



Strategic Service Quality on Sales Performance of Multinational Fast-Food Firms in Nairobi County Kenya

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Abstract

On a local and global perspective, the performance of multinational fast-food firms encountered difficulties in the past in improving sales revenue, this occurred due to poor service quality (KNBS report 2023). Therefore, the purpose of the study was the analysis of strategic service quality on sales performance of multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. The independent variable service quality was measured by customer service, delivery on time and customer feedback. Dependent variable involved sales performance indicators such as market share, sales and profits, mediating variables were measured by restaurant ambience this included décor, interior design and spatial layout, moderating variables included organisational competence measured by management, transactional and operational competence. Competitive advantage, SERVQUAL model, expectation-disconfirmation and value-percept theory. The research design utilised was explanatory research design, target population was 23 managers and 19930 customers. 22 managers and 376 customers were sampled, a census was used. Content and construct validity was used to test validity, reliability was tested, with the Cronbach Alpha 0.75 was obtained, semi-structured questionnaires were distributed. Statistical Package for Social Science was used, inferential and descriptive statistics was utilised. Descriptive statistics included mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics used was correlation and regression analysis. Service quality had a major effect ($\beta = 0.108$, $P = 0.002$), restaurant ambience had a statistically significant mediating positive effect on sales performance ($\beta = 0.083$, $P = 0.012$) and organisational competence had a statistically significant moderating positive relationship between service quality and sales performance in Nairobi, County Kenya ($P=0.023$).

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Introduction

Multinational fast-food firms, these companies are business entities that operate at their countries of origin but have physical facilities, subsidiaries, offices and manufacturing plants in other foreign countries known as host countries, these firms specialize in the production of beverages and food items for fast-food consumption (Gupta, 2018).

Globally multinational fast-food firms in countries that are developing and developed have been affected by factors that have contributed to their performance, due to the continuous improvement and constant modifications required in the implementing of strategic service quality. These firms have opened many branches in host countries looking for opportunity and resources such as manageable tax policies, raw



materials and cheap labour (Kouam, 2024). These firms have challenges in entering new markets due to differences in cultures, lifestyles and local beverage and food items found in these countries. Difficulty in gaining local and foreign investments and resources of the host countries, this has led to closed premises and bankruptcy (Babeet, 2024). On the regional perspective there are certain strategic service quality practices that have negatively hindered the sales performance of these firms such as customer feedback and suggestions not being implemented, delivery of products and services not being done on time and poor customer service, have negatively impacted the food industry because the firm's employees are not well trained and proper attention is not given when it comes to service provision and delivery. The subsidiaries of these firms in African countries experience struggles such as lack of ingredients and raw materials, fluctuation and inflation of prices and poor infrastructure (Babeet, 2024). In Kenya these multinational fast-food firms had challenges that negatively impacted their quality of service such as the government's continuous increase of tax and custom laws, also coming up with strict policies that these firms have to adhere to in order to come up with food and beverage items that are substandard, because they find it expensive to produce food and beverages that are good quality and in transporting raw materials and resources to be used in production (Kouam, 2024).

Strategic service quality dictates that the services offered by the company should meet the consumers demand and expectations (Lynch, 2024). The organisational competence of a company is determined by the human and physical resources that the company has, this is determined by the raw materials, resources, machinery, technology and equipment the company has under its possession (Lynch, 2024). According to Babeet (2024), sales performance of a firm is determined by the amount of money acquired through the services or products, sold to the consumer by a company. The company needs to be effective and efficient in achieving its sales objectives and targets, sales is analysed and measured on a comprehensive basis this enables the company to achieve its revenue goals. The number, price and amount of merchandise sold to customers for profits at a given time is significant. The objectives included the delivery on time, customer service and customer feedback (Arne, 2024).

