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STRATEGIC SERVICE DELIVERY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM HOTELS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT
Observations and interactions with hotel operators in Rivers State suggest a persistent decline in occupancy rates among many small and medium hotels, despite increased traffic of business and leisure travelers to the state. Strategic service delivery have been identified as critical drivers of customer retention, patronage, and competitive advantage. This research examined the influence of strategic service delivery on entrepreneurial success of small and medium hotels in Rivers State. The study adopted a correlational survey research design. The population comprises all 328 registered small and medium hotels in Rivers State. A sample size of 181 hotels was determined using the Taro Yamane. A total subject of 362 in the frame of two (2) respondents in each hotel who are mainly senior operations manager were purposively selected as the respondents. Data were collected using questionnaire as data collection instrument. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics for univariate analyses. Linear regression was used to test the influence of dimensions of strategic service delivery (SSD) on entrepreneurial success-market share Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was relied upon for data analyses. The results of test of hypotheses show that service customization, service environment, and service speed and accessibility all have significant influence on entrepreneurial success of small and medium hotels in Rivers State. Thus, the study concluded that effective strategic service delivery significantly influences market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State, and recommends that firms should invest in customer data systems (CRM tools) that allow them to understand individual customer preferences and tailor services effectively.

Keywords: **Strategic Service Delivery, Small and Medium Hotels, Entrepreneurial Success, Market Share.**

Introduction
The global hospitality industry has become one of the fastest growing service sectors, contributing significantly to employment generation, foreign exchange earnings, and GDP in both developed and developing economies. In Nigeria, the sector accounts for over 4.8% of GDP, with small and medium hotels constituting more than 80% of registered accommodation providers. Within Rivers State, the proliferation of oil and gas activities, commercial enterprises, and tourism has intensified demand for hotel services, thereby positioning small and medium hotels as critical players in the state's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Yet, this expansion has also heightened competition, compelling hotel entrepreneurs to seek strategic differentiators beyond price and location.
Entrepreneurial success in the hotel sub-sector is increasingly tied to the ability to deliver superior service experiences that attract and retain customers. While financial indicators such as profitability and sales growth remain relevant, market share has emerged as a more stable proxy for long-term entrepreneurial success in hospitality because it reflects competitive positioning and customer preference over time. For small and medium hotels in Rivers State, gaining market share is particularly challenging due to the dominance of international chains, limited capital, and infrastructural deficits. Consequently, strategic service delivery has become a vital entrepreneurial tool for survival and growth.
Strategic service delivery refers to the deliberate alignment of service design, processes, and interactions with customer expectations to create value and competitive advantage. Three

dimensions are especially salient in hotel operations: service customization, service environment, and service speed and accessibility. Service customization involves tailoring offerings to meet the specific needs, preferences, and cultural expectations of guests. In the hospitality context, this ranges from personalized room settings and meal preferences to flexible check-in/check-out policies. Empirical evidence from Malaysia shows that hotels that adopt customization strategies record higher repeat patronage and positive word-of-mouth, both of which translate into increased market share.

The service environment, often captured as "servicescape," encompasses the physical and ambient conditions in which service is delivered, including décor, cleanliness, lighting, music, and spatial layout. Bitner (1992) argued that the service environment influences customer satisfaction, perceived quality, and behavioral intentions. In Ghana, Mensah and Dei Mensah (2018) found that mid-scale hotels with deliberate investments in aesthetic and functional environments secured larger market share than competitors with poor ambience, because guests associated the environment with safety, comfort, and status. For small and medium hotels in Rivers State, where power supply and maintenance culture are problematic, the service environment becomes a visible signal of management competence and entrepreneurial orientati**on.** Empirical evidence from Nigeria suggests that poor service delivery remains a major challenge affecting customer satisfaction and business growth, while firms that prioritize service excellence tend to outperform competitors (Olorunniwo, Adeyemi, & Udo, 2022; Adeola & Evans, 2023). This underscores the need to examine specific dimensions of service delivery that drive entrepreneurial success.

