

**THE ROLE OF CUSTOMER CARE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY  
A CASE STUDY OF MIKLIN HOTEL IN KUMASI**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research studied the role of customer care in the Hospitality industry, a case study on Miklin Hotel Kumasi. The study was to identify the marketing strategies put forward by Miklin Hotel to use customer care to achieve competitive advantage in the hotel industry and how they satisfy their target market. Moreover, the study was to ascertain the effectiveness and efficiency of the numerous marketing activities it embarks upon, such as relationship marketing as well as customer interface which are of much importance to the hotel. Personal interviews, surveys and questionnaires of the hotels customers and an in-depth interviewing of the staff and management were conducted to find out the role that customer care plays in the hotel industry.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for the wisdom, knowledge and strength given to us throughout this research work.

We also dedicate it to our lecturers and families for their prayers and support

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Hospitality means the reception and entertainment of guests and visitors with liberality and goodwill. (Oxford English Dictionary) in view of this, restaurants and travel industries which offer the services as defined by the Oxford Dictionary could be classified under the service industry.

In this modern competitive world, the success of every business organization depends on the rate at which the firm is able to understand the environment in which it operates. Many businesses are facing problems due to the turbulent and unpredictable nature of the environment in which they operate. The business environment has become very dynamic and competitive due to trade liberalization and the growth of the economies in which businesses operate.

Also, the globalization of today's businesses has led to changes in the business environment which has in turn affected many businesses of which the hospitality industry is no exception. In view of this, the hospitality industry in the Kumasi metropolis is facing competition due to the emergence of several hotels in the Kumasi metropolis. Also, due to the lucrative nature of the market, many businesses in the hospitality industry in Kumasi are now facing intense competition because a lot of investors have invested in that industry.

It has therefore become very necessary for the management of Miklin hotel to identify these environmental changes which affect them and to come out with effective marketing strategies that will help them to stay on top of the competition in the hospitality industry.

Nonetheless, In spite of the intense competitive nature of the environment that these firms in the hospitality industry operate in, they can still gain competitive advantage by creating differential services which distinguishes them from their competitors. The creation of customer care centers by the firms can help them to satisfy the needs of their target market better than that of their competitors. This means that businesses in the hospitality industry in the Kumasi metropolis should not only be aggressive to win more customers but they should also be sensitive to the needs of their valued customers and to try as much as possible to cater to those needs in order to maintain their existing customers and to win more additional customers.

Moreover, since the services rendered by the firms in the hospitality industry are intangible, firms normally measure the services of these firms by how well employees relate with them and how promptly their needs are attended to. Therefore, offering better customer care and putting the customer at the forefront of the firms operations are some of the of the ways of ensuring that these firms not only maintain their existing customers but also win more customers in addition to the ones they already have.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The reason why we chose this topic was to find out the various marketing strategies adopted by Miklin hotel to use customer care to satisfy its customers and thereby achieve competitive advantage over its industry players and to evaluate whether this was proving a success or a failure. In many countries of which Ghana is an example, the hospitality and tourism industries play a very significant role in the national economy. These industries contribute to foreign exchange earnings and the creation of several employment opportunities in the country. Therefore, since these tourism and hospitality industries create play a major role in

the Ghanaian economy, a separate ministry has been created by the government to see to the development of hospitality and tourism sector.

The hospitality industry in itself has become very lucrative and competitive. Due to the competitive and profitable nature of the industry, many companies and organizations are looking forward for strategies that will enable them to cope with the competition.

This study is therefore set to probe into how miklin hotel is using customer care to attain the status as being one of the best hotels in the Kumasi metropolis.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- How is customer care highlighted in the hospitality industry?
- How does the organization establish good relationships with its publics?
- How does the organization investigate the relationship between its internal and external customers?
- How does the organization identify its target market?
- How is customer perception about the organization evaluated?

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To examine on the importance of customer care in the hospitality industry.
- To evaluate a good relationship between an organization and its publics
- To investigate the relationship that exists between the organization and its internal and external customers.
- To identify the target market of the hotel
- To evaluate customers perception about the organization.

#### **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It is hoped that, after this study, the researcher will be able to bring out marketing strategies on how miklin hotel can use customer care to gain competitive advantage over its competitors in the hospitality industry. This study is intended to come out with strategies that will help organizations to establish good relationships between its employees and customers. This research work is also intended to serve as a source of information for any future research work on the role of customer care in the hospitality industry.

#### **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study was based on improving customer care service in the hotel industries in Kumasi. This project was therefore limited to the Danyame branch of Miklin Hotel in Kumasi in order for the research work to be timely, effective and efficient.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reviews the related literature and attempts to analyze the various aspects of customer care and how it is used by the hospitality industry in marketing their services. According to Clutterhuck (1988), “customer care is a fundamental approach to standards of service quality. It covers every aspect of companies operations, from the design of a product or service to how it is packaged, delivered and serviced”

The rules for the success of a business are changing fundamentally. Forces such as globalization, technological change and the rising power of the customer is stimulating marketers to find new ways to retain, satisfy and work with customers so that their needs can be anticipated and also products and services customized more accurately. One of the most reliable indicators of the success of a company is whether it retains its customers. According to Kotler et al, (1999) it cost five times as much to attract a new customer as it does to keep the current customer satisfied.

However, an organization that comes into face to face contact with customers or practice customer interface without considering intermediaries must aim at satisfying the customer’s needs satisfactorily so as to be able to retain him or her. Practicing customer interface is not an easy task but the organization must do well to give out their best to the customers by working as a team so as to retain the customer since he or she is the reason for the existence of the organization.

The creation of customer care and its impact on companies especially the service industry, can be viewed from the literary work of Baker (1991) which states that the growth in the service sectors has given more contribution to the employment and gross domestic product (GDP) of various national economies.