Literature Review

Theoretical Literature

Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT), contributed by Oliver in 1980 and Weber in 1997, is accredited as a tool that is applicable on a wide scope when explaining customer satisfaction, quality of service and sales. This theory concentrates on two specific concepts: quality and satisfaction. Empirical findings indicated that expectations instead of wants were utilised in determining the quality of a service (Peng et al., 2022). Value-Percept Theory, contributed by Edwin Locke 1970's, suggested that customers change brands frequently depending on the value that customers attach to a brand, product or service. This theory opinionates that products have actual and ideal value. Actual value is concerned with the actual performance and quality of a service or product according to how consumers perceive them. Ideal value explains the ideal performance or quality of a commodity that is expected by customers before buying the product (Peng et al., 2022). SERVQUAL model, is a research instrument that is multidimensional and designed to focus on consumer expectations and perceptions a long five dimensions of a service that is representative of the quality of service. The five dimensions are represented by assurance, reliability, tangibles, responsiveness and empathy. The consumers expectations and perceptions are important in service delivery (Peng et al., 2022). Competitive Advantage Model, according to Lorenzo, Ramon, and Tere (2023) the model policies are pursued by companies resulting in goods that are high in quality for sale at high prices in the market, this increases the competitive advantage. Competitive advantage is achieved when production is improved by the company and low production costs are implemented (Hosseini, et al., 2023).



Empirical Literature

Service Quality on Sales Performance of Multinational Fast-Food Firms. The upmarket fast-food firm has customers expecting services that are high in quality in terms of delivery. In cases where the quality of service does not match with the customer expectation this affects sales revenue. The ordering system and service delivery of food and beverage items that is efficient can assist the management to easily manage their day to day operations (Rijswijk & Frewer, 2023). According to the study done by Rijswijk and Frewer, (2024), service quality improvement on the fast-food service industry, the findings indicated that service quality leads to positive referrals, improved corporate brand and enhanced commercial success, in the fast-food service industry in Ghana, the shortcomings of this study that was previously done is that the service quality indicators does not clearly illustrate its contribution to the fast-food service industry.

Restaurant Ambience on Sales Performance of Multinational Fast-Food Firms. According to Vladimir, (2024), it involves space being designed to produce certain effects that in turn influences the buyers' emotions increasing their high chances of purchasing. Ambience involves elements like colour, lighting and music. Ambience has an impact that is very powerful on the attitude of a customer and consumer behaviour. According to the study previously done by Vladimir (2024) Restaurant Ambiences, service quality and customer satisfaction, the findings indicated that the ambience of a room and service quality highly impacted the customer satisfaction of restaurants in Nigeria.

Organisational Competence on Sales Performance of Multinational Fast-Food Firms. According to Vladimir, (2024) Organisations thrive in turbulent circumstances revolving around ideas, competition, regulations, markets, financing and other factors thus leading to changes that must be made so that the organisation can attain their goals in profits and sales revenue. Organisational success involves the capacity of the management to respond to internal and external requirements. According to the study previously done by Vladimir (2024) Organisational competence affects sales performance of enterprises both medium and small in Kenya. The study findings show that many SMEs had utilised the transactional competencies such as product printing, the shortcoming is that the study does not focus on organisational competences such as skills and capabilities.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework represents the correlation between strategic service quality and sales performance. Organisational competence and restaurant ambience were the moderating and mediating variables of the study. The key to strategic service quality being successful involves the firm embracing delivery on time, customer service and customer feedback. While having excellent service provision to the consumers (Vladimir, 2024).

