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Effect of hotel overall service quality on customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty: perspectives from Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to examine the influence of service quality, satisfaction, trust, value and commitment on hotel customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty.

Keywords Attitude, Behaviour, Hotel, Commitment, Loyalty, Service quality, Satisfaction, Trust, Value

Paper type Research paper

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1. Introduction and contextualisation

With the intense competition characterising the hospitality and leisure sector, understanding the antecedents of overall service quality and their effect on customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty is very important (Chikazhe *et al.*, 2021). This is particularly important in the hospitality service sector due to low customer switching costs (Sardana and Bajpai, 2020). Switching costs are the costs hotel customers pay as a result of switching brands or products, which can be monetary, psychological, effort-based and time-based (Lam *et al.*, 2004). In the hospitality sector, there are lower switching costs due to the high overall service quality offered by hotels (Matzler *et al.*, 2015), which reduces the probability of customers to switch from one hotel to the other rampantly (Yang and Peterson, 2004). The factors which affect customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty, such as service quality, satisfaction, trust, value and commitment, are expected to enhance service excellence and customer retention (Ashraf *et al.*, 2018). Under normal operating conditions, hotels following a customer-centric approach are expected to be able to attract, retain and build long-term relationships with customers (Ngo and Nguyen, 2016), which, in turn, translate into sustainable competitive advantage (Hosseini and Saravi-Moghadam, 2017). Engendering customer loyalty is critical for all businesses including hotels, due to the high cost associated with attracting new customers as opposed to retaining the existing ones (Thaichon and Quach, 2015).

The Zimbabwean hospitality service sector, with specific reference to Harare as the capital city (Harare City, 2022), is operating with a philosophy that mirrors the other developing countries. It aims to create memorable customer experiences by offering and incubating competitive hospitality products and services which enhance customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Towards this end, variation of hospitality services is very key due to the heterogeneity of customer needs and service level expectations. Zimbabwe, as a tourism destination, has experienced numerous operating challenges induced by its socio-economic and political state of affairs (Klimek, 2013). Despite the cutthroat competition in the marketplace and position, Harare in Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe remains a tourist destination of choice for sterling hospitality overall service quality.

Although prior research studies (Chikazhe *et al.*, 2021; Dabholkar *et al.*, 2000) have investigated service quality effect in hospitality and tourism, they were not conclusive on key constructs that influence attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Uniqueness of the current study is that it contributes to efforts to bridge that knowledge gap by tbe examining influence of overall service quality on customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty in the hotel service sector in Zimbabwe. In particular, this study sets out to address the following main objectives:

- to explore customers' evaluation of overall service quality in hotels' context; and
- to examine its (overall service quality) influence on hotel customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty.

The remainder of this research article is structured as follows: literature review (Section 2), hypotheses and research conceptual model development (Section 2.3), this is followed by on methodological delineations (Section 3), then analysis of results (Section 4), the discussion (section 5), conclusion (Section 6), theoretical implications (Section 7), practical implications (Section 8), and finally study limitations and future research implications (Section 9) are presented.

2. Literature review

The organisation approach of literature in the current study follows a critical review, where the literature has been extensively researched, and its quality is critically evaluated (Grant and Booth, 2009). The aim of using this literature organisation approach is to produce the

highest degree of thorough analysis, hypotheses development, conceptual model innovation and subsequent testing.

2.1 Model grounding the study

Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) managed to develop the SERVQUAL model, with the most widely used scales that have been applied for the measurement of service quality in the past recent years by many scholars. SERVQUAL model has five dimensions, namely, tangibles, reliability, assurance, responsiveness and empathy (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988). With regard to the tourism and hospitality industry, many scholars have modified the model and adapted it to the qualities of services provided (Blesic *et al.*, 2011). Due to this, overall service quality concept has been used interchangeably (Reeves and Bednar, 1994), extremely endured pursuit by academics and has come to be a major business organisation issue of concern. However, the criticisms laid against SERVQUAL model are found in Buttle (1996) and Ladhari (2008). Its usage is still pervasive in nature (Adetunji *et al.*, 2013; Attallah, 2015), and there is a general consensus that SERVQUAL items are the best predictors of overall service quality as applied in the current research study. In complement to the criticisms raised in the prior research upon application of SERVQUAL model, Cronin and Taylor (1992) have developed the SERVPERF performance based model, which proved to be better after its application in four different service industries. However, the current research applied SERVQUAL model due to its alignment to the variables developed in the conceptual framework. The scale has been extensively used in many studies and has formed the base for specific industries such as LODGSERV, DINESERV, SITEQUAL and SELEB (Rajeswari *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, there is no concurrence over on set of universal service quality dimensions that could be generalised across all industries (Dabholkar *et al.*, 2000; Duggal and Verma, 2018).

The purpose of the research study feeds into the exploration of the theoretical and/or conceptual structure in line with overall service quality and its influence on hotel customers' behavioural and attitudinal loyalty. Prior research studies have depicted that there are many factors which influence behavioural and attitudinal loyalty of customers and overall service quality remains the dominant one. Empirically, there are several research studies that have indicated that greater degree of customer satisfaction as a result of positive overall service quality can drive customer satisfaction (Dabholkar *et al.*, 2000; Kushwana *et al.*, 2013; Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000; Seto-Pamies, 2012).

In addition to this, other inquiries have depicted that there is an existence of a nexus between overall service quality and behavioural and attitudinal loyalty of customers (Brady and Cronin, 2001). A direct effect in this relationship has been unearthed (Boohene and Agyap, 2010). However, other studies have depicted that overall service quality and behavioural and attitudinal loyalty of customers need not to always be through a hierarchical relationship and can be moderating factors (Roberts *et al.*, 2003; Zeithamal *et al.*, 1996). The five dimensions of overall service quality of SERVQUAL define the basic concepts which make overall service quality (Groonros, 1984; Roest and Pieters, 1997; Parasuman *et al.*, 1988). However, the importance is the development of an understanding of what specific containment in each of the elements is if the excellence of service is to be achieved (Brady and Cronin, 2001; Boulding *et al.*, 1993).

2.2 Overall service quality

The idea behind overall service quality is that it depicts the gap that exists between customer expectations and actual service performance (Liu *et al.*, 2020; Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988). Overall service quality needs to match customers' expectations (Lovelock and Wright,

2002). It results from a comparison that is between service perception and the expectations of the customers (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Groonros, 2010). Overall service quality represents a good source of competitive advantage within the service industry like the hotel and hospitality (Rahman *et al.*, 2020; Woratschek *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, overall service quality and reliability of products of an organisation create a competitive advantage (Bahadur *et al.*, 2018; Iqbal *et al.*, 2018). Customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty, as well as satisfaction, are yields of continuous improvement (Chongsanguan *et al.*, 2016; Junior and de Aquino Guimarães, 2012). Repeat purchases of service probability by hotel customers are as a result of overall service quality satisfaction (Liu *et al.*, 2020). Hotel competitors are differentiated among other players as a result of superior service quality (El Essawi and El Aziz, 2012).