He later stated that, the growth in the service sector is due to the impact of technology, deregulation and increased competition and customer satisfaction (Baker, 1991). Foster (1984) observes that as economies develop and income levels increase, there will be a corresponding increase in demand for service of all kinds. In actual fact, the service sector has been noted as a powerful subsection that will speed up the achievement of the objectives of vision 2020 in Ghana's economy (state of Ghana's economy, 1996— Ghana s revolving development plan). A lot of researches and investigations have been undertaken to underscore the role of the service sectors to the economies of various countries such as Ghana that is envisaging a development in its economy.

Furthermore, it has been realized that the service firms play a very important role to the national economy through the generalization of revenue and creation of employment for the citizenry. Therefore, in order for service firms to achieve their objectives; they must be marketing — oriented. That is why 'Miklin Hotel is using customer care to achieve their various objectives.

## **2.1 DEFINITION OF TERMINOLOGIES**

Below are the excerpts of some materials of other researchers and authors that directly relate to the writers view on the study.

Priority is shifting from product to people and processes aimed at creating delighted customers. This is the underlying theory of using a systems approach towards organizational behavior recognition that every aspect of the system will have an effect on another. According to Tom Cannon, (2003), the system approach emphasizes the role of people, either individually or acting together, in shaping the environment to their own ends. Marketing is moving from transactional to relationship marketing. Each of these approaches has its own characteristics.

### **2.1.1 Transactional Marketing**

According to Buttle (1996), transactional marketing is nothing more than ‘hit and run marketing without any consideration of future contact. Expenditure was usually directed at acquiring more customers instead of looking after the existing ones.

Christopher, et al (2002), identified the following under transactional marketing;

- Focuses on single sales
- Orientation on product features
- Short time scale
- Little emphasis on customer service
- Limited customer commitment
- Moderate customer content
- Quality is primarily a concern of production

### **2.1.2 Relationship Marketing**

According to Kotler et al, (1999) relationship marketing is defined as the process of creating, maintaining and enhancing strong value-laden relationships with customers and other

stakeholders. Relationship marketing however, embraces the following according to Christopher et al (2002)

- Focuses on customer retention rather than attraction
- Orientation on product benefits
- Long time scale.
- High customer service emphasis.
- High customer commitment and development of ongoing relationships.
- High customer contact that is direct and regular
- Quality is the concern of all
- Multiple employee customer contacts
- Emphasis on key account relationship management, service quality and buyer behavior rather than the traditional mix.
- Emphasis on trust.

Relationship marketing is therefore the process of building and managing collaborative customer and other value chain relationships to increase customer value, retention and profit. Payne, et al, (1991) suggests that the process of relationship marketing involves attempts at moving customers up the relationship marketing ladder of loyalty as illustrated below:



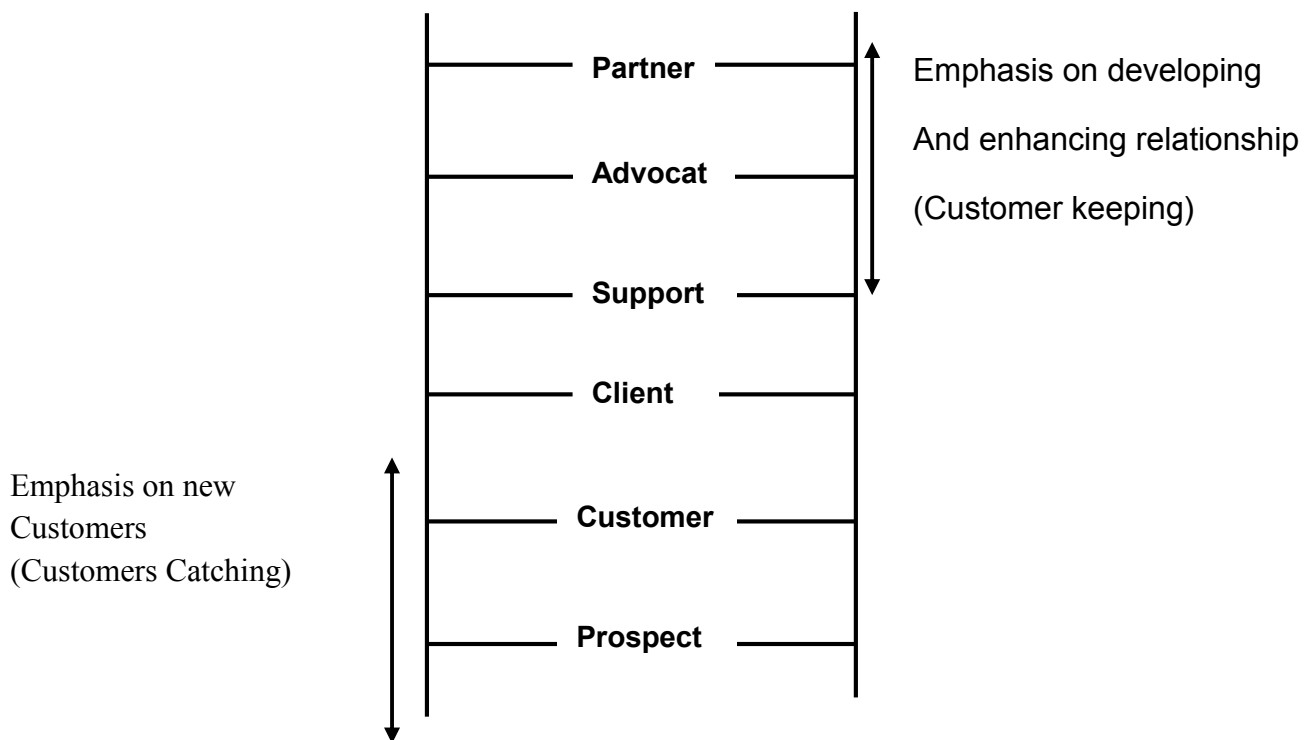


Figure 2.1 The relationship marketing ladder of loyalty

The external management of customer care must focus upon building stronger links and cementing closer relationships between an organization and its customers. The essence of this focus is on communication. Good customer communication signals efficiency and flexibility from a customer's perspective and is manifested in the quality and ease of contacts with an organization. Thus, consistent customer care will be provided at all stages and all areas of contact. An organization will not only be aware of its core contact personnel, but also its peripheral contact points, as well as its first and last contact points. A weakness in any one of these contact points may result in damaging the expected customer care performance. The concentration of any customer care contact point should be on establishing sound one-to-one interactions between company personnel and the individual customer at a personal level.