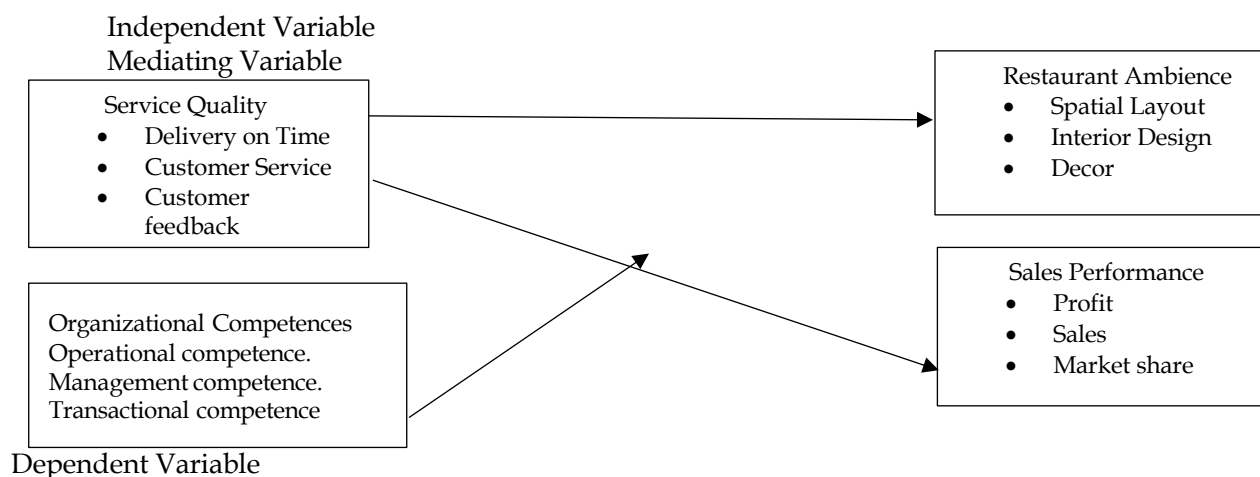


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2025)

Methodology

Research Methodology

The research philosophy utilised was positivism, this is the knowledge obtained through objective measurements and observation. Explanatory research design was utilised for purposes of explaining relationships and for testing causal relationships particular occurrences that occur. Target population was made up of 19,930 customers and 23 managers from 23 multinational fast-food firms from Nairobi county, Kenya, according to the FBA (2023) report. The method of sampling known as census was implemented, here the population was selected from the target population (Sergey, 2022)

Study Area. The study was conducted among the 23 multinational fast-food businesses in Nairobi County, Kenya. These firms were obtained from the FBA (2023) report that recorded 23 multinational fast-food firms, according to the report these firms have their major headquarters and branches within Nairobi, they also have records of high annual sales and population of customers. **Data Collection,** instruments of research included semi-structured questionnaires, that were open-ended and close-ended questionnaires with Likert scales. **Pilot Study,** 10% of the sample size was utilised, in the study, which was 2 customers and 38 branch managers. In data analysis, data was gathered and analysed using the questionnaires, that were answered. The inferential statistics included testing the hypothesis, regression analysis and ANOVA and descriptive statistics were quantified using variances, mean and standard deviation were applied. SPSS version 30 was utilised for computing descriptive statistics. (Arao, 2024).

Ethical Consideration

The researcher observed confidentiality when it came to matters concerning the intellectual property rights, trademarks and trade secrets. By informing the participants and respondents that the study was for academic purposes and getting their consent before including them in the research also by showing them the letter from the University and NACOSTI research permit to show that the authenticity of the study.

Study Population

The target population was 19953 made up of 23 managers and 19930 customers from multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. According to the report by FBA (2023) recorded the presence of 23 multinational fast-food firms (Sergey, 2022).



Sample Size and Sampling

The method of sampling that was utilised, was a probability sampling technique known as stratified random sampling (Sergey, 2022). In the stratified random sampling participants were selected from the target population by dividing the population into smaller sub groups known as strata. This ensured the results obtained were accurate and reliable (Douglas, 2019).

The study was working with a sample size of 38 customers and 22 managers in multinational fast-food firms obtained from the census method, representing 75% of the MNCs fast-food firm's respondents in Nairobi County (Douglas, 2019). According to Sergey (2022) reliability was measured using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the outcome was 0.75, this outcome indicated that the research instruments were normally approved, because it was above 0.7, while 0.7 and below is normally disapproved. Validity was tested through the use of content and construct validity. The study's multiple regression is meant to have linear regression that is ordinary: multicollinearity, normality, homoscedasticity, linearity and non-autocorrelation that is not perfect (Bell et al., 2022).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Period of Purchase and Customer Relationship Management Practices

Entry	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Period Purchasing Foods and Beverages	Below 5 Years	175	47%
	5-15 Years	127	34%
	16-25 Years	56	15%
	Above 25 Years	18	4%
	Total	376	100%
Customer Relationship Management Practices	Restaurant ambience	53	13%
	Product quality	126	34%
	Product prices	78	21%
	Service quality	119	32%
	Total	376	100%

Source: Author (2025)

Table 1, above shows the period of purchase and customer relationship management practices, the findings indicated that particular customers have purchased foods and beverages below 5 years, at 175 frequencies at 47%, between 5 to 15 years at a frequency of 127, at 34%, between 16 to 25 years at a 56 frequency of 15% and above 25 years at a frequency of 18, at 4%. According to the findings participants indicated that restaurant ambience at a frequency of 53, at 13% motivated their purchases and visits and service quality at a frequency of 119, at 32% motivated their visits and purchases. (Bell et al., 2022).

