MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

SERVICE PERSONALIZATION, SERVICE TRUST AND BEHAVIOURAL LOYALTY IN FIVE STAR HOTELS IN UGANDA

AMANYA JONAN

2019/HD10/21706U

Tel No: +256780250275 /+256751419615

Email:amanyajonan5@gmail.com

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL (FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH) IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

PLAN A

NOVEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

I, **AMANYA JONAN** do declare to the best of my knowledge that this work is truly my original work and has never been submitted to any other institution of learning for any award.

Signed: Date: 25/11/2023

AMANYA JONAN

2019/HD10/21706U

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this work was done under our supervision and is now ready to be submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of a Master of Hospitality and Tourism Management of Makerere University.

Signature .....Date 27/11/2023

Assoc. Prof. Otengei Samson Omuudu

Makerere University Business School

Signature:..... Date: 08/12/2023

Mr. Kaggwa David Nabakira

Makerere University Business School

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my Supervisors, my wife Kyokutamba Pamela, my dear parents Mr&Mrs. Atukwatsibwe, and classmates, surely you have all been pillars to this journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank the Almighty God for the gift of life, the blessing and the grace of coming to this far. I am surely indebted to my supervisors Assoc. Prof. Otengei Samson Omuudu and Mr. David Kaggwa Nabakira for the priceless guidance in this study. I extend my sincere gratitude to some of MHTM 2019 classmates for all the support and encouragement during this journey. More thanks to my family, friends, lecturers, mentors for all forms of support given and enabling me to keep moving. May God bless you!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ..... **i**

APPROVAL ..... **ii**

DEDICATION ..... **iii**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..... **iv**

LIST OF TABLES ..... **viii**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **ix**

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ..... **x**

ABSTRACT ..... **xi**

CHAPTER ONE **1**

1.0 Introduction 1

1.1 Background of the study 1

1.2 Problem statement 3

1.3 Purpose of the study 4

1.4 Study objectives 4

1.5 Research questions 5

1.6 Scope of the study 5

1.6.1 Subject scope 5

1.6.2 Geographical scope 5

1.7 Significance of the study 6

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW **8**

2.0 Introduction 8

2.1 Theoretical review 8

2.1.1 The Commitment-trust theory (CTT) 8

2.2 Literature review 9

2.2.1 Service personalization 9

2.2.2 Service trust 10

2.2.3 Behavioural Loyalty 11
2.3 The relationship between service personalization and behavioural Loyalty 11
2.4 The relationship between service trust and behavioural loyalty 13
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 16
3.0 Introduction 16
3.1 Study Design 16
3.2 Study Area 16
3.3 Study Population 16
3.4 Sample Size Determination 17
3.5 Sampling design and Procedure 18
3.6 Data Sources 18
3.7 Data Collection Instruments and Procedure 19
3.7.1 Data Collection Instrument 19
3.7.2 Data Collection Procedures 19
3.8 Measurement of variables 19
3.9 Validity and reliability 20
3.9.1 Validity 20
3.9.2 Reliability 20
3.10 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation 20
3.11 Ethical Requirements 21
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS 22
4.0 Introduction 22
4.1 Response rate 22
4.2 Sample characteristics 22
4.3 Means and standard deviation 25
4.4 Correlation analysis and Descriptive statistics 25
4.5 Regression analysis 26

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS 29

5.0 Introduction 29

5.1 Relationship between Service Personalization and Behavioral loyalty 29

5.2 Relationship between Service Trust and Behavioral loyalty 30

5.3 The joint predictive relationship between Service personalization, Service Trust and Behavioral Loyalty 31

5.4 Conclusion 31

5.5 Recommendations of the study 32

5.6 IMPLICATIONS 33

5.6.1 Theoretical implications 33

5.6.2 Managerial implications 33

5.7 Limitations of the study and Suggestions for future research 34

REFERENCES 36

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE 44

APPENDIX II: KREJCIE AND MORGAN TABLE 49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Showing average daily number of customers per five star hotel 17
Table 2: Showing sample size of respondents per five star hotel 18
Table 3: Sample characteristics 22
Table 4: Means, Standard Deviations (SD) and Correlation 25
Table 5: Multiple linear regression results 27

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual frame work of the study 6

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UBOS……..... Uganda Bureau of Statistics

UTB……... Uganda Tourism Board

MTWA…….. Ministry of Tourism Wildlife & Antiquities

CTT……... Commitment Trust Theory

CVI……Content Validity Index

Tel……..……... Telephone

WWW……..……. World Wide Web

SP……... Service Personalization

ST……... Service Trust

PS…….. Personalized service

SD……. Standard deviation

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the links between service personalization and service trust factors of behavioral loyalty in selected five star hotels sub-sector in Uganda. Specifically, the objectives were to examine the relationship between service personalization; service trust; behavioral loyalty and the joint predictive relationship between service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty.

The study adopted an analytical cross sectional correlational survey research design to test the study hypotheses. Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire from a sample of 201 guests of the selected five star hotels participating in the study. The data was analysed using correlation and hierarchical multiple linear regression in Statistical package for Social sciences.

Furthermore, Service personalization had one component: perceived preference with five measurement items for perceived preference adapted, such as; “My hotel offers me services that satisfy my specific need,” “My hotel offers me services that I couldn’t find in other hotels”. Service trust was measured by perceived credibility and trustworthiness, having six measurement items, such as; “The service I receive in this hotel makes me feel safe,” “This hotel’s services are a guarantee of quality.” Behavioural loyalty was subdivided into two components; Revisits and positive word of mouth with three measurement items for revisits such as; “I usually come back to visit this hotel,” I consider myself a loyal guest of this hotel, and three measurement items for positive word of mouth such as; “I recommend other people to patronize this hotel,” “I say positive things about services in this hotel to other persons.”

The findings showed a significant positive relationship between Service personalization and behavioural loyalty, Service trust and behavioural loyalty. The study also found that Service personalization and Service trust significantly predict behavioural loyalty. The study highlights the indispensible role of Service personalization in terms of perceived preference to hotels activities in building behavioural loyalty. Furthermore, role played by Service trust in form of perceived credibility and trustworthiness is vital in engendering behavioural loyalty exhibited in repeat purchase behaviour and positive word of mouth.

The study thus recommends that, hotel managers need to provide unique hotel attributes to build trust among customers inorder to improve on the behavioural loyalty exhibited by their guests.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This section presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, hypotheses and the study conceptual framework.

1.1 Background of the study

The global hotel industry has registered a 4.7% growth in the recent years, especially in the five star rated hotels (Hyland, 2018). In Uganda the subsector is increasingly becoming significant with over 20,483 businesses engaged in providing hospitality services in Kampala City (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS], 2012). Furthermore, according to UBOS (2019), there are five hotels in Uganda ranked five stars which include; Sheraton Kampala Hotel, Kampala Serena Hotel, Common wealth Resort, Mbale Resort and Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort & Spa. In such a competitive business environment, building behavioural loyalty is crucial for the survival and success of businesses. Existing literature confirms that behavioral loyalty can be valuable to any enterprise in terms of financial benefits (Kim, Ham, Moon, Chua & Han, 2019); positive word of mouth, reduced operational costs and revisit behaviour (Chong, 2017), among others.

By loyalty we mean the non-random behavioral tendency of customers to make repeat purchases and spread a positive word of mouth about the hotel brand (Albayrak, Karasakal, Kocabulut&Dursun 2020; Jacoby &Kyner 1973; Oliver, 1999). In extant literature, scholars propose the duo dimensional nature of customer loyalty i.e. attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Ball, Coelho &Machas, 2003; BlascoLópez, Virto, Manzano&García- Madariaga, 2020; Childs, Turner, &Watchravesringkan, 2019). Behavioural loyalty (the focus of this study) is exhibited in the repeat purchase (Srivastava, &Kaul, 2016) or the numbers of instances repeat purchase

occurs in relation to the times the customer opts to purchase from competitors and spread positive word of mouth (Babayev, 2018; Hagel III & Armstrong, 1997).

Nonetheless, despite hotels effort in attracting customers, retaining the same has increasingly remained a major challenge especially for five star hotels in emerging economies such as Uganda. Most hotels seem to rely on chance guests implying that the level of loyalty has remained very low (Tukamushaba, Musinguzi, Katongole, &Honggen, 2012). According to Uganda Tourism Board UTB, (2018), average hotel occupancies are stagnant which could be as a result of low or no loyalty. Deplorably, the number of studies examining the antecedents of behavioral loyalty has remained scanty especially in the context of five star hotels (Bonabaaba, 2018; Otengei, Changha, Kasekende and Ntayi, 2014)

This study concentrates on service personalization and service trust as key enablers of behavioural loyalty.

