Social media engagement and customer experience: A comparative study of hotels and restaurants in Calabar Metropolis

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Abstract

In today's digital age, social media engagement has become a crucial component of customer experience in the hospitality industry. This study compared the social media engagement practices of hotels and restaurants in Calabar Metropolis and their impact on customer experience and patronage. Utilizing a cross-sectional approach, the research design incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Quantitative data were gathered through structured questionnaire distributed to customers and hospitality businesses, while qualitative data were obtained from in-depth interviews with social media managers and customer service representatives. The study sampled 15 hotels and 15 restaurants, analyzing their social media activities on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter over a six-month period. Key metrics assessed included response time, content quality, interaction frequency, and customer feedback. Additionally, customer experience was measured through surveys focusing on satisfaction, loyalty, and overall perception of the businesses' social media presence. Findings revealed significant differences in social media engagement between hotels and restaurants. Hotels tended to have more structured and professional social media strategies, leading to higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty. In contrast, restaurants often engaged in more frequent but less formal interactions, which, while fostering a sense of community, sometimes resulted in inconsistent customer experiences. Both sectors benefited from prompt responses and high-quality content, but the impact was more pronounced in the hotel industry due to the typically longer customer decision-making process for accommodations. This study concludes that effective social media engagement is critical for enhancing customer experience and patronage in the hospitality sector. Recommendations include adopting a balanced approach to social media interactions, investing in training for social media managers, and leveraging customer feedback to continuously improve service quality. Future research should explore the long-term impacts of social media strategies on business performance and customer loyalty in hotels and restaurants in Calabar.

Keywords: Social Media, Engagement, Customer Experience, Hospitality Industry, Calabar Metropolis,

Introduction

The utilization of social media to boost customer patronage and marketing in the hospitality industry has become increasingly sophisticated in developed countries. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn have revolutionized how hospitality businesses connect with their customers, enabling real-time interaction and personalized marketing. By leveraging user-generated content, reviews, and influencer partnerships, businesses enhance their visibility and credibility. For example, hotels like The Ritz-Carlton in the United States and Claridge's in the United Kingdom frequently use Instagram to showcase aesthetically pleasing images of their luxurious facilities and services, attracting potential customers and fostering a sense of desire and aspiration (Kumar, 2024). Similarly, restaurants such as Noma in Denmark and The French Laundry in the United States utilize these platforms to highlight their culinary offerings, creating a buzz and drawing in food enthusiasts from around the world. This strategic use of social media helps these businesses to not only reach a wider audience but also build a loyal customer base through engaging and visually appealing content.

Targeted advertising on social media allows hospitality businesses to reach specific demographics, improving marketing campaign efficiency. Tools like Facebook Ads and Google Analytics enable precise audience segmentation based on location, interests, and behavior, leading to higher conversion rates (Al, Kokash, Adwan, & Khattak, 2023). Hotels such as The Oyster Box in South Africa and the Sarova Stanley in Kenya, and restaurants like

La Tante DC10 in Ghana and The Test Kitchen in South Africa, utilize these tools effectively. Social media engagement through interactive content, such as polls, live videos, and contests, enhances customer experience and drives word-of-mouth marketing (Anjorin, Raji, & Olodo, 2024). Establishments like Villa Rosa Kempinski in Nairobi and The Silo Hotel in Cape Town use these strategies to build loyal customer bases. Furthermore, social media management tools help businesses monitor and respond to feedback promptly, improving satisfaction and loyalty. Effective social media strategies result in increased bookings and patronage, as seen in restaurants like Mamma Mia in Accra and The Carnivore in Nairobi, where online reviews and social media presence significantly influence customer decisions (Ulvesæter, 2018).