One of the critical dimensions of strategic service delivery is service customization, which refers to tailoring services to meet individual customer needs. Globally, customization has been linked to enhanced customer satisfaction and loyalty because it creates personalized experiences that align with customer preferences (Xu, Wang, Lu, & Xiao, 2023). However, in many Nigerian firms, service customization is still evolving due to limitations in technology and organizational flexibility. Despite these challenges, businesses that successfully implement customization strategies are more likely to differentiate themselves and gain competitive advantage in the market.

Another important dimension is the service environment, which includes the physical, social, and technological setting in which service delivery occurs. International studies highlight that a conducive service environment significantly influences customer perception, satisfaction, and repeat patronage (Bitner, 1992; Das, 2024). In Nigeria, the role of service environment is particularly evident in sectors such as hospitality and banking, where ambience, employee behavior, and technological infrastructure shape customer experience. Poor service environments have been identified as a barrier to customer retention, while improved environments enhance organizational performance and competitiveness.

Service speed and accessibility also play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of service delivery. With the rise of digital technologies, customers now expect faster and more convenient access to services across multiple platforms. Globally, responsiveness has been identified as a key determinant of customer satisfaction and firm performance (Nawaz, Hameed, & Bhatti, 2023). In Nigeria, the adoption of digital platforms and mobile services has significantly improved service accessibility, particularly in the banking and telecommunications sectors. However, delays and inefficiencies still persist in some industries, affecting customer satisfaction and limiting market share growth. Market share, as a measure of entrepreneurial success, reflects a firm's ability to attract and retain customers in a competitive environment. It is widely used in both local and international studies as an indicator of firm performance and strategic effectiveness. Firms that deliver superior service through customization, conducive environments, and efficient service processes are more likely to gain a larger share of the market.

In Rivers State, the operational realities of small and medium hotels present a paradox. On one hand, these hotels possess flexibility and local knowledge that should enable customization, intimate service environments, and rapid decision-making. On the other hand, many are characterized by inconsistent service standards, poor facility maintenance, and slow adoption of technology. Preliminary interactions with hotel managers in Port Harcourt reveal complaints of declining occupancy rates despite high tourism traffic, suggesting that strategic service delivery may be misaligned with guest expectations. This misalignment potentially undermines entrepreneurial success as measured by market share.

Extant literature has examined service quality and hotel performance extensively, but most studies adopt SERVQUAL or general service quality frameworks without isolating strategic delivery dimensions. Moreover, research in Nigeria tends to focus on large or international hotels in Lagos and Abuja, with limited empirical attention to small and medium hotels in oil-rich but infrastructure-challenged regions like Rivers State. Where studies exist, they privilege financial performance indicators and overlook market share as a market-based measure of entrepreneurial succe**ss. De**spite this, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the combined effect of these service delivery dimensions on market share, particularly within the Nigerian context. This study therefore seeks to bridge this gap by examining how strategic service delivery influences entrepreneurial success of small and medium hotels in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Small and medium hotels in Rivers State operate in a highly competitive environment driven by oil and gas activities, commercial expansion, and rising tourist inflows. To remain viable, these hotels must secure and expand their market share as a key indicator of entrepreneurial success. Strategic service delivery dimensions such as service customization, service environment, and service speed and accessibility have been identified in foreign contexts as critical drivers of customer retention, patronage, and competitive advantage. Empirical studies from Malaysia, Ghana, and Kenya demonstrate that hotels that tailor services to guest preferences, maintain appealing and functional environments, and deliver prompt, accessible services record higher market share than their counterparts.

However, preliminary observations and interactions with hotel operators in Port Harcourt suggest a persistent decline in occupancy rates and customer loyalty among many small and medium hotels, despite increased traffic of business and leisure travelers to the state. Many of these hotels are characterized by standardized service offerings, poorly maintained facilities, slow front-desk operations, and weak digital accessibility, which collectively undermine their competitiveness against larger chains and newer entrants. This situation indicates a possible misalignment between service delivery strategies and the expectations of contemporary guests. The unique challenges of erratic power supply, security concerns, and socio-cultural diversity in the state further suggest that findings from other regions may not be directly applicable.