Customers must feel that they are not only known but are individuals who are of an importance to the organization.

### **2.1.3 Collaborating Internally**

Companies instead of just being led by their production capability, their technology, or their financial departments are looking at the needs of their customers and are breaking down walls internally to develop value chains based on relationships. Therefore communication flow and network are very important. These customer-focused companies are thriving on their relationships, or rather the strength of their relationships both externally so that there is a good match between the external and internal environment. Relationship marketing involves taking a broader view of this match.

Kotler (1996) identified that the key to a successful implementation of a relationship marketing strategy is to organize and motivate your workforce so that they would be interested and understand the concept, then:

- Carry out industry analysis
- Carry out an audit of relationship market
- Analyze internally
- Collect information on your customers
- Identify customers for relationship marketing strategy
- Understand an individual customer's profitability
- Market internally and externally
- Measure and evaluate the results.

#### **2.1.4 Relationship marketing in customer markets**

Up until recently the idea of relationship marketing was mainly applied to industrial and services marketing, but it may also have some relevance for consumer marketing. This will depend on the characteristics of a market segment and product field in question. It is important to understand and distinguish between actions that would aim to develop marketing relationships and actions that are interpreted and evaluated as sales promotion and which merely create sales in the short term.

Marketing relationships are often initiated by the supplier, but sometimes customers make the first move and take responsibility for maintaining and developing a relationship. This is termed reverse marketing, a good example is the relationship between a private customer and a local builder, or the relationship patients may build up with a dentist as they seek to build further treatment over a lifetime.

It is this trust and confidence that relationship marketing seeks to build with larger group of customers. Although this one-to-one, individualized marketing communication is more expensive per person to undertake, in the long term it may be less of an expense, if analyzed in terms of lifetime value.

#### **2.1.5 Risks Involved In Relationship Marketing**

There is a danger of only thinking about marketing in terms of relationship marketing. The objective of relationship marketing is to turn new customers to be devoted to a company on a long-term basis. Hopefully, this will ensure that they stay with the company and recommend it to other people. Relationship marketing therefore adds an additional concept to customer service and quality to the traditional marketing mix.

The following aspects need to be considered;

Personal and professional dimensions of role relationships it is obviously easier for relationships to form if the people concerned get on well together, it is another matter when they do not, or even when they start off getting on well, and for their relationship to deteriorate as a result of some personal or professional disagreement.

The question is: how does the organization put in systems to deal with this before the situation becomes confrontational. The relationship itself will need to be maintained and feedback on the functional, professional and the feeling side, to do with the personal relationship that is forming or has formed need to be considered.

Creating an atmosphere in which these discussions can take place can only be done in a no blame environment. Human beings are not like machines, very often things go wrong that, with an opportunity for reflection, we can learn to manage.

With this contact of understanding, organizations need to meet on a regular basis to look at:

- The task elements: is the job going on well, are the contractual and legal obligations being met?
- The following elements: how are people feeling? Are the behavioral criteria being met?
- If they are not, it may be time to move key individuals out of the relationships. In a no-blame' culture where people are open to discussing the vagaries of human nature, it should be possible to do this less painfully than in a blame culture where 'scape goating' is the norm.

## **2.1.6 Customer Care and Customer Relationship**

This is the process of creating, maintaining, and enhancing strong, value-laden relationships with customers and other stakeholders.

### **Customer Care**

In deciding strategic direction and formulating marketing strategy, every company needs to address issues of customer care, because of:

- Legal constraints
- Industry codes of conduct
- The recognition that keeping existing customers happy is cheaper than acquiring new ones.
- The value chain. Customer care is part of after-sales service and offers an opportunity for differentiation. It is also a valuable source of information.

### **2.1.7 Importance of Relationships: the cost of lost Customers:**

Kotler identified the lifetime value of a customer. If a company loses customers unnecessarily, it sacrifices its lifetime profit. This is known as lifetime customer value. A 5% increase in customer retention can increase the total company operating profits by 50%. Davidson, (1990).

Existing, loyal customers are valuable because:

- They don't have to be acquired
- They buy a broader range of products
- They cost less to service as they are familiar with the company's ways of doing business

- They become less sensitive to price overtime
- They can recommend by word of mouth.

The purpose of relationship marketing is to establish, maintain and enhance relationship with customers and other parties so that the objectives of both parties involved are met. This is because service and industrial companies have direct, regular and often multiple contacts with their customers.

### **Gaining Trust and Keeping Promises**

To have ongoing relationships, both parties need to trust each other and keep the promises they make.

Marketing moves from one-off potentially manipulative exchanges towards co-operative relationships built on financial, social and structural benefits

### **Network of Exchange Partners**

Customer relationships are important but so too are the relationships which organizations have with other parties such as suppliers, distributors, professional bodies, banks and trade associations.

## **2.2. CUSTOMERS**

### **2.2.1 Customer Interface**

Customer interface is seen to be organizations or companies who have direct contact with their customers. That is, to say, organizations or companies who have face to face interaction with their customers without engaging the services of intermediaries.

This enables the organization to know the exact need of the customer to be able to satisfy him or her at a profit.

### **2.2.2 Scope of Customer Care**

Chaston (1990) outlines the varieties of customer care as;

- The product, knowledge and interpersonal skills of the employees who interact with the customers.
- The type of service required by the customers and perception of how the organization fulfils their expectations on quality.
- The organizations structure of the company, which determines the efficiency with which services (products) are delivered at all phases from the point of initial contact through to the customers post-purchase evaluation of the service received. (Chaston 1990).

Customer care and satisfaction transgress all aspects of marketing, whether it be in consumer markets or industrial markets, inter or intra industry. However, it is in the area of services marketing that most progress and attention has been given to customer care and satisfaction.

