

## **Female Consumers Expectations and Post Patronage Satisfaction of Tailoring Services in Ibadan Metropolis**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated consumers' expectations and post patronage satisfaction of tailoring services and delivery of garment makers among female residents of Elere Community, Apata, Ibadan. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Data were mean and t-test. The result revealed that the mean score of consumers expectation is 3.14 while the mean score of consumers' post patronage satisfaction is 2.85. The hypothesis revealed that there is no significant difference between consumers' expectation and post patronage perception ( $t_{cal} < t_{crit} 0.05$ ) of tailoring services and delivery. It was recommended, among others, that tailors/dressmakers should improve their skills and services.

**Keyword:** Consumers, Tailoring, Satisfaction, and Patronage.

### **Introduction**

Clothing is any article placed on the body in order to protect, beautify or adorn the body (Anyakoha, 2005). Clothing is so important because, it gives a non-verbal communication about the wearer, his/her status, roles in the society and signals to people if the person deserves an attention or not. Quality clothing is expensive and any individual who

purchases quality fabric to be sewn into a garment is scared of getting his/her expensive fabric damaged by unskilled tailors/dressmakers. A good tailor/dressmaker should be able to sew a garment that fits perfectly, offer professional advice on the fit for body shape and have knowledge on styles and fabrics to create unique designs that will

enhance the appearance of the consumer (Amubode, 2012).

Within the current marketing environment, the competition between products and services is becoming increasingly tough. Each producer of goods and services attempts to obtain a share of the market by making consumers believe that they have the answer to all their personal needs and desires.

Consumer satisfaction is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet's or surpasses customer expectation. Customer satisfaction is defined as "the number of customers, or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a firm, its products, or its services (ratings) exceeds specified satisfaction goals (Faris, Neil, Phillip and David, 2012). Within organizations, customer satisfaction ratings can have powerful effects. They focus employees on the importance of fulfilling customers' expectations and they warn of problems that can affect sales and profitability. According to Yang and Peterson (2004), satisfaction is an important predictor of customer loyalty. When a brand has loyal customers, it gains positive word-of-mouth marketing, which is both free and highly effective (Faris *et.al.* 2012). A customer who is satisfied with a

product or service tends to use the product/service more often than an unsatisfied customer (Bolton and Lemon, 1999). Organizations need to retain existing customers while targeting non-customers (Joby, 2003). Measuring customer satisfaction provides an indication of how successful the organization is at providing products and/or services to the marketplace.

In a competitive marketplace where businesses compete for customers, customer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator and increasingly has become a key element of business strategy (Gitman and McDaniel, 2005). Thus, customers' expectations are a key factor and link behind customers' satisfaction. When customers have high expectations and the reality falls short, they will be disappointed and will likely rate their experience as less than satisfying.

Rogers, Peyton and Berl (1992) pointed out that there is no general agreement of the definition of satisfaction because the concept is viewed differently. In this study, the concept of customer satisfaction is viewed as a function of customer expectations (what customers expect from the service) and perceptions (what customers receive). Gerson (1993) suggests that a firm will always have to measure quality and customer satisfaction to determine how well they are doing.

According to Hill, Brierley and MacDougall (2003), customer expectations are the customer-defined attributes of one's product or service one must meet or exceed to achieve customer satisfaction. Customer expectations are of two types - Expressed and Implied. Expressed Customer Expectations are those requirements that are written down in the contract and agreed upon by both parties, for example, product specifications and delivery requirements.

Faris *et. al* (2010) suggests that expectations are a key factor behind satisfaction. When customers have high expectations and the reality falls short, they will be disappointed and will likely rate their experience as less than satisfying. For this reason, a luxury resort, for example, might receive a lower satisfaction rating than a budget motel - even though its facilities and services would be deemed superior in "absolute" terms.

There are many reasons why customer expectations are likely to change over time. Process improvements, advent of new technology, changes in customer's priorities, improved quality of service provided by competitors are just a few examples. The customer is always right. Supplier's job is to provide the customer what he wants, and when he wants it. Customer satisfaction is customers' perception

that a supplier has met or exceeded their expectations (Hill *et. al*, 2003). However, Yi and La (2004), discovered that the effect of consumer satisfaction on repurchase intention is mediated by adjusted expectations.

Given the central importance of expectations, it is important to understand how they are formed. The basic key factors most commonly seen to influence expectations are described as:

*Personal needs:* Any customer or user of a service will have what they regard as a set of key personal needs that they expect the service to address. These will vary from service to service and from customer to customer. A clear understanding of these needs is necessary to design and deliver an appropriate service.

*Previous experience:* Many will have had service encounters before. Their previous experience will in part influence their future expectations for the service. This can include their past experience of the service in question, but also of other services.

*Communication:* Expectations will be shaped by communications from sources other than the service provider itself. This can include family, friends and colleagues, but more widely the media and other organizations.

*Explicit service communications:* Statements from staff or from leaflets

or other publicity material can have a direct impact on expectations.

*Implicit service communication:* This includes factors such as the physical appearance of buildings e.g., renovation may lead to the customer to expect other service aspects to be of higher quality.