Service Quality

The quality of service was measured through delivery on time, customer care and customer service within these firms. According to the results from Table 2 below participants strongly agreed that delivery of services and take-out services improved profits (78%), hiring staff that is competent and proactive improved the delivery of products (48%) order accuracy and preparation influenced preparation and delivery on time



(40%) (Rodriguez,2026). In the following table 2 below; SA=strongly agree, A=agree, SWA=somewhat agree, SWD=somewhat disagree, D= disagree and SD= strongly disagree

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis for Timely Delivery

Statement	SA	A	SWA	SWD	D	SD
Service delivery and take-out services improves profit	78%	14%	5%	2%	1%	0%
Hiring proactive, competent staff improves product delivery	48%	41%	6%	2%	2%	0%
Order accuracy and preparation influence delivery on time	40%	15%	34%	7%	3%	1%

Source: Author (2025).

Table 3 below shows results on customer service. The results pointed out that participants strongly agreed that the expectations of customers were met by services provided (50%), during and after sales services that encouraged purchases (34%) and sales became higher when the services are better (36%) (Rodriguez, 2026). In the following table 3 below; SA=strongly agree, A=agree, SWA=somewhat agree, SWD=somewhat disagree, D= disagree and SD= strongly disagree

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis for Customer Service

Statement	SA	A	SWA	SWD	D	SD
Customers' expectations are met by the services provided.	50%	36%	9%	3%	1%	1%
During & after purchase, services encourage the buying	34%	33%	22%	7%	4%	0%
Sales increase when the quality of service is better.	36%	17%	22%	18%	5%	1%

Source: Author (2025).

The findings on customer care are on the Table 4 below. According to the findings, participants strongly agreed that customer care determines return and repeat purchases (55%), customer care is improved by technology that is current (40%) and customer experience is important in customer care (42%)(Arao,2024). In the following table 4 below; SA=strongly agree, A=agree, SWA=somewhat agree, SWD=somewhat disagree, D= disagree and SD= strongly disagree.

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis for Customer Care

Statement	SA	A	SWA	SWD	D	SD	Return
and repeat purchases are determined by customer care.	55%	36%	16%	6%	1%	1%	
Current technology equipment improves customer care.		40%	23%	17%	15%	5%	0%
A positive customer experience is important in customer care.		42%	12%	24%	7%	13%	2%

Source: Author (2025).

Inferential Statistics

Diagnostic Tests

The used to determine data's suitability for regression analysis. The tests conducted included multicollinearity, normality and linearity (Kyi et al, 2024).

Test of Multicollinearity

Computed using the variance inflation test, value of 1 is an indication of no multicollinearity. VIF values closer to 1 are an indication of lower multicollinearity (Chanmi, 2016). As portrayed in the Table 5 below, the collinearity statistics tolerance for service quality (.747). While VIF for service quality (1.339). VIF value lower than five and closer to 1, this indicated lower multicollinearity (Bell et al., 2022).



Table 5: Multicollinearity

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Service Quality.	.747	1.33

a. Dependent Variable: Sales performance.

b. Predictor (Constant): Service quality.

Source: Author (2025).

Test of Hypotheses

The study utilised the ANOVA, multiple linear regression analysis, model summary and regression coefficients. This was done to assess the effect of the constructs in the independent variable, service quality and performance of sales on the dependent variable that was from the multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi, County (Chanmi, 2016).

Model Summary

The model summary on Table 6 below indicated that in service quality, the R- squared value was 0.067, which indicated that the model explained 6.7% of the variation in the dependent variable, sales performance. The whole regression model was found to be significant $p < 0.05$ (Dogramaci, 2024).

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the estimate	Durbin-Watson
Service Quality	.260 ^a	.067	.053	.4205	1.895

a: Predictor variable: (Constant) Service quality.

b: Dependent variable: Sales performance.

Source: Author (2025)

ANOVA.

