

THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMER ORIENTATION ON CUSTOMER RETENTION, SALES GROWTH, PROFITABILITY, AND OVERALL PERFORMANCE IN LOCAL EATERIES IN GHANA**^{1,*} Dr. Ebenezer Ocran Turkson and ²Dr. KojoAckaah-Kwarteng**¹Department of Marketing at KAAF University²Rosebank International University College (RIUC), Ghana**Received 20th May 2025; Accepted 27th June 2025; Published online 31st July 2025**

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of customer orientation on customer retention, sales growth, profitability, and overall performance in local eateries in Ghana. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 767 respondents across six regional capitals using a structured questionnaire. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multivariable regression models. The results demonstrate that customer orientation has a significant positive impact on customer retention, sales growth, profitability, and overall business performance in the context of Ghanaian local eateries. However, the study is limited by a relatively small sample size, a cross-sectional design, potential self-reporting biases, and the exclusion of other relevant factors, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. The study recommends that local eatery owners prioritize customer orientation strategies to enhance customer retention, drive sales growth, increase profitability, and improve overall performance. Socially, the findings underscore the importance of building strong customer relationships to foster loyalty and business success. The originality of this research lies in its focused examination of the relationships between customer orientation, retention, sales growth, and profitability within Ghana's local eateries, offering valuable insights into this underexplored area.

Keywords: Customer Orientation, Customer Retention, Sales Growth, profitability, Local Eatery Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Local food eateries constitute a significant segment of Ghana's food service industry (Turkson *et al.*, 2025), playing a vital role within the socio-economic landscape by generating employment, fostering entrepreneurship, and providing daily sustenance to a diverse population (Gheribi & Voytovych, 2018). By definition, local eateries are informal establishments where traditional foods are served. In Ghana, these outlets are predominantly owned by women and are commonly situated in both urban and rural settings, often near markets, transportation hubs, and along major roads. They typically offer affordable, traditional African cuisine that is widely patronised by Ghanaians. These establishments are recognised as a sub-sector characterised by substantial market activity, where customers and service providers engage collaboratively in service co-production (Turkson *et al.*, 2025). In the contemporary, competitive environment, Ghanaian local eateries are increasingly recognising the importance of cultivating strong customer relationships to ensure sustained success and growth (Chowdhury *et al.*, 2023). A customer orientation that prioritises the needs and preferences of consumers has emerged as a strategic approach to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, thereby contributing to sales growth, customer retention, and overall business performance (Aburayya *et al.*, 2020; Turkson *et al.*, 2025). As these establishments endeavour to create distinctive dining experiences and adapt to shifting consumer demands, understanding the complex dynamics between customer orientation and key business outcomes including profitability and sustainability is essential (Turkson *et al.*, 2025; Igor, 2023; Ghlichlee & Bayat, 2021).

Despite the recognised importance of customer orientation, the specific mechanisms through which it influences these business outcomes remain insufficiently explored within the context of Ghanaian local eateries (Akanpaaba *et al.*, 2024; Sousa *et al.*, 2023). Existing research predominantly concentrates on larger enterprises or international brands, often neglecting the unique challenges and opportunities faced by small-scale, community-based establishments. Furthermore, there is a notable paucity of comprehensive frameworks that examine the interplay between various dimensions of customer orientation and their impact on consumer retention and business sustainability within this sector (Helal, 2023; Xia & Ha, 2021). This study aims to address these gaps by elucidating how customer orientation specifically affects customer retention, a critical factor for fostering loyalty within local eateries (Turkson *et al.*, 2025; Artha *et al.*, 2022; Larsson & Broström, 2020). Additionally, it will investigate the relationship between customer orientation and sales growth, exploring how a customer-centric approach can drive revenue generation (Igor, 2023; Singh & Venugopal, 2015). The research will also examine the connection between customer orientation and profitability, providing insights into how prioritising customer needs can enhance financial performance (Briggs *et al.*, 2020; Xia & Ha, 2021; Yulianthini *et al.*, 2021; Domi *et al.*, 2020). Focusing on Ghanaian local eateries offers a unique opportunity to understand how cultural and socio-economic factors influence the effectiveness of customer orientation strategies. Ghana's distinct cultural landscape and stable economic environment make it an ideal setting for such inquiry (Mensah, 2020). The country's vibrant culinary scene, reflecting local traditions and social dynamics, provides a rich context for exploring how these establishments serve their customers and adapt to local customs (Turkson *et al.*, 2025). Moreover, Ghana's relatively stable political climate and growing economy facilitate more reliable research conditions

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and insights (Korotayev *et al.*, 2023). The country's emphasis on tourism and hospitality further underscores the importance of excellent customer service within its local food industry. Conducting research in Ghana not only enhances understanding within this specific context but also offers valuable insights applicable to neighbouring countries sharing similar cultural and economic characteristics.

