-imitate resources such as proprietary technology, strategic alliances, and brand equity create superior value (Barney, 1991).

Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Value Creation

Innovative Value

Innovative value refers to the introduction of new service concepts, advanced technologies, and unique guest experiences that enhance a hotel's competitive position (Schumpeter, 1934; Bharadwaj, 2020). Luxury hotels achieve innovative value through cutting-edge service delivery, artificial intelligence-powered personalization, and the integration of sustainable practices in hospitality management (Buhalis & Leung, 2018). For instance, hotels that incorporate smart room

technology, contactless check-in systems, and AI-driven concierge services provide customers with a seamless and memorable experience (Kim, Tang, & Jeong, 2021). Additionally, innovation in guest engagement, such as experiential marketing and immersive hospitality experiences, enhances perceived luxury and exclusivity (Tsai, 2017).

Customer Value

Customer value in the luxury hotel industry is defined by the perceived benefits that guests receive relative to the cost of their stay (Zeithaml, 1988). It extends beyond basic service provision to include elements such as exclusivity, personalized experiences, superior service quality, and brand prestige (Kim & Mauborgne, 2019). The concept is closely linked to customer satisfaction, loyalty, and willingness to pay premium prices (Homburg, Jozić, & Kuehnl, 2017). Luxury hotels create customer value by offering bespoke services, VIP treatment, curated cultural experiences, and membership-based privileges that reinforce brand affinity and enhance long-term customer retention (Berry, Carbone, & Haeckel, 2002).

Concept of marketing success

Marketing success is a multifaceted concept that has been defined and measured differently by scholars, depending on the context and industry under study. Generally, marketing success refers to the effectiveness of a firm's marketing strategies in achieving business objectives such as increased sales, customer retention, brand growth, and market competitiveness (Kotler & Keller, 2016). While some scholars emphasize financial performance metrics, others argued that marketing success should be evaluated based on customer engagement, brand equity, and long-term competitive advantage (Aaker, 2018; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). A critical review of these perspectives reveals a complex yet complementary view of how marketing success is conceptualized and measured.

A traditional perspective on marketing success is rooted in financial performance. Scholars in this school of thought argued that marketing efforts are only successful if they contribute to revenue growth, profitability, and market expansion (Rust, Zeithaml, & Lemon, 2004). Kotler and Keller (2016) define marketing success as the ability of a business to generate increasing sales, sustain profitability, and gain a competitive edge in its industry.

Dimensions of marketing success

Sales Growth

A sale is the act of selling a product or service in return for money or other compensation (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). Santos and Brito (2012) defined sales as the process of convincing customers to purchase goods usually one on one interaction. Sales growth refers to a company's annual and quarterly rate of increase in its sales (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). The Business Dictionary defines sales growth as the amount by which the average sales volume of a company's products or services has grown, typically from year to year. Ajitabh and Momaya (2004) defined sales growth as the increase in the total sales made by a firm when compared to the sales of the previous year.

Sales growth indicates that a company is doing well in the market. It shows that customers are satisfied with the company's products. Fatoki (2012) stated that if the sales of a company is growing from year to year, it means that customers are satisfied with the company's products. He explains that only satisfied and loyal customers buy more of a company's products and recommend the products to their friends and relatives – a behaviour that boosts sales. When more of a company's products are purchased, it will increase sales and the company was able to grow its profit margin and sustain in its industry. Delmar and Wiklund (2013) stated that sales growth brings about increased profitability and general business growth. Davidsson et al (2010) argued

that any small or medium enterprise that experiences consistent sales growth from year to year stands a better chance of growing its business into a larger entity.

Market Share Growth

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2004), market share is the percentage or proportion of the total available market or market segment that is being served by a company. It is determined by dividing a brand's sales volume by the total category sales volume. It is necessary to commission market research (generally desk/secondary research) to determine the firm's market share. A company's market share can be ascertained by calculating the sales made by the company at a given period and divide the figure by the total sales of the industry over the same period. The result which is expressed in percentage enables the company to know how customers value its products in relation to competitors' offerings. For instance, if a company like Toyota sold N200 million worth of cars in Nigeria for the year 2017, and the total cars sold in Nigeria was N400 million at the same period, Toyota's Nigeria market share for cars would be 50%.