Essentially, as Peters and Austin (1985) state, customer care “all boils down to perceived and appreciated and consistently delivered service and quality to the consumers” These statements serve to assist appreciation of the concept’ of customer care, but what are the actual parameters of its scope of activity? Many terms have been used both by authors and companies to label customer care activity, such as customer service product quality, service quality, and after sales service.

#### **Customer Service.**

It generally includes advice and information for customers regarding the technical specifications of the product or service and after sales back-up arrangements and procedures.

To emphasize this point Christopher (1986) writes that ultimately customer service is

determined by the interaction of all those factors that affect the process of making products and services available to the buyer’.

### **Product Quality**

Related to standards and measures set to ensure a product conforms to specifications and is therefore fit for its purpose and safe to use.

### **Service Quality**

This refers to the company or customer interface and relationship, focusing on the customer’s experience during the process of the transaction.

### **After Sales Service**

This covers after sales enquiries and complaints.

All of these aspects form part of the total customer care package which is about adopting a caring attitude through being helpful, friendly, concerned and reassuring. The aim is to continuously satisfy customer requirements and comply with expectations. In this context customer care applies to all aspects of marketing.

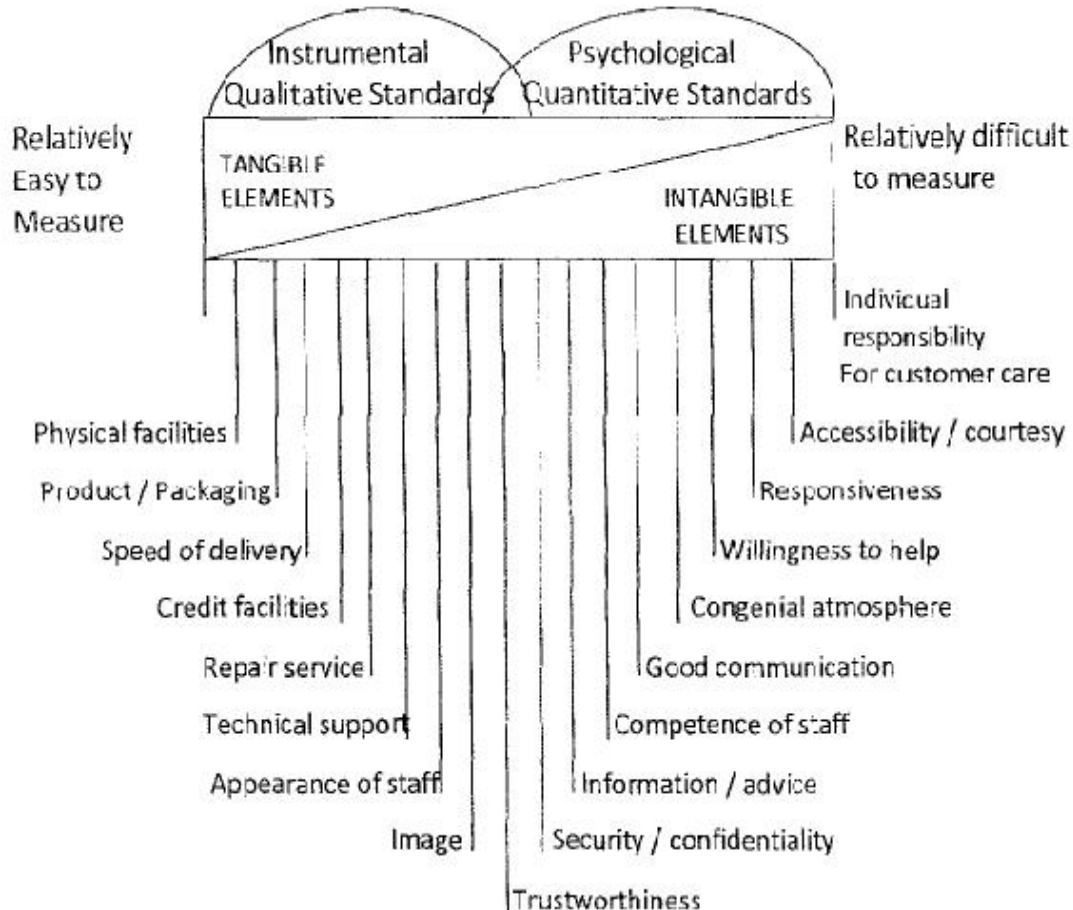
### **2.2.3 Dimensions of Customer Care**

The inter relationship between quantitative hard standards and qualitative soft standards can be seen in Figure 1. This model illustrates the range of factors that can be included in the complete definition of customer care. These elements range from the hard, tangible aspects such as appearance of staff to the soft, intangible aspects such as the degree of courtesy and consideration experienced by the customer.



Many of these aspects of customer care are different to measure and evaluate by both customers and companies. An examination of the nature of the characteristics upon which they can be evaluated allows classifications of goods or services into three categories (Derby and Kami 1973, Nelson 1974). These classifications are 'search properties, experience properties and 'Credence' properties. Search properties are those which a consumer can determine prior to purchasing a product, for example, packaging, and price, and so on. Experience properties are those such as courtesy, ease of contact, dependability, and as such can be discerned only after purchase or during consumption.

Credence properties are those qualities consumers may find impossible to evaluate even after purchase and or consumption, perhaps because they do not have the knowledge or skill to do so and therefore have to rely on the professional credence of the supplier.



#### **2.2.4 Internal Customers**

In an attempt to improve perceptions of staff towards customer care, Miklin has tried schemes which involve treating their employees as customers that is internal marketing training.

Berry (1981) describes this as ‘viewing employees as internal customers, viewing jobs as internal products that satisfy the needs and wants of these internal customers while addressing the objectives of the organization - Internal marketing is important in that it recognizes that customer service is not just the responsibilities of the front-line staff. The concept of internal marketing invokes the application of marketing principles to “selling the staff” on their role in providing customer satisfaction.