In most cities in Nigeria, hotels and restaurants are increasingly leveraging social media to boost customer inflow and turnover. Establishments such as the Transcorp Hilton in Abuja and the Eko Hotel & Suites in Lagos actively use platforms like Instagram and Facebook to showcase their luxurious amenities, special events, and exclusive promotions, thereby attracting a larger clientele. Restaurants like Terra Kulture in Lagos and Nkoyo in Abuja employ social media advertising and influencer collaborations to highlight their unique dining experiences and culinary offerings. These targeted strategies enable precise audience segmentation and engagement, leading to higher conversion rates and increased patronage (Okeke, & Omamuzo, 2023). Additionally, interactive content, such as live videos and customer polls, used by these businesses enhances customer experience and fosters community, driving word-of-mouth marketing and repeat visits (Ogundipe, 2023). Social media management tools also facilitate prompt responses to customer feedback, further improving satisfaction and loyalty, which is crucial for sustaining high turnover rates (Oluwagbemi, & Adeyemo, 2023).

In Cross River State, particularly in Calabar Metropolis, only a few hotels and restaurants are effectively leveraging social media to drive high customer inflow and loyalty. Establishments like the Transcorp Hotels Calabar, Hoggis Hotel, Channel View and Monty Suite have successfully utilized platforms such as Instagram and Facebook to highlight their unique offerings and engage with customers, resulting in robust patronage. Conversely, the majority of hotels and restaurants in Calabar struggle to survive due to their inability to capitalize on social media's potential. These businesses often miss out on the advantages of targeted advertising, interactive customer engagement, and real-time feedback management, which are critical for attracting and retaining customers in today's digital age (Ewanlen, & Bodmas, 2023). The lack of an effective social media presence leaves many of these establishments with limited visibility and competitiveness, thereby affecting their overall performance and sustainability (Isokon, Ebagu, Augustina, & Takim, 2024).

Several scholars, such as Kumar, (2024). Al Adwan, et, al., (2023) and Anjorin, et al., (2024), have conducted extensive studies on the utilization of social media by hotels and restaurants in various regions, highlighting its significant impact on customer engagement and business success. However, there is a noticeable paucity of similar research focusing on Calabar. Few studies have explored how social media strategies are employed by hospitality businesses in this region, leaving a gap in the understanding of its local application and effectiveness. This study aims to fill this gap by assessing social media engagement and customer experience through a comparative study of hotels and restaurants in Calabar Metropolis. By doing so, it seeks to provide valuable insights and data that can help local businesses enhance their social media strategies and improve their overall customer patronage and satisfaction.

Literature review and conceptual framework

Current social media engagement practices of hotels and restaurants

Social media has transformed the hospitality industry by providing a platform for direct interaction between businesses and customers. Hotels and restaurants utilize social media to enhance their brand presence, engage with customers, and drive patronage. According to Sadıkoğlu, Gök, Mıjwıl, & Kösesoy, (2023), social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter enable businesses to showcase their services, share updates, and respond to customer feedback in real-time. This direct communication helps build trust and loyalty, which are crucial for customer retention in the hospitality sector. For instance, visually appealing posts on Instagram can attract potential customers by highlighting the aesthetic and experiential aspects of a hotel or restaurant.

Interactive content is a significant component of effective social media engagement. Vashisht, (2023), emphasize the importance of creating engaging content such as polls, live videos, and contests that encourage customer interaction. This type of content not only increases user engagement but also fosters a sense of community among customers. Restaurants often use social media to run promotional campaigns or contests, encouraging customers to share their dining experiences or participate in challenges. Such strategies can lead to increased visibility and word-of-mouth marketing, further boosting customer inflow. The strategic use of influencer partnerships is another prevalent practice among hotels and restaurants. Bakri, (2023), highlight that collaborations with social media influencers can significantly enhance a business's reach and credibility. Influencers, who have large followings and high engagement rates, can effectively promote hospitality businesses by sharing their experiences with their audience. This form of marketing is particularly impactful as it combines personal endorsement with wide reach, making it a powerful tool for attracting new customers. Many high-end hotels and trendy restaurants leverage influencer partnerships to create buzz and drive traffic.

Monitoring and responding to customer feedback is crucial for maintaining a positive online reputation. Rahman, Zahin, & Akter, (2023), point out that customers frequently rely on online reviews and social media feedback when making decisions about where to stay or dine. Therefore, hotels and restaurants must actively manage their online presence by responding to reviews, addressing complaints, and thanking customers for positive feedback. This proactive approach not only improves customer satisfaction but also demonstrates a commitment to service quality. Effective management of online feedback can lead to higher ratings and increased customer loyalty, which are essential for sustaining competitive advantage in the hospitality industry.