Understanding key concepts for local eateries in Ghana

Understanding the fundamental concepts that underpin local eateries in Ghana highlights their significant role within communities and the broader economy. Key among these are customer orientation and customer retention. Customer orientation involves prioritising the needs and preferences of diners by tailoring menus to popular Ghanaian dishes, such as fufu, jollof rice, and waakye, and enhancing the dining experience through personalised service and active community engagement (Mistrean, 2021; Duffy *et al.*, 2020; Osarenkhoe, 2008; Awuah, 2024; Sanful *et al.*, 2024; Dufie, 2021; Helal, 2023; Kaushal & Yadav, 2021; Mitchell, 2025; Meire, 2021). Closely related, customer retention depends on consistently providing high-quality traditional food, implementing loyalty programmes, and addressing customer complaints swiftly, thereby fostering loyalty and encouraging positive word-of-mouth, which is vital in closely-knit communities (Broström, 2020; Azhari *et al.*, 2023; Marcos & Coelho, 2022; Ahmed & Alzoubi, 2020; Angelovska *et al.*, 2022; Antić & Bogetić, 2024).

In addition, sales growth and profitability are crucial indicators of a business's long-term viability. Achieving growth involves introducing new dishes, employing effective marketing strategies such as social media campaigns and collaborations with local influencers, and diversifying offerings to include delivery and catering services particularly during cultural festivals (Budiharjo, 2023; Антошкова *et al.*, 2024; Nkegbe & Abor, 2023). Profitability hinges on managing operational expenses, setting competitive prices mindful of local purchasing power, and expanding revenue streams through avenues like merchandise or specialised services (Diana & Maria, 2020; Putri & Rahyuda, 2020). While resource constraints and rapidly shifting customer preferences pose challenges, prioritising a customer-focused approach remains essential for the sustainable growth and success of local eateries in Ghana (Bansal, 2023; Setiawan *et al.*, 2021).

Proposed Model and Hypothesis

The conceptual model (see Figure 1) outlines the process by which customer orientation influences the overall performance of local eateries, including factors such as customer retention, sales growth and profitability. We selected local eatery performance as our dependent variable because we aimed to demonstrate the accountability associated with using customer orientation to evaluate its impact on local eatery performance through customer retention, sales growth, and profitability in Ghana. When eateries actively seek feedback and genuinely care about their customers' needs, they tend to foster greater satisfaction and loyalty. Customer orientation plays a crucial role in fostering customer retention within local eateries. By prioritising customer satisfaction through active engagement and responsive service, establishments can build meaningful relationships that encourage repeat patronage (Gonu *et al.*, 2023).

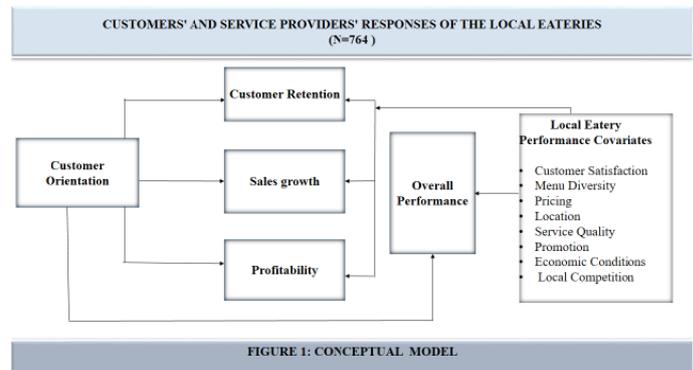


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

When businesses make their customers feel valued and appreciated, emotional bonds are established, which significantly reduces the likelihood of customers switching to competitors (Arslan, 2020). This loyalty translates into consistent revenue streams and is generally more cost-effective than acquiring new customers, highlighting the importance of adopting customer-centric practices to enhance retention rates. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed: **H1**: There exists a positive relationship between customer orientation practices and customer retention rates in local eateries.