#### **2.2.5 External Customers**

The company needs to study its customers market closely. There are five types of consumer markets. Consumer market consists of individuals and households that buy goods and services for personal consumption. Business markets buy goods and service for further processing or for use in their production processes, whereas reseller markets buy goods and services to resell at profit. Government markets are made up of government agencies that buy goods and services to produce public services or transfer the goods to other who need them. Finally, international market consists of these buyers in other countries including consumers, producers, retailers and governments. Each markets type has special characteristics that call for careful study by the seller.

### **2.3 INTERACTIVE MARKETING**

Interactive Marketing describes the skill employed by employees to service customers. This is where the service quality depends on the quality of higher seller interactions. In service marketing, service quality depends on both the person who delivers the service and the quality of the delivery. This is in contrast to product marketing in which product quality often depends little how the product is obtained. In service marketing, effective service interaction is important for achieving satisfying service transaction. The customer judges service quality not just on technical quality, but also in its functional quality.

Successful higher seller interaction may help to secure a satisfied customer; however, to retain customers over the long-term, many service providers have to develop strong relationship marketing skills and managing customer relations. According to Kotler (1996) “the hospitality industry is made up of those businesses that do one or more of the following:

Provide accommodation for the travelers; prepare food and beverages and entertainment for the travelers”. Jones (1996) expands his 1993 definition to go like this;”Hospitality is made up of two distinct services to provide overnight accommodation for people staying away from home and the provision of substance for people eating away from home.

In Eastern Europe and Soviet States, hospitality services are considered to be services provided by hotels. The definition is, however, too narrow in its scope as it leaves out some other vital service such as transportation. The definition could be more acceptable if services provided by hotels are clearly defined.

Also, in Singapore, hospitality services are seen to be concerned with the provision of transportation and accommodation and other attractions available to tourists. According to Kotler (1996), it embraces transportation services, but it leaves out other services such as catering and leisure, which may be what, is implied by other attractions.

Hospitality service includes hotels, catering, and tourism and travels (Boella, 1994). He further classified them under six main headings: accommodation, meals, public houses and clubs, tourism and travels, factories and offices as well as public services such as education, hospitality homes and others.

Jones (1994) differentiated hospitality services from catering services and defines hospitality services as ‘providing the services, which make the customer feel welcome with the ambience being the contribution to the comfort factor’. She limits catering service to services meeting the basic needs such as food, drink and accommodation.

An important concern to this study is integrative approach to tourism development adopted by many countries- Ghana’s strenuous efforts to develop this sector as an engine of growth. Because whatever push is given to tourism propels the hospitality industry forwards as well. This is why the international communities are eyeing the niche of Kenya tourism industry. This equally pertains in Zimbabwe (Daily Graphic, July 21, N98). In Ghana, the story is not different. In Kakum and Mole national parks, resorts are provided to cater for the needs of their numerous clientele.

Boree and Thill (1992) discuss the predominance of small establishments in the service sector. Acheampong (1996) equally confirms this in his panorama of the hotel sector in the Central Region of Ghana. As a small portion of the tourism industry, the needs of the target audience dictate the ideal marketing mix needed for effective performance

## **2.4 FRONTLINE STAFF**

This is a person or persons (staff of the company) who the customer meets first before meeting the other staff of the organization or company. The frontline staff represents the company and carries the image of the company as well. This therefore calls for the need for the frontline staff to carry him or herself well to portray a good and excellent image of the company.

### **2.4.1 Qualities of a Frontline Staff**

#### **A. Personal Qualities**

The personal appearance of frontline staff is of concern to a company. Neatness is a valuable trait and frontline staff that dress and behave in a good manner project a favorable image of their organizations.

#### **Personal Care**

An attractive appearance begins with perfect personal care, and the frontline staff has to learn to pay attention to basic grooming needs which must never be neglected.

- Take a bath or shower at least twice a day.
- Use an antiperspirant or deodorant daily.
- Brush your teeth at least twice a. day.
- Manicure your nails regularly.
- Wash your hair regularly and. brush it often.

#### **Dress**

Uniform or dress chosen by the frontline staff for the office must be well washed and ironed nicely. Color combination must also be taken into consideration as well as the length of cloth chosen must be accepted in the community.

The frontline staff should choose shoes that are appropriate for her clothing and is comfortable so that she can work smartly.

### **Hair Styles**

Hair styles in much the same way as clothing vary considerably Again appropriateness and good taste should be given major consideration when making your decision about which hair style to choose for the office. That is, a simple but nice and neat hair style is suitable for the office.

### **Make-Up**

Make-up should complement the choice of cloth for the office. Little make-up should be used to brighten the face.

### **Language Usage**

As a frontline staff attention must be paid to the voice and tone of language used as transaction goes on. A pleasant, clear voice is recommended

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

Essentially, a firm's strategy needs to be differentiated from those of competitors in order to achieve a competitive success.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter talks about the description and the procedure, materials and techniques for data collection for the project work.

#### **3.1.1 Sources of Data Collection**

In order to have a comprehensive and complete view of the study area, the researcher collected data from two main sources which were primary and secondary sources of data.

#### **3.1.2 Primary sources of data Collection**

Primary sources included interviews and administering of questionnaires. Questionnaires were designed for the management, hotel employees and customers of Miklin hotel. These questions were designed to find out how effective the role of customer care is and how the marketing mix are being implemented to create a competitive advantage in the hospitality industry.

#### **3.1.3 Secondary Data**

With the secondary data, efforts were made to obtain current data in the research area from textbooks, newspapers, periodicals, library, company brochures, and other research reports that were related to the study area.

#### **3.1.4 Instruments Used For Data Collection**

This technique was made successful by the adoption of questionnaire and interviews in collecting the data for the research work. Under this technique, comprehensive set of

questions were designed based on the objectives and problems of the research work. Open and close-ended questionnaires were used for the respondents to get enough time to answer the question and express their views on the research topic.

### **3.2 SAMPLE SIZE**

For the purpose of this research, a sample size of fifty three personnel including management, employees and customers were interviewed. The customers interviewed were thirty six, employees were twelve and management members interviewed were five.