Consequently, the problem this study addresses is the lack of context-specific empirical data on the extent to which strategic service delivery dimensions influence the market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State, Nigeria. Without such evidence, hotel entrepreneurs lack guidance on which service delivery strategies to prioritize for competitive positioning, and policymakers lack a basis for targeted interventions to strengthen the sector's contribution to state economic growth. Furthermore, while extensive literature exists on service quality and hotel performance using SERVQUAL and related models, most studies focus on large hotels in Lagos, Abuja, or foreign contexts, and emphasize financial performance indicators rather than market share as a measure of entrepreneurial success. There is therefore limited empirical evidence on how the specific dimensions of service customization, service environment, and service speed and accessibility jointly or independently influence market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of strategic service delivery on entrepreneurial success of small and medium hotels in Rivers State, Nigeria. The specific objectives set for the study are:

1. To determine the influence of service customization on market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State.
2. To assess the influence of service environment on market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State.
3. To ascertain the influence of service speed and accessibility on market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does service customization influence market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State?
2. What is the influence of service environment on market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State?
3. How does service speed and accessibility influence market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research questions are developed to guide this study:

H_{01}: Service customization has no significant influence on market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State.

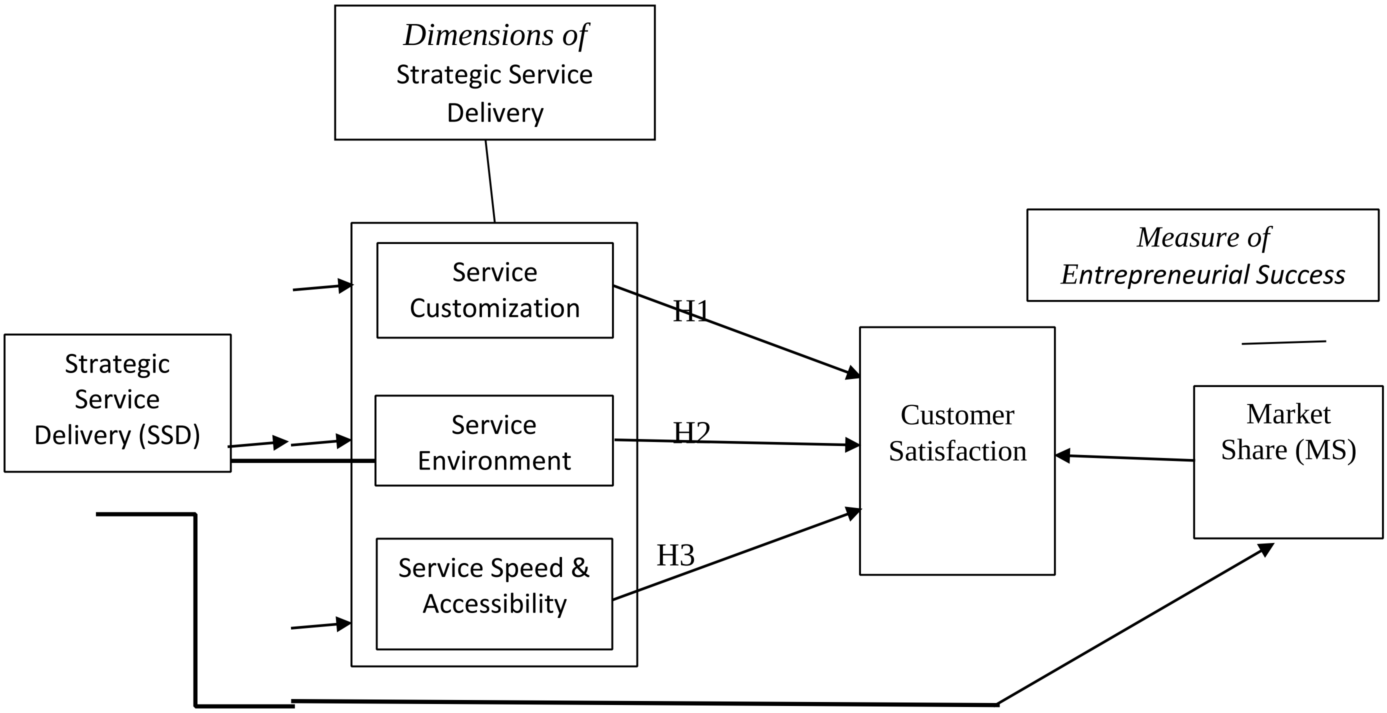
H_{02}: Service environment has no significant influence on market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State.