2.3 Hypotheses development and conceptual modelling

2.3.1 Overall service quality, customers' trust, satisfaction, value and commitment. Trust levels have been operationalised in prior research as the customers' integrity, benevolence and ability in relation to the perception of hotel's overall service quality. Intention to try hotel overall service can be defined as the customers' subjective probability that they will perform an actual behaviour (Bae, 2018; Cheng and Jiang, 2020). The intention to try hotel service is highly related to the trust that customers place on them (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018). Further to this, trust and intention to try hotel service is connected to the level of customers' loyalty to a given corporate brand of the hotel (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021) and associated satisfaction levels (Papacharissi and Mendelson, 2011). This is so because the intention to try overall hotel service is positively related with hotel customers' satisfaction and trust (Oliver, 1997). Bold associations exist between using new hotel technology such as smart mobile phone service, chatbots, micro-vlogs, microblogs (Nyagadza, 2020) and user trust.

In line with the above, customer satisfaction is a consequence of the comparison between the expected hotel service or product performance, product brand performance (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021) and comparison of standard type of customer expectations (Smith *et al.*, 1999). For customers and other stakeholders to be able to evaluate the level of satisfaction in the overall hotel service offered via various platforms including digital ones (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021) and emotions play an important role (Bagozzi *et al.*, 1999). However, only a few studies have managed to consider hotel service failure and hotel service recovery in connection with attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Menon and Dube, 2000; Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004). When hotel customers experience negative effects, they are exposed to lesser satisfaction than those who have little to no emotions (Oliver, 1997). This is due to the fact that customer satisfaction in this context has two psychological components, which are cognitive and affective.

For this current research study, customer value can be defined as the preferences of customers related to their assessment of the hotel products' qualities and their performance (Neupane *et al.*, 2021). Customer satisfaction is shaped by the creation of customer value proposition, which is meant for the proposition of value (Saarijarvi, 2012; Murphy, 2017). Customer purchase intention of hotel services or products is necessitated through customer value proposition (Kim and Mauborgne, 2015). The key values and/or factors which influence the customer value proposition are important elements which enhance overall hotel's service quality (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018). Most hotels and hospitality organisations make more investments in these key values to enhance their space in staying ahead of the competitors (Thaichon and Quach, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2019). Customer commitment and trust levels have been

operationalised in prior research (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018) as the customers' integrity, benevolence and ability in relation to the perception of overall hotel's service quality. Customer commitment can be viewed as the person's subjective probability state or quality of being dedicated to the overall service quality of a hotel (Bae, 2018; Cheng and Jiang, 2020; CGS, 2019). The intention to enjoy offered hotel service is highly related to the trust that customers place on them in transacting and receiving envisaged hospitality services. Further to this, commitment and trust in overall hotel service quality are both connected to the level of loyalty to a given corporate brand of a hotel and associated customer satisfaction levels (Papacharissi and Mendelson, 2011; Arnold, 2018). This is so because the intention to enjoy hotel service is positively related to satisfaction and trust (Bae, 2018). Bold associations exist between using hotel services and products and customer commitment. Based on this research evidence in literature, we hypothesise that:

H0. Overall hotel's service quality negatively affects (a) customers' trust, (b) customers' satisfaction, (c) customers' value and (d) customers' commitment.

H1. Overall hotel's service quality positively affects (a) customers' trust, (b) customers' satisfaction, (c) customers' value and (d) customers' commitment.

2.3.2 Customers' trust, satisfaction, value and attitudinal loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty is directly related to hotel customers' attachment to inner thoughts, as well as word of mouth, which is positive and constructive recommendations (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996). This is due to the fact that trust plays a crucial role in determining attitudinal loyalty (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018). On the other hand, behavioural loyalty is built through evaluating whether customers remain with the same hotel in the future (Worthington *et al.*, 2010). This argument, however, requires further empirical support in Zimbabwe, a country is known for actively promoting gender equality, and traditional beliefs conservatism is linked to age and gender. However, it is not known whether this translates to the customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty to hotel's overall service quality (Murphy, 2017).

Attitudinal loyalty focuses on the cognitive basis of loyalty and isolates the purchase of services motivated by a strong attitude from other purchases due to constraints within a situation. Further to this, attitudinal loyalty can be seen as the extent of customer's psychological attachments and attitudinal advocacy towards the organisation (Jaiswal and Niraj, 2011). The probability of switching for these hotel customers can be low if the level of attitudinal loyalty of customers is also high (Dube and Maute, 1996). Furthermore, the perception of the customers in terms of overall hotel service quality is a major driver of attitudinal loyalty (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000) and one of its major constructs (Taylor *et al.*, 1992; Fornell, 1992). For customers and other stakeholders to be able to evaluate the level of satisfaction in the overall hotel service offered via various platforms including digital ones (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021), emotions and attitudinal loyalty play an important role (Bagozzi *et al.*, 1999). However, only a few studies have managed to consider hotel service failure and hotel service recovery in connection with emotions (Menon and Dube, 2000; Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004).

Commitment and trust in overall hotel service quality are both connected to the level of loyalty to a given hotel corporate brand (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018) and associated customer satisfaction levels. Whenever customers are satisfied with the quality of the service of any given hotel, it leads to the development high customer attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Fornell, 1992; Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000). This is supported by Oliver (1997) who proposed that if an organisation is able to satisfy the basic wants of its customers such as

the ones for hotels, it is very easy task to yield customer's positive behavioural and attitudinal loyalty to the overall service offered to them. This is so because the intention to enjoy hotel service is positively related with satisfaction and trust (Bae, 2018). Bold associations exist between using hotel services and products (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018) and customer commitment. Therefore, we propose:

H0. (a) Customers' trust, (b) customers' satisfaction, (c) customers' value and (d) customers' commitment negatively affect attitudinal loyalty.

H2. (a) Customers' trust, (b) customers' satisfaction, (c) customers' value and (d) customers' commitment positively affect attitudinal loyalty.

2.3.3 Customers' trust, satisfaction, value, commitment and behavioural loyalty. Long-term relationships with service providers in tourism and hospitality organisations such as hotels (Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000) hold the major key success factors meant for sustainability establishment (Seto-Pamies, 2012). There are several research studies with application of the SERVQUAL model that have indicated that greater degree of customer trust as a result of positive overall service quality can drive customer behavioural loyalty (Dabholkar *et al.*, 2000; Kushwana *et al.*, 2013). For customers and other stakeholders to be able to evaluate the level of satisfaction in the overall hotel service offered via various platforms including digital ones (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021), emotions play an important role (Bagozzi *et al.*, 1999). Customer satisfaction is a consequence of the comparison between the expected hotel service or product performance, product brand performance (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021) and comparison standard type of customer expectations (Smith *et al.*, 1999). Other research inquiries have indicated that greater degree of customer satisfaction as a result of positive overall service quality can drive customer satisfaction (Dabholkar *et al.*, 2000; Kushwana *et al.*, 2013). In addition to this, some have depicted that there is an existence of a nexus between overall service quality and behavioural and attitudinal loyalty of customers (Brady and Cronin, 2001).

Behavioural loyalty is built through evaluating whether customers remain with the same hotel in the future (Worthington *et al.*, 2010). Commitment and trust in overall hotel service quality are both connected to the level of loyalty to a given corporate brand of hotel and associated customer satisfaction levels (Papacharissi and Rubin, 2010). When customers enjoy the overall service quality, they believe that they have made the correct decisions. This is because the overall service quality of hotels have been found to be with direct effect on customer trust, customer satisfaction and behavioural loyalty (Liu *et al.*, 2020), as supported in the SERVQUAL model. Customer perceived value and trust levels have been operationalised in prior research (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018) as the customers' integrity, benevolence and ability in relation to the perception of overall hotel's service quality. However, other studies have depicted that overall service quality and behavioural and attitudinal loyalty of customers need not to always be through a hierarchical relationship and can be moderating factors (Roberts *et al.*, 2003; Zeithamal *et al.*, 1996). Therefore, we propose:

H0. (a) Customers' trust, (b) customers' satisfaction, (c) customers' value and (d) customers' commitment negatively affect behavioural loyalty.