### **3.3 DATA ANALYSIS**

The results collected from the questionnaires were analyzed through frequency tables, bar graphs and percentages. This helped the researcher to interpret the questionnaire. These designed questionnaires were personally distributed to ensure that they got to the intendeds. Personal interviews were also held with some employees and customers of the area of the study, which enabled the researcher to overcome the problems of the questionnaires.

### **3.4 POPULATION**

The target population for the study was management, employees and customers of Miklin hotel. The information collected from the hotel was used to represent the entire population of the hotel which amounted to four hundred and twenty six.

### **3.5 METHOD OF SAMPLING**

Looking at the various personnel of the Hotel and the position they occupy, stratified sampling method was used to collect the data. The method allowed for the division of the population into sub-groups called strata. These groups included the management, employees



and customers of the hotels. The simple random sampling method was used in the case of customers because of its advantage of ensuring that every customer had an equal chance of being interviewed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective behind this chapter of the project work is to analyze the data collected from the field. That is to say, interviewing management and staff of Miklin Hotel, including that of the customers as well.

#### 4.2 THE SURVEY RESULTS

Fifty three sets of questionnaires were designed out of which five were distributed to management, twelve to the workers and thirty six to the customers of Miklin Hotel, Kumasi. Out of the fifty three questionnaires distributed, forty nine were returned, Out of the Forty nine completed, five were received from management, twelve from workers of the hotel and thirty six from the customers. Four questionnaires in all were not used for the survey because they were not returned. The table below represents the outcome of the survey:

**Table 4.1 Outcome of Survey**

Sample Area	Total No of Questionnaires	Total No of Returns	Total No of Non Returns
Management	5	5	X
Workers	12	2	X
<b>Customers</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>4</b>

**Source: Field Work (2013)**

### 4.3 UNDERSTANDING OF CUSTOMER CARE

The researchers solicited information on how the customers of the company understand the concept of customer care. The information gathered is shown on the table below.

**Table 4.2 Understanding of customer care by Consumers**

Meaning of customer care	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Selling to customers	1	3
Providing Customer Satisfaction	18	60
Paying Attention to Customers	6	*//20
Providing Quality Products	5	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field work (2013)**

The diagram indicates that, thirty customers were interviewed in all. Out of this eighteen (18) were of the view that providing customer satisfaction is what is meant by customer care representing 60%. Six (6) respondents agreed that paying attention to the customers is customer care representing 20%. Five out of the remaining six respondents also believed that, providing quality products is what customer care is all about. Only one respondent was of the view that, selling to customers is the real meaning of customer care It can be concluded that, the highest number of customers interviewed believed that, customer care is providing customer satisfaction which represented 60 percent.

#### 4.4 CUSTOMER NEEDS

The researchers collected information from the respondents as to whether the customer care activities of Miklin Hotel meet their needs. This was to identify the views of customers about the satisfaction of their needs by the company. Below is how the data is presented

**Table 4.3 Customer Needs**

Customer Satisfaction	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	22	73
No	6	20
Sometimes	2	7
Total	30	100

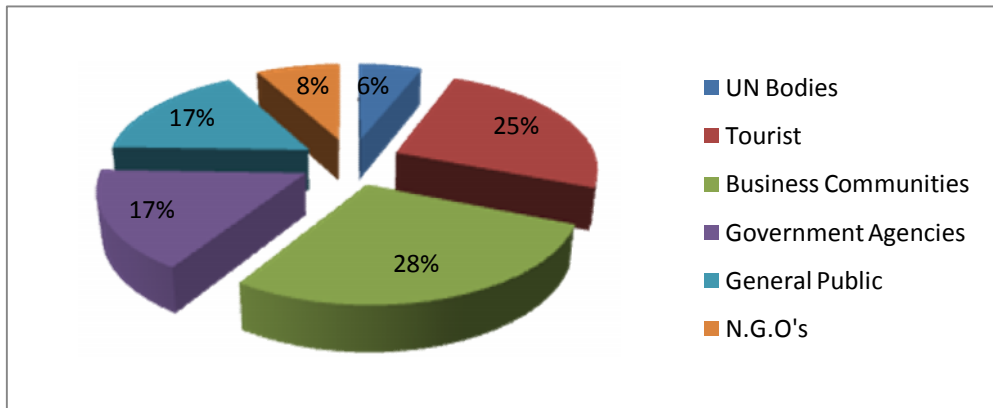
Source: Field Survey (2013)

It is shown that, thirty customers of Miklin Hotel, Kumasi were interviewed. Among these 30 respondents, twenty-two (22) said 'YES', thus their needs are always met by the customer care activities of the company representing 73%. Six (6) of them said 'NO' meaning that, their needs are not met representing 20%. Only two (2) respondents representing 7% of the population said SOMETIMES meaning it was not always that their needs were met. This shows that, customer care activities of Miklin Hotel Kumasi meet the needs of most of the customers interviewed.