H_{03}: Service speed and accessibility have no significant influence on market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Figure 1: Research Framework Showing Link between Dimensions of Strategic Service Delivery (SSD) and Entrepreneurial Success-Market Share (ES-MS)



Source: Researchers' conceptualization, (2026).

Strategic Service Delivery (SSD)

Strategic service delivery refers to the deliberate design, coordination, and management of service processes to achieve organizational goals and create superior customer value. It goes beyond routine service provision by aligning service operations with business strategy, customer expectations, and competitive dynamics. In modern service economies, organizations compete not only on what they offer but on how effectively those offerings are delivered. As noted by Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (2020), service delivery systems must be carefully structured to ensure consistency, efficiency, and responsiveness. Similarly, Wirtz and Lovelock (2022) emphasize that strategic service delivery integrates people, processes, and technology to produce outcomes that enhance customer satisfaction and organizational performance. A key feature of strategic service delivery is its multidimensional nature, involving elements such as service customization, service environment, and service speed and accessibility. These dimensions collectively shape customer experience and determine how services are perceived in the marketplace. For instance, customization allows firms to tailor services to individual needs, while the service environment influences emotional and psychological responses, and speed/accessibility determine convenience and responsiveness. According to Grönroos (2015), value in service contexts is created through interactions between the firm and the customer, making the delivery process central to value creation. Furthermore, advances in digital technology have transformed service delivery by enabling real-time interaction, automation, and multi-channel access, thereby increasing efficiency and customer engagement (Minaya, Avella, & Trespalacios, 2024).

Strategic service delivery is also closely linked to organizational performance and competitive advantage. Firms that effectively manage their service delivery processes are better positioned to attract and retain customers, leading to improved outcomes such as customer loyalty, profitability, and market share. This relationship is particularly significant in emerging markets like Nigeria, where service quality and delivery efficiency remain key differentiators among competing firms. Empirical evidence suggests that organizations that prioritize strategic service delivery achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction and stronger market performance (Adeola & Evans, 2023). Consequently, strategic service delivery serves as a critical pathway through which firms translate internal capabilities into measurable entrepreneurial success.

Service customization (SC)
Service customization refers to the extent to which organizations tailor their services to meet the unique needs, preferences, and expectations of individual customers. It is a critical dimension of strategic service delivery because it enhances perceived value and strengthens customer relationships. According to Xu et al. (2023), customization enables firms to create differentiated service experiences, which significantly improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. In highly competitive environments, customization is increasingly becoming a strategic necessity rather than a luxury, as customers expect services that align closely with their personal needs. From an operational perspective, service customization involves flexibility in service design, employee adaptability, and the integration of customer input into service processes. Organizations achieve this through mechanisms such as customer feedback systems, personalized communication, and adaptive service delivery channels. Sousa and da Silveira (2022) argue that effective customization requires balancing personalization with operational efficiency, as excessive customization may lead to increased costs and complexity. Thus, firms must develop systems that allow for customization without compromising service consistency and efficiency. Empirical studies have shown that service customization positively influences organizational performance by increasing customer retention and encouraging repeat patronage. This ultimately contributes to improved market share and competitive positioning. In emerging markets like Nigeria, customization is gradually gaining importance as firms adopt digital tools and customer relationship management systems to better understand and serve their customers (Adeola & Evans, 2023). Therefore, service customization remains a key driver of value creation and entrepreneurial success.