H3. (a) Customers' trust, (b) customers' satisfaction, (c) customers' value and (d) customers' commitment positively affect behavioural loyalty.

Based on the theoretical and literature review and posited hypotheses, the conceptual model supporting this study is illustrated in Figure 1.

3. Methodology

The research design, data sources and collection strategy, sample, design of the questionnaire and measures applied in the research are explained in this section.

3.1 Study design

The research followed a positivist research philosophy and quantitative methodology to examine the causal effect of hotel's overall service quality on customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Due to objective nature of the research study, deductive logic and approach were applied to test the SERVQUAL model's theoretical application (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988) after practical statistical inferences. On the condition of nomothetic quantitative methodology, the researchers applied cross-sectional time horizon due to the fact that the research was limited to a specific time frame. Time horizons are needed for the research design independent of the research methodology used (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

3.2 Data sources

Data were collected primarily from the field through the distribution of self-administered structured questionnaires to the hotel customers. The survey method was used to collect data with an intention to validate the research model. All hotel customers (including non-customers) could access the questionnaire and respond to it. Customers who paid for services from the selected five hotels were qualified to participate in the study based on their most recent hotel service experiences. However, the customers who used other services of the hotels were excluded from the current study.

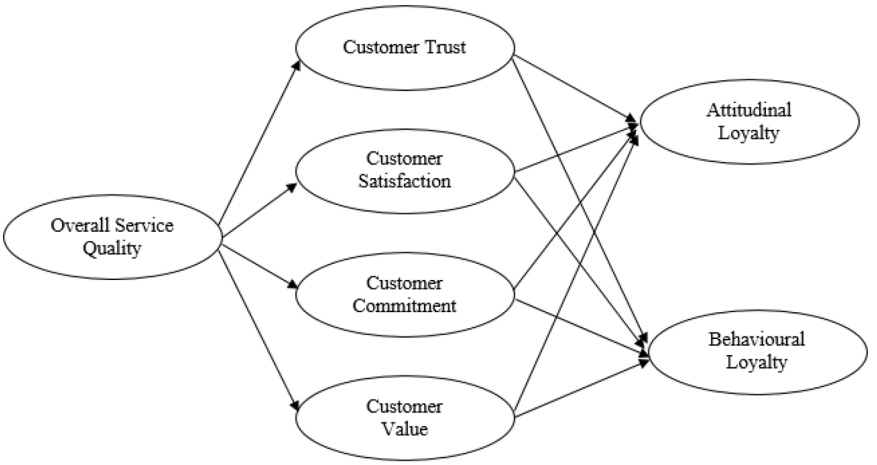

Figure 1.
Conceptual research study model

Source: Researchers' conception (2021)

3.3 Study area characteristics

The geographical location of the study area was in the city of Harare, formerly Salisbury (now commonly known as "Sunshine City"), under Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe, where five hotels were selected (Harare City, 2022). Justification for the five selected hotels in the city of Harare was due to the fact that it is the epicentre of business and administrative activities, with all year round good weather attractive to tourists (Harare City, 2022). Further to this, the selected five hotels include the top, middle and lower tiers in terms of service quality ranking so as to gather mean survey responses for conclusive research results.

3.4 Data collection strategy, population, sampling and sample size

The researchers divided the population of 600 potential respondents into more relevant and significant strata (Muposhi *et al.*, 2021) based on subsets where a random sample was drawn from each of the strata (Saunders *et al.*, 2009), such as the customers' profiles (low, middle and high income earning capacities), as well as the geographical locations (local, regional and international) to which they belong to. Stratified random sampling technique was applied due to its accuracy and easy-to-use advantages (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). To determine the sample size, Krejcie and Morgan 1970 formula was applied, necessary to construct a confidence interval (generally +5%) (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018). A total of 234 questionnaires were distributed through the Web-based survey method to hotel customers in Harare, Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe, where the five selected hotels are geographically located. The research study applied an online Web-based cross-sectional survey with the aid of 20 fieldworkers. Participation was voluntary, and the objectives of the study were explained to the participants in the research study before completing the questionnaire (Nyagadza, 2019). The researchers collected the data from April 2021 to June 2021. Stretching of the data collection period was as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, which caused some bottlenecks in the whole process. A total of 219 questionnaires were returned, and 205 valid responses were considered for analysis, translating to a response rate of 88%. Pilot study was conducted on the respondents using stratified random sampling from the five selected hotels. These respondents represented the recommended 5% of the research study sample. To complete the questionnaire, the respondents took about 20 min on average. Women dominated men in the survey. Majority of the respondents (69.2%) were aged between 20 and 39 years. Most of the respondents (67.2%) had already earned at least a bachelor's degree. Majority of the respondents (84.4%) were earning less than US$1,500 per month. The sample constituted mixed nationalities due to the fact that hotels may include visitors from various countries and majority being locals. Hotels that participated in the study were mainly four- and five-star ranking due to accessibility issues. Questionnaires for the study were distributed via electronic means through Web-based survey means during the process of service delivery in the selected five hotels.

3.5 Research instrument

Study constructs were measured using item scales adapted from literature, specifically from prior research studies, which were in line with hotel overall service quality, behavioural and attitudinal loyalty. Likert scale used was with a range of Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 to Strongly Agree (SA) = 5. The main importance of the Likert scale questions to statistical community is that they use a universal method of collecting data, which means it is easy to understand them and easy to draw conclusions, reports, results and graphs from the responses. The sources of constructs in the questionnaire (Table A1, Appendix 1) include Blesic *et al.* (2011), Reeves and Bednar (1994), Nelson *et al.* (2005), Buttle (1996), Ladhari

(2008), Adetunji *et al.* (2013), Attallah (2015) and Cronin and Taylor (1992). Measurement instrument variables were subjected to examination via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

3.6 Reliability and validity

Reliability of each factor in the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha (α) (Malhotra, 2010). Each value was required to be at least 0.5, as this is suggested to be a sufficient reliability score by Churchill (1979). Internal consistency was meant to measure the degree of interrelatedness of measurement items that were constructed to assess the uniformity (Thaichon and Quach, 2015). To assess validity, content, discriminant and predictive validities were tested (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021). The researchers used content validity to look into the fitness and link of the research subjects to the theoretical underpinnings (Malhotra, 2010). Furthermore, the researchers used pretesting and pilot approaches to enhance research instrument's content validity. The concept of construct validity used was made to check on the connections between items that were assessed (Liu *et al.*, 2020) and the concept under study (Malhotra, 2010). To assess construct validity, average inter-item correlations were computed using *CFA* (Adetunji *et al.*, 2013; Attallah, 2015). To establish discriminant validity of the measurement model, the researchers used Fornell and Larcker's (1981) measure of average variance extracted (*AVE*). All the factor loadings that were above 0.5 were considered (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

3.7 Non-response bias test

Armstrong and Overton's (1977) technique was used to check for non-response bias tests. The process involved the use of *t*-tests to compare the means of each of the items of the succeeding responses against the rest of the responses. There were no larger differences in the means. This suggests that non-response bias was not a threat to the research study.