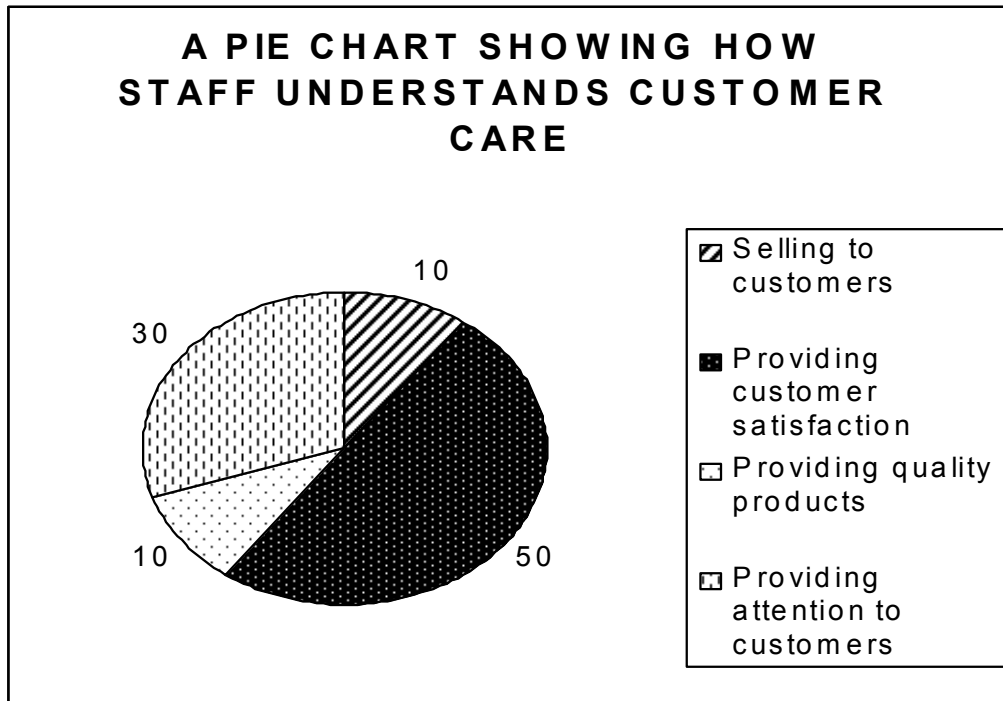
#### 4.5 TARGET AUDIENCE

From the questionnaires, we realised that the hotel receives different types of customers. These included business communities, government agencies, tourists, united nation bodies and the general public.

**Figure 1 Target audience**



**Figure 2 Understanding Of Customer Care**



**Source: Researcher's field work (2013)**

The chart above shows that, ten staff was interviewed in the study. Five (5) of them agreed that customer care is providing satisfaction to customers representing 50%. Three (3) out of the remaining five were of the view that, paying attention to the customers is what customer care is all about representing 30% percent. Each of the remaining two respondents was of the

notion that, customer care is selling to customers and also providing quality products representing 10% percent each.

It can be concluded that, the highest number of the staff interviewed which is five representing 50% agreed that, taking good care of the customer is making sure the customer is very satisfied.

#### **4.6 STAFF PERCEPTION ABOUT THE COMPLAINTS OF CUSTOMERS**

As part of the data gathering, the staff members were asked about how they feel about some complaints of customers. This is to help identify how the staff believes in the need to solve customer complaints. This data is shown on the table below.

**Table 4.4 feelings staff have about customers’ complaints**

Feelings about customer complaints	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Normal	6	60
Annoying	-	-
Interesting	3	30
Worrying	1	10
TOTAL	10	100

Source: Field work (2013)

The table above shows that, a total of ten staff members were interviewed in this study. Among these, Six (6) of them believed that, some complaints of customers are normal due to the nature of their businesses which represented 60% of the population. Three respondents representing 30% percent said they see customer complaints as interesting. Only one of the

staff interviewed said some complaints of customers are worrying. The table also shows that none of the respondents felt customer complaints are annoying. The table shows that, among the ten respondents employed in the study, most of them felt that all complaints of customer are normal due to the nature of their business representing 60% of the population. Stated on the figure are the other percentages of how the staff feels about complaints of customers

#### 4.7 THE RIGHT TIME TO RESPOND TO CUSTOMERS

The following data presented shows the employees' perception with regards to when they think is appropriate to attend to customer needs.

**Table 4.5 Appropriate Time to Respond To Customers**

Time frame	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Immediately when possible	7	70
Later when time permits	2	20
When the appropriate person comes	1	10
TOTAL	10	100

Source: field work (2013)

From the table above, ten officials were interviewed. Seven (7) respondents with 70% agreed that, the appropriate time to respond to customers should be immediately when possible. Two of them said later when time permits representing 20%. Only one of them agreed that, it should be done when the appropriate person comes along with 10%. It can be concluded that, the highest number of the total of ten respondents interviewed with 70% were of the view that certain complaints should be handled immediately. Twenty percent were in favor of

responding to complaints at the appropriate time whilst the remaining 10 percent said customers had to wait for sometime for the right person to come along to handle their complaints.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the project work takes into account the research findings, analysis, recommendation and conclusion made to the management of Miklin hotel.

#### 5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

We found out that there is a gap between the staff and the top management. Also, how to make their grievances **known** to the management was also a problem. There was no mutual relationship between the staff and the management.

Through our findings we realized that there were conflicts between the various departments in the hotel and the staff as well. Also there was no committee that resolves staff problems to make sure that all the department work hand in hand.

- We found out that customers are content with the neatness and the general ambiance of the entire hotels environment.
- Employees' customer service was also below average and not up to standard, of which some were due to lack of incentives, training and inexperience on the part of the employees.
- There was not a medium through which customers could express their reservations and problems to the management.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the research findings and some personal observations, the following recommendations were found to be necessary for the management of Miklin Hotel — Kumasi.

1. It is recommended that marketing research undertaken by management be intensified and carried out on a regular basis so as to identify the kind of services and products needed by customers and to provide them promptly to keep them satisfied.
2. Management should maintain and improve upon or modify the physical evidence of the Hotel by providing an attractive environment since the physical evidence of the place proves to the customers the quality of service provided and has a greater dimensional impact on the service delivery process.
3. Since in every service, there is an interaction between the customer and the service provider and this serves as the main aspect of the mechanism through which the hotel customers are served, management should train their front line staff or contact personnel to be able to interact effectively and efficiently with customers to create superior value during service encounter. Front line staff that practice customer interface should be trained to use this opportunity to reduce customer complaints, give assurance, reduce dissonance and promote the hotel's reputation.
4. It is recommended to management to motivate workers through incentives packages that emphasize quality such as monthly awards or bonuses to workers based on customer feedback. This will help motivate them to be more industrious and respond more quickly to customers.
5. Management should improve customer service centers where all complaints and suggestions from customers will be dealt with promptly.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

The findings and analysis of this work were arrived at as a result of the survey carried out. Upon these findings and analysis, suitable recommendations have been provided for Miklin Hotel and the various firms within the hospitality industries to follow to help maintain their existing customers and attract new ones.