Furthermore, a strong customer orientation is instrumental in driving sales growth. Understanding and responding to customer preferences enable eateries to tailor their marketing efforts effectively, such as introducing seasonal menus or showcasing local specialities, thereby attracting more visitors (Ferrell *et al.*, 2022). In the context of Ghana's community-oriented culture, satisfied customers are more inclined to recommend their favourite eateries to friends and family, which can significantly amplify sales through word-of-mouth endorsements (Ullah & Shabbir, 2020; Nadube & Gowon, 2023; Suparta & YT, 2022). Additionally, a comprehensive understanding of the local market facilitates innovation and diversification such as implementing delivery or catering services further aligning offerings with evolving customer demands. This strategic realignment ultimately results in increased footfall and revenue, reinforcing the positive correlation between customer orientation and sales growth. Therefore, the second hypothesis is: **H2**: Higher levels of customer orientation within local eateries are positively correlated with sales growth.

The relationship between customer orientation and profitability is equally compelling. Eateries that adopt a customer-focused approach often benefit from reduced customer acquisition costs, owing to the loyalty of their existing clientele, which enhances profit margins (Domi *et al.*, 2020; Briggs *et al.*, 2020). Offering exceptional experiences and high-quality products also enables businesses to command premium prices, thereby improving profitability (Fornell *et al.*, 2020; Jena, 2023). Moreover, operational efficiencies such as simplifying menus based on popular items can minimise waste and optimise supply chains, further contributing to improved financial performance. Empirical studies affirm that a strong customer orientation is positively associated with profitability, as it fosters customer willingness to pay higher prices and supports long-term financial stability. Accordingly, the third hypothesis is: **H3**: There is a significant positive correlation between customer orientation and profitability in local eateries.

The overall performance of local eateries is significantly influenced by their commitment to customer orientation. Such dedication not only enhances the establishment's reputation within the community but also attracts new customers while strengthening loyalty among existing patrons (Zhang *et al.*, 2024). This dual effect creates a virtuous cycle, where satisfied employees deliver better service, which in turn enhances customer satisfaction and organisational performance. Effective process management, underpinned by strong leadership and aligned with customer needs, is critical to sustaining this positive impact (Zhang *et al.*, 2020; Sa *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, fostering networks between customers and staff during the co-creation of services further enhances service quality and organisational outcomes (Neneh, 2018; Woods *et al.*, 2019). The evidence consistently demonstrates that a customer-centred organisational culture is essential for achieving sustained success in the competitive landscape of Ghanaian local eateries. This leads to the final hypothesis: **H4:** Customer orientation is positively associated with the overall performance of local eateries.

In summary, the relationship between customer orientation and key performance metrics such as customer retention, sales growth, profitability, and overall organisational performance is both complex and mutually reinforcing. Emphasising a customer-focused approach not only improves immediate service interactions but also lays a strong foundation for long-term resilience and growth. Future research could benefit from longitudinal studies to better understand how sustained customer orientation influences the long-term viability and profitability of local eateries in Ghana. Ultimately, cultivating a culture centred on customer needs remains vital for ensuring the ongoing success and competitiveness of these establishments within an increasingly challenging market environment.

Theoretical Underpinning of the Study

Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), first proposed by Stephen Vargo and Robert Lusch in 2004, offers a fresh way of looking at how value is created in marketing and economic exchanges. Instead of focusing mainly on tangible goods, SDL shifts the emphasis to service. It suggests that all economic activity is centered around providing and co-creating value through service, with physical products serving merely as tools to deliver that service. This idea changes the way service producers think about value, which is now seen as residing in the experiences and benefits that products enable rather than in the products themselves. A key idea behind SDL is that customers are active partners in creating value. Since 2004, it has been recognised that they do not just passively receive value from businesses; instead, they bring their own knowledge, skills, and experiences into the process (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). This means that successful businesses involve customers in meaningful ways, working together to shape the service experience. It is about collaboration both parties contribute resources, and value emerges from their joint effort.

SDL also emphasises that value is not fixed or static; it is constantly changing depending on individual circumstances and personal experiences. All players in the economy whether consumers or companies are seen as resource integrators, blending different inputs to create something meaningful (Peltier *et al.*, 2020). This wider view encourages organisations to see themselves as part of a bigger service ecosystem, where

interconnected relationships and resource sharing are vital for navigating the complexities of today's markets (Frow *et al.*, 2014). In Ghanaian local eateries, especially in the hospitality industry, adopting a customer-focused approach rooted in SDL has proven to be crucial for success (Deniz & Abbasaliyeva, 2022; Antonsson *et al.*, 2011). Research shows that when eateries focus on understanding and meeting their customers' needs, it positively impacts key areas like customer retention, sales, and overall profitability (Karpen *et al.*, 2015; Zuhroh & Rini, 2024; Vargo *et al.*, 2020; Kuzgun & Asugman, 2015). This approach helps local restaurants build stronger relationships with their patrons and encourages repeat visits. At the centre of this approach is a genuine understanding of what customers want and value (Kopalle & Subramaniam, 2020). Successful eateries actively personalise their offerings such as providing menus that reflect local tastes, offering attentive service, and asking for feedback. When customers feel appreciated and understood, they're more likely to develop loyalty and keep coming back. This emotional connection is powerful; it transforms simple transactions into meaningful relationships (Ghorbanzadeh, 2021).