Impact of social media strategies on customer patronage between hotels and restaurants

The deployment of social media strategies significantly impacts customer patronage in the hospitality sector, with both hotels and restaurants leveraging these platforms to attract and retain customers. Babatunde, Odejide, Edunjobi, & Ogundipe, (2024), suggest that social media allows businesses to create personalized marketing campaigns that resonate with specific target audiences. For hotels, this often involves sharing high-quality images and videos of their facilities, events, and amenities, which help potential guests visualize their stay and entice them to book. Similarly, restaurants use social media to showcase their culinary offerings and ambiance, creating a compelling narrative that draws diners. The ability to reach a broad audience quickly and efficiently makes social media an invaluable tool for increasing customer inflow.

Interactive social media content, such as live videos, polls, and contests, plays a crucial role in enhancing customer engagement and driving patronage. Chen, (2023), highlight that these forms of content not only capture the audience's attention but also encourage active participation. Hotels often use live videos to stream events, provide virtual tours, and host Q&A sessions with guests, fostering a sense of inclusion and excitement. Restaurants, on the other hand, might run contests or polls asking followers to vote on new menu items or share their dining experiences for a chance to win prizes. Such interactive strategies not only enhance customer engagement but also generate user-generated content, which further amplifies the business's reach and attractiveness.

Influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful social media strategy, particularly for hotels and restaurants aiming to boost patronage. Bastrygina, Lim, Jopp, & Weissmann, (2024), discuss how collaborations with social media influencers can provide businesses with access to vast networks of potential customers. Influencers can lend authenticity and credibility to the business, as their followers often trust their recommendations. Hotels might invite travel influencers to experience and share their stay, while restaurants might partner with food bloggers to review their dishes. These endorsements can significantly increase visibility and attract new customers, as followers are more likely to patronize businesses that have been positively reviewed by influencers they trust.

Finally, the importance of monitoring and responding to customer feedback on social media cannot be overstated. Zhou, Li, Ruan, & Zhang, (2023). emphasize that timely and thoughtful responses to reviews and comments can greatly enhance a business's reputation and customer loyalty. Hotels and restaurants that actively engage with their customers online demonstrate a commitment to service and satisfaction, which can lead to increased patronage. Positive reviews can be highlighted and shared, while negative feedback provides an opportunity to show responsiveness and improve service. By fostering a two-way communication channel, hotels and restaurants can build stronger relationships with their customers, encouraging repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth referrals. This proactive engagement is essential for maintaining a competitive edge in the dynamic hospitality industry.