The current study therefore, adopts the commitment theory of trust to explain behavioral loyalty in five star hotels. The theory assumes that trustworthiness is at the heart of any successful relationship with customers, Morgan and Hunt (1994). For example, it emphasizes trust as being vital in generating long-term benefits for the enterprise. The Commitment - trust theory seems to suggest that without service trust and personalized service, it may be difficult to build customer loyalty.

By service personalization we mean a culture of getting personal with individual customers Otengei&Changha, (2021). Hence it is very important that hotels tailor their services to fit the unique demands/requirements, (Dwayne, Coelho, Pedro, Vilares and Manuel, 2018). Drawing on the key tenets of the commitment trust theory, it is logical to conclude that service

personalization is one of the possible strategies for enhancing repeat visits and word of mouth among clients,(Kim, (2017). On the other hand, trust occurs when a customer's actions show commitment to the hotel brand. For example, patronage to a five star hotel could be because of its perceived credibility and trustworthiness. Notably, the theory suggests that trust is manifested in form of perceived credibility on part of customers. Implying that credibility is a key dimension of trust without which repurchases and advocacy/recommendations may not be realized by any hotel. Regrettably, not many studies have interrogated the link between service personalization (SP), Service trust (ST), and behavioural loyalty (BL) in the hotel subsector context in an emerging economy such as Uganda. (Ball et al., 2004, Swaen and Chumpitaz, 2008).

The current study attempts to make humble contribution to the existing board of knowledge by assessing the relationship between the three study variables namely, SP, ST, and BL.

1.2 Problem statement

In Uganda, steady growth is evident in the accommodation and food service (i.e hospitality subsector) as revealed by 2.8% contribution to Gross Domestic Development (GDP) in 2017/2018 compared to 2.7% in 2016/2017 and 2.6% in 2015/2016, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, [UBOS], (2013). However, according to (Katongole, 2018) while the industry features strongly in National development plans (NDP), the service levels have remained unsatisfactory. As a result many businesses including five stars hotels seem to realize low levels of customer loyalty (Kalulu, Kiconco & Kasande, 2015). Certainly, the sector has great expectation to perform better but a major challenge seems to rotate around failure to provide credible, trustworthy and personalized services. Yet these are major pull factors for both domestic and international consumers of hotel services. Comparable to many low income countries, hotels in Uganda have always experienced numerous complaints from their clients as a result of questionable service

attributes (Otengei&Changha, 2020). Non-the-less, extant literature reveals that little or no work has been conducted on the relationship between service personalization, service trust and behavioural loyalty in the hotel sector perspective in a developing economy. Constructs such as satisfaction, trust, customer collaboration, customer interaction, firm image, personalization, learning relationships, and so forth, have all been proposed as intermediate blocks, or tools for building loyalty. Yet, to date, only some of these constructs have been measured and shown to be related to loyalty (Coelho, Ball &Vilares, 2006). This study fills a portion of this empirical gap by attempting to establish whether service personalization and service trust indeed affect loyalty. Thus, the current study specifically seeks to determine the relationship between service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty among customers in Uganda's five star hotels.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty among customers in Uganda's five star hotels.

1.4 Study objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives;-

i. To examine the relationship between service personalization and behavioral loyalty in five star hotels in Uganda
ii. To examine the relationship between Service trust and behavioral loyalty in five star hotels in Uganda
iii. To establish the extent to which service personalization and service trust individually and or jointly predict behavioral loyalty in five star hotels in Uganda

1.5 Research questions

The study sought to address the following research question;-

i. What is the relationship between service personalization and behavioral loyalty?

ii. What is the relationship between service trust and behavioral loyalty?

iii. To what extent does service personalization, service trust individually and/or jointly affect behavioral loyalty in Uganda's five star hotels?

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of the study is further divided into two;-

1.6.1 Subject scope

The study covered service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty in a hotel sector. Because this relationship has been understudied in emerging economies in Africa

1.6.2 Geographical scope

The study was carried out in five star rated hotels in Uganda, namely;

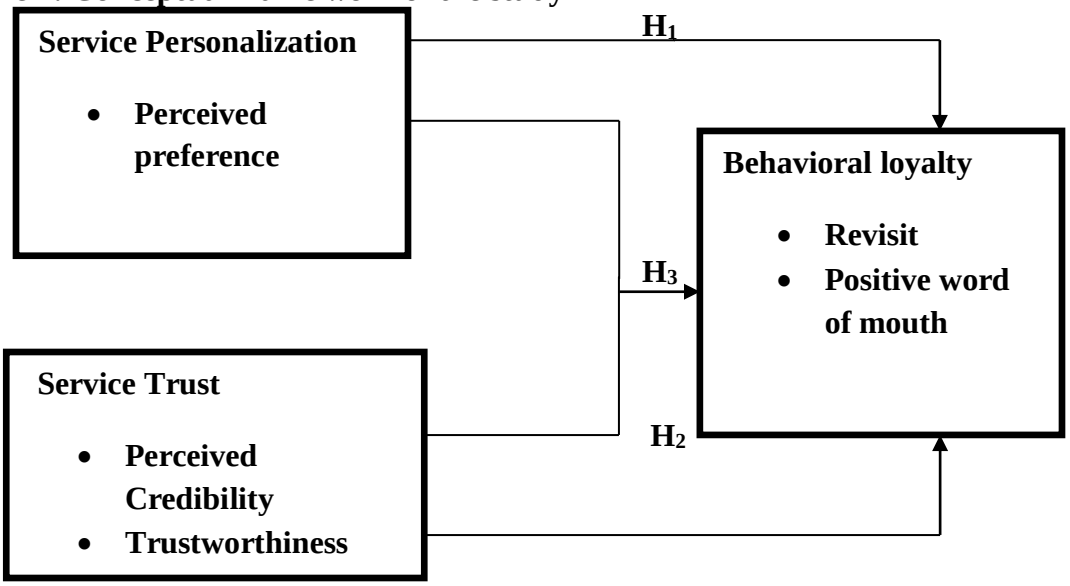
1) Sheraton Kampala Hotel; located on Tarnan Avenue, PO BOX 7041, Kampala, Uganda
2) Kampala Serena Hotel; located on Kintu Road, PO BOX 7814, Kampala, Uganda. (Nakasero Hill). Since it stretches far, it's also located on plot 32, Nile Avenue PO BOX 7057, Kampala, Uganda
3) Common wealth Resort; located on Wavamunno Road, PO BOX 3673, Kampala, Uganda (Munyonyo)
4) Mbale Resort; located on Plot 50, Bungokho Road PO BOX 1621, Mbale, Uganda, and
5) Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort & Spa; located on Lweza-Kigo Road off Entebbe Road, PO BOX 37761, Kampala, Uganda.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study findings on the association between service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty are important in various ways;

1. It will help the hotel subsector to formulate appropriate strategies for loyalty formation among their customers eg, managers through the study findings may wish to improve or focus on individualized service and trust building as key ingredients for loyalty
2. Government and ministry of tourism may be in a better position to formulate better policies and regulatory frameworks for ensuring acceptable service standards in the subsector. For a long time a number of studies have indicated that the hospitality industry in Uganda is predominantly faced with service delivery inadequacies and lack of professionalism
3. Knowledge contribution; It is hoped that this study will extensively contribute to the existing knowledge through the proposed model which suggest an association between service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty in the hotel subsector

Figure 1: Conceptual frame work of the study



Source; (Theoretical and literature review)

Description of the conceptual frame work

The conceptual framework is a modification of various concepts by various researchers on service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty. In this model, service personalization, serviced trust, are independent variables; whereas behavioral loyalty is the dependent variable. It is hypothesized that there is a significant and positive relationship between service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty. Secondly, the study theorizes that there is a link between service trust and behavioral loyalty, lastly the study posticulates that service personalization and service trust individually and/or jointly predict behavioral loyalty.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section reviewed relevant theories and literature to the study variables, namely; Service Personalization and Service Trust factors and, behavioural loyalty. Specifically, the section reviewed the relationship between the major study variables.

2.1 Theoretical review

The theoretical review attempts to elaborate on the understanding of study (behavior Loyalty)

2.1.1 The Commitment-trust theory (CTT)

The Commitment-Trust Theory (CTT) is a theory which attempts to explain the understanding of relationship marketing and behaviour on the basis of individual different factors that influence customer behaviour (Morgan&Hunt, 1994). The CTT assumes that customers are compelled to attain different desires through consuming services (Ramanathan&Ramanathan, 2011). According to CTT, customers have infinite factors that drive their patronage towards a brand in form of activities they engage in. These engender their subsequent behavioural outcomes in form of factors such as; repeat visits and spreading positive word of mouth. The theory suggests that, factors such as service personalization and service trust are major enablers of enhancing behavioural loyalty. In other words, the commitment-trust theory assumes that the sustainable presence of service personalization in a hotel and service trust will elicit repeat visits and positive word of mouth. This study therefore seeks to extend existing knowledge on service personalization and service trust as factors that influence behavioral loyalty in the context of five star hotels in Uganda.