That loyalty is not just about repeat business; it is also about creating an emotional bond. When customers have consistently positive experiences, they develop trust and a sense of belonging, which makes them more likely to recommend the eatery to others. In a competitive market, keeping existing customers happy often costs less than constantly trying to attract new ones, helping local restaurants secure a steady income and reduce marketing costs (Arslan, 2020). Ultimately, focusing on the customer can lead to increased sales and profits. Loyal customers tend to spend more over their lifetime and are less sensitive to price changes, boosting the business's margins (Reichheld & Kenny, 1990; Arslan, 2020). Happy customers also tend to share their experiences through word-of-mouth or social media which can attract new visitors without much extra effort from the business (Koufie & Kesa, 2020). Plus, staff who understand customer preferences can suggest complementary dishes or drinks, increasing the average spend and improving the overall dining experience (Vatavwala *et al.*, 2023). In conclusion, looking at customer orientation through the lens of SDL highlights how vital it is for local eateries in Ghana. By making their customers' needs a priority, building strong relationships, and actively co-creating value, these businesses can boost loyalty, grow sales, and improve profitability (Scarlett *et al.*, 2022). Embracing these principles encourages a culture of responsiveness and adaptability traits that are essential in today's competitive restaurant scene. Ultimately, putting the customer at the centre provides a clear path for sustainable growth and long-term success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research adopted a quantitative approach, which is a systematic and objective method for collecting and analysing data (Ahmad *et al.*, 2019). It utilised both stratified and simple random sampling techniques to select respondents, ensuring a representative sample (Turkson *et al.*, 2025; Rahman *et al.*, 2022; Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020). Local eatery owners were chosen through simple random selection, while a stratified random sampling technique was applied to customers. The use of stratified random sampling ensured that customers engaged

in service co-creation were differentiated from those who do not participate (Sturgis, 2020). This approach provided a more accurate representation of the varying levels of customer involvement in local eatery services. The combination of a quantitative approach with appropriate sampling techniques and data analysis methods facilitated a systematic and rigorous exploration of the research question.

Respondents and the Study Area

The study focused on six regional capitals in Ghana. Primary data was gathered from 383 local eatery owners and 384 customers in Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, Koforidua, Cape Coast, and Tamale. This balanced representation between the two groups permitted a thorough analysis of both perspectives, enabling the researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. This decision was guided by the research objective, access to diverse customer segments, a higher likelihood of customer participation, and efficient management of research resources. Local eateries cater to a diverse customer base, including travellers, office workers, singles, and professionals, among others.

Data Collection

Data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed in local eateries across six regions in Ghana. The study focused on customers and local eatery owners, aiming to understand the impact of customer orientation on the performance of local eateries. By emphasising six cosmopolitan regions in Ghana, the research sought to provide insights into the effect of customer orientation on local eatery performance in urbanised settings. These regions were selected based on their higher likelihood of exposure to global trends and practices.

Data Analysis

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between customer orientation, customer retention, sales growth, profitability, and the overall performance metrics of local eateries included in the sample. To achieve this, a baseline regression model was developed to assess these relationships, and the results of the analysis, obtained using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimation of the linear regression line, are presented in Table 2. Since the dependent variable (performance) was assessed through three sub-components (customer retention, sales growth, and profitability), the regression model was estimated separately for each sub-component as well as for the overall performance construct (composite performance index). Customer orientation served as the primary independent variable, along with a range of demographic control variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore the impact of customer orientation on customer retention, sales growth, profitability, and the overall performance of local eateries in Ghana. The following sections will present the numerical findings derived from the data analysis.