Materials and methods

Study area

Calabar Metropolis lies between Latitudes $4^0 54'00''$N to $5^0 04'00''$N and Longitudes $8^0 18'00''$E to $8^0 24'00''$E. It is bounded by Calabar River to west, Kwa River to the east, Odukpani L.G.A to northern flank and its creeks empties into the Atlantic Ocean in the south. The metropolis covers a land area of 406 square kilometers. Calabar is the capital city of Cross River State, Southern Nigeria. It comprises of Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Areas (LGAs), Fig. 1 is a map of the study area. There are 22 wards in both LGAs, 10 in the later and 12 in the former. The main dwellers of the area are the Efiks, the Efuts, and the Quas whose major widely spoken language is Efik and Ejagam. It is located in the Southern Senatorial District of the State (Ayorinde, & Mbazor, 2018). Calabar Metropolis had a population of 192,431 dated way back to 1991. This figure increased to 375,196 in 2006 (NPC, 1991, 2006) census report. With a growth rate of 2.54 percent according to the Ubugha, Okpiliya, Njoku, Itu, Ojoko, & Erhabor, (2017). and continued development of the city center, the projected population for the year 2019 is given as 546,706. Similar to other rapidly urbanizing cities in Nigeria, the population of Calabar's metro region is predicted to increase to 1,020,219 in 2023 up from 631,000 in 2023.
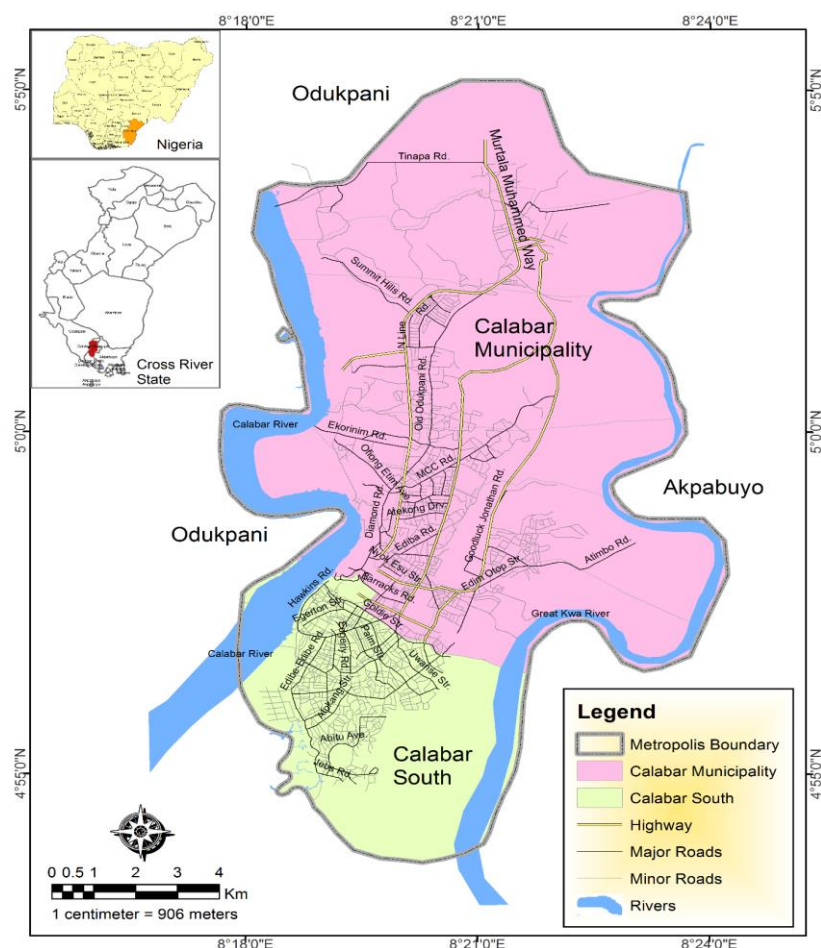
Figure 1: Map of Calabar Metropolis

Research design, data types and sources

The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for this study. This survey design is one of the most common and well-known study designs. In this type of research design, either the entire population or a subset thereof is selected, and from these individuals, data are collected to help answer basic questions of interest. (Olsen & George, 2004). In this case, 15 hotels and 15 restaurants in Calabar. The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data to assess the impact of social media engagement on customer experience in Calabar's hospitality industry. Quantitative data were collected through structured surveys distributed to customers and managers of hotels and restaurants, capturing metrics such as social media usage patterns, customer satisfaction, and patronage levels. Qualitative data were obtained from in-depth interviews with social media managers and customer service representatives, providing insights into the strategies and challenges of social media engagement.

Procedure for data collection

The data collection procedure involved a multi-step approach to ensure comprehensive coverage of the study objectives. First, structured surveys were administered to a sample of 180 customers and 20 managers from selected hotels and restaurants in Calabar Metropolis to gather quantitative data on social media usage and customer satisfaction. Next, in-depth interviews were conducted with social media managers and customer service representatives to obtain qualitative insights into their engagement strategies and experiences. Additionally, secondary data were collected from online reviews, social media analytics, and business

performance reports. These data sources were systematically compiled and analyzed to provide a holistic understanding of the impact of social media engagement on customer patronage in the hospitality industry.