2.2 Literature review

The following sub sections present relevant literature on the key study variables and the relationships between them.

2.2.1 Service personalization

According to Robert (2003), service personalization is the process of providing an individualized service to the customer based on his or her unique requirements (Otengei&Changha, 2021). Imhoff, Loftis&Geiger,(2001);Zhang,(2018) define service personalization as the ability of a company to recognize and treat its customers as individuals through personal messaging, special offers on bills or other personal specifications. While Robert's (2003) definition brings forth the aspect of preparing an individualized service, Imhoft, Loftis& Geiger (2001) proposed how and where to apply personalization.

Otengei and Changha, (2021) conceptualized the personalization process in three stages; 1) learning about customer's preferences, 2) matching offerings to customers and 3) evaluation of the learning and matching process. Otengei&Changha, (2021), forexample declared that; guaranteeing self-service options and adhering to guest specifications is personalization of a service.

Similarly, Adomavicius et.al (2003), see personalization as an interactive process that can be defined by a clear understanding of the guest's specific demands. Additionally, the extent to which an individual perceives that he or she has been offered services that satisfy his or her specific need also constitutes service personalization. (Otengei, Changha, Kasekende&Ntayi, 2014; Cherry, 2016; & Ryan, 2001). In this study, service personalization is looked at as an act of tailoring an experience, communication or service based on information a hotel has obtained from an individual guest.

2.2.2 Service trust

According to Kagaari, Munene&Ntayi (2010), service trust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability (to another) based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another. Similarly, Kasekende, Lubogoyi, Ngoma&Bakunda, (2017) define trust as the subjective assessment of one party that another party will perform a particular transaction according to his or her confident expectations. While Kagaari, Munene&Ntayi's(2010) definition conveys the facet of intentions or behaviour to trust, Kasekende, Lubogoyi, Ngoma&Bakunda's, (2017) definition suggests a particular transaction perceived credible by an individual customer.

Doney and Cannon (1997) study that service trust is formed by two aspects; perceived credibility and trustworthiness, the study adds that indeed, trust could exist at the individual level(Rotter,1967) or at the firm level (Moorman et al.,1993, Otengei, Changha, Kasekende & Ntayi, (2014) see service trust as a construct catalyst in many transactional relationships as well as a construct that tends to develop slowly as a result of a hotel's services that are perceived trustworthy by an individual customer or group of individuals that patronize the five star hotel activities. A guest's trust in a hotel will be built when services they receive are proportionate to what they perceive as credible and trustworthy,(Abubakar, Ampong, Agbola, Agyekum&Ofari, (2020). In this study service trust is defined as the belief that the hotel will provide services perceived credible and trustworthy by the guest. Here service trust is conceptualized as a state of feeling secure while interacting with a service provider on the perception that the service provider will remain reliable and responsible to satisfy the guest. These will stimulate intentions to repurchase and positive recommendations (behavioural loyalty).

2.2.3 Behavioural Loyalty

By behavioural loyalty, we mean revisits and positive recommendations by consumers (Otengei&Changha, 2021). Similarly, Ampong et al., 2020; Prayag and Ryan, (2012), refer to behavioural loyalty as behaviour of a customer to repurchase and practice positive word of mouth about the firm. Undeniably, behavioural loyalty has become an important factor of focus for the hotel subsector, (Otengei et al., 2014).

Borrowing from earlier theorists and researchers (eg.Bansal& Taylor, 1999; Uncles et al., 2003; Baumann, 2012; Kandampully, Zhang &Bilgihan, 2015; Otengei and Ahebwa, 2020; Ha et al., 2020; Hall et al., 2020; Dayour et al., 2021), this study posts that behavioural loyalty is devotion or addiction that a guest may exhibit to a hotel or hotel activities and that devotion or addiction will result into repurchase and positive word of mouth behaviours in a guest. This paper will make a major contribution by examining how behavioural loyalty is built and maintained in the hotel subsector especially in the five star hotels. Repurchase and positive word of mouth performed by the customers of a hotel are behavioural tendencies which signify an underlying plane of personalization and trust of a service. Thus, this paper focuses on the role of service personalization and service trust as major precursors for behavioural loyalty formation. The subsequent subsections review the relationships between the study variables.

2.3 The relationship between service personalization and behavioural Loyalty

Service Personalization has largely been assumed to affect behavioural loyalty (Peppers and Rogers 1993; Rust et al. 2000). Ball, Coelho, and Vilares 2006; Ansari et al., 2000; Ansari &Mela 2003; Gilmore & Pine, 2000; Anahita&Alireza, 2011) seem to agree with this proposition that people prefer individualized services. Ball et al., (2016) established that service personalization improves loyalty through several routes.

Properly done personalization of a service should obviously meet a customer's perceived preference, which is a primary antecedent of behavioural loyalty. Services that fit the customer's needs better should naturally be more satisfactory than one-size-fits-all.

In addition, they continue to argue that personalized services may encourage a customer to repatronize a firm. Tam & Ho, (2014) concur with the former scholars that personalization influences consumers' decision process depending on the perceived preference. In America, Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, (2018) conducted a study using American Customer Satisfaction Index model which revealed that perceived preference (personalization) is a positive significant indicator of a customers' behaviour to repurchase and pass on a positive word of mouth. Similarly, Ostrom and Iacobucci (2019) find that service personalization contributes to the formation of behavioural loyalty.

Indeed, (Ball, Coelho, and Vilares 2016) concluded that there is a predictive validity of the personalization construct in a relationship marketing context, since personalization contributes to the explanation of behaioural loyalty. It appears logical to conjecture that particular service personalization is a precursor to enhancing behavioural loyalty formation among five star hotels (see Kesgin et al., 2019; Otengei et al., 2017). Remarkably, upon critical examination of the scripts, (Otengei et al., 2021), established that there is a positive significant relationship between service personalization and behavioural loyalty in selected African-ethnic restaurants (AERs).

However, some scholars (e.g. Ball, Coelho, &Vilares, 2006) critique the assertion that service personalization alone affects behavioural loyalty, arguing that the significance of the effect is amplified through satisfaction, Image, communication, quality, value etc. In addition, there is also a caution that the impact of service personalization on behavioural loyalty depends on

culture context (Souiden et al., 2006). The debate seems mixed, confusing and inconclusive. Nevertheless, numerous empirical findings have indicated that service personalization of a firm positively influences behavioural loyalty (Alves&Raposo, 2010; Kim et al., 2012; Ryu et al., 2012).

This calls for further studies to explore how some of the less studied hotels adapt and adjust their practices so as to enhance behavioural loyalty formation. Remarkably, whereas earlier research has generally paid attention to "customer loyalty", "brand loyalty", "tourist loyalty" or for this case attitudinal loyalty, there are few studies that have focused on service personalization as a driver of behavioural loyalty, especially in Uganda's five star hotels. Moreso, these studies were carried out in either restaurants, online (web) platforms or banking industry.

2.4 The relationship between service trust and behavioural loyalty

Gundlach and Murphy (1993) contend that "the variable most universally accepted as a basis of any human interaction or exchange is trust". More recent scholars view trust as a belief of one party that other party will be fulfilling their needs and wants, (Wang and Emurian, 2005; Yoon, 2012). As far as services are concerned, service trust is the confidence that customers have on the provider of a service to fulfill their need. Doney and Cannon (1997) found a linear relationship between service trust and behavioural loyalty. Furthermore, trust serves as glue that holds the relationship between customer and the hotel together. Trust is specific to long-term relationship and not merely to a particular exchange episode (Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2013).

Similarly, a United Kingdom study by (Liang and Wang, 2006) revealed that the higher the customers' trust towards the hotel, the greater the display of behavioural loyalty. The emergence of the relational paradigm has contributed to highlighting the importance of trust in hotel-guest relationships in both service (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987; Morgan & Hunt, 1994) and consumer

markets (e.g., Bennett,2015; Lau & Lee, 2016). In the study of exchange, the construct of 'trust' is most often portrayed as the outcome of reflexive considerations of the ability of an actor (e.g., a firm or brand) to meet set obligations (see Chaudhuri&Holbrook, 2011). As such, trust has been presented as a central attribute in relationship initiation, formation, and maintenance in a variety of exchange contexts (e.g., Sirdeshmukh et al., 2013; Verhoef, Francis,& Hoekstra, 2012).

Trust has been linked to a variety of outcomes in both the hospitality (e.g., Hennig-Thurau& Klee, 2015) and the marketing literatures (e.g., Chaudhuri& Holbrook, 2018). Hennig-Thurau and Klee (2017) theorize that relational attributes will play important roles in repurchasing decisions. Indeed, Such arguments are supported by the empirical findings of Eriksson and Vaghult (2018) who find a strong relationship between service trust and behavioural loyalty whereas, Sirdeshmukh et al. (2012) positions trust as directly linked to behavioural loyalty. Also, (Lau and Lee, 1999) examined the link between consumers' trust in a brand and their behavioural loyalty and found a significant positive association. These insights are extended by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2019) who found strong evidence in support of a significant association between service trust and repurchase behaviour. Finally, Sultan and Mooraj (2011) concluded that trust is central to relationships.