Reliability Testing Results

The questionnaire used to gather data comprised two main constructs, some of which included sub-constructs, resulting in

a total of 20 items. Specifically, the customer orientation construct comprised 6 items, while the local eatery performance construct included 14 items divided among three sub-constructs: 5 for customer retention, 5 for sales growth, and 4 for profitability. To evaluate the reliability of the survey instrument in measuring the intended constructs, a reliability test was conducted. The Cronbach alpha method was utilised to assess the consistency of the items within the relevant sections of the questionnaire. The results of this reliability test are summarised in Table 1. An alpha value of 0.7 or higher was deemed sufficient to indicate internal consistency for the constructs. The findings revealed that the five items pertaining to customer orientation yielded an alpha value of .876, whereas the performance construct achieved .795. Overall, it is evident that the items effectively measure or define the constructs for which they were designed.

The statistical results reported in Table 2 show that, as expected, customer orientation has positive significant effect on local eatery business performance measured by customer retention. We find that in the model with customer retention as the dependent variable, customer orientation positively affects retention of customers at 5% significant level ($\beta = .723, p < .01$). This result statistically suggests that all things equal, if local eatery operators are able to orientate customers about service provisions and therefore provide them with the required information, attending to customers' needs and queries and having the passion to serve customers well, then the tendency for retaining the customers is high. For example, the result can be interpreted to imply that adequate orientation of customers can potentially engender customers' trust, loyalty and satisfaction with service delivery, which are ingredients for retaining customers. Also, orientation of customers may represent one strategy for getting customers involved in the co-production of services, and with their involvement, they feel consulted and engaged as opposed to the feeling of 'imposition' of service.

On the part of the demographic control variables, the results indicate that in the customer retention model, gender of service provider significantly affects customer retention ($\beta = .516, p < .01$). This result tells us that female local eatery operators may be better positioned to retain customers. This can be possible because women operators may be able to attract and retain customers far more than their male counterparts. The impacts of respondents' age ($\beta = .097, p > .05$), education level ($\beta = -.065, p > .05$) and experience ($\beta = -.019, p > .05$) on customer retention are not statistically strong to contribute to customer retention. These numbers suggest that one's age, and level of education and experience may be important factors that can help retain business customers, but they do not contribute statistically meaningfully in driven retention processes. This means that owners of local eatery enterprises should pay more attention to customer retention principles and practices (such as service quality) than relying on their age, education, and experiences. Further, results in Table 2. Show that in the second model with sales growth as surrogate for the dependent variable (performance), customer orientation has a 1% significant effect on local eatery performance ($\beta = .637, p < .01$). The meaning of this result is that if local eatery operators embark on aggressive and improved customer orientation, they are likely to make more sales. This result is equally expected in the sense that enhanced orientation of current customers can facilitate their retention, and sales from current customers may grow over time. Also, the result intuitively indicates that

achieving customer satisfaction through improved orientation programs and activities may lead to current customers making word-of-mouth referrals to potential and new customers. All things equal, this has the propensity to increase sales over time. The statistical result makes sense, in the sense that in the food service businesses whereby food is the principal commodity served, customers patronage means that more sales are recorded on daily basis. It is also observed that in the sales growth model, the statistical effects of two demographic variables including age ($\beta = .148, p < .01$) and gender ($\beta = .338, p < .05$) on customer retention are positive and significant while local eatery work experience ($\beta = -.050, p < .01$) has negative effect on sales growth. These results show that when it comes to growing sales in local business enterprises, owners' age and gender statistically matter. However, owners' education ($\beta = .024, p > .05$) is less important consideration.

The third model estimated for testing the effect of customer orientation on local eatery business performance measured performance using profitability as the dependent variable. The estimated result from this model shows that customer orientation possesses significant positive effect on profitability ($\beta = .796, p < .01$). This result indicates that improved orientation of customers leads to growth in profitability. This result is not surprising because given that cost items, internal and external factors affecting profitability are assumed constant, rigorous orientation of customers may add to improve sales volumes and by extension, enhanced profitability. All the demographic control variables appear to be less useful indicators of local eatery operators' profitability. This is because owners' age ($\beta = .046, p > .05$), gender ($\beta = .111, p > .05$), education level ($\beta = .068, p > .05$) and work experience ($\beta = .001, p > .05$) do not contain statistically significant beta values for impactful consequence. These results imply that profitability as a performance measure may be suitably influenced by other factors as opposed to demographic variables. After testing the effect of customer orientation on individual sub-constructs of performance (customer retention, sales growth and profitability), the study reconfigured and re-estimated the models with a composite performance index (aggregate performance variable) capturing the three sub-constructs as the dependent variable. The numerical results (shown in the last two columns of Table 2) show that customer orientation significantly and positively affects local eatery business performance ($\beta = .719, p < .01$). This result summarizes the entire results pertaining to the effect of customer orientation on performance. Overall, conclusion from the analysis of data for examining the direct effect of customer orientation on performance of local eatery businesses is that customer orientation has positive significant effects on performance measured by customer retention, sales growth, profitability and the aggregate performance variable.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study focused on the direct effect of customer orientation on local eatery performance. Numerical results from regression estimations show that customer orientation positively and significantly affects all indicators of local eatery business performance (customer retention, sales growth, profitability and aggregate performance measure). This finding is consistent with Neneh (2016) who found that customer-focused service enterprises become successful in terms of customer retention through the collection of customer information for strategic