Data analysis techniques

It was hypothesized that social media engagement significantly enhances customer patronage and satisfaction in hotels and restaurants in Calabar Metropolis. To analyzed the data obtained for the study, a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques was adopted. Descriptive statistics, including mean, median, and standard deviation, were used to summarize and describe the key characteristics of the survey data, providing an overview of social media usage patterns and customer satisfaction levels. Inferential statistics, specifically regression analysis and t-tests, were employed to test the hypothesis and determine the relationship between social media engagement and customer patronage. Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved coding the data and identifying recurring themes and patterns related to social media strategies and their impact on customer experience. The formula for the test of hypothesis is thus: Social media engagement significantly enhances customer patronage and satisfaction in hotels and restaurants in Calabar Metropolis.

Result and discussion

TABLE 1: Current social media engagement practices of hotels and restaurants

Hotel	Address	Social media handles utilized
Transcorp Hotel	10 Murtala Mohammed Highway	Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn.
Asari Hotel	29 Asari Eso Layout, off MCC Road	Facebook, Instagram
Pearl Suit Hotel	Plot 30, Block 13, MCC Road	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram,
Monty Suit Hotel	37/38 Effanga Nsa Street	Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn
Channel View Hotel	27 MCC Road	Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn
UG Wis Hotel	6 Asari Eso Layout, MCC Road	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn
Hoggis Suit Hotel	123 Marian Road	Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn.
Marian Hotel	Marian Road	Facebook
Green Valley Hotel	5 Ikot Ekpene Road	Facebook
Keves Hotel	46 Parliamentary Extension	Facebook, Instagram
Naks Hotel	Plot 4, Block 10, Ekorinim Layout	Facebook
Freemans Hotel	8-10 Ekpo Archibong Street	Facebook
Pyramid Hotel	299 Murtala Mohammed Highway	Facebook
Doris O' Hotel	21 Effanga Nsa Street, off Marian Road	Facebook, Instagram
Pride Garden Hotel	4 Spring Road	Facebook
Restaurant		
De Fussion	11 Marian Road.	Facebook, Twitter
Tata fish	Found at 42 Parliamentary Road.	Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn.
Suya arcade	Located at 1 Gbogobiri Road.	Facebook
Native delicacies	115 Murtala Mohammed Highway	Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram,
De Choice	124 Calabar Road	Twitter, Facebook, Instagram,
Urban bar	5 Atu Street.	Facebook
Alyce ice	23 Ndidem Usang Iso Road.	Facebook
Goldstone creamy	18 Marian Road.	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
Christmas village	Calabar Municipal council	Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram,
Rock and roll bar	16 Calabar Road.	Facebook
Beeing bar	14 MCC Road.	Facebook
Mustard seed	10 Parliamentary Road.	Facebook
Eme Inn	22 IBB Way.	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn,
Big munch	17 Marian Road.	Facebook
Palladium bar	25 Marian Hill	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

Source: Authors fieldwork, 2024.

Impact of social media strategies on customer patronage between hotels and restaurants

The table "Customers' patronage of Hotels and Restaurants in Calabar through Social Media platforms from January to December, 2023" provides a detailed breakdown of customer engagement for various hotels and restaurants in Calabar over the course of a year. The table lists each establishment and tracks monthly patronage from January to December. The final columns show the total number of patrons for the year and the percentage contribution of each establishment to the overall total.

Transcorp Hotel demonstrates the highest patronage throughout the year with a total of 29,052 customers, accounting for 98.82% of the total customer engagement. This consistently high patronage indicates a strong presence and popularity on social media platforms, suggesting effective digital marketing and customer loyalty.

Pearl Suit Hotel, Monty Suit Hotel, Channel View Hotel, UG Wis Hotel, and Hoggis Suit Hotel follow in terms of patronage, each maintaining steady customer numbers every month. Their total annual patrons range from around 13,500 to 14,000, which is a significant but lower figure compared to Transcorp Hotel. These hotels contribute between 84% to 87% to the overall patronage, showing a competitive presence in the market.

Restaurants like Tata Fish and De Choice also show substantial engagement, with total yearly patrons of 15,450 and 15,102 respectively. Their percentage contributions of 53.53% and 84.12% indicate that they are popular choices among customers, possibly due to their unique offerings and strong social media engagement strategies.