However, the few contemporary findings have been on large international enterprises and non-service sectors in high-tech industries, moreover from developed economies (Hogan et al., 2011). As a result, some researchers (e.g. Kindstrom et al., 2012) have questioned whether findings about service trust and behavioural loyalty from other sectors are also relevant to hotel subsector, vividly five star hotels. This debate on the relationship between service trust and behavioural loyalty seems inconsistent and confused. For example, Baumann et al. (2012), Ryu et al (2012),

and Santouridis and Trivellas (2010) found that service trust has significant effect on behavioural loyalty while Jani and Han (2011) findings shows no significant effect of service trust on repurchase behaviour but the effect is amplified by satisfaction.

The above literature review presupposes that there is still confusion in the relationship between service trust and hotel behavioural loyalty. The two extremes to date have generated a kind of inconclusive debate and there is need for a truce. Moreover, most of these studies were carried out in hospitals, banks, online platforms, etc. Coupled with the above, most of these studies considered a smaller sample size and this study chooses to widen the sample size atleast bigger than what earlier literature used. Thus, the study focused on service trust and behavioral loyalty in Uganda's five star hotels.

.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section presents the study design, study area, study population, sample size determination and sampling design, sources of data and data collection tools, measurement of study variables, data processing and analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Study Design

The study used an analytical cross sectional correlational survey design to test the study questions. The design was preferred because it enabled the collection of data at a single time and analysis of relationship or association of the study variables and thus facilitated making of meaningful recommendations in accordance with the study objectives. Burns and Grove (2010) argue that in non-experimental research designs, studies should be utilised where phenomena are studied in their natural environment without any manipulation of the variables. The study employed quantitative approaches.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Uganda, which has only five hotels rated "five star hotels," namely; Sheraton Kampala Hotel, Kampala Serena Hotel, Munyonyo Common Wealth Resort, Mbale Resort Hotel, and Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort & Spa (UTB, 2018). Kampala and Wakiso, These offer a number of services and top notch experience rated highly, which includes; elegant accommodation, airport shuttle pick-ups, international cuisine, "fast foods" (Vuong, 2018) in addition to local cuisines ((Otengei, Bakunda, Ngoma, Ntayi&Munene, 2017)

3.3 Study Population

The scientific population for the study was 420 resident guests (Table 1). Resident guests are persons who patronise hotels for accommodation (Hu, 2018). According to Hotel Act, 2008; it is a requirement by law to register guests who seek accommodation at the hotel per day. Therefore,

basing on hotel records it is possible to estimate the average number of resident guests per day. Shown below is the average number of resident guests who patronize the selected hotels per day for accommodation. The guests were both the unit of analysis and unit of inquiry while the five star hotels were simply a testing ground. These hotels provide premium dining options and personalized services to their guest. They do not overlook any detail and they commonly provide high end and luxury facilities for guests, (Ghoochani, Torabi, Hojjat, Ghanian&Kitterlin, 2018; Goyal& Singh, 2007; Liu, Lee & Hung, 2017). The study targeted only those guests that had stayed in the respective hotels more than once i.e; re-visits only. This information was readily available through guest records

Table 1: Showing average daily number of customers per five star hotel

Name of five star hotel	**Average daily number of customers**
1. Kampala Serena Hotel	120
2. Sheraton Kampala Hotel	100
3. Mbale Resort Hotel	60
4. Common Wealth Resort	85
5. Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort and Spa	55
Total	**420**

Source: Company records (2019)

3.4 Sample Size Determination

The sample size was derived using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for sample size determination. Given the study population of 420, the sample size for the study was 201. Proportionate sampling was used in obtaining the sample size for all hotels. [See Table2]

Table 2: Showing sample size of respondents per five star hotel

Name of five star hotel	**Average daily number of customers**	**% of total average daily customer number**	**Number of respondents**
Kampala Serena Hotel	120	28.8	57
Sheraton Kampala Hotel	100	23.8	48
Mbale Resort Hotel	60	14.3	29
Common Wealth Resort	85	20.0	41
Lake Victoria Serena Golf Resort and Spa	55	13.1	26
Total	**420**	**100**	**201**

Source; Company records (2019)

3.5 Sampling design and Procedure

The study used purposive sampling technique because the study targeted guests who were re-visiting and willing to participate in the study. This was done until the required sample of guests was obtained for each hotel.

3.6 Data Sources

The study used both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was in form of organisation records for population determination and primary data for analysing relationships from questionnaires administered to the customers who were coming to patronise the five star hotels during the study at the point of data collection.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments and Procedure

The instruments and the procedure to collect data is mentioned here below;-

3.7.1 Data Collection Instrument

The data was collected using a closed ended self-administered questionnaire with four sections which captured primary data regarding the background information of the respondents, service personalization, service trust and behavioural loyalty. Questions were constructed on an interval scale to draw out the degree of agreement or disagreement. As such, a 5-point Likert scale with 1 for "strongly disagree' and 5 for "strongly agree" was adopted

3.7.2 Data Collection Procedures

The management of the selected hotels was contacted prior to data collection to seek permission for the exercise. Guests who visited the hotel at the point of data collection and consented to participate in the study and with the help of reception staff were given the questionnaire to complete as they enjoyed the experience. This was done till the sample for each hotel was attained. The university's introductory letter helped to easy the approach to the hotels. Questionnaires were collected from the guest through hotel receptions where the researcher or research assistant collected them.

3.8 Measurement of variables

The study variables were operationalized and measured basing on the previous studies and reviewed literature. Service personalization had one component: perceived preference. Five measurement items for perceived preference adapted from Gupta, Gupta and Shainesh (2018) and Mimouni-Chaabane and Volle, (2010) were used, such as; "My hotel offers me services that satisfy my specific need," "My hotel offers me services that I couldn't find in other hotels". Service trust was measured by perceived credibility and trustworthiness (Chang, Wang & Yang, 2009) having six measurement items. (Chang, Wang & Yang, 2009; Gupta, Gupta &Shainesh

2018), such as; “The service I receive in this hotel makes me feel safe,” “This hotel’s services are a guarantee of quality”

Behavioural loyalty was subdivided into two components; Revisit and positive word of mouth. Three measurement items for revisit adapted from Sudhahar, Israel, Britto and Selvam (2006), Baloglu (2002), Ryu, Lee, and Kim (2012), Gong and Yi (2018), Zhong and Moon (2020), Wahab, Zahari, Al Momani, and Nor (2011) such as; “I usually come back to visit this hotel,” I consider myself a loyal guest of this hotel, and three measurement items for positive word of mouth (Raab, Berezan Yen & Tanford,2013) such as; “ Recommend other people to patronize this hotel,” “I say positive things about services in this hotel to other persons.”

3.9 Validity and reliability

The validity and reliability of the instruments is explained below ;-

3.9.1 Validity

Campbell (2004) recommends that validity be determined by computing content validity index (CVI).The content validity was examined by a panel of experts in the field of hospitality. The panel consisted of three (3) hotel managers and three (3) senior lecturers of hospitality management.

3.9.2 Reliability

The Cronbach alpha coefficient was computed to measure reliability of the questionnaire as a tool. The questions were reliable since the Cronbach alpha coefficients were above the recommended cut-off point of 0.7 (Gad, 1996).

3.10 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation

Data editing, cleaning and coding according to themes derived from the research objectives was done. The process of cleaning data was done to remove any errors and help improve the

reliability of the data. Statistical packages for Social Sciences were employed to tabulate the raw data and provide comparisons which made the analysis easier. Collected data was analysed using quantitative analysis which majorly involves six major activities namely, data preparation, counting, grouping, and relating, predicting and statistical testing. Entry errors, missing values and outliers were checked. Entry errors were rectified by cross checking with the questionnaire for these particular cases. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics. Correlation tests were done to ascertain the significance of the relationships between the study variables based on study hypotheses.

3.11 Ethical Requirements

The ethical considerations included seeking and obtaining the approval of the research proposal by the Faculty of Graduate and Research Studies Makerere University Business School. Coupled with the above, an introductory letter issued was presented to the management of each five star hotel where the study was carried out. Approval was granted by the hotel managers. The researcher sought consent of the respondents to participate in the study and ensure that they give data willingly and voluntarily. Maximum respect for each and every respondent

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This section presents the findings and interpretation in line with the research objectives. It includes response rate descriptive statistics on the sample characteristics, regression analyses and correlation.