3.8 Data analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analysing quantitative data from the questionnaire. Structural equation modelling (*SEM*) was used to test the posited hypotheses. Descriptive statistical analysis was achieved through the functional application of charts, tables, graphs and diagrams, and this fed into inferential statistics (Attallah, 2015). These included frequencies, mean and standard deviation. Software packages used for data visualisation were Smart PLS and SPSS, version 3 and version 25, respectively. Exploratory factor analysis (*EFA*) was used to identify the underlying relationships between the variables measured (Gerald, 2018). Chan and Idris (2017) advise researchers to carry out an *EFA* at the beginning of data analysis as part of scale validation. Keller and Kros (2011) postulate that *EFA* is used to measure the dimensionality of a survey, to recognize precarious and non-critical items (Attallah, 2015), to decrease the quantity of items and to re-examine the content of the factor. Effendi *et al.* (2019) consent that *EFA* help researchers who do not know how many factors which explain the interrelationship among a set of items (Maat *et al.*, 2011). *EFA* was performed so as to refine and decrease the number of related variables to a more relevant (Keller and Kros, 2011) and manageable number prior to using them for further analysis (Alexander *et al.*, 2016). To assess adequacy of the measurement model, the researchers applied *CFA* (Worthington *et al.*, 2010). The researchers also used principal component analysis to consider the total variance in the data (Muposhi *et al.*, 2021) and establish minimum number of factors that will account for the maximum variance (Da Costa Carvalho, 2015). In addition, Bartlett's test of sphericity was applied to examine the hypothesis that the variables were uncorrelated (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018). It was used to see whether there were some relationships between variables, which is necessary for factor analysis to be appropriate (Field *et al.*, 2012).

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations related to participating hotel customers' privacy, informed consent, freedom of response, professionalism, integrity, accuracy (Blesic *et al.*, 2011) and values of research have been adhered to by the researchers, in line with the provisions made by the marketing research society Marketing Research Society (MRS) (2022). Due to this, the researchers were obliged to observe the practices that take note of the values (Alexander *et al.*, 2016) and the integrity of research by not making manipulations to ethical issues (Muposhi *et al.*, 2021). They made sure that they upheld ethical considerations by maintaining integrity and professionalism about the morals of academic research (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021).

4. Results

The charts, tables, graphs and diagrams have been fed into inferential statistics so as to draw conclusions from a sample and generalise them to a population after having confidence that the sample accurately reflects the research population. The next section discusses factor analysis.

4.1 Exploratory factor analysis

EFA was used by researchers to discover the number of factors influencing the variables under investigation (Effendi *et al.*, 2019), and it allowed analysis of the variables that were correlated (Hair *et al.*, 2013). Varimax (orthogonal rotation) with principal axis factoring (*PAF*) on 23 items was used. Orthogonal rotation states that there is no correlation between the resulted components or factors (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007).

Table 1 summarises the results of the rotated factor matrix (*RFM*) for each variable, where two items with factor loadings <0.60 were removed one by one with re-running the analysis for that specific variable (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Among all, only 21 items were retained for further analysis with no cross-loadings >75% on any other item, and the eigenvalues of one were opted to extract the number of factors (Field *et al.*, 2012).

4.2 Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin and Bartlett's test

Results showed that the data was normally distributed; hence further analysis can be done with $\chi^2\,(28) = 2{,}514.301, p < 0.05$ as shown in Table 2.

4.3 Reliability analysis

For overall service quality, it was given as 0.814, and for customer value indicator, Cronbach's alpha (α) of 0.809 was produced, while Cronbach's alpha (α) of 0.826, 0.909, 0.887, 0.876 and 0.829 were obtained for customer commitment, customer satisfaction, customer trust, attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty, respectively (as shown in Table 3). These values were above the threshold of 0.7, indicating that all the constructs are internally consistent and reliable to be used as a measurement.

4.4 Correlation analysis

Table 4 gives the inter-item correlation estimates: attitudinal loyal and behavioural loyal (r = 0.729), customer commitment and attitudinal loyal (r = 0.730), customer trust and attitudinal loyal (r = 0.873), customer trust and behavioural loyal (r = 0.801), customer trust and customer commitment (r = 0.805), customer satisfaction and attitudinal loyal (r = 0.876), customer satisfaction and behavioural loyal (r = 0.901), customer satisfaction and customer commitment (r = 0.843), customer satisfaction and customer trust

Item	*OSQ* factors 1	*CV* factors 2	*COM* factors 3	*CST* factors 4	*CT* factors 5	*AL* factors 6	*BL* factors 7
OSQ1	0.881						
OSQ2	0.82						
OSQ3	0.816						
CV1		0.862					
CV2		0.835					
CV3		0.902					
CV4		0.531					
COM1			0.822				
COM2			0.871				
COM3			0.858				
CST1				0.921			
CST2				0.901			
CST3				0.898			
CT1					0.852		
CT2					0.826		
CT3					0.836		
CT4					0.482		
AL1						0.937	
AL2						0.91	
AL3						0.903	
BL1							0.821
BL2							0.803
BL3							0.842

Table 1.
Summarised results of rotated factor matrix (RFM)

Source: Primary data (2021), key to acronyms in Table 1: overall service quality (OSQ), customers' value (CV), customers' trust (CT), customers' satisfaction (CST), attitudinal loyalty (AL), behavioural loyalty (BL), commitment (COM). Specific details appear in Appendix 1. Extraction method: principal axis factoring (PAF) and factor loading in Italic are <0.60

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.903
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. chi-square	2,514.301
	Df	28
	Sig.	0.000

Table 2.
KMO and Bartlett's test

Notes: Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) values found acceptable >0.60, with 0.903 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Whereas Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant with $p < 0.001$ (Field *et al.*, 2012). Communalities value for each item was >0.2
Source: Primary data (2021)

($r = 0.814$), customer value and attitudinal loyal ($r = 0.718$), customer value and behavioural loyal ($r = 0.770$), customer value and customer commitment ($r = 0.803$), customer value and customer trust ($r = 0.749$), customer value and customer satisfaction ($r = 0.835$), overall service quality and attitudinal loyal ($r = 0.648$), overall service quality and behavioural loyal ($r = 0.703$), overall service quality and customer commitment ($r = 0.686$), overall service quality and customer trust ($r = 0.705$), overall service quality and customer satisfaction ($r = 0.820$) and overall service quality and customer value ($r = 0.619$). In conclusion, the relationship between the variables is classified as moderate to very strong.

Construct	Item	Descriptive statistics Mean	*SD*	S_k	K_u	Cronbach alpha (α)	Result	Communalities
Overall Service Quality (*OSQ*)	*OSQ1*	4.17	1.12	0.815	1.73	0.814	Reliable	0.801
	OSQ2			0.826	1.32			
	OSQ3			0.914	1.76			
Customer Value (*CV*)	*CV1*	4.13	1.05	1.09	1.62	0.807	Reliable	0.803
	CV2			1.21	1.75			
	CV3			0.925	1.70			
Customer Commitment (*COM*)	*COM1*	4.14	1.10	0.776	1.61	0.826	Reliable	0.816
	COM2			0.812	1.72			
	COM3			1.24	1.72			
Customer Satisfaction (*CST*)	*CST1*	4.76	1.21	1.32	1.82	0.909	Reliable	0.854
	CST2			1.46	1.85			
	CST3			1.81	1.79			
Customer Trust (*CT*)	*CT1*	4.56	1.16	0.88	1.74	0.887	Reliable	0.836
	CT2			1.33	1.74			
	CT3			1.21	1.71			
Attitudinal Loyalty (*AL*)	*AL1*	4.29	1.13	0.952	1.41	0.876	Reliable	0.825
	AL2			0.794	1.78			
	AL3			1.37	1.45			
Behavioural Loyalty (*BL*)	*BL1*	4.07	1.02	1.71	1.58	0.829	Reliable	0.812
	BL2			1.45	1.35			
	BL3			1.25	1.37			