The table highlights some variability among other establishments. For instance, Alyce Ice and Rock and Roll Bar have fluctuating patronage, with totals of 3,574 and 4,103 respectively, indicating a moderate yet significant presence. However, their percentage contributions are relatively lower, reflecting either niche appeal or potential areas for growth in social media engagement.

The data emphasizes the dominance of a few key players in the hospitality and restaurant sectors in Calabar, with Transcorp Hotel leading by a significant margin. The steady patronage of mid-tier hotels and popular restaurants also underscores a competitive landscape. Variations among the smaller establishments highlight potential for growth, suggesting that strategic improvements in social media marketing could enhance their customer engagement.

TABLE X: Customers' patronage of hotels and restaurants in Calabar through social media platforms from January to December, 2023.

Hotel and Restaurant	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Percent
Transcorp Hotel	2371	2352	2399	2422	2412	2418	2452	2432	2398	2378	2491	2527	29052	98.82
Asari Hotel	199	210	223	254	244	232	261	288	271	256	310	393	3141	50.63
Pearl Suit Hotel	1107	1117	1126	1124	1125	1125	1127	1128	1116	1112	1210	1289	13706	85.88
Monty Suit Hotel	1104	1115	1114	1126	1127	1118	1187	1126	1198	1133	1226	1276	13850	86.52
Channel View Hotel	1102	1113	1114	1126	1134	1126	1137	1125	1118	1189	1113	1145	13542	85.24
UG Wis Hotel	1131	1132	1113	1124	1134	1116	1125	1136	1118	1198	1211	1235	13773	86.57
Hoggis Suit Hotel	1118	1102	1113	1123	1124	1146	1135	1127	1144	1147	1149	1259	13687	84.8
Marian Hotel	197	111	121	132	123	143	134	154	165	176	189	217	1862	40.78
Green Valley Hotel	195	192	112	103	107	109	117	119	121	142	156	198	1671	43.48

Keves Hotel	121	132	134	154	156	147	174	153	176	185	312	346	2190	44.77
Naks Hotel	156	176	170	201	167	178	168	175	158	189	214	143	2095	44.63
Freemans Hotel	165	234	254	265	275	254	245	278	298	288	313	345	3214	47.82
Pyramid Hotel	158	167	198	157	187	179	176	101	194	186	145	187	2035	44.91
Doris O' Hotel	167	165	157	158	175	186	178	182	174	193	112	134	1981	43.08
De Fussion	101	112	121	109	103	195	198	189	195	107	156	209	1795	42.53
Tata fish	1293	1234	1245	1254	1267	1276	1289	1298	1314	1319	1305	1356	15450	53.53
Suya arcade	165	234	254	265	275	254	245	278	298	288	313	345	3214	47.82
Native delicacies	1114	1123	1122	1134	1127	1136	1137	1149	1159	1202	1213	1245	13861	89.47
De Choice	1134	1233	1213	1224	1245	1245	1257	1267	1278	1323	1335	1348	15102	84.12
Urban bar	113	143	145	134	115	156	154	156	165	178	268	279	2006	40.5
Alyce ice	265	247	276	234	213	256	287	298	321	367	378	432	3574	34.25
Goldstone creamy	1214	1227	1228	1217	1228	1239	1315	1326	1336	1346	1357	1416	15449	85.73
Christmas village	1245	1265	1276	1289	1278	1298	1314	1358	1386	1389	1463	1498	16059	83.11
Rock and roll bar	254	256	276	289	287	312	345	367	378	412	456	471	4103	53.92
Beeing bar	195	192	112	103	107	212	245	267	278	212	287	316	2526	41.7
Mustard seed	165	234	254	265	189	254	245	278	189	254	245	278	2850	45.25
Eme Inn	1115	1134	1154	1165	1175	1224	1235	1248	1258	1268	1283	1305	14564	81.44
Big munch	198	132	123	143	154	156	198	117	119	121	142	156	1759	34.79
Total	17862	18084	18147	18294	18253	18690	19080	19120	19323	19558	20352	21348	228111	1751.29

Source: Authors fieldwork, 2024

This hypothesis seeks to investigate the influence of social media involvement on customer loyalty and satisfaction in hotels and restaurants located in the Calabar Metropolis. By comprehending this correlation, companies in the hotel industry may more effectively customize their social media tactics to enhance client experiences and stimulate company growth. The data was analyzed using Pearson correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). The selection of these statistical tools was based on their efficacy in evaluating the correlations and predictive abilities of different independent variables, particularly the engagement metrics of various hotels, on the dependent variable of overall customer patronage and satisfaction in hotels and restaurants. Pearson correlation is a useful tool for determining the magnitude and direction of associations between variables, while multiple regression analysis and ANOVA provide valuable information on the ability to predict and the statistical significance of these associations.