4.1 Response rate

201 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 167 were answered. There were 6 questionnaires that were unusable. There was therefore a response rate of 80% (161 useable questionnaires). To maximize the response rate, the target respondents were approached with the help of the reception staff who identified them as repeat guests. The questionnaires were mostly distributed to those who had given a guarantee that they would willingly answer the questionnaires although they met the sample characteristics.

4.2 Sample characteristics

Table 3: Sample characteristics

Item		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	86	53.4%
	Female	75	46.6%
	Total	**161**	**100.0%**
Age group	18-24	8	5.0%
	25-29	23	14.3%
	30-34	28	17.4%
	35-3	32	19.9%
	40 and Above	70	43.5%
	Total	**161**	**100.0%**
Region where the visitor comes from	Uganda	18	11.2%
	Rest of EA	34	21.1%
	Rest of Africa	11	6.8%

	Europe	47	29.2%
	North America	19	11.8%
	Middle East	10	6.2%
	South East Asia	20	12.4%
	South America	2	1.2%
	Total	**161**	**100.0%**
Level of Education	No education	4	2.5%
	Primary	9	5.6%
	Secondary	21	13.0%
	Tertiary	67	41.6%
	Bachelor's degree	40	24.8%
	Masters	18	11.2%
	PHD	2	1.2%
	Total	**161**	**100.0%**
Marital status	Single	47	29.2%
	Married with children	73	45.3%
	Marriedwithout children	15	9.3%
	Single parent	18	11.2%
	Widow/widower	8	5.0%
	Total	**161**	**100.0%**
How many times have you visited here	Second time	85	52.8%
	Third time	44	27.3%
	Several times	32	19.9%
	Total	**161**	**100.0%**
Frequency of visits to five star hotel in a month	Once	31	19.3%
	Twice	39	24.2%
	Thrice	23	14.3%
	Four times or more	16	9.9%
	Rarely	52	32.3%
	Total	**161**	**100.0%**

	Business	70	43.5%
	Leisure	68	42.2%
Purpose of visit	Medical	4	2.5%
	Religion	5	3.1%
	Other	14	8.7%
	Total	**161**	**100.0%**

Source: Primary data

According to the results shown in Table 3, majority of the respondents were male, with 53.4% while female were 46.6%. Majority of the respondents were in the age group of 40 and above with 43.5%, followed by those in the age group of 35-38 with 19.9%, the age group of 30-34 came third with 17.4%, those of age group 25-29 were 14.3%, 18-24 age group made up 5.0%. The results also shows that Europe as a block leads in visiting five star hotels. Europe alone comprised of 29.2% of the visitors, Rest of East Africa came second with 21.1%. South East Asia that which includes China had 12.4%, North America had 11.8% followed by Uganda with 10.9%, then Middle East with 6.5% closely followed by Rest of Africa with 6.0% and the least number of visitors came from South America with only 1.5%. Majority of the respondents according to Table 3 had a Tertiary certificate as the highest level of education at 41.3%, this was followed by Bachelors holders' with 24.9%, those with Secondary education only were 13.9%, those with Masters degrees were 11.2%, those who stopped at primary school were 5.6% while those with no education were 2.5%, there were a small number of visitors who had PhD around 1.2%. Results according to table 3 show that majority of respondents were married with children, this contributed 45.3% while those who were single followed with 29.4%, those who were single parents were 11.2%, those who were married without children were 9.3%, the Widows/widowers were the least with 5.0%. On how often they visited the hotel, majority 52.8% had visited the hotel twice followed by those who had visited thrice with a percent of 27.3%,

followed by those who had visited the hotel several times with 19.9%. 43.5% of the respondents were in the hotel for business purposes, slightly above leisure with 42.2, 8.7% visited the hotel for other reasons while 3.1% were there for religious reasons. 2.5% were for medical reasons.

4.3 Means and standard deviation

From table 4, the corresponding average responses for the study constructs were: Service Personalization (Mean=4.23, SD=0.28), Service Trust (Mean=4.13, SD=0.41) and behavioural Loyalty (Mean=4.16, SD=0.37). The mean scores for the study constructs ranged between 4.13 and 4.23 and the standard deviations ranged from 0.28 to 0.41. The standard deviations were less than the mean scores. This implies that the calculated means reflect the real population (Field, 2006) and certainly the computed averages represent the observed data.

4.4 Correlation analysis and Descriptive statistics

To establish the strength and direction of relationship between the study variables Pearson correlation analysis was performed because the effect of other variables in the correlation between any two variables was not controlled. The results are shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Means, Standard Deviations (SD) and Correlation

Variable	Mean	SD	Correlation		
			SP	ST	BL
SP	4.233	0.275	1	0.137**	0.498**
ST	4.128	0.409	0.137**	1	0.379**
BL	4.163	0.368	0.498**	0.379**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Source: Primary data

The relationship between Service Personalization and behaviour loyalty (study objective one)

The relationship between Service Personalization and behavioural loyalty was significantly positive at ($r=0.498$, $P\leq 0.01$) indicating that an improvement in Service Personalization of a hotel's services leads to increasing behavioural loyalty to patronise the hotel.

The relationship between Service trust and behavioural loyalty (study objective two)

Service trust and behavioural loyalty have a significant positive relationship at ($r=0.379$, $P \leq 0.01$) denoting the more a guest trusts the hotel, the higher the behavioural loyalty tendency.

4.5 Regression analysis

To test the predictive power of the independent variables on the dependent variable, multiple linear regression was performed as shown in table 5.

The model adopted by this study can be stated as $BL=a + bSP+ cST + e$, where "BL" is behavioural loyalty, "SP" is Service Personalization, "ST" is Service Trust, *a* is a constant, *b* and *c* are respective coefficients of the independent variables; *e* is the error term associated with the coefficients of the regression equation.

From table 5 below, the initial model (M_1) contained control variables namely; Gender, Age, Region where the visitor comes from, level of education and marital status, were all non-significant predictors of behavioural loyalty.

In model two (M_2) service personalization was introduced and was a significant predictor of behavioural loyalty. Implying that a unit increase in service personalization strengthens behavioral loyalty by 0.498 standard units ($\beta= 0.498$, $R^2= 0.248$, $P\leq 0.01$)

Service trust was introduced in model three (M_3) and was also a significant predictor of behavioural loyalty. This means one standard unit change in service trust induces change in behavioural loyalty by 0.317 standard units (β=0.317, R^2=0.346, P≤ 0.01). The prediction of the model increased to 34.6 percent. All put together in model three (M_3) service personalization (β= 0.454, P ≤0.01) and service trust (β=0.317, P ≤ 0.01) were significant predictors of behavioural loyalty, explaining 34.6 percent variance in behavioural loyalty (R^2= 0.346, adjusted R^2= 0.338, P≤ 0.01).

Generally, a combination of service personalization (SP) and Service trust (ST) significantly explains 34.6 percent of the variance in behavioural loyalty in Uganda's five star hotels.

Table 5: Multiple linear regression results

From table 5 below, it is clear that a unit increment in SP and ST (the study's independent variables) can lead to an improvement on BL (the study's dependent variable). Furthermore, the research results further show that Service personalization has a greater effect on behavioural loyalty than Service trust. Lastly, the overall model was significant at 1 percent and can be stated as BL=4.05 + 0.498SP + 0.317ST; where BL is Behavioural loyalty, SP is Service personalization and ST is Service trust.

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	B	B	B	B	B	β
(Constant)	4.051**		4.177**		4.204**	
Gender	0.005	0.007	0.038	0.069	-0.015	-0.018
Age group	0.008	0.026	-0.004	0.020	-0.011	0.033
Region where the visitor comes from	0.004	0.019	-0.001	0.009	0.032	0.147
Level of Education	0.004	0.012	0.023	0.096	0.005	0.015
Marital status	0.021	0.063	0.018	0.074	0.040	0.109
SP			0.664**	0.498**	0.606**	0.454**
ST					0.286**	0.317**
Dependent variable: BL						
R		0.081		0.498		0.588
R Square		0.007		0.248		0.346
Adjusted R Square		-0.025		0.243		0.338
Std. Error		0.37		0.342		0.321
R Square Change		0.007		0.144		0.248
F Change		0.25		26.735		52.306
Sig.		0.96		0.000		0.000
Collinearity Statistics-	**VIF**	1.980		1.998		1.995

*** Significant at 0.01 level;*

** Significant at 0.05 Level*

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings in the previous chapter in line with the study objectives and the related literature reviewed. The study objectives were to examine the relationship between service personalization, service trust and behavioural loyalty in Uganda's five star hotels. The discussion of the findings is followed by sections on conclusion, recommendations and limitation.

5.1 Relationship between Service Personalization and Behavioral loyalty

The study's first research objective sought to examine the relationship between service personalization and behavioral loyalty. The results confirm that there is a positive significant relationship between service personalization and behavioral loyalty. From these study findings, it can be argued that service personalization will lead to a positive change in behavioral loyalty in hotel trade.