Service Environment (SE)
Service environment, commonly referred to as the servicescape, encompasses the physical, social, and technological setting in which service delivery takes place. It includes elements such as layout, ambience, cleanliness, employee behavior, and digital infrastructure. Bitner (1992) conceptualized the service environment as a critical determinant of customer perception and behavior, influencing both emotional responses and satisfaction levels. A well-designed service environment enhances the overall customer experience and contributes to positive service evaluations. The service environment operates on multiple levels, including physical surroundings (e.g., lighting, space, temperature), social interactions (e.g., employee-customer relationships), and technological support systems (e.g., digital platforms and automation). Recent studies highlight the increasing role of digital environments in shaping service experiences, particularly with the rise of online and mobile service platforms (Das, 2024). These elements collectively influence how customers perceive service quality and whether they are likely to return or recommend the service to others. In the Nigerian context, the service environment plays a significant role in sectors such as hospitality, banking, and retail, where customer experience is closely tied to physical and social interactions. Poor service environments, characterized by inadequate facilities or unprofessional staff behavior, have been linked to customer dissatisfaction and reduced patronage (Olorunniwo et al., 2022). Conversely, organizations that invest in improving their service environment tend to experience higher customer satisfaction and stronger market performance, making it a vital dimension of strategic service delivery.

Service Speed and Accessibility (SSA)
Service speed and accessibility refer to how quickly and easily customers can obtain services. Speed relates to the time taken to deliver services, while accessibility refers to the availability and convenience of service channels. These dimensions are particularly important in today's fast-paced

and technology-driven environment, where customers expect immediate and seamless service experiences. Nawaz et al. (2023) emphasize that responsiveness is a critical factor influencing customer satisfaction and competitive advantage. Operationally, service speed is influenced by process efficiency, staff competence, and technological integration, while accessibility depends on the availability of multiple service channels such as physical locations, websites, mobile applications, and social media platforms. Firms that invest in digital technologies are better able to enhance both speed and accessibility, thereby improving customer experience. However, organizations must carefully manage the trade-off between speed and service quality to avoid compromising customer satisfaction. Empirical evidence indicates that faster and more accessible services lead to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention. In Nigeria, the adoption of digital banking and mobile services has significantly improved service accessibility, although challenges such as network issues and system downtimes still persist (Adeola & Evans, 2023). Overall, service speed and accessibility are essential for maintaining competitiveness and achieving entrepreneurial success in modern service industries.

Market Share (Measure of Entrepreneurial Success)

Market share is defined as the proportion of total market sales or customers that a firm captures within a specific industry. It is widely recognized as a key indicator of entrepreneurial success because it reflects a firm's competitive position and its ability to attract and retain customers. According to Kotler and Keller (2022), market share is a critical performance metric that provides insights into a firm's market dominance and strategic effectiveness. Market share can be measured using various indicators, including sales volume, revenue proportion, and customer base relative to competitors. These measures provide a comprehensive view of a firm's performance in the marketplace. In service industries, market share is often influenced by intangible factors such as service quality, customer satisfaction, and brand reputation. Firms that deliver superior service experiences are more likely to gain a larger share of the market.

Theoretical Review

Resource-Based View (RBV)

Underpinning this study is the Resource-Based View (RBV) by Birger Wernerfelt in (1984). Resource-Based View (RBV) posits that firms achieve sustained competitive advantage by acquiring and effectively utilizing resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. These resources may be tangible (e.g., infrastructure, technology) or intangible (e.g., skills, organizational culture, customer relationships). RBV emphasizes that it is not just the possession of resources that matters, but the firm's ability to deploy them strategically to create value. In service-oriented firms, capabilities such as responsiveness, flexibility, and customer orientation are considered strategic resources that can enhance performance outcomes.

In the context of strategic service delivery, RBV provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding how internal capabilities translate into competitive advantage. Service customization, for instance, reflects a firm's ability to leverage knowledge about customer preferences to tailor services effectively. Similarly, service environment represents the firm's investment in physical and technological resources that shape customer experience, while service speed and accessibility demonstrate operational efficiency and responsiveness. These dimensions are not easily replicated by competitors, especially when they are deeply embedded in organizational processes and culture, thereby satisfying the RBV criteria for strategic resources.