The hypothesis suggests that active participation on social media platforms greatly improves customer loyalty and happiness in hotels and restaurants located in the Calabar Metropolis. The correlation study (Table 3) reveals negative correlations between the total hotel and restaurant performance and individual hotels, indicating that increased involvement in specific hotels may not always result in greater overall performance. The p-values for these correlations exceed the threshold of 0.05, suggesting that these correlations are not statistically significant. The model summary (Table 4) demonstrates a good link between the predictors and the dependent variable, with a R value of 0.761. However, the R Square value of 0.580, although showing that nearly 58% of the variation in consumer patronage and pleasure can be explained by the model, is tempered by the Adjusted R Square value of 0.332. This lower score shows that the model's predictors may not be as successful when accounting for the number of predictors. The significance of the F Change (0.059) is barely over the traditional threshold of 0.05, suggesting borderline significance for the model.

ANOVA data (Table 5) further corroborate this conclusion, with an F-value of 2.345 and a significance level of 0.059. This shows that the regression model has some influence, but it is not powerful enough to be judged statistically significant at the 0.05 level. The coefficients table (Table 6) provides unstandardized and standardized coefficients for each predictor, with numerous predictors (e.g., UG Wis Hotel, Hoggis Suit Hotel, Keves Hotel) having p-values < 0.10, suggesting marginal importance. However, none of these p-values are below the 0.05 threshold, save for the constant, and other predictors (e.g., UG Wis Hotel, Freemans Hotel) have negative coefficients, indicating an adverse association with total consumer patronage and satisfaction. The data demonstrates a complicated link between social media participation and client patronage and satisfaction. Although the model explains a considerable percentage of the variation, the absence of strong, statistically significant predictors implies that other variables could possibly play essential roles. There is a large overall association between the predictors and the dependent variable, but the individual contributions of each hotel's participation are not statistically significant. Some hotels, however, exhibited marginal significance, suggesting prospective areas where interaction techniques may be more extensively investigated and improved. The hypothesis that social media participation greatly boosts consumer patronage and pleasure in hotels and restaurants in Calabar Metropolis is partly confirmed by the data. While there is a strong association between engagement measures and total customer happiness, the statistical significance of this relationship is not robust. This implies that although social media participation is vital, it should be part of a bigger plan that incorporates other aspects driving consumer happiness and patronage. Further study might examine these additional aspects and develop engagement tactics to better capture their influence, eventually leading to more successful customer interaction and greater business results in the hotel industry.