Source: Primary data (2021)

Table 3.
Descriptive statistics

Variables	*AL*	*BL*	*COM*	*CT*	*CST*	*CV*	*OSQ*
AL	0.917						
BL	0.729	0.822					
COM	0.730	0.716	0.851				
CT	0.873	0.819	0.805	0.838			
CST	0.876	0.801	0.843	0.814	0.907		
CV	0.718	0.770	0.803	0.749	0.835	0.867	
OSQ	0.648	0.703	0.686	0.705	0.820	0.619	0.840
AVE	0.840	0.676	0.724	0.703	0.822	0.751	0.705

Notes: Key to acronyms in Table 4: overall service quality (OSQ), customers' value (CV), customers' trust (CT), customers' satisfaction (CST), attitudinal loyalty (AL), behavioural loyalty (BL), commitment (COM). specific details appear in Appendix 1
Source: Primary data (2021)

Table 4.
Correlation between constructs

4.5 Convergent validity

From the results displayed in Table 5, there are *AVE* values for overall service quality (0.705), customer value (0.751), customer commitment (0.724), customer satisfaction (0.822), customer trust (0.703), attitudinal loyalty (0.840) and behavioural loyalty (0.676). The *AVE* values for convergent validity across constructs ranged between 0.528 and 0.699 (>0.50), showing that the indicators assumed to measure the same construct adequately. All the constructs passed the convergent validity assessment.

Construct	Item	Factor loading (*FL*)	FL^2	$1–FL^2$	No. of indicators(n)	*CR*	*AVE*	Result
Overall Service Quality (OSQ)	*OSQ1*	0.881	0.776	0.224	3	0.739	0.705	Achieved
	OSQ2	0.820	0.672	0.328				
	OSQ3	0.816	0.666	0.336				
Customer Value (CV)	*CV1*	0.862	0.743	0.257	3	0.777	0.751	Achieved
	CV2	0.835	0.697	0.303				
	CV3	0.902	0.814	0.186				
Customer Commitment (COM)	*COM1*	0.822	0.676	0.324	3	0.755	0.724	Achieved
	COM2	0.871	0.759	0.241				
	COM3	0.858	0.736	0.264				
Customer Satisfaction (CST)	*CST1*	0.921	0.848	0.152	3	0.836	0.822	Achieved
	CST2	0.901	0.812	0.188				
	CST3	0.898	0.806	0.194				
Customer Trust (CT)	*CS1*	0.852	0.726	0.274	3	0.738	0.703	Achieved
	CS2	0.826	0.682	0.318				
	CS3	0.836	0.699	0.301				
Attitudinal Loyalty (AL)	*AL1*	0.937	0.878	0.122	3	0.852	0.840	Achieved
	AL2	0.910	0.828	0.172				
	AL3	0.903	0.815	0.185				
Behavioural Loyalty (BL)	*BL1*	0.821	0.674	0.326	3	0.717	0.676	Achieved
	BL2	0.803	0.645	0.355				
	BL3	0.842	0.709	0.291				

Table 5.
Convergent validity

Source: Primary data (2021)

The following formulae were used to calculate the critical ratios (*CR*) and *AVE*, respectively.

$$CR = \frac{\left(\sum F\right)^2}{\left[\left(\sum F\right)^2 + \sum (1 - F^2)\right]} \tag{1}$$

$$AVE = \frac{\sum F_i^2}{n} \tag{2}$$

where:
F = standardised factor loading
N = number of items

4.6 Discriminant validity

AVE were compared with squared inter-construct correlations in a bid to assess discriminant validity.

The Fornell–Larcker criterion results presented in Table 6 inform that the seven constructs, respectively, had square roots of *AVE*: 0.917, 0.822, 0.851, 0.838, 0.907, 0.867 and 0.840. The four latent constructs had met the criteria of discriminant validity.

Variables	AL	BL	COM	CT	CST	CV	OSQ
AL	1						
BL	0.729	1					
COM	0.730	0.716	1				
CT	0.873	0.819	0.805	1			
CST	0.876	0.901	0.843	0.854	1		
CV	0.718	0.770	0.803	0.749	0.835	1	
OSQ	0.648	0.703	0.686	0.705	0.820	0.619	1
AVE	0.917	0.822	0.851	0.838	0.907	0.867	0.840

Notes: Key to acronyms in Table 6: overall service quality (OSQ), customers' value (CV), customers' trust (CT), customers' satisfaction (CST), attitudinal loyalty (AL), behavioural loyalty (BL), commitment (COM). Specific details appear in Appendix 1
Source: Primary data (2021)

Table 6. The Fornell–Larcker criterion

4.7 Hypotheses testing

The confidence interval also confirms the significance of the paths in the model as indicated in Table 7. To test the structural relationships hypothesised in the research model (Figures A1 and A2 in Appendices 2 and 3), SEM was applied in SmartPLS v 3.

From the results displayed in Table 7, all the null hypotheses were rejected. Testing of *H1(a)* gave a result of overall service quality significantly affecting customer trust (β = 0.882, t = 10.457, p = 0.000). *H1(b)* indicated that overall service quality significantly affect customer satisfaction (β = 0.874, t = 9.304, p = 0.000). In line with this, *H1(c)* showed that overall service quality significantly affect customer value (β = 0.804, t = 8.561, p = 0.000). The testing of *H1(d)* depicted that overall service quality significantly affect customer commitment (β = 0.815, t = 9.104, p = 0.000). *H2(a)* concluded that customer trust significantly affect attitudinal loyalty (β = 0.010, t = 2.113, p = 0.023). The *H2(b)* clearly depicted that positive customers' satisfaction positively affects attitudinal loyalty. *H2(c)* testing showed the result that customer commitment significantly affect attitudinal loyalty

Path	Path coefficients (β-value)	Confidence intervals 2.5%	97.5%	t-value	p-value	Significance level
COM→AL	0.612	0.415	0.817	8.014	0.000	Significant
COM→BL	0.199	0.070	0.387	3.731	0.007	Significant
CT→AL	0.010	0.009	0.139	2.113	0.023	Significant
CT→BL	0.200	0.137	0.383	4.341	0.003	Significant
CST→AL	0.197	0.116	0.287	3.431	0.011	Significant
CST→BL	−0.123	−0.167	0.188	2.009	0.034	Significant
CV→AL	0.129	0.086	0.298	3.084	0.013	Significant
CV→BL	0.085	0.041	0.211	2.930	0.015	Significant
OSQ→COM	0.815	0.655	0.983	9.104	0.000	Significant
OSQ→CT	0.882	0.475	0.992	10.457	0.000	Significant
OSQ→CST	0.874	0.646	0.979	9.304	0.000	Significant
OSQ→CV	0.804	0.585	0.998	8.561	0.000	Significant

Notes: Key to acronyms in Table 7: overall service quality (OSQ), customers' value (CV), customers' trust (CT), customers' satisfaction (CST), attitudinal loyalty (AL), behavioural loyalty (BL), commitment (COM). Specific details appear in Appendix 1
Source: Primary data (2021)

Table 7. Results of bootstrapping

(β = 0.612, t = 8.014, p = 0.000). As well as *H2(d)* came out indicating positive customers' value positively affects attitudinal loyalty (β = 0.129, t = 3.084, p = 0.011. Testing of *H3(a)* showed that customer trust significantly affects behavioural loyalty (β = 0.200, t = 4.341, p = 0.0003). Positive customers' satisfaction positively affect behavioural loyalty [*H3(b)*]. Testing of *H3(c)* depicted a result that customer commitment significantly affect behavioural loyalty (β = 0.1999, t = 0.199, p = 0.007). Testing of *H3(d)* depicted a result that customer value significantly affect behavioural loyalty (β = 0.085, t = 2.930, p = 0.015).