According to Table 7, below indicate that the ANOVA model used to measure the impact of service quality on sales performance was significant, $Df (1, 369) = \text{Mean square } (1.720), F (9.724), \text{Sig}(.002^b); p < 0.05$. Findings confirm the impact of service quality on sales performance (Kyi et al., 2024).

Table 7: ANOVA

ANOVA- Service Quality						
Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	1.720	1	1.720	9.724	.002 ^b
	Residual	65.253	375	.177		
	Total	66.973	376			

a.) Dependent variable: Sales performance

b.) Predictors(constant): Service quality

Source: Author (2025)

Regression Coefficient

Based on the findings in Table 8, below the regression coefficients confirm the Strategic service quality on sales performance of multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi county Kenya. Delivery on time on sales performance, $t (371) = 2.374; p < 0.05$. Based on the findings the first hypothesis of the study was



rejected, implying that delivery on time has no statistically significant impact on the sales performance of multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi, Kenya. The regression coefficients were $t(371) = 2.525$; $p < 0.05$ (Bell et al, 2022). Based on the findings, the second hypothesis of the study was rejected, implying that customer service has no statistically significant impact on the sales performance of multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi, Kenya. Regression coefficients confirm the impact of customer feedback on the sales performance, $t(371) = 3.118$; $p < 0.05$. Based on the findings the third hypothesis of the study was rejected, implying that customer feedback has no statistically significant impact on sales performance of multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi, Kenya (Bell et al., 2022).

Table 8: Regression Coefficient

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients			Standardised Coefficients		
	B	Std Error		Beta	t	Sig
1	(Constant)	1.760	.069		25.610	.000
	Delivery on time	.088	.037	.123	2.374	.018
	Customer service	.083	.033	.130	2.525	.012
	Customer feedback	.108	.035	.160	3.118	.002

Discussion

Service quality on sales performance

The service quality indicators included customer feedback, service delivered on time and customer service. The study results found service quality to have a positive and significant effect on sales performance. Timeliness and convenience are the main reasons why customers choose fast-food restaurants. Therefore, for consumers who frequent these firms' convenience and speed are of great significance (Namrata et al., 2023). The findings on timely delivery showed that many participants, strongly agreed that delivery and take away services improves profits, also by employing staff who were competent improved the delivery of the products and accuracy of orders. The results indicated that most customers strongly agreed that in customer service, the expectations of customers are met by the services they provided, when the service quality improves during and after purchase, sales and buying increases. The findings indicated that most participants strongly agreed that return and repeat purchases are determined by customer feedback, a customer experience that is positive, technology and equipment that is current, improves customer care (Namrata et al., 2023).

The repeat purchases are linked to customer care, especially when customers are handled and managed well, customers are willing to spend and buy more products and services. Many consumers were of the opinion that if customer care given was personalised and catered to the specific requests of consumers, then customers would keep buying food and beverage items from these restaurants. Services should also be offered using modern automated machinery and equipment (Namrata et al., 2023).

Restaurant Ambience on sales performance.

The mediating effect of restaurant ambience on the performance of sales on multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi, Kenya, the findings of the study confirmed that the ambience found in restaurants plays an important role in mediating the relationship between the quality of service and performance of sales (Douglas, 2019). The study objective sought to find out the mediating effect of restaurant ambience on the correlation between quality of service and sales performance of the multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi. The results in the descriptive statistics portray that a score that was high, was achieved on the five point Likert scale, this meant that most of the respondents agreed, that the ambience of restaurants was linked at a high level to the performance of sales in these multinational fast-food firms. These results tallied with the inferential statistics from the model summary findings, on the moderating process



confirmed that the restaurant ambience, moderated the relationship between the quality of service and sales performance of multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi county, Kenya (Douglas, 2019).

The study demonstrated that while the quality and pricing of food and beverage items and the quality of services played an important role, the restaurant atmosphere and ambience was pivotal in improving sales of these companies. The results establish that the direct effect of x (service quality) on y (sales performance) was significant $p < 0.05$, the indirect effect of x and y , was positive indicating that an improvement in the quality of services causes an increase in performance of sales through restaurant ambience. The confidence intervals (0.0106, 0.0479), does not include zero, this indicates that the effect of restaurant ambience was significant (Babeet, 2024).