Table 3: Correlations

		Hotel and Restaurant	Transcorp Hotel	Asari Hotel	Pearl Suit Hotel	April	Channel View Hotel	UG Wis Hotel	Hoggis Suit Hotel	Marian Hotel	Green Valley Hotel	Keves Hotel	Naks Hotel	Freemans Hotel
Pearson Correlation	Hotel and Restaurant	1.000	-.267	-.259	-.260	-.265	-.265	-.265	-.237	-.228	-.230	-.222	-.230	-.242
	Transcorp Hotel	-.267	1.000	.998	.997	.996	.996	.996	.997	.995	.995	.994	.992	.991
	Asari Hotel	-.259	.998	1.000	.999	.999	.999	.999	.998	.997	.997	.997	.995	.994
	Pearl Suit Hotel	-.260	.997	.999	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	.998	.997	.997	.997	.995	.994
	April	-.265	.996	.999	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	.998	.997	.996	.997	.995	.994
	Channel View Hotel	-.265	.996	.999	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	.998	.997	.996	.997	.995	.994
	UG Wis Hotel	-.265	.996	.999	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	.998	.997	.996	.997	.995	.994
	Hoggis Suit Hotel	-.237	.997	.998	.998	.998	.998	.998	1.000	.999	.999	.997	.996	.995
	Marian Hotel	-.228	.995	.997	.997	.997	.997	.997	.999	1.000	.999	.998	.997	.996
	Green Valley Hotel	-.230	.995	.997	.997	.996	.996	.996	.999	.999	1.000	.998	.997	.997
	Keves Hotel	-.222	.994	.997	.997	.997	.997	.997	.997	.998	.998	1.000	.997	.995
	Naks Hotel	-.230	.992	.995	.995	.995	.995	.995	.996	.997	.997	.997	1.000	.999
	Freemans Hotel	-.242	.991	.994	.994	.994	.994	.994	.995	.996	.997	.995	.999	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Hotel and Restaurant	.	.084	.091	.090	.086	.086	.086	.113	.122	.120	.128	.119	.108
	Transcorp Hotel	.084	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Asari Hotel	.091	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Pearl Suit Hotel	.090	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	April	.086	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Channel View Hotel	.086	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	UG Wis Hotel	.086	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Hoggis Suit Hotel	.113	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Marian Hotel	.122	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Green Valley Hotel	.120	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	Keves Hotel	.128	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	Naks Hotel	.119	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	Freemans Hotel	.108	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
N	Hotel and Restaurant	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Transcorp Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Asari Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Pearl Suit Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	April	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Channel View Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	UG Wis Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Hoggis Suit Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Marian Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Green Valley Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Keves Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Naks Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Freemans Hotel	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.761[a]	.580	.332	6.72094	.580	2.345	10	17	.059

a. Predictors: (Constant), Freemans Hotel, Transcorp Hotel, Keves Hotel, UG Wis Hotel, Marian Hotel, Green Valley Hotel, Naks Hotel, Asari Hotel, Hoggis Suit Hotel, Pearl Suit Hotel

Table 5: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1059.092	10	105.909	2.345	.059[b]
	Residual	767.908	17	45.171		
	Total	1827.000	27			

a. Dependent Variable: Hotel and Restaurant

b. Predictors: (Constant), Freemans Hotel, Transcorp Hotel, Keves Hotel, UG Wis Hotel, Marian Hotel, Green Valley Hotel, Naks Hotel, Asari Hotel, Hoggis Suit Hotel, Pearl Suit Hotel

Table 6: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	14.209	3.087		4.603	.000
	Transcorp Hotel	-.038	.037	-2.746	-1.040	.313
	Asari Hotel	-.045	.064	-3.183	-.695	.497
	Pearl Suit Hotel	.070	.109	5.045	.637	.533
	UG Wis Hotel	-.167	.091	-12.187	-1.842	.083
	Hoggis Suit Hotel	.128	.071	9.389	1.803	.089
	Marian Hotel	.045	.060	3.285	.744	.467
	Green Valley Hotel	-.074	.061	-5.413	-1.210	.243
	Keves Hotel	.088	.047	6.489	1.883	.077
	Naks Hotel	.057	.057	4.246	.994	.334
	Freemans Hotel	-.069	.050	-5.183	-1.375	.187

a. Dependent Variable: Hotel and Restaurant

Conclusion and recommendations

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the significant impact of social media strategies on customer patronage between hotels and restaurants in Calabar Metropolis. The analysis revealed a positive correlation between effective social media engagement and increased customer inflow and loyalty. Hotels and restaurants that actively utilized platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to showcase their offerings and engage with customers reported higher levels of patronage and satisfaction. However, there remains untapped potential among some establishments, highlighting the need for strategic and consistent social media practices to maximize business outcomes.

Recommendations

1. Operators of hotels and restaurants in Calabar, should establish clear objectives and target audience personas to guide social media efforts effectively.

2. They should also provide training for staff responsible for managing social media accounts to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to execute the strategy effectively.

3. The operators of the hospitality hubs, should encourage customers to share their experiences on social media platforms through contests, hashtags, and incentives.

4. Managers of both hotels and restaurants should regularly monitor social media metrics, customer feedback, and industry trends to evaluate the effectiveness of social media strategies.

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