4.8 Testing of mediation effect

Mediation analysis was done using Sobel's test in this study since there was a third variable (mediator) between the two variables. Sobel's test uses the product of coefficients. The results are presented in Table 8.

Taking, for example, the path *OSQ→CT→AL*, the results are the product of 0.010 and 0.882, which are beta values for *OSQ→CT* and *CT→AL,* respectively. Thus, with 0.01 × 0.882, we get 0.009. According to the results in Table 8, the relationship between *OSQ* and *AL* is significantly mediated by *CT* (β = 0.009, $p < 0.001$), the relationship between *OSQ* and *BL* is significantly mediated by *CT* (β = 0.176, $p < 0.001$), the relationship between *OSQ* and *AL* is significantly mediated by *CST* (β = 0.120, $p < 0.001$). From the analysis, it shows a direct and an indirect relationship, implying that there was no change in terms of the significance of the constructs. The only notable change was the reduction in the beta (β) value, and this indicates the existence of a partial mediation (Effendi *et al.*, 2019).

4.9 Evaluation of the structural model

The developed model has a moderate explaining power. An effect size $f^2 \leq 0.30$, $0.3 < f^2 \leq 0.50$ and $f^2 > 0.50$ is thought to represent a weak, moderate and strong effect, respectively. The effect size in Table 9 calculated from the research model shows a moderate-to-strong effect is moderate.

In addition to R^2 as a predictive criterion, Hair *et al.* (2013) recommended that researchers examine Q^2 to assess the predictive relevance of the structural model. Chin (1998) mentions that the predictive relevance of constructs must be positive and with values greater than zero, so also Hair *et al.* (2013). The size of the Q^2 effect allows to evaluate how an exogenous

Path	Std beta	Std error	T statistics	p-values	Decision	Bootstrapping confidence interval 95% CI LL	95% CI UL
OSQ→CT→AL	0.009	0.003	2.659	<0.001	Supported	0.003	0.101
OSQ→CT→BL	0.176	0.062	5.024	<0.001	Supported	0.015	0.627
OSQ→CST→AL	0.120	0.054	5.834	<0.001	Supported	0.098	0.198
OSQ→CST→BL	−0.108	0.285	2.041	<0.001	Supported	−0.298	0.112
OSQ→COM→AL	0.499	0.021	7.635	<0.001	Supported	0.372	0.673
OSQ→COM→BL	0.597	0.014	7.831	<0.001	Supported	0.121	0.605
OSQ→CV→AL	0.104	0.087	4.923	<0.001	Supported	0.073	0.184
OSQ→CV→BL	0.068	0.105	4.162	<0.001	Supported	0.032	0.217

Table 8.
Mediating effect analysis via Sobel test

Notes: Key to acronyms in Table 8: overall service quality (OSQ), customers' value (CV), customers' trust (CT), customers' satisfaction (CST), attitudinal loyalty (AL), behavioural loyalty (BL), commitment (COM). Specific details appear in Appendix 1
Source: Primary data (2021)

construct contributes to an endogenous latent construct Q^2 as a measure of predictive relevance, which can be small (0.02), medium (0.15) or large (0.35). From the current research study, the Q^2 was medium and depicted the model's forecasting relevance was enough for the endogenous construct.

4.10 Standardised root mean square residual

The standardised root mean square residual for the current study's model depicted proper fit with 0.013, a chi-square of 888.898 and normed fit index of 0.877, as indicated in Table 10.

4.11 Overall assessment

Goodness of fit (*GoF*) is defined as the geometric mean of both *AVE* and the average of R^2 of all endogenous variables (Akter *et al.*, 2011). Smart PLS results can be assessed globally for the overall mode and locally for the measurement model and the structural model (Henseler, 2017). The criteria of GoF to decide whether GoF values are not fit, small, medium or large to be considered as global valid PLS model are given by (Akter *et al.*, 2011) as GoF less than 0.1 (not fit), GoF between 0.1 and 0.25 (small), GoF between 0.25 and 0.36 (medium) and GoF greater than 0.36 (large). The formula for calculating GoF was adopted from (Henseler, 2017) as follows:

$$\text{GoF} = \sqrt{AVE \times R^2}$$

Therefore, the GoF value for this study is 0.739 (Table 11), which is above 0.36 as indicated (Akter *et al.*, 2011). This proves that the developed model is large in explaining the issues of customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty.

		Attitudinal and behavioural loyalty as dependent variables		
Constructs	R^2	Tolerance	VIF	Effect size
Customers' Trust	0.684	0.316	3.16	2.16
Customers' Satisfaction	0.708	0.292	3.42	2.42
Commitment	0.587	0.413	2.42	1.42
Customers' Value	0.717	0.283	3.53	2.53
Behavioural Loyalty	0.934	0.066	15.15	14.15
Attitudinal Loyalty	0.855	0.145	6.90	5.9

Source: Primary data (2021)

Table 9. Variance inflation factor (VIF) and effect size

	Estimated model
Standardised root mean square residual	0.013
d_ULS	2.531
d_ G1	0.874
d_G2	0.728
Chi-square	888.898
Normed fit index	0.877

Source: Primary data (2021)

Table 10. Model fit summary

Construct	Average variance extracted	R^2
OSQ	0.705	
CV	0.751	0.646
COM	0.724	0.664
CST	0.822	0.764
CT	0.703	0.778
AL	0.840	0.752
BL	0.676	0.795
AVE	0.746	
AVE × R^2	0.546	
GoF	0.739	

Table 11.
Goodness of fit index calculation

Notes: Key to acronyms in Table 11: overall service quality (OSQ), customers' value (CV), customers' trust (CT), customers' satisfaction (CST), attitudinal loyalty (AL), behavioural loyalty (BL), commitment (COM). Specific details appear in Appendix 1
Source: Primary data (2021)

5. Discussion

In line with this, all the testing of *H1(a)* to *H3(d)* indicated positive significance levels. Testing of *H1(a)* gave a result of overall service quality significantly affecting customer trust ($\beta = 0.882$, $t = 10.457$, $p = 0.000$). Trust and intention to try hotel service are connected to the level of customers' loyalty to a given corporate brand of the hotel (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021) and associated satisfaction levels (Papacharissi and Mendelson, 2011). The *H1(b)* indicated that overall service quality significantly affects customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.874$, $t = 9.304$, $p = 0.000$). This is supported by the view that customer satisfaction is a consequence of the comparison between the expected hotel service or product performance, product brand performance (Nyagadza, 2020) and comparison standard type of customer expectations (Smith *et al.*, 1999). The key values are a vital reflection of the ways in which customers make decisions on their needs regarding specific hotel services (Saarijarvi, 2012). In line with this, *H1(c)* showed that overall service quality significantly affects customer value ($\beta = 0.804$, $t = 8.561$, $p = 0.000$). During the process of making a decision to get hotel service, customers tend to refer to some key specifications of the offers, compare and examine other options (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012) for sustainable enjoyment. The testing of *H1(d)* depicted that overall service quality significantly affects customer commitment ($\beta = 0.815$, $t = 9.104$, $p = 0.000$). This is so because the intention to enjoy hotel service is positively related with satisfaction and trust (Bae, 2018). Bold associations exist between using hotel services and products and customer commitment. Attitudinal loyalty of hotel customers is directly to the latter's attachment to inner thoughts, word of mouth which is positive and constructive recommendations (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996). *H2(a)* concluded that customer trust significantly affect attitudinal loyalty ($\beta = 0.010$, $t = 2.113$, $p = 0.023$). This is due to the fact that trust plays a crucial role in determining attitudinal loyalty. On the other hand, behavioural loyalty is built through evaluating whether customers remain with the same hotel in the future (Worthington *et al.*, 2010).