Relating RBV to the current study, the three dimensions of strategic service delivery—service customization, service environment, and service speed and accessibility—are conceptualized as firm-specific capabilities that influence market share. Firms that effectively deploy these capabilities are better positioned to attract and retain customers, leading to improved entrepreneurial success. For example, a firm that excels in service speed and accessibility through advanced digital systems gains a competitive edge that competitors may find difficult to imitate. Therefore, RBV explains how strategic service delivery contributes to market share by transforming internal capabilities into superior market performance.

Service-Dominant Logic (SDL)

Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), developed by Vargo and Lusch (2004), shifts the focus of economic exchange from goods to services, emphasizing that value is co-created through interactions between firms and customers. According to SDL, customers are not passive recipients of value but active participants in the service delivery process. Value is therefore realized through use and experience rather than embedded in products or services alone. This perspective highlights the importance of relationships, interactions, and customer engagement in creating competitive advantage.

SDL is particularly relevant to strategic service delivery because it emphasizes the interactive nature of service processes. Service customization aligns closely with SDL principles, as it involves incorporating customer input into service design and delivery. Similarly, the service environment facilitates value co-creation by providing a context in which customers and employees interact. Service speed and accessibility also play a critical role by enabling timely and convenient interactions, which enhance the overall service experience. These dimensions collectively support the co-creation of value, which is central to SDL.

In relation to the current study, SDL explains how strategic service delivery dimensions influence market share through customer engagement and satisfaction. When customers actively participate in customized service processes, they develop stronger emotional connections with the firm, leading to increased loyalty and repeat patronage. A conducive service environment further enhances this experience, while efficient service speed and accessibility ensure that customers can easily engage with the firm. These factors collectively contribute to customer satisfaction, which is a key driver of market share.

Empirical Review

Existing empirical studies overlap with this study in examining the relationship between strategic service delivery and entrepreneurial success of small and medium hotels. Yet, none replicate its specific concern. This review therefore draws on closely related works to contextualize the present inquiry. Adeola and Evans (2023) conducted an empirical study to examine the effect of digital service delivery on the performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which was considered appropriate for capturing perceptions of service delivery practices among business operators. The population of the study consisted of registered SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria, while a sample size of 210 respondents was selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques to ensure representation across different sectors such as retail, hospitality, and financial services. Data analysis was carried out using multiple regression analysis and correlation techniques with the aid of SPSS. The study found that service accessibility and speed significantly influenced firm performance, particularly customer growth and competitive positioning. The results further revealed that SMEs that adopted digital platforms experienced higher levels. This study is relevant to the present research as it highlights the importance of service speed and accessibility in influencing performance outcomes such as market share.

In yet another study, Olorunniwo, Adeyemi, and Udo (2022) investigated the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction in the Nigerian hospitality industry. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and focused on selected hotels in major Nigerian cities, including Lagos and Abuja. The population comprised hotel customers, while a sample size of 180 respondents was selected using convenience and purposive sampling techniques due to accessibility considerations. The researchers used a structured questionnaire adapted from the SERVQUAL model, capturing dimensions such as tangibility (service environment), responsiveness (service speed), and empathy (customization). The instrument's reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.79. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and

regression analysis. The findings indicated that service environment and responsiveness had a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction, while customization also contributed positively but to a lesser extent. The study is highly relevant to the current research as it provides empirical support for the role of service environment and service speed in driving performance outcomes.
Also, Akinwale and Kyari (2021) examined the impact of service delivery on competitive advantage in the Nigerian banking sector. The study adopted a quantitative research design using a survey method. The population consisted of bank customers across selected commercial banks in Nigeria, while a sample size of 250 respondents was determined using Yamane's sampling formula. A systematic sampling technique was employed to select respondents from different bank branches. Data were collected through a well-structured questionnaire focusing on service customization, service speed, and service environment. The instrument was validated by experts in marketing and business administration, and reliability testing yielded a Cronbach alpha of 0.84. The data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis and ANOVA to test the relationships between variables. The findings revealed that service speed and accessibility had the strongest effect on competitive advantage, followed by service customization and service environment. This study directly supports the current research by demonstrating how strategic service delivery dimensions influence market-related outcomes, which can be interpreted as proxies for market share.

