

A Study of Customer Aggression towards Frontline Employees in Some Hotels in Imo State, Nigeria

Authors : Polycarp A. Igbojekwe, Chizoba Amajuoyi, Peterson Nwokorie

Abstract : The main purpose of this study was to carry out a survey of customer's aggression towards hotel workers and make contributions on the prevalence and rationale behind customer's aggression. Data for the study were gathered with a four-point Likert type rating scale. Samples were drawn from frontline hotel employees, managers and customers of twelve (12) hotels selected from three zones of Imo State. Data analyses were conducted using simple percentage, descriptive statistics; and Z-test statistical technique was used to test hypotheses. Among other factors, service failure and verbal abuse by service providers and poor quality product compared to price were identified by customers as the three major factors that can lead to customer aggression. Frontline employees identified verbal abuse as the most common mode of aggression and that customer aggression causes emotional disturbance in them. The study also revealed that customer aggression is more prevalent in the 1&2 star hotels than it is in 3-5 star hotels. Most of the hotels have not institutionalized systematic approaches needed to effectively face the challenges of customer aggression, thus, customer aggression has become a common feature in the industry. Frontline jobs demand high emotional input. Therefore, we recommend that frontline employees should be given emotional support by their managers and also trained on how to cope with emotional disturbance.

Keywords : customer aggression, emotional disturbance, employee well-being, service failure, verbal abuse

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