Market share growth refers to the increase in the portion of the market captured by a company from year to year (McKelvie&Wiklund, 2010). A company's market share can be calculated by taking into consideration the total sales of the company over a period of time and the industry's total sales for the same period (Parmenter, 2009). Huynh and Petrunia (2010) agreed that market share growth enables a company to attain greater scale of operations and increase its profitability. A higher market share means more sales for the company, lesser effort to sell more products and a strong discouragement to competitors who are planning to enter the industry. Every company wants to increase their market share since it is a sure way to maximize profit. To increase market share means that a company has to put in more efforts to grow its sales (Brudan, 2010). Woodburn (2004) stated that a company can increase its market share by embracing innovation, strengthening its relationship with its existing customers and acquiring competing firms.

Theoretical Review

The study is anchored on Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View which was first coined by BirgerWernerfelt in 1984. The theory describes a firm as a unique bundle of tangible and intangible resources (assets, capabilities, competencies, organizational processes, firm attributes, information and knowledge and so forth) that are controlled by the firm (Barney, 1991). The resource-based view (RBV) is founded on the idea that a firm's internal resources, rather than its external positioning, are the basis of its performance and competitive advantage.

These resources enable a firm to implement strategies designed to improve its efficiency and effectiveness (Barney, 1991). The resource-based view suggests that valuable firm resources are usually scarce, imperfectly imitable and lacking in direct substitutes. A firm's resource must have four attributes: it must be valuable; it must be rare among a firm's current and prospective competition; it must be imperfectly imitable, and it cannot be substituted for strategically equivalent resource (Barney, 1991).

This theory is relevant to the study because Resource-Based View theory is anchored on the notion that organizations can have the competitive advantage through the development of resources that are peculiar and diversely distributed (Aliyu& Mahmoud, 2014). It holds much promise as a framework for understanding strategic marketing issues; EO is unique to the firm, as such a source of enhanced performance and sustainable competitive advantage.

Empirical Review

Innovative Value and Sales Growth

Innovative value refers to a firm's ability to develop and introduce new products, services, or processes that enhance customer experiences and create competitive differentiation (Schumpeter, 1934; Teece, 2010). In the luxury hospitality industry, innovation is a critical driver of revenue expansion, as customers **seek** unique, technology-driven, and personalized experiences. Ottenbacher and Gnoth (2005) conducted a study on innovation in the hospitality industry and found that hotels that introduced new service concepts, such as personalized concierge services, AI-powered recommendations, and immersive experiences, reported a 27% increase in sales revenue compared to hotels that maintained traditional service models. Also, Bharadwaj (2020) examined the role of digital transformation in the hospitality industry and found that luxury hotels that implemented smart room technologies, digital concierge services, and automated check-in processes experienced a 35% rise in direct sales and booking rates. Furthermore, Kim, et al., (2021) studied the impact of tech-driven innovation in luxury hotels and found that those integrating augmented reality (AR) hotel previews and virtual concierge systems saw a **20%** improvement in occupancy rates and revenue per available room (RevPAR).

Innovative Value and Market Share Growth

Market share growth depends on a firm's ability to capture a larger portion of the market relative to competitors, often through strategic innovation and superior service delivery (Porter, 1985). Empirical research shows that innovative luxury hotels outperform competitors by continuously evolving their offerings to meet changing customer expectations. Teece (2010) found that businesses that focus on continuous innovation and service differentiation experience sustainable market share expansion because they create barriers to entry for competitors. Again, Leung, et al., (2015) examined social media-driven innovation in hospitality marketing and found that hotels leveraging digital engagement strategies and AI-powered recommendation systems expanded their market reach by 30% over a three-year period. Furthermore, Chathoth et al. (2016) studied co-creation and innovation in luxury hotels and found that brands that involved customers in the design of personalized experiences achieved higher market penetration and a 25% increase in brand preference.

Customer Value and Sales Growth

Customer value refers to the perceived benefits that customers receive relative to the cost of a product or service (Zeithaml, 1988). In luxury hospitality, creating customer value through exceptional service quality, exclusivity, and emotional engagement directly influences sales growth. Berry, et al., (2002) found that hotels prioritizing total customer experience management, such as personalized guest interactions and VIP treatment, experienced a 40% increase in revenue per guest compared to competitors. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) studied the impact of customer journey optimization on sales performance and found that hotels delivering hyper-personalized services—such as customized amenities and exclusive member benefits—achieved a 25% increase in repeat patronage and overall revenue growth. Kim and Mauborgne (2019) found that luxury brands that shifted from price-based competition to experience-based value creation (such as private concierge services and experiential luxury) experienced higher customer willingness to pay and a 30% increase in premium service sales.