Methodology

This study adopted a correlational survey research design. This design is appropriate because the study seeks to establish the nature and degree of relationship between strategic service delivery dimensions — service customization, service environment, and service speed and accessibility — and entrepreneurial success measured by market share. The population comprises all registered small and medium hotels in Rivers State. Based on records from the Rivers State Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Nigerian Tourism Development Authority (2026), there are 328 small and medium hotels operating in key urban centers such as Port Harcourt, Obio-Akpor, Eleme, and Oyigbo. The target respondents are owner-managers or operations managers of these hotels, since they possess strategic knowledge of service delivery practices and market share data. A sample size of 181 hotels was determined using the Taro Yamane. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across the four major urban clusters in Rivers State. Within each hotel, the owner-manager or the most senior operations manager was purposively selected as the respondent. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Strategic Service Delivery and Market Share Questionnaire (SSDMQ)". The instrument will have two sections: Section A: Demographic data of respondents and hotel characteristics. Section B: Items measuring the independent variables — service customization, service environment, service speed and accessibility — and the dependent variable, market share. Items were developed by the researcher in line with the objectives of the study. Responses was measured on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts: two in hospitality management and one in measurement and evaluation. A pilot test was conducted using 20 hotels outside the main sample. Cronbach's Alpha was used to establish reliability, and a reliability coefficient of 0.89% was obtain which show reasonable level of reliability. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer research questions while linear regression was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS version 25.

Result of Findings

Table1: Analyses of responses to items on Service Customization

Items on Service Customization	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The organization provides services that are tailored to individual customer needs.	181	3.85	.477	.031

Employees adjust services based on specific customer preferences.	181	3.84	.363	.024
Customers are allowed to influence how services are delivered.	181	3.81	.473	.031
The organization offers flexible service options to meet different customer requirements.	181	3.09	.801	.052

Source: SPSS version 25.0 output (2026)

Analysis in Table 1 showed that all questionnaire items have mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating an acceptance of service customization influence on market share. In summary, with a grand mean of 3.64, the respondents confirmed that sustained entrepreneurial success and competitive advantage in small and medium hotels in Rivers State is a function of service customization.

Table 2: Analyses of Items on Service Environment

Items on Service Environment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The service environment is clean and visually attractive.	181	3.76	.562	.036
The layout of the service area enhances customer comfort and experience.	181	3.85	.477	.031
Employees maintain professionalism in appearance and behavior during service delivery.	181	3.86	.362	.023
The overall ambience of the service environment improves customer satisfaction.	181	3.80	.467	.030

Source: SPSS version 25.0 output (2026)

Table 2 showed that all questionnaire items had mean scores surpassing the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating an acceptance that service environment influence market share in Rivers State. In summary, with a grand mean of 3.81, the respondents confirmed that the sustained entrepreneurial success and competitive advantage in small and medium hotels in Rivers State is a function of service environment.

Table 3: Analyses of Items on Service Speed and Accessibility

Items on Service Speed and Accessibility	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Services are delivered quickly without unnecessary delays	181	2.44	.480	.031
Customers are attended to promptly when they request service.	181	2.23	.417	.027
Our organization is easily accessible through physical and/or digital channels.	181	2.21	.473	.031
Customers can easily obtain services whenever they are needed.	181	2.16	.804	.052

Source: SPSS version 25.0 output (2026)

Table 3 showed that all questionnaire items have mean score below the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating rejection or decline on service speed and accessibility influence market share. In summary, with a grand mean of 2.26, the respondents confirmed that sustained entrepreneurial success and competitive advantage in small and medium hotels in Rivers State is a function of service speed and accessibility.