The study findings reveal that there is increasing demand for personalized service from all their clients and that the need to involve guests in the hotel activities and service processes is a key requirement for enhancing revisits and positive word of mouth and among hotel guests in Uganda. The study shows that five star hotels which deliberately and consistently involved customers and provided service in tandem with guest unique needs, special requests and specifications, do realize increased visits and re-visits. For example, freshly preparing dishes for individual guests according to their choice of food, preparation method, ingredients and other specifications is crucial in increasing revisits and positive word of mouth. Flexibility in terms of responding to guest unique requests and preferences was reported as a valuable capability which if done prudently leads to improved visitor influx.

Generally, the study findings suggest that service personalization initiatives are very important in increasing the proportion of guest residents who patronize, dine and re-visit five star hotels in Uganda. The findings are in line with Otengei and Changha, (2021), Ball, et al (2006), Otengei and Ahebwa,(2020) who contend that service personalization has an effect on behavioural loyalty indicators such as the repurchase tendencies and positive word of mouth. The implication is that, when guests are sure of their unique preferences being addressed, they will purchase more of the hotel products time and again. Furthermore, they will also encourage others to visit the same hotel and spread positive word of mouth.

The above results suggest that ensuring a close relationship with the customer, guaranteeing self-service options, adhering to guest specifications, knowing their individual needs and avoiding any misunderstandings as well as ensuring that glitches of a nontechnical nature are reduced, is often rewarded by repeat visit and positive word of mouth. Also being highly flexible with individual customer requests and problems is a potential enabler of behavioural loyalty formation.

In conclusion, therefore, five star hotels ought to increase their engagement with their customers in view of understanding the kind of services customers want and how they want to be served. When customers feel an association with the services provided by the hotel, they also feel associated with the service provider which is the hotel. This leads to behavioral loyalty.

5.2 Relationship between Service Trust and Behavioral loyalty

In objective two, the study sought to establish whether there is a relationship between Service Trust and Behavioral loyalty. Results confirm that there is a positive significant relationship between service trust and behavioral loyalty. This implies that when customers perceive that what is being done is for their best interest, they tend to feel a great association with the hotel

and will recommend the hotel to other people, regard the hotel as credible, visit the hotel whenever possible. They will choose the hotel as their first choice, talk favorably about the hotel among their friends and relatives. This finding is in agreement with earlier works in this area of study. For example, Hugh, (2009) found that brand trust is a significant moderator of behavioral loyalty. This means that when a customer trusts the services they receive; they will have a positive view of the hotel and will recommend the hotel to others and talk favorably about the hotel.

5.3 The joint predictive relationship between Service personalization, Service Trust and Behavioral Loyalty

The R-square show that both service personalization and service trust combined have a positive correlation with behavioral loyalty. Generally, results confirm that when customers receive personalized services and perceive the hotel as being credible and trust worthy, they tend to exhibit increased behavioral loyalty. This finding is supported by Tanford, (2019) who found that behavioral loyalty increased as a result of personalized services offered to guests. Put differently, the more personalized the services are, and the more trust customers have for the services, the more they exhibit behavioral loyalty.

5.4 Conclusion

This study empirically tested the links between Service personalization, Service trust and Behavioural loyalty in Uganda's five star hotels. The findings indicated that there is a significant relationship between Service personalization and behavioural loyalty and Service trust and behavioral loyalty and a joint predictive relationship between Service personalization, Service trust and behavioural loyalty. The study finds that Service personalization had more influence on behavioral loyalty than Service trust, although the influence of service trust can still be considered substantial. This study shows that the freedom to choose, which service

personalization offers to guests can lead to increased behavioral loyalty. Service trust seems to take long to be realized possibly because people need to experience certain services with consistency to completely regard a service credible. The findings of this study can therefore be used to deduce that giving customers the choice to choose how and what they would like to be served can lead to behavioral loyalty.

Similarly, these results are vital because they deliver proof of the comprehensive expounding influence of Service personalization and Service trust on behavioural loyalty. The findings indicate that when the management of 5-star hotels in Uganda enhances Service personalization and Service trust in their processes and operations, the behavioral loyalty will be boosted. Service personalization and Service trust are significant predictors of behavioral loyalty in 5-star hotels in Uganda

Accordingly, the erudition point is that Service personalization and Service trust are very essential in influencing behavioural loyalty in this sub-sector of the hotel trade in Uganda. In a nutshell therefore, the study revealed that a unit change in the combination of the independent variables leads to a 33.8% change in behavioural loyalty in the 5-star hotels in Uganda.

5.5 Recommendations of the study

The hotel management should declare service personalization as major strategy and winning tool for hotel trade survival and customer retention.

The hotel should ensure appropriate ratio of employee to guest so as to ensure adequate personalized service.

5.6 Implications

Implications in this study are further divided into two;-

5.6.1 Theoretical implications

This study asserts that behavioral loyalty can be influenced by service trust and service personalization. The study therefore gives an alternative theoretical position on understanding the influences of behavioral loyalty through the lens of service personalization and service trust. The study presents service personalization and service trust as major predictors of behavioral loyalty.

The study also supports previous theoretical views on behavioral loyalty, that service trust and service personalization are important drivers of behavioral loyalty. The role of proper communication while implementing personalization of services needs to be looked into, to give an understanding of its influence on service personalization, service trust and behavioral loyalty.

5.6.2 Managerial implications

The study results reveal that, service trust had less but important influence on behavioral loyalty. It means that more time and energy needs to be invested on those elements that lead to service trust. Service personalization is a powerful way to retain customers in its own right. Put differently, it is also understood that service personalization is a continuous process because guests keep on changing their preferences. It is therefore important that five star hotel managers emphasize regular training of hotel staff on the most current preferences of their customers if they are to realize behavioral loyalty. The people who work in five star hotels are an important influence to service trust and therefore, their credibility must be seriously considered if service trust is to lead to behavioral loyalty.

It is therefore important that a combination of proper communication in the provision of personalized service and affective commitment of the employees be taken into consideration while implementing behavioral loyalty programs based on service personalization and service trust.

5.7 Limitations of the study and Suggestions for future research

Fieldwork was conducted in Kampala, Uganda, a sub-region which may contextually differ from other settings, rendering the whole findings tricky. It is therefore essential that related studies be conducted in other settings to take into account the effect of those environments.

Investigating comparatively larger samples from different subsectors rather than five star hotels might present a basis for results that can aid managers in promoting adaptive behavior in their operations.

The study explored the status of five star hotels using cross-sectional design and could not apparently envisage future firm dynamics. In fact, this work was restricted to a particular time of measurement, but since hotel capacity usually changes with time, a longitudinal approach is recommended for trajectory analysis.

This study focused on behavioral loyalty, further studies may need to discuss attitudinal loyalty formation and its differences compared with behavioral loyalty formation. In fact, it could also be interesting to conduct a comparative study of behavioral loyalty in other emerging areas of tourism in the greater Uganda. The outcomes of such undertakings would avail new lessons that could guide the academic discourse on major enablers of loyalty formation among hospitality and tourism firms in Uganda.

Unwillingness by the respondents: Since the study was purposive, the identified respondents were at times hesitant and too busy to fill and return questionnaires in time which required the researcher to keep checking with the reception more one time until the questionnaire was returned at the reception and collected, however, this strained and stretched the researcher financially.

In a nutshell, Loyalty formation is a very important and sensational concept affected by a diversity of factors. In the researcher's opinion, the proposed framework is not anywhere near being comprehensive, probably other factors may be identified in future works so as to provide incremental understanding of Service personalization and Service trust as drivers of behavioral loyalty formation. Conceptually, it may also be necessary for later studies to consider whether communication and corporate image could be incorporated into the proposed model as additional predictors so as to make it more robust. Regardless of how behavioral loyalty is described and measured, it may be beneficial for future research to have clearly distinct measures for loyalty formation. In conclusion, despite possible limitations, the study findings provide valuable insights into the association between Service personalization, Service trust and behavioral loyalty, particularly, using five star hotels in Uganda.

REFERENCES

Agrawal, R., Gaur, S. S., & Narayanan, A. (2012).Determining behavioural loyalty: Review and model. The marketing review, 12(3), 275-289

Agustín, Clara and Jagdip Singh (2005), "Curvilinear Effects of Consumer Loyalty Determinants in Relational Exchanges," Journal of Marketing Research, 42 (1), 96-108.

Albayrak, T., Karasakal, S., Kocabulut, Ö, &Dursun, A. (2020). Customer loyalty towards travel agency websites: the role of trust and hedonic value. Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism, 21(1), 50-77

Amin, M. E. (2005). Social science research: Conception, methodology and analysis. Kampala, Uganda: Makerere University

Ampong, G.O.A., Abubakari, A., Mohammed, M., Appaw-Agbola, E.T., Addae, J.A. and Ofori, K.S. (2020), "Exploring customer loyalty following service recovery: a replication study in the Ghanaian hotel industry", Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print, doi: 10.1108/JHTI-03-2020-0034.