The *H2(b)* clearly depicted that positive customers' satisfaction positively affects attitudinal loyalty. For customers and other stakeholders to be able to evaluate the level of satisfaction in the overall hotel service offered via various platforms including digital ones (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021), behavioural loyalty role (Bagozzi *et al.*, 1999) plays an important role. *H2(c)* testing showed the result that customer commitment significantly affect attitudinal

loyalty (β = 0.612, t = 8.014, p = 0.000). As well as *H2(d)* came out indicating positive customers' value positively affect attitudinal loyalty (β = 0.129, t = 3.084, p = 0.011). Commitment and trust in overall hotel service quality are both connected to the level of loyalty to a given corporate brand of hotel and associated customer satisfaction levels (Papacharissi and Mendelson, 2011). This is so because the intention to enjoy hotel service is positively related with satisfaction and trust (Bae, 2018). Testing of *H3(a)* showed that customer trust significantly affect behavioural loyalty (β = 0.200, t = 4.341, p = 0.0003). Prior research studies have depicted that there are many factors which influence the loyalty of customers and overall service quality remains the dominant one. There are several research studies that have indicated that greater degree of customer trust as a result of positive overall service quality can drive customer behavioural loyalty (Dabholkar *et al.*, 2000; Kushwana *et al.*, 2013). Positive customers' satisfaction positively affects behavioural loyalty [*H3(b)*]. Customer satisfaction is a consequence of the comparison between the expected hotel service or product performance, product brand performance (Nyagadza *et al.*, 2021) and comparison standard type of customer expectations (Smith *et al.*, 1999). Testing of *H3(c)* depicted a result that customer commitment significantly affect behavioural loyalty (β = 0.1999, t = 0.199, p = 0.007). Behavioural loyalty is built through evaluating whether customers remain with the same hotel in the future (Worthington *et al.*, 2010). Customer value and trust levels have been operationalized in prior research (Alalwan *et al.*, 2018) as the customers' integrity, benevolence and ability in relation to the perception of overall hotel's service quality. Testing of *H3(d)* depicted a result that customer value significantly affect behavioural loyalty (β = 0.085, t = 2.930, p = 0.015).

The contribution of the current study is of explaining the hotel's overall service quality effect on customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. In addition to this, the current article innovatively separates itself from earlier research inquiries which were both generalised on measuring customer retention and customer satisfaction by accounting for the customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. The importance of studying this issue in the context of Zimbabwe is that of enhancing the business performance of hospitality firms by embracing the ideas of knowing how overall service quality of hotel influences customers' behavioural and attitudinal loyalty and informing development of human capital policies for such organisations.

Uniqueness of the study area, Harare city, is that it has different types of hotels and mainly serves local (internal), regional and international (external) target markets (Britannica, 2022). It is modern, well-planned, with multi-storey buildings, tree-lined avenues and is the centre of Zimbabwe's industry and commerce (Britannica, 2022), with stiff competition. The city includes Harare urban with 1.5 million, Harare rural, Chitungwiza and Epworth with 2.1 million people. Of this population, 1 million are men and 1.1 million are women (Harare City, 2022). The city of Harare lies at an elevation of 1.489 m, covering 559 km^2, with a temperate climate and it is the hub of rail, road and air transport (Chikazhe *et al.*, 2021), making it easy for customers to access desired hotel services as when they need them. They were more women than men. Majority of the respondents (69.2%) were aged between 20 and 39 years. Most of the respondents (67.2%) had already earned at least a bachelor's degree. Majority of the respondents (84.4%) were earning less than US$1,500 per month. The results of the current research study can be applied in different parts of the world due to the fact that in the study area, Harare city hotels have benchmarked their services charges (ranging from a minimum of US$35 to around US$133 as the most expensive per night) with other competitive global hoteliers around the continent and international scale.

Conclusion, theoretical, research practical implications, limitations and future research directions of the study are discussed in the succeeding section.

6. Conclusion

Despite the limitations of the current study, the results have contributed to the better understanding of overall service quality, satisfaction, trust, value and commitment nexus with hotel customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Complementary research studies can be done in other developed parts of the world (not only in Zimbabwe, located in southern Africa) to be able to come up with cross-cultural comparisons, as well as methodological validation. In summary, the results hopefully may influence further future research study inquiries. Key lessons learnt in the current study include the notion that, during the process of making a decision to get hotel service, customers tend to refer to some key specifications of the offers, compare and examine other options for enjoyment.

Furthermore to this, the key values are an important cogitation of the ways in which customers make decisions on their needs or wants regarding specific hotel services. Whenever customers are satisfied with the perceived value of the overall service of any given hotel, it leads to the development high customer attitudinal loyalty. If an organisation is able to satisfy the basic wants of its customers such as the ones for hotels, it is very easy to achieve customers' behavioural and attitudinal loyalty to the overall service offered to them. The intention to enjoy offered hotel's overall service is highly related to the trust that customers place in transacting and receiving envisaged hospitality services. This directly affects customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty to the hotel.

7. Theoretical implications

Despite the need for making an improvement in overall service quality to enhance customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty, there is a need to involve other variables such as customer trust, satisfaction and value (Chawla and Joshi, 2017; Gong and Yi, 2018). The model developed in the current research study has managed to comprehensively integrate predictors from the existing literature in connection with exploratory, empirical, conceptual and anecdotal literature conducted in the hotel service quality research stratification. Hotel overall service quality study is a complicated phenomenon which may require more than one model to test its validity and reliability than the theoretical model explicated in the current study. A results comparison with the extant literature is anchored on the hypothetical context incubated to address the main research objectives. These are very key in a service sector such as hotels, tourism and hospitality.

The theoretical findings in the current study complement those in the existing body of literature related to the overall service quality area, such as Abd-El-Salam *et al.* (2013), Asongu *et al.* (2020), Chiguvi and Guruwo (2017), Kamboj and Singh (2018), Thakur (2014) and Chikazhe *et al.* (2021). The study's contribution to theory indicated the necessity of using overall service to predict attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. This is theoretically enriching in the understanding of mediation analysis for the link between the predictor (overall service quality, customer value, satisfaction, commitment and trust) and response variables (attitudinal and behavioural loyalty) as applied in the current study.

8. Practical implications

The current research study's practical implications are for the hospitality service industry and other related services sector organisations. The research has determined useful,

practical contributions to hotel service practice and implications for pushing the agenda of fostering sterling hotels' overall service quality in Zimbabwe. The study indicates that overall service quality, satisfaction, trust, value and commitment have a direct effect on hotel customers' attitudinal and behavioural loyalty, as indicated by the hypotheses test results [*H1(a)* to *H3(d)*]. Since overall service quality is highly subjective, there is a need for physical experience and interaction with the service offerings of a hotel before a customer regard a hotel to be of high overall service quality.