These results indicate that restaurant ambience had a statistically mediating significance on sales. Ambience is significant because a place that is well-designed, affects the emotions of the buyers, this in turn impacts their perceptions and purchasing behaviour, thus increasing their chances of making purchases (Babeet, 2024). In addition, the study discovered that there is a link between quality of services and performance of sales of multinational fast-food firms, especially the level of restaurant ambience such as lighting and interior decorations, this influences the restaurant choices by consumers, who prefer good lighting and spacious sitting arrangements (Babeet, 2024).

Organisational Competence on sales performance.

Additionally, results confirmed that organisational competence acts as a significant moderator. The inclusion of this variable, representing the firm's internal capabilities, substantially improved the model's explanatory power. This indicates that the effectiveness of a firm's pricing, food, and service strategies in driving sales is significantly strengthened by its underlying operational and managerial competencies. The objective of the study sought to establish the moderating effect of organizational competence on the correlation between customer relationship management practices and performance of sales on multinational fast-food firms, in Nairobi County, Kenya.

The inferential statistics revealed that organizational competence had a positive significant effect on the relationship between service quality and sales performance of multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study made a conclusion that the quality of service utilized by the sampled multinational fast-food firms formed the basis of explanation for the positive effect the moderating variable (organizational competence) had on the correlation between quality of service and sales performance. In addition, it was concluded that managers of multinational fast-food firms make strategic decisions with the ability to alter the strategic contour of the organizations and their environment. This means that the positive effects of quality of service on sales are channelled through the physical environment of the restaurant. The significance of the moderating variable was achieved by a confidence interval which excluded zero (Peng et al., 2022). According to summary of hypotheses tests, organisational competence does not have a statistically moderating significant effect, the beta coefficient is direct effect, $p = 0.023 < 0.05$; Confidence intervals 0.0106, 0.479. Do not include zero. Model for quality of service was significant ($p < 0.05$), with R^2 of 0.099, this implies that the model explains 9.9% of variations in the dependent variable, sales performance this portrays the impact of organisational competence, as a moderating variable. In addition, the study concluded that the correlation between the quality of sales and performance of sales of multinational fast-food firms, depends on the level of restaurant ambience, this involves the kind of interior decoration, lighting, music, seating arrangements and seats, this according to the results influences the selection of restaurant by customers, who prefer spacious sitting arrangements and good lighting (Peng et al., 2022).

Limitation

The analysis of this literature as an investigation of the various concepts is organised around literature that has been reviewed and documents that are authoritative based on policy instead of empirical study.



In this regard it brings theoretical value, it polishes the idea service quality as a key determinant when it comes to sales increment in fast-food industry and offers explanatory framework, yet it does not empirically test that framework using primary data from all the managers and all customers, instead selecting only a small segment of managers and customers, based on personal judgement about individuals in a position to provide the necessary information required. This argument should be understood as an interpretive synthesis that organises existing evidence into a consistent analytical framework, rather than as a claim to causal verification.

Conclusion

The general objective of the study was to establish the analysis of strategic service quality on sales performance of multinational fast-food firms in Nairobi, County, Kenya, which was tested by using the following independent variables: customer feedback, timely delivery and customer service. Findings of the descriptive statistics indicated most of the respondents agreed that the repeat purchase of a product and service depended on the customer feedback given by the firm, customer service is excellent when the services and products are delivered in a timely way, the findings indicated that the delivery of products and services on time was important to the customers this influenced the sales and profits. The inferential statistics further showed that quality of service had a positive significant effect on the performance of sales in multinational fast-food firms, leading to the conclusion that multinational fast-food firms should continue to leverage on the customer feedback and services so as to enhance performance of sales. The demographic information showed that majority of the respondents who were customers, who frequent this multinational fast-food firms, were mostly female, between the age bracket of 38 to 49 years and possessing diploma education, while the other respondents who are managers had more than one-year experience in the multinational fast-food firms, contributing to their ability to think strategically and make calculated decisions about the best direction the firms should take when involving quality of service and sales performance activities. The vast experience in years, in the field was an indication that the managers of the various multinational fast-food firms had acquired mastery in terms of operations and a deep grasp of customer behaviour to the extent that the quality of service activities do not have an effect on sales performance. The study concluded firms that invest in quality, service delivery, appropriate pricing and service quality achieve improved sales outcomes.

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