Anderson, E.W; Fornell, C. (2000), "Foundations of the American Customer Satisfaction Index", Total Quality Management, Vol 11 No 7, pp.869-882.

Anderson, J.C., and Narus, J.A. (1998). Business Marketing: Understand What Customers Value. Harvard Business Review, 76 (6), 53–65

Andreassen, T. W., &Lindestad, B. (1998).Customer loyalty and complex services: The impact of corporate image on quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty for customers with varying degrees of service expertise. International Journal of Service Industry Management, 9(1), 7-23.

Ayero. S,(2021) extrinsic and intrinsic determinants of customer behavioural loyalty in selected fast food restaurants in kampala city. Unpublished Master's thesis. Makerere University Business School , Kampala, Uganda

Ball, Dwayne; Pedro Simoes Coelho and Manuel J. Vilares (2006), "Service Personalization and Loyalty," Journal of Services Marketing, 20 (6), 391-403. DOI: 10.1108/08876040610691284

Ball, Dwayne; Pedro Simoes Coelho, and Alexandra Machas (2004), "The Role of Communication and Trust in Explaining Customer Loyalty: an Extension to the ECSI Model," European Journal of Marketing, 38 (9/10), 1272-1293.

Bilgihan, A., Madanoglu, M., & Ricci, P. (2016). Service attributes as drivers of behavioral loyalty in casinos: The mediating effect of attitudinal loyalty. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 31, 14-21.

BlascoLópez, M. F., Virto, N. R., Manzano, J. A., &García-Madariaga, J. (2020). Archaeological tourism: looking for visitor loyalty drivers. Journal of Heritage Tourism, 15(1), 60-75.

Bloemer, J., & Schroder, G.O. (2002). Store Satisfaction and Store Loyalty Explained by Customer and Store-Related Factors. Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior, 15, 68-80.

Buttle, F.; Burton, J. (2002), "Does service failure influence behavioural loyalty?",Journal of Consumer Behaviour, Feb. Vol 1 No 3, pp.217-227.

Childs, M., Turner, T. F., &Watchravesringkan, K. (2019). Active leisure: an investigation of active participants‟ shopping, purchase and behavioural loyalty for physical activity apparel. Leisure/Loisir, 43(1), 27-54.

Chiu, C. M., Chang, C. C., Cheng, H. L., & Fang, Y. H. (2009). Determinants of customer repurchase intention in online shopping. Online information review.

Choi, B., & La, S. (2013). The impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and service trust on the restoration of loyalty

Clement, J., Duraipandian, I., Britto, A., &Selvam, M. (2006). Service Loyalty Measurement Scale: A Reliability Assessment. American Journal of Applied Sciences, 3 (4): 1814-1818.

Coelho, P. S., &Henseler, J. (2012).Creating customer loyalty through service customization. European Journal Of Marketing, 46(3-4), 331-356.https://doi.org/10.1108/03090561211202503

Curasi, C. F., & Kennedy, K.N. (2002). From prisoners to apostles: A typology of repeat buyers and loyal customers in service businesses. Journal of Services Marketing, 16(4), 322-341.

De Ruyter, K., &Bloemer, J. (1999).Customer loyalty in extended service settings.International Journal of Service Industry Management.

Doney, Patricia M. and Joseph P. Cannon (1997), "An Examination of the Nature of Trust in Buyer-Seller Relationships," Journal of Marketing, 61 (2), 35-51.

Dwyer, F. Robert, Paul H. Schurr, and Sejo Oh (1987), "Developing Buyer-Seller Relationships," Journal of Marketing, 51 (2), 11-27.

Fornell, Claes, Michael D. Johnson, Eugene W. Anderson, Jaesung Cha, and Barbara Everitt Bryant (1996), "The American Customer Satisfaction Index: Nature, Purpose, and Findings," Journal of Marketing, 60 (4), 7-18.

Ganesan, S. (1994).Determinants of Long-Term Orientation in Buyer-Seller Relationship.Journal of Marketing, 58(April), 1-19.

Garbarino, E.; Johnson, M. (1999), "The different roles of satisfaction, trust and commitment in customer relationships", Journal of Marketing, Vol 63 No 2, pp.70-87.

Ha, J., & Jang, S. (2012). The effects of dining atmospherics on behavioural intentions through quality perception.Journal of Services Marketing, 26(3), 204–215.

Ha, Y., &Im, H. (2012). Role of web site design quality in satisfaction and word of mouth generation.Journal of Service Management, 23, 79-96.

Halimi,Alireza , Namdar, Shahriar , Sheibani (2011) the contribution of personalization to customers' loyalty across the bank industry in Sweden. 2011 International Conference on Social Science and Humanity IPEDR vol.5 (2011).

Hennig-Thurau, Thorsten, Kevin P. Gwinner, and Dwayne D. Gremler (2002), "Understanding Relationship Marketing Outcomes: An Integration of Relational Benefits and Relationship Quality," Journal of Service Research, 4 (3), 230-247.

Hsi-Peng, L., & Philip, Y.-J.S. (2009). Factors affecting purchase intention on mobile shopping websites .Emerald Insight Internet Research Vol. 19 Issue: 4, pp.442-458.

Hur, W. M., Ahn, K. H., & Kim, M. (2011).Building brand loyalty through managing brand community commitment.Management Decision.

Jacoby, J. a. (1973).Brand loyalty versus repeat purchasing behaviour.Journal of Marketing Research, pp. 1–9.

Jani, D., & Han, H. (2011).Investigating the key factors affecting behavioural intentions: Evidence from a full-service restaurant setting.International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 23(7), 1000–1018.

Jones, M.A., Mothersbaugh, D.L., & Beatty, S.E. (2002). Why Customers Stay: Journal of Consumer Marketing, 20(5), 480-485. Journal of Service Industry Management, 12(1), 44-59.

Jones, T., & Taylor, S. F. (2007). The conceptual domain of service loyalty: How many dimensions? Journal of Services Marketing, 21(1), 36-51.

Kamukama, N., Ahiauzu, A., &Ntayi, J. M. (2010). Intellectual capital and performance: testing interaction effects. Journal of Intellectual Capital.

Kandampully, J., & Hu, H. (2007). Do hoteliers need to manage image to retain loyal Customers? International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 9(6), 435-443.

Kandampully, J., &Suhartanto, D. (2000). Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: The role of satisfaction and image. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 12(6), 346-351.

Kandampully, J., Zhang, T. C., &Bilgihan, A. (2015). Customer loyalty: a review and future directions with a special focus on the hospitality industry. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management.

Kang, M., &Schuett, M. A. (2013). Determinants of sharing travel experiences in social media. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 30(1-2), 93-107.

Kasekende, Ngoma, Bakunda,(2017) Organizational Trust, Collectivism and Goal Congruence. Makerere Business Journal,Vol. 13, Issue 1 2017 pp.27-46 Makerere University Business School

Katongole, C. (2018), "Revisiting Uganda's tourism development path in the national development agenda", Journal of Tourism Research and Hospitality, Vol. 7 No. 1, p. 1000181.

Kim,(2002) Personalization: Definition, Status, and Challenges Ahead. Journal of object technology, Vol. 1, No. 1, May-June 2002

Komiak, Sherrie Y. X. and IzakBenbasat (2007), "The Effects of Personalization and Familiarity on Trust and Adoption of Recommendation Agents", MIS Quarterly, 30 (4), 941-960.

Koufaris, Marios and William Hampton-Sosa (2004), "The Development of Initial Trust in an Online Company by New Customers," Information & Management, 41 (3), 377-397.

Krejcie, R.V., & Morgan, D.W. (1970).Determining Sample Size for Research Activities.*Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30,* 607-610

Lemon, Katherine N., Tiffany Barnett White, and Russell S. Winer (2002), "Dynamic Customer Relationship Management: Incorporating Future Considerations into the Service Retention Decision," Journal of Marketing, 66 (1), 1-14.

Lloyd, A. E., &Luk, S. T. K. (2011). Interaction behaviours leading to comfort in the service encounter. Journal of Services Marketing, 25(3), 176-189.

Marshall (2006) What Is Personalization? Perspectives on the Design and Implementation of Personalization in Information Systems. Journal of Organizational Computing and Electronic Commerce · January 2006. DOI: 10.1207/s15327744joce1603&4_2

Martınez, P., &Rodrıguez del Bosque, I. (2013). CSR and customer loyalty: The roles of trust, customer identification with the company and satisfaction. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 35, 89–99.

McMullan, R. (2005). A multiple-item scale for measuring customer loyalty development.Journal of Services Marketing, 19(7), 470-481.

Mittal, Banwari and Walfried M. Lassar (1996), "The Role of Personalization in Service Encounters," Journal of Retailing, 72 (2), 95-109.