Due to the fact that Harare city has different types of modern hotels, being the centre of Zimbabwe's industry and commerce, and mainly serves local, regional and international target markets, this implies a great deal of competition. Hotels are compelled to improve their overall service quality to maintain positive customer trust, value, commitment and satisfaction. Practically, the perception of the customers towards overall hotel service quality is a major driver of attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. When customers are positively satisfied by hotels' overall service quality, they believe that they have made the correct decisions, and it increases their probability of repeat service purchases. This is so because the overall service quality of hotels have been found to be with the direct effect on customers' trust and customers' satisfaction.

9. Study limitations and future research implications

The study has limitations which may affect the generalisability of the results since they can only be applied to the population and country or area studied. Another limitation was the nature of the study (cross-sectional), which does not allow conclusions to be made about the development of hotel service due to the smaller sample size used and insufficient survey questions number. A fairly bigger sample and more accurate sampling plan may be needed in future to improve the study. This implies that in future, longitudinal research study inquiries can be made to check different variations of economic situations in other relevant studies. Future research studies can include evaluating other relevant theoretical frameworks in service quality, satisfaction, trust and value and commitment nexus with hotel customers' loyalty.

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Appendix 1. Instrument statements and reliability

Construct	Item	Statement	F	α
Overall Service Quality (*OSQ*)	*OSQ1*	The overall service quality is excellent	0.881	0.814
	OSQ2	The overall service quality is high quality	0.820	
	OSQ3	The overall service quality is of a high standard	0.816	
Customers' Value (*CV*)	*CV1*	I would choose this hotel service because it is good to pay for	0.862	0.807
	CV2	The hotel service offer is worthwhile	0.835	
	CV3	The hotel service is good value for money	0.902	
Customers' Trust (*CT*)	*CS1*	Many people I know use this hotel service	0.852	0.826
	CS2	My behaviour is shaped by people who also use this hotel	0.826	
	CS3	The people I value their opinions also use the hotel	0.836	
Customers' Satisfaction (*CST*)	*CST1*	This is my right choice to choose the hotel	0.921	0.909
	CST2	I am not ashamed of my decision to choose this hotel	0.901	
	CST3	Overall, I am happy about this hotel	0.898	
Attitudinal Loyalty (*AL*)	*AL1*	I am a patron of this hotel due to its service quality effectiveness	0.937	0.825
	AL2	I am somebody who is positive about the hotel	0.910	
	AL3	I am willing to refer someone to this hotel	0.903	
Behavioural Loyalty (*BL*)	*BL1*	This hotel is my first option	0.821	0.812
	BL2	I am of the notion of increasing more service seeking in future	0.803	
	BL3	I will not increase service seeking in the coming years	0.842	
Commitment (*COM*)	*COM1*	I will keep on paying for the services offered by this hotel	0.822	0.826
	COM2	In future, I will be fully committed for its services	0.871	
	COM3	I will not pay for this hotel's service in future	0.858	

Table A1. Instrument statements and reliability

Appendix 2

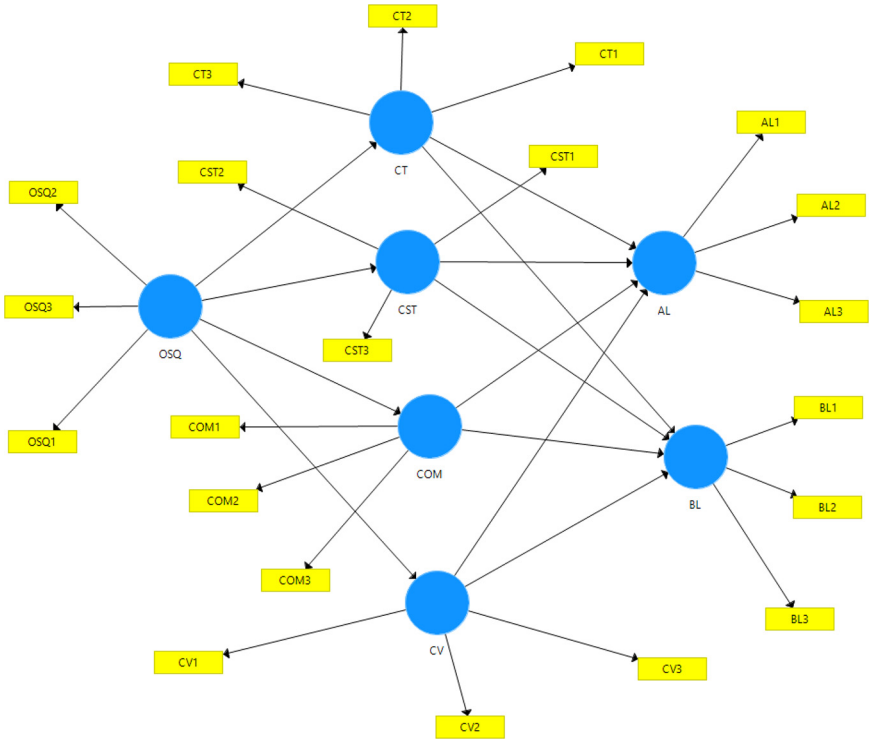

Figure A1.
Initial structural model

Appendix 3

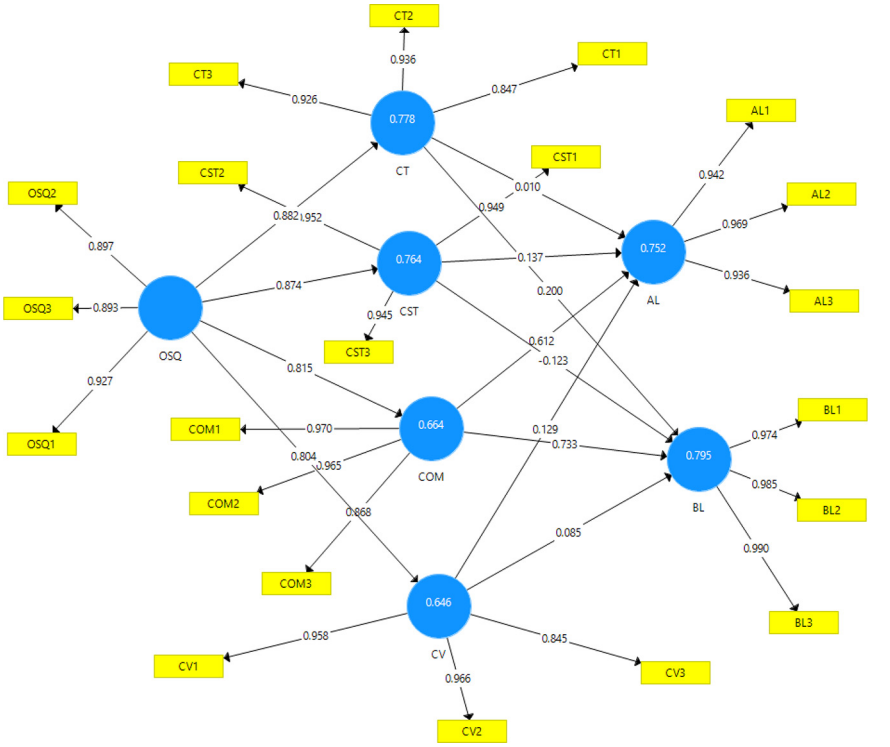

Figure A2.
Final structural model

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