Customer Value and Market Share Growth

Beyond influencing sales, customer value also plays a significant role in expanding a hotel's market share. By delivering exceptional customer experiences, luxury hotels can increase customer retention, generate positive word-of-mouth marketing, and strengthen their competitive positioning. Reinartz and Kumar (2000) found that companies with high customer lifetime value (CLV) outperform competitors in market expansion, as loyal customers are more likely to

recommend brands and contribute to organic market share growth. Kim, et al., (2019) examined the relationship between brand prestige, customer loyalty, and market share growth and found that luxury hotels that cultivated strong emotional connections with their guests increased their market dominance by 22% over a five-year period. Additionally, Aaker (2018) studied the role of brand equity in market expansion and concluded that hotels with strong brand equity and customer advocacy programs experienced higher international expansion rates and market penetration.

Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey design within a quantitative method. The population of this study comprised of 30 luxury hotels in Port Harcourt, the population was retrieved from <https://www.tripadvisor.com>. In line with the population of the study which is 30 luxury hotels, the study adopted a census approach and studied the entire 30 luxury hotels with a focus on the staff. The judgmental sampling technique was adopted to reach out to the study elements. The data for this study were collected from the primary data source. The primary data was collected through the administration of questionnaire to the respondents of luxury hotels. This study adopted a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical tools with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 27.0 in order to facilitate the analysis. Charts, frequency tables, means, as well as percentages constituted the descriptive statistical while the inferential statistics Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation was employed to test the hypotheses. Hypotheses were tested at a 95% confidence level ($p \leq 0.05$) to determine statistical significance.

Data Presentation

Here, the data collected in the questionnaire were presented in tables and interpreted. A total of ninety (90) copies of the instrument were issued to the respondents (employees) of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt. The questionnaire administration and the collection rate are shown in table 4.1 below:

Table 1: Questionnaire Administration and Collection

| Distributed | Retrieved | Useful | Not Useful |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 90 | 87 | 84 | 3 |

Source: Survey Data, 2026.

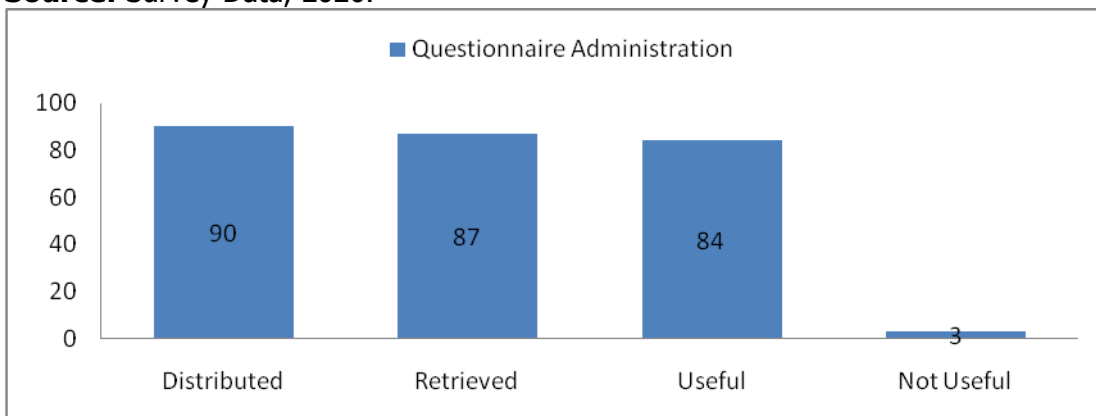


Table 4.1 and Fig.4.1 contains the number of questionnaire administered to the respondents (employees) of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt and their collection rate. Out of the 90 copies of questionnaire administered to the respondents, 87 copies were retrieved, 84 copies were useful and 3 copies were not useful.

Demographic Analysis

The demographic analysis covers the respondents’ sex, age, length in service, and educational qualification. The demographic variables of the respondents are presented in tables and analyzed accordingly.

Table 2: Sex of the Respondents

| Sex | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Male | 37 | 44% |
| Female | 47 | 56% |
| Total | 84 | 100% |