However, in spite of the recommendations made, the management of Miklin should bear in mind that its future success would be based on strengthening, marketing orienting, strategizing and automating its servicing activities as well as equipping itself with well-trained front line staff in order to ensure its growth in this present Ghanaian competitive hospitality market.

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**APPENDIX I**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ROLE OF CUSTOMER CARE IN THE HOSPITALITY**  
**INDUSTRY**  
**A CASE STUDY OF MIKLIN HOTEL KUMASI**

We are final year BBA (Marketing Option) students of the School of Business Administration of Christian Service University College

We are carrying out this survey on the role of customer care in the hospitality industry of which Miklin Hotel serves as case study.

We would be very grateful if you could complete this questionnaire.

**QUESTIONNAIRE (CUSTOMER SECTION)**

Instruction: please fill or tick where applicable [  ]

1. What are some of the services you have enjoyed from the hotel?

.....

2. Are these services of high quality? Yes [  ]                      No [  ]

3. Are prices of the hotel reasonable to that of competitors?

Yes [  ]              No [  ]

4. If yes, give reason(s).....

5. Did you enjoy any cordial relations with the employees of the hotel?

Yes [  ]                      NO [  ]

6, Why did you choose this hotel instead of others in town?

.....

7. How did you get to know about this hotel? .....

8. Did you enjoy the services rendered by the hotel? Yes [  ] No [  ]

9. If Yes, give reasons .....

10. What are some of the you benefits derived from the hotel

11. Will you pay a visit to the hotel again?

.....

12. How do you rate this hotel in relation to other hotels you have visited?

.....

13. Will you recommend this hotel to others? Yes [ ] No [ ]

**APPENDIX II**

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ROLE OF CUSTOMER CARE IN THE HOSPITALITY  
INDUSTRY**

**A CASE STUDY OF MIKLIN HOTEL, KUMASI**

We are final year BBA (Marketing Option) students of the School of Business

Administration of Christian Service University College

We are carrying out this survey on the role of customer care in the hospitality industry of which your reputable organization serves as case study.

We would be very grateful if you could complete this questionnaire.

**QUESTIONNAIRE (MANAGEMENTS SECTION)**

**Instruction:** please fill or tick where applicable

1. When was the hotel established?

.....

2. Does the hotel have any special or unique features that distinguish it from other hotels in the Kumasi metropolis?

.....

3. If yes, what features make it unique or special? .....

4. What are some of the services provided by the hotel to its numerous customers?

.....  
.....

5. How does the hotel price its services? .....

6. Does the hotel face any challenges from its competitors?

Yes [ ]                      No [ ]

7. If Yes, what are some of these challenges?

.....



8. What percentage of customers are foreigners?.....

9. What percentage of customers are Ghanaians?

.....  
.....  
.....

10. Is the hotel patronized by customers throughout the year?

Yes [ ]                      No [ ]

11. During which month(s) does the hotel receive its highest number of customer's?

.....  
.....  
.....

12. Does the hotel have the right calibre of employees? Yes [ ]                      No [ ]

13. If yes, give examples

.....  
.....

14. Does the hotel have enough accommodation for its numerous customers?

Yes [ ]                      No [ ]

15. Which are some of the types of accommodation provided by the hotel?

16. What are some of the techniques employed by the hotel to win customers?

.....  
.....

17. How many departments does the hotel have?

.....  
.....

18. What are some of the problems that the hotel faces in managing these departments?

.....  
i. ....  
ii. ....

19. How does the hotel make itself known to the public both within and outside of Kumasi?

.....  
.....

20. What category of customers does the hotel target?

.....  
.....

21. How does the hotel receive complaints from customers?

.....  
.....

22. What are the complaints the hotel receives from customers?

.....  
.....

23. Does the menu of the hotel comprise only local dishes?

.....  
.....

**APPENDIX III**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ROLE OF CUSTOMER CARE IN THE HOSPITALITY**  
**INDUSTRY**  
**A CASE STUDY OF MIKLIN HOTEL KUMASI**

We are final year BBA (Marketing Option) students of the School of Business Administration of Christian Service University College.

We are carrying out this survey on the role of customer care in the hospitality industry of which your reputable organization serves as case study.

We would be very grateful if you could complete this questionnaire.

**QUESTIONNAIRE (EMPLOYEES SECTION)**

Instruction: please fill or tick where applicable

1. Please are you a worker of this organization? Yes [ ] No [ ]

2. Are you a casual or a permanent worker?

.....

3. For how long have you been working with this organization?

.....

4. Do you enjoy working for this organization? Yes [ ] No [ ]

5. If yes, what makes working here enjoyable?

.....

.....

.....

6. Have you worked somewhere before joining this organization? Yes [ ] No [ ]

7. If yes, what can you say about the two organizations?

.....

8. Do you hope to work here for a long time? Yes [ ] No [ ]

9. Are you comfortable with your present salary? Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. How much do you receive monthly?

.....

.....

11. Is the condition of service good? Yes [  ] No [  ]

12. If yes, how good is it?

.....  
.....

13. Do you face any difficulties in your present work? Yes [  ] No [  ]

14. If yes, can you be specific?

.....  
.....

15. What can you say about the relationship between the internal customers?

.....  
.....

16. What about management and employees? Good [  ] Poor [  ]

17. Are customers satisfied with the price of your organization?

Yes [  ] No [  ]

18. What packages do customers enjoy from your organization?

.....  
.

19. Do you receive complaints from your customers?

Yes [  ] No [  ]

20. If yes, how are the complaints handled?

.....

21. Are the customers always satisfied with the way their grievances are solved?

Yes NO

22. If No, are you making any efforts to change the system? Yes [  ] No [  ]

23. How many hours do you work per day?

.....  
.....

24. Do you enjoy overtime allowances? Yes [  ] No [  ]

25. Apart from the overtime allowances, do you enjoy any other bonuses?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

26. Have you been promoted since you started working here?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

27. If yes, under what conditions were you promoted?

.....  
.....