Unlike developed countries like Europe where ready to wear garments dominate the clothing business, in the Nigerian society, the prevalent clothing technique is custom made, usually regarded to as *cut and sew*. Ready-to-wear garments are mass produced, using standard body measurement and are ready to be worn at the time of purchase. For custom-made garments on the other hand, fabrics are bought by customers and presented to either a dressmaker or tailor to sew a desired style of the customer using his/her actual body measurement. Custom made tailors/dressmakers are expected based on the expectations and to the satisfaction of their customers. Many Nigerians depend on indigenous dressmakers/tailors for their traditional dresses.

It is important to note the online comments of some Nigerians in the diaspora on the services of Nigerian tailors/dressmakers. These online comments reveal that customers are not satisfied with the services of Nigerian tailors/dressmakers. Customers complained of insult, delay, disappointment,

unprofessional ethics, poor sewing construction and poor customer relations received from tailors/dressmakers (Naijarules 2011, Wabada 2007).

From the above online comments of Nigerians in diaspora, it can be argued that Nigerian tailors/dressmakers may not be performing to the expectations of international customers, consequently Nigerians in diaspora are dissatisfied with the services of the tailors and dressmakers. The question is, could this be the same experience with local customers/consumers? According to Willet (2011), consumers are frustrated and bored with sameness, not finding creative and quality fashions that will fit for the value of money paid. Consumers are becoming involved in designing in various ways, and insist that every fashion designer must become collaborative and drop personal ego.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study investigated consumers' expectations and post-patronage satisfaction of tailoring services and delivery of garment constructors in Ibadan Metropolis. Specifically, the study determined

1. The expectations of the consumers.
2. If the consumers of locally made garments were satisfied with the services provided by their tailors including their mode of delivery.

3. Possible causes of consumer dissatisfaction.

### **Research Questions**

This study answered the following research questions:

1. What are the expectations of female consumers of tailoring services in Ibadan Metropolis?
2. Are the female consumers in Ibadan Metropolis satisfied with tailoring services and delivery?
3. In case they are not satisfied then, what are the causes of consumers' dissatisfaction of tailoring services in the study area?

**Area of the study:** The study was carried out among the residents of Elere Community, Ibadan in Ido local Government Area of Oyo State. Elere community has six streets, 108 houses (Chairman, Landlord Association, 2011).

**Population for the study:** This was made up of tailors and their customers/clients. These customers were the consumers of the services of the tailors. The tailors were owners of small scale enterprises. They were registered members of Tailoring and Fashion Design Association in Elere community in Ibadan Metropolis. There were 35 of such tailors and each had up to 20-30 female customers aged 21 years and above. They were workers in both the private and public sector. They

included both married and single women.

**Sample for the study:** A sample of 10 tailors was randomly selected from the list of the registered tailors. Ten customers were selected from each tailor to give a total of 100 customers who participated in the study.

**Instrument for data collection:** The data was collected using a six-point questionnaire. It was designed based on the purposes of the study. It was validated by three clothing lecturers from tertiary institutions. The six-point scale ranged from very poor to very good (very Poor, Poor, fair, Average, Good, Very Good) with assigned scores of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 respectively. The indices used to measure customers' expectation/satisfaction include: the product, delivery date, customers' relations, price, packaging, garment fit and business environment.

**Data collection and analysis techniques:** Contact details of the 100 customers who patronise the tailors and reside in Elere community were obtained from the 10 tailors. Informal introduction was made on phone with the customers and appointments were booked with them. The customers were later contacted in their homes, offices, schools and shops. Questionnaires were given to each customer. There was no direct contact between the customers and the tailors in the

course of data collection so as to allow objective response from the customers. A total of 100 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. All the questionnaires were retrieved and analysed.

The data were analysed using the Means for research question 1 and percentages for question 2.

### Findings

The findings are summarised in Tables 1 and 2

**Table 1: Comparison between Consumers' Expectation and Post Patronage Perception of Tailoring Services and Delivery.**

| S/N | Tailoring Services and Delivery                     | Mean Expectation | Mean Post-Patronage |
|-----|---|------------------|---------------------|
| 1   | Beauty and cleanliness of the environment           | 3.22             | 2.78                |
| 2   | Positive Human Relations                            | 3.30             | 2.94                |
| 3   | Communications and listening skills of tailors      | 3.28             | 2.89                |
| 4   | Garment fitting on consumer/customer                | 3.67             | 3.11                |
| 5   | Creativity fitting on consumer/customer             | 3.23             | 3.14                |
| 6   | Tailor's charges                                    | 2.73             | 2.77                |
| 7   | Comfort ability of the shop                         | 2.75             | 2.51                |
| 8   | Tailor's ability to attend to customer's complaints | 2.99             | 2.51                |
| 9   | Tailor's accessibility/availability                 | 3.11             | 2.67                |
| 10  | Tailor's overall attitude towards customers         | 3.15             | 2.89                |
| 11  | Knowledge of varieties                              | 3.08             | 3.00                |
| 12  | Neatness of garment finishing                       | 3.32             | 2.89                |
| 13  | Garment packaging post construction                 | 3.08             | 2.70                |
| 14  | Joint agreement on delivery date                    | 3.17             | 2.85                |
| 15  | Ability to meet up with agreed delivery date        | 3.06             | 2.59                |