Mohammed &Jermien(2020) The Role of Trustworthiness in Achieving Customers' Loyalty in Tourism and Hotel Sectors. International Journal of Heritage, Tourism and Hospitality Vol. (14), No. (1), June, 2020

Moorman, Christine, Zaltman, Gerald and Deshpandé, Rohit. (1992). Relationships between Providers and Users of Market Research: The Dynamics of Trust Within and Between Organizations. Journal of Marketing Research, 29 (3), 314–329.

Morgan. M and Hunt. D (1994), "The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing," Journal of Marketing, 58 (3), 20-38.

Oliver, Richard L. (1999), "Whence Customer Loyalty?"Journal of Marketing, 63 (Special Issue), 33-44.

Otengei et al., (2014) Determinants of Brand Loyalty.Advances in Hospitality and TourismResearch (AHTR) An International Journal of Akdeniz University Tourism Faculty ISSN: 2147-9100 (Print), 2148-7316 (Online) Vol. 2 (2) 79-107

Otengei S and Changha G,(2021) Resident Loyalty Formation for survival of African-ethnic restaurants. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights © Emerald Publishing Limited 2514-9792.DOI 10.1108/JHTI-07-2021-0159

Otengei, S.O. and Ahebwa, W.M. (2020), "Innovative capacity and sustainable food tourist influx to African-ethnic restaurants: the dynamic capabilities perspective", Tourism and Hospitality Research, Vol. 21 No. 2, pp. 131-143, doi: 10.1177/1467358420966028.

Otengei, S.O., Bakunda, G., Ngoma, M., Ntayi, J.M. and Munene, J.C. (2017), "Internationalization of African-ethnic restaurants: a qualitative enquiry using the dynamic capabilities perspective", Tourism Management Perspectives, Vol. 21, pp. 85-99.

Otengei, S.O., Waako, F. and Bakunda, G. (2014), African Cuisine-History and Practice: A Text for Culinary Practitioners and Students, MK Publishiers, Kampala.

Peppers, D., and Rogers, M. (1993) The One to One Future: Building Relationships

Peppers, D., and Rogers, M. (2004) Managing Customer Relationships, Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley

Pine, B. Joseph II, Don Peppers, Martha Rogers (1995), "Do You Want to Keep Your Customers Forever?" Harvard Business Review, 73 (2), 103-114.

Ramanathan, U., &Ramanathan, R. (2011). Guests' perceptions on factors influencing customer loyalty: An analysis for UK hotels. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 23(1), 7-25.

Sheth, Jagdish N., Rajendra S. Sisodia, and Arun Sharma (2000), "The Antecedents and Consequences of Customer-Centric Marketing," Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 28 (1), 55-66.

Simonson, Itamar (2005), "Determinants of Customers' Responses to Customized Offers: Conceptual Framework and Research Propositions," Journal of Marketing, 69 (1), 32-45.

Singh, J.; Sirdeshmurk, D.; Sabol, B. (2002), "Consumer trust, value and loyalty in relational exchanges", Journal of Marketing, Vol 66 No 1, pp. 15-37.

Sirdeshmukh, Deepak, Jagdip Singh, and Barry Sabol (2002), "Consumer Trust, Value, and Loyalty in Relational Exchanges," Journal of Marketing, 66 (1), 15-37.

Soderlund, M. (2006).Measuring customer loyalty with multi-item scales: A case for caution.International Journal of Service Industry Management, 17(1), 76-98.

Solomon, R., & Flores, F. (2001).Building Trust: In business, politics, relationships, and life. New York: Oxford University Press

Surprenant, Carol F. and Michael R. Solomon (1987), "Predictability and Personalization in the Service Encounter," Journal of Marketing, 51 (2), 86-96.

Tam, Kar Yan and Shuk Ying Ho (2005), "Web Personalization as a Persuasion Strategy: An Elaboration Likelihood Model Perspective," Information Systems Research, 16 (3), 271–291.

Tian, Kelly Tepper, William O. Bearden, and Gary L. Hunter (2001), "Consumers' Need for Uniqueness: Scale Development and Validation," Journal of Consumer Research, 28 (1), 50-66. Time, New York: Currency/Doubleday

Tripadvisor,2018 Ratings

Tukamushaba, E. K., Musinguzi, D., Katongole, C., & Xiao, H. (2012).Modeling service quality improvement priorities in selected hotels for efficient service delivery.International Journal of Tourism Sciences, 12(2), 21-43.

UBoS.(2019). Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2018 Statistical Abstract.Kampala, Uganda.

Vesanen (2005) What is personalization. A literature review and framework.Helsinki school of economics. ISBN 951-791-970-0

Vesanen, Jari. And Raulas ,Mika (2004) Building bridges for personalization- a process view , working paper W-366,Helsinki school of economics

Vilares, Manuel J. and Pedro Simões Coelho (2004), "The Employee-Customer Satisfaction Chain in the ECSI Model," European Journal of Marketing, 37 (11/12), 1703-1722

Zhang(2018) Research on Hotel Industry Personalized Service from the Perspective of Experience Economy. Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, volume 193

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

MAKERERE  **UNIVERSITY**

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

QUESTIONAIRE

Dear respondent,

I am Amanya Jonan, a student of Makerere University Business School. I am undertaking a study on **"*Service personalization, Service trust and behavioral loyalty in five star hotels in Uganda*".** The information provided for this study is purely for academic purposes. All responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Region oforigin……..

Name of five star hotel ……

SECTION A: Background Information of the Respondent

Please tick as appropriate;

1. Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40&Above

2. Age group

3. Level of formal education

No education	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Bachelor's degree	Masters	PhD

4. Marital status

Single	Married with children	Married without children	Single parent	Widow/widower

5. How many times have you visited here?

Second time	Third time	Several times

6. How often do you visit at the five star hotels monthly?

Once	Twice	Thrice	Four times or more	Rarely

7. What was the purpose of your visit?

Business	Leisure	Medical	Religion	Other

SECTION B: SERVICE PERSONALIZATION (SP)

Please indicate by ticking in the appropriate box the extent to which you agree / disagree with the most suitable response that are rated as follows; **(1= Strongly Disagree(SD); 2= Disagree(D); 3= Not sure(NS); 4= Agree(A); 5= Strongly Agree(SA)**

Perceived preference						
CODE	**ITEM**	**SD**	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
SP 01	My hotel offers me services that satisfy my specific need, " the hotel adheres to guest specifications"	1	2	3	4	5
SP 02	My hotel offers me services that I couldn't find in other hotels	1	2	3	4	5
SP 03	If I changed from this hotel I wouldn't obtain services as personalized as I have now	1	2	3	4	5
SP 04	I choose my menu and the menu is not imposed on me, ""tailored menu"	1	2	3	4	5
SP 05	My hotel guarantees self service options	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: SERVICE TRUST (ST)

Please indicate by ticking in the appropriate box the extent to which you agree / disagree with the statements/items rated as follows; **(1= Strongly Disagree(SD); 2= Disagree(D); 3= Not sure(NS); 4= Agree(A); 5= Strongly Agree(SA)**

Perceived Credibility						
CODE	**ITEM**	**SD**	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
ST 01	The service I receive in this hotel makes me feel safe	1	2	3	4	5
ST 02	This hotel's services are a guarantee of quality	1	2	3	4	5
ST 03	This hotel is interested in its customers	1	2	3	4	5
ST 04	When the hotel suggests an offer, it is because it is to my advantage	1	2	3	4	5
ST 05	The hotel treats me honestly in all its dealings	1	2	3	4	5
ST 06	Overall, I have complete trust in my hotel	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: BEHAVIOURAL LOYALTY (BL)

Please indicate by ticking in the appropriate box the extent to which you agree / disagree with the most suitable response that are rated as follows; **(1= Strongly Disagree(SD); 2= Disagree(D); 3= Not sure(NS); 4= Agree(A); 5= Strongly Agree(SA)**

Behavioral loyalty

Repurchasing						
CODE	**ITEM**	**SD**	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
BL 01	I usually come back to visit this hotel	1	2	3	4	5
BL 02	I consider myself a loyal customer of this hotel	1	2	3	4	5
BL 03	I consider this hotel my first choice when I need hotel services	1	2	3	4	5
BL 04	Iam willing to collaborate with management to improve or promote the hotel. Even if prices are hiked	1	2	3	4	5
Positive word of mouth						
CODE	**ITEM**	**SD**	**D**	**NS**	**A**	**SA**
BL 05	I recommend other people to patronize this hotel	1	2	3	4	5
BL 06	I say favorable things about services in this hotel to other persons	1	2	3	4	5
BL 07	I take pride in telling other people about my experiences in this five star hotel	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX II: KREJCIE AND MORGAN TABLE

Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining the sample size of a given population

Table for Determining Sample Size for a Given Population

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	246
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	100000	384

Note: "N" is population size
"S" is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970