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

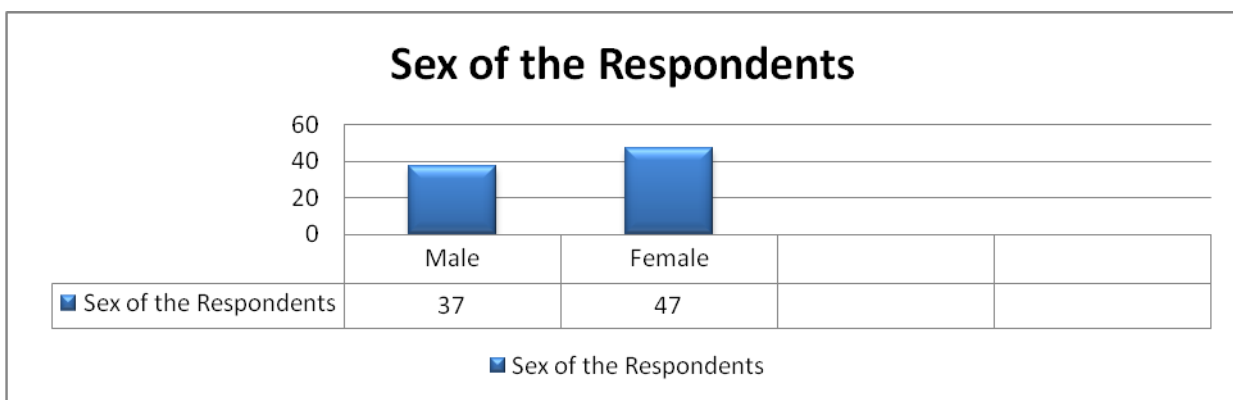


Table 4.2 and fig.4.2 shows the sex of the respondents who completed and returned the questionnaires. From the table, it is observed that out of the 84 employees who completed and returned the questionnaire, 37 of them were male representing 44% of the respondents while 47 of them were female representing 56% of the respondents.

Bivariate Analysis

Hypothesis 1

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between Innovative value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

Table 3: Result of bivariate analysis between innovative value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

| | | | Innovative value | Sales growth |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Pearson Correlation (r) | Innovative value | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .815** |
| | | Sig. (2 tailed) | . | .001 |
| | | N | 84 | 84 |
| | Sales growth | Correlation Coefficient | .815** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2 tailed) | .001 | . |
| | | N | 84 | 84 |

***Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)*

**Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)*

Source: SPSS-generated Output

Table 3 depicts the result of bivariate analysis carried out between innovative value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt. The result shows a very strong positive correlation between innovative value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt. ($r = .815^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as indicated by the symbol **. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho₁) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that we then accept that

there is very strong positive and significant relationship between innovative value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

Hypothesis 2

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between Innovative value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

Table 4: Result of bivariate analysis between innovative value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt

| | | | Innovative value | Market share growth |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Pearson Correlation (r) | Innovative value | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .659** |
| | | Sig. (2 tailed) | . | .001 |
| | | N | 84 | 84 |
| | Market share growth | Correlation Coefficient | .659** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2 tailed) | .001 | . |
| | | N | 84 | 84 |

***Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)*

**Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)*

Source: SPSS-generated Output

Table 4 presents the result of bivariate analysis carried out between innovative value statements and market share growth of hotels in Port Harcourt. The result shows that innovative value statements is strongly and positively correlated to market share growth ($r = .659^{**}$) and the symbol ** indicates that this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Based on this result, the null hypothesis (Ho₂) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that we then accept that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between innovative value statements and market share growth of hotels in Port Harcourt.

Hypothesis 3

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between customer value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

Table 5: Result of bivariate analysis between customer value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

| | | | Customer value | Sales growth |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Pearson Correlation (r) | Customer value | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .723** |
| | | Sig. (2 tailed) | . | .001 |
| | | N | 84 | 84 |
| | Sales growth | Correlation Coefficient | .723** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2 tailed) | .001 | . |
| | | N | 84 | 84 |

***Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)*

**Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)*

Source: SPSS-generated Output

Table 5 shows the result of bivariate analysis carried out between customer value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt. The result indicates that customer value has a strong positive correlation with sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt ($r = .723^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as indicated by the symbol **. As a result of this, we then reject the null hypothesis (Ho₃) and accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is strong positive and significant relationship between customer value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

Hypothesis 4

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between customer value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

Table 6: Result of bivariate analysis between customer value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

| | | Customer value | market share growth |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Pearson Correlation (r) | Customer value | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2 tailed) | .001 |
| | | N | 84 |
| | market share growth | Correlation Coefficient | .381** |
| | | Sig. (2 tailed) | .001 |
| | | N | 84 |

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-generated Output

Table 6 presents the result of bivariate analysis carried out between customer value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt. The result shows that customer value statements has a weak positive correlation with market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt ($r = .381^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as indicated by the symbol **. As a result of this, the null hypothesis (Ho₄) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is weak positive and significant relationship between customer value and market share growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt.

Summary of Findings

Based on the results of the analysis carried out on the study variables, the findings are:

- i. There is significant relationship between innovation value and sales growth of hotels in Port Harcourt.
- ii. There is significant relationship between innovation value and market share growth of hotels in Port Harcourt.
- iii. There is significant relationship between customer value and sales growth of hotels in Port Harcourt.
- iv. There is significant relationship between customer value and market share growth of hotels in Port Harcourt.