Table 1 shows the Mean Expectation and Mean Post-Patronage Perception Scores of consumers on the tailoring/dressmaking services and delivery. For statement number 1, on the beauty and cleanliness of the

tailoring environment, the Mean Expectation Score (MES) is 3.22 (Good), while the Mean Post Patronage Perception Score (MPPS) is 2.78 (Average), for statement Number 4, the ES is 3.67 (Very Good)

while the MPPS is 3.11 (Good), for statement number 12, the MES is 3.32 (Good) while the MPPS is 2.89 (Average) and for statement 15, the MES is 3.06 (Good) while the MPPS is 2.59 (Average). It can however be deduced that garment constructors in Elere community, Ibadan are not meeting consumers expectation in the areas of beautiful and clean environment, garment fitting the

customers, good garment finishing and ability to meet up with agreed delivery date without disappointment. There are other statements in the table that confirms the inability of the tailors/ dressmakers to meet up with consumers' expectations despite the fact that the consumers are not expecting an excellent or perfect service.

**Table 2: Causes of Consumers' Dissatisfaction of Tailoring Services and Delivery**

| S/N | Causes of Dissatisfaction                      | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----|--|-----------|----------------|
| 1   | Inability to meet up with agreed delivery date | 34        | 34.00          |
| 2   | Inability to sew perfectly the style chosen    | 17        | 17.00          |
| 3   | High charges                                   | 13        | 13.00          |
| 4   | Lack of good time management                   | 5         | 5.00           |
| 5   | Poor customer relations                        | 4         | 4.00           |
| 6   | Lack of good communication skills              | 6         | 6.00           |
| 7   | Low creativity                                 | 6         | 6.00           |
| 8   | Imperfect garment fitting                      | 3         | 3.00           |
| 9   | Imperfect garment finishing                    | 10        | 10.00          |
| 10  | Inability to resolve complaints                | 2         | 2.00           |
|     | TOTAL  |           | 100.0          |

Table 2 shows causes of dissatisfaction of tailoring services and delivery among consumers in Elere community. Thirty four percent (34%) of the respondents are dissatisfied of the tailors' inability to meet up with agreed delivery date, 13% are not satisfied with high charges, 17% complained of tailors' inability to sew chosen style

perfectly, while 10% were displeased of imperfect garment fitting. The table reveals the responses of the respondents to other variables of dissatisfaction. It however becomes pertinent for tailors in this community to improve on their services and delivery to ensure loyalty and continuous patronage of their customers.



**Table 3: Hypothesis Testing**

**H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between consumer expectation and satisfaction of tailoring services and delivery.**

| Variable                  | Number of Items | SD   | Df | t <sub>cal</sub> | t <sub>crit</sub> | Decision              |
|---------------------------|-----------------|------|----|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Expectation               | 15              | 0.23 | 28 | 0.7635           | 1.701             | Accept H <sub>0</sub> |
| Post-patronage Perception | 15              | 0.18 |    |                  |                   |                       |

From Table 3, the calculated t-value, 0.7635 is lesser than the critical t-value, 1.701, ( $t_{cal}(28) = 0.7635 < t_{critical}(28) = 1.701$ ) a statistical evidence has been established to accept the null hypothesis, consequently, there is no significant difference between consumers' expectation and post patronage perception of tailoring services and delivery among tailors in Elere community.

### Discussion of findings

The study showed that the customers have understanding of the fashion trend and some expectations from tailors in the discharge of their services that will lead to satisfaction and repurchase intention. This is in line with Yi and La, (2004), Hill *et. al* (2003) and Uduma, (2007). It can however be argued that tailors in Elere community, Ibadan do not meet consumers expectations despite the fact that consumers are not expecting a very good service. The questions that continues to agitate

ones' mind include: how would these tailors/dressmakers be able to compete favourably at the international market if they are still struggling to meet up with a minimal consumers' expectations and secondly, does the minimal consumers' expectations indirectly affect the performance of the tailors/dressmakers and finally if these tailors are to engage in mass production of ready to wear garments, how would they be able to meet up with the delivery date and produce perfectly fitted garments. Consequently, training and retraining for development/improvement of skill acquisition is however very vital for the tailors/dressmakers in this sector of the Nigerian economy.

### Conclusion

The study shows that consumers' post-patronage satisfaction of tailoring services and delivery is on the average. Consumers are, mostly



not satisfied with their tailors' inability to meet up with agreed delivery date, inability to sew perfectly the style chosen, high charges and imperfect garment finishings. The result of the hypothesis test shows that there is no significant difference between consumers' expectation and perception of tailoring services and delivery. This means that consumers accept whatever they get from their tailors and continue to patronize them regardless of the low satisfaction received.

### Recommendations

The tailors should

- 1.Improve their clothing construction skills and services
- 2.Deliver products/services on agreed dates. They should be able to keep appointments with customers.
- 3.Be honest in dealing with customers
- 4.Maintain open channels of communication with customers

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