purposes. The finding of customer orientation improving performance equally provides support for the observation that firms that take orientation seriously possess substantial knowledge about customer needs (Longenecker *et al.*, 2016). It is argued that this knowledge enables firms to establish enduring relationship with customers, and by so doing affords firms the opportunity to offer value for customers, achieving customer satisfaction which eventually promotes profitability (Rebello *et al.*, 2021; Racela, 2014). Further, the outcome of this study resonates with prior studies that argued that customer orientation places firms in a competitively advantage position which contributes towards relatively better firm performance (Feng *et al.*, 2019). Some few recent studies (Peterson & Crittenden, 2020) documented that firms that implement strategic customer orientation end up achieving improved sales and marketing targets. Hence, we find that this study's findings resemble that of those two studies. Some earlier scholars that reported direct positive influence of customer orientation on firm performance offer supporting view that suggests that firms engaging in customer orientation activities are better performers than those that do not provide orientation services (Sa *et al.*, 2020; Asikhia, 2010). Therefore, we find that this study's report does not deviate from the established literature findings, possibly because most of the prior research focused on service-based firms just like this study did.

Conclusion

In the context of today's highly competitive local eatery environment, the relationship between customer orientation and key performance indicators such as customer retention, sales growth, profitability, and overall business success has gained increasing significance, particularly within the Ghanaian hospitality sector. This study has emphasised the critical importance of prioritising customer needs and preferences, demonstrating how active engagement with patrons can enhance customer satisfaction and foster loyalty. By adopting a comprehensive customer-oriented strategy, local eateries can not only encourage repeat patronage but also generate positive word-of-mouth referrals, thereby driving sales growth and improving profitability. These findings underscore the imperative for local establishments to embrace a customer-centric approach as a means of ensuring long-term sustainability and maintaining a competitive advantage in an evolving market landscape.

Recommendations

Drawing from the insights gained from this research, several key recommendations emerge for local eateries in Ghana. First, establishing effective customer feedback mechanisms is essential; regularly collecting and analysing customer inputs through informal conversations, surveys, or suggestion boxes can help eateries tailor their offerings to better meet customer preferences. Investing in staff training is another critical strategy; empowering employees with skills in customer service and product knowledge enhances the dining experience and fosters a knowledgeable team capable of creating memorable interactions. Developing loyalty programmes, such as discounts or free meals after a certain number of visits, can incentivise repeat patronage and cultivate long-term loyalty. Additionally, leveraging social media platforms to engage customers, showcase new menu items, and promote events can increase visibility and foster a sense of community around the

establishment. Menu innovation should also be prioritised; regularly updating menus with seasonal and inventive dishes keeps existing customers engaged while attracting new patrons. Finally, building partnerships with local suppliers and farms can enhance the quality of offerings, support the local economy, and serve as a unique selling point that appeals to customers who value sustainability and locally sourced ingredients.

Study limitations and suggestions for future research

Despite providing valuable insights, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The restricted sample size and focus on specific regions of Ghana may limit the generalisability of the findings, given the country's diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts. Additionally, the cross-sectional design prevents observing changes over time, and a longitudinal approach would offer a deeper understanding of how customer orientation influences local eateries in the long term. The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential bias, as customers might overstate positive experiences, while other influential factors such as competition, economic conditions, and operational management were not examined. To address these limitations, future research could adopt longitudinal methods, include broader geographic areas, incorporate qualitative techniques like interviews and focus groups, and explore additional variables such as market competition and external economic influences. Comparative studies between local eateries and larger establishments could also shed light on unique challenges and opportunities faced by community-based businesses. By pursuing these avenues, scholars can deepen insights into the role of customer orientation in fostering sustainable success for Ghanaian local eateries, enabling the hospitality sector to adapt and thrive in an evolving market landscape.

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