Discussion Findings

Innovative Value and Sales Growth

The study found a significant positive relationship between innovative value and sales growth of luxury hotels in Port Harcourt. This indicates that hotels that adopt innovative practices such as new service designs, use of digital platforms, or differentiated offerings are more likely to experience increased sales. This aligns with Schumpeter’s (1934) innovation theory, which posits that innovation is a driver of entrepreneurial growth and competitiveness. In the hospitality industry, innovation creates memorable guest experiences, attracts new customers, and stimulates repeat patronage, all of which contribute to sales growth.

Empirical studies support this finding. For instance, Enz and Siguaw (2003) emphasized that service innovations in hotels significantly boost customer satisfaction and revenue performance. In the Nigerian context, Akinyele (2010) similarly found that hotels that introduced innovative amenities and digital booking systems recorded higher occupancy and improved sales volumes.

Thus, the evidence suggests that innovative value is not just a desirable feature but a necessity for sales expansion.

Innovative Value and Market Share Growth

The results also revealed a significant positive relationship between innovative value and market share growth. This implies that hotels that continuously innovate are able to capture a larger proportion of the market by differentiating their offerings and building stronger competitive positions. This supports the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991), which identifies innovation as a rare and valuable resource that provides sustained competitive advantage. Research by Tajeddini (2010) also confirmed that innovation-oriented hotels enjoy higher market share as they respond quickly to changing customer preferences. In the Nigerian context, Onyema (2019) found that innovative hotel practices such as mobile applications, customized meal services, and loyalty programs were instrumental in expanding customer bases and increasing market share. This suggests that innovation is a strategic tool for growth, especially in urban hospitality markets.

Customer Value and Sales Growth

The findings demonstrated a significant relationship between customer value and sales growth, confirming that delivering superior value directly contributes to revenue expansion. Customer value involves offering high-quality services, personalized experiences, and fair pricing, which enhance satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases. Zeithaml (1988) argued that perceived value is a key driver of purchase intention and loyalty, which directly boosts sales performance. This finding is supported by empirical evidence. Ajayi and Oyatoye (2019) reported that Nigerian hotel customers strongly associate value-for-money with their decision to return, thereby enhancing sales. Similarly, Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasized that firms that deliver superior value enjoy sustained revenue growth because customers are willing to repurchase and recommend services.

Customer Value and Market Share Growth

The study also revealed that customer value significantly affects market share growth, though to a slightly lesser extent than sales growth. This suggests that while customer value enhances immediate revenue outcomes, its impact on long-term market share expansion requires reinforcement with other factors such as innovation and branding. This is consistent with Porter's (1985) competitive strategy model, which highlights customer value creation as central to differentiation and market positioning.

Empirical evidence by Kim and Mauborgne (2005) in their *Blue Ocean Strategy* supports this finding, showing that businesses that deliver exceptional customer value often create new demand and expand market share. In Nigeria, Ebitu (2016) found that hotels that provided superior value in terms of service quality, comfort, and responsiveness gained higher market visibility and competitive advantage.

Conclusion

The findings of this study confirm that entrepreneurial value creation is a vital strategic resource for luxury hotels seeking to thrive in a competitive and dynamic environment. Specifically, innovative value strongly influences both sales growth and market share, underscoring the importance of service innovation, adoption of technology, and unique value propositions in the hospitality sector. Equally, customer value was found to significantly impact sales growth and, to a lesser extent, market share growth. This suggests that while providing superior customer experiences enhances sales and loyalty, sustaining market share dominance requires continuous reinforcement of both innovation and customer-centered strategies. This study concluded that luxury hotels in Port Harcourt can achieve sustainable marketing success through deliberate investments in innovation, customer experience management, and value creation practices.

Entrepreneurial value creation thus provides a sustainable pathway for improving competitiveness, increasing customer patronage, and ensuring long-term profitability.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. Luxury hotels should consistently adopt new technologies such as smart room automation, contactless check-in, and AI-powered concierge services to enhance guest experiences.
2. Hotels should prioritize personalized services, exclusivity, and tailored guest experiences to strengthen customer loyalty and encourage repeat patronage.
3. Employees should be trained on innovative service delivery and customer relationship management to ensure consistency in value delivery.
4. Hotels should employ social media engagement, digital storytelling, and data-driven marketing campaigns to reinforce brand visibility and capture greater market share.

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