Table 4: Service customization influence on market share of small and medium hotels

SSD	B	Beta	t-value	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	Sig	Hypothesis
SC	.817	.886	29.355	.886[a]	.785	.784	.028	.000	Rejected

Source*:* SPSS version 25.0 output (2026)

The results from the linear regression analysis in Table 4 provide support for rejecting the hypotheses that service customization has no significant influence on market share of small and medium hotels in Rivers State. The R value of .866 shows that service customization has very strong relationship with strategic service delivery; while the coefficient of determination (R^2 = .785) indicates that about 79% of SSD in the small and medium hotels in Rivers State is due to service customization.

Table 5: Influence of service environment on market share of small and medium hotels

SSD	B	Beta	t-value	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	Sig	Hypothesis
SE	.764	.799	20.440	.799[a]	.639	.637	.037	.000	Rejected

Source*:* SPSS version 25.0 output (2026)

The results from the single linear regression analysis in Table 5 provide support for rejecting the hypotheses that service environment has not significant influence on SSD. The R value of .799 suggests a strong relationship between service environment and SSD; while the coefficient of determination (R^2 = .637) indicates that service environment accounts for about 64% change in SSD in small and medium hotels in Rivers State.

Table 6: Influence of service speed and accessibility influence on market share of small and medium hotels

SSD	B	Beta	t-value	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	Sig	Hypothesis
SSA	.778	.861	26.034	.861[a]	.742	.741	.030	.000	Rejected

Source*:* SPSS version 25.0 output (2026)

The results from the linear regression analysis in Table 6 provide support for rejecting the hypotheses that service speed and accessibility do not significantly influence SSD in the tourism industry in Rivers State. The R value of .861 shows that service speed and accessibility has very strong relationship with SSD, while the coefficient of determination (R^2 = .742) indicates that about 74% of change in SSD in small and medium hotels in Rivers State is attributable to service speed and accessibility.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the influence of strategic service delivery on entrepreneurial success of small and medium hotels in Rivers State, Nigeria. The empirical tests conducted in the study showed that Strategic service delivery has strong, positive and statistically significant influence on entrepreneurial success of small and medium hotels in Rivers State. These findings support reports of previous studies which emphasized that firms adopting structured service delivery strategies tend to achieve higher customer satisfaction, loyalty, and improved performance indicators such as market share and profitability (Wirtz & Lovelock, 2022; Minaya, Avella, & Trespalacios, 2024).

The current study also support the findings of Akinwale and Kyari (2021) who examined the impact of service delivery on competitive advantage in the Nigerian banking sector. Their findings revealed that service speed and accessibility had the strongest effect on competitive advantage, followed by service customization and service environment.
Similarly, our findings corroborate with Olorunniwo et al. (2022). They investigated the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction in the Nigerian hospitality industry. It was revealed that service environment and responsiveness had a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction, while customization also contributed positively but to a lesser extent.
Finally, Adeola and Evans (2023) conducted an empirical study to examine the effect of digital service delivery on the performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The study found that service accessibility and speed significantly influenced firm performance, particularly customer growth and competitive positioning. The results also affirms the position of this research study.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between strategic service delivery and entrepreneurial success, with emphasis on service customization, service environment, and service speed and accessibility as key dimensions, while market share served as the measure of entrepreneurial success. The literature and conceptual analysis indicate that all three dimensions of strategic service delivery play a significant role in enhancing organizational performance. Service customization improves customer satisfaction by ensuring that services are tailored to individual needs, thereby strengthening loyalty and repeat patronage. Service environment contributes by shaping customer perception and experience through physical, social, and technological service settings. Service speed and accessibility enhance convenience and responsiveness, which are critical in attracting and retaining customers in competitive markets. Overall, the study concludes that effective strategic service delivery significantly influences market share. Organizations that successfully integrate customization, a conducive service environment, and efficient service speed and accessibility are more likely to achieve sustained entrepreneurial success and competitive advantage in their industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Firms should invest in customer data systems (CRM tools) that allow them to understand individual customer preferences and tailor services effectively. This will strengthen personalization and increase customer loyalty, which ultimately improves market share.
2. Management should continuously upgrade the physical and digital service environment, ensuring cleanliness, modern design, and comfort that enhance customer experience.
3. Organizations should streamline service processes to reduce waiting time and service delays, thereby improving responsiveness and customer satisfaction

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