Improving Customer Satisfaction at Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd

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ASHESI

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Applied Project Report is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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Candidate's Name: Keshia E. Benson.

Date: May 2020

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the Applied Project Report were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on the supervision of applied projects laid down by Ashesi University College.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd is an organic health food store and restaurant that specializes in freshly made vegan foods, with strengths such as cleanliness and good presentation, a convenient location, and considering culture in meal design. However, the management of Mahorgany, in an interview, noted issues with the level of customer satisfaction, mainly caused by long serving time.

Data collection during needs assessment was by interviews and observation. Managers, employees, and customers were the three groups of participants interviewed. The Ishikawa diagram and service blueprint were used to analyze the data. The results confirmed that the low level of customer satisfaction was caused by long-serving time, but also by consistent unavailability of menu items, and mediocre customer service stemming from poor employee attitude.

The literature review looked at the effect of customer satisfaction on restaurants and how service quality affects customer satisfaction. It focused on the link between customer service and customer satisfaction, and that between wait time and customer satisfaction. It then evaluated the various service quality and service mapping models that could be used to improve customer satisfaction.

The proposed solution uses a service blueprint to tackle the three contributing factors of low customer satisfaction affecting Mahorgany. The blueprint of Mahorgany was re-designed to include work scheduling, employee training, warming equipment, and a double menu system. This service blueprint, if adopted with the help of committed management, will improve the level of customer satisfaction experienced by the customer at Mahorgany.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this project is to improve customer service at Mahorgany Healthy Foods Ltd. The intent is to reduce long waiting times of customers and develop a customer retention strategy that encompasses how to handle customer complainants during waiting times. This chapter discusses the profile of Mahorgany Healthy Foods limited, a PESTLE analysis of the current situation in Ghana, and an analysis of the industry Mahorgany finds itself in, the vegan or vegetarian industry, first globally and then narrowed down to Ghana.

1.2 Organizational Context

1.2.1 Company Profile

Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd is an organic health food store and restaurant headquartered in Accra, Ghana, and was established in May 2016. Mahorgany specializes in freshly made vegan foods and products. Mahorgany believes that a plant-based vegan diet should be the ideal food for consumption to aid in living one's best healthy life. They believe that the food choices, especially animal diets, of people, have tremendous impacts on the environment and, for that matter, have taken it upon themselves to provide an alternative in healthy food in place of the other more harmful options. Mahorgany is located on the 1st floor of A&C Mall. On a typical weekday, the opening hours are from 9 am – 8 pm, however, on weekends the hours are between 2 pm – 5 pm.

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Some of the key products sold at the health shop include organic oils, fonio, quinoa, turmeric powder, apple cider vinegar, organic fluoride-free toothpaste, pink Himalayan salt, seeds, nuts, tofu, among others. Also, some of the dishes served at their restaurants include smoothies, juices, tofu dishes, quinoa dishes, brown rice dishes, mushroom dishes, assorted salads, soups, and teas.

1.3 The Rationale for Choosing Mahorgany

The Tourism and Hospitality industry in Ghana is growing and is a potential industry for increased revenue. Many indicators are showing that Ghana is becoming a vacation location. Hence Ghanaians need to leverage on this and improve on their Tourism and Hospitality industry to allow it to become a significant contributor to the country's GDP, as Dubai has been able to do, to improve economic growth. This will be possible by improving the quality of services in the country. Hence, this project provides a medium through which the researcher can contribute in her own way to the development of the Tourism and Hospitality industry by helping a business increase its efficiency and, in turn, the quality of service provided to its customers.

1.4 The Gap Identified

Mahorgany can be classified under a vegetarian or vegan restaurant whose values are in line with the betterment of the health of human beings, which would, in turn, improve the well-being of the earth. However, the business faces operational problems that affect the level of customer satisfaction experienced by Mahorgany's customers. Based on the needs assessment, it was revealed that the unavailability of menu items at

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Mahorgany tends to cause customers to feel limited. Additionally, it showed that food serving at Mahorgany takes much time, and as such, results in a long waiting time for customers before they are served, which causes customers to become frustrated. The interviews also revealed that on particularly bad days, some customers are reported to leave out of frustration without receiving their orders. To top it off, the employees are not able to handle customers with empathy and care when offering their service, leading to mediocre customer service being provided. These three issues contribute immensely to the level of customer satisfaction experienced by Mahorgany's customers.

This project will apply knowledge and skills gathered from operations management into a real-life setting to enhance the services at Mahorgany while improving the researcher's critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

An evaluation of the current procedures that form the back-end operations of Mahorgany will provide insight on the non-value, adding practices that contribute to the long food serving times. As a result, measures will be put in place to reduce the long waiting times and enhance the overall customer experience to provide the utmost satisfaction.

1.5 Industry Analysis (PESTLE)

PESTLE analysis is a strategic analysis tool that evaluates the external environment of an organization to determine potential threats or opportunities that may affect a project, by looking at the industry through a Political (P), Economic (E), Social (S) Technological (T), Legal (L) and Environmental (E) lens (Rastogi & Trivedi, 2016). This tool will be used to analyze the current conditions of the country that Mahorgany

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Health Foods Ltd finds itself; Ghana. The country will be analyzed through the political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological lens to determine possible threats and opportunities that Mahorgany needs to manage or capitalize on for better performance.

1.5.1 Political Analysis

Ghana launched a marketing campaign, inviting African-Americans and the Diaspora to mark the 400 years of the first enslaved Africans arriving in Jamestown, Virginia. The Government of Ghana put together a plan for the year consisting of activities that they believed would pull their target market to the country, naming it the Year of Return. According to Year of Return. (2019), the August of 2019 marks 400 years since enslaved Africans arrived in the United States, hence the set of programs was designed to celebrate how far the victims of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade have come and their continuous resilience to make the most of their lives despite their history and how it tramples upon their opportunities. These African victims who were scattered in the world in areas of the Diaspora are the target of the campaign. This program is likely to influence the number of foreigners who come to Ghana this year. Depending on the success of events, more tourists could be arriving in Ghana at the end of each year. Hence, Mahorgany needs to capitalize on the inflow of foreigners and ensure that the quality of services in their facility is comparable to the restaurants that the foreigners have at home.

Mahorgany is found in AnC Mall, one of Ghana's first malls, located at East Legon. This is helpful because malls typically encounter a massive inflow of people each day. Also, foreigners tend to find their way to malls because of the availability of a

variety of products and services at one centralized point. AnC Mall is furnished with shops such as MaxMart, which contains a wide range of grocery foods, and Woodin, which sells African print fabrics for men and women, among others, AnC. (2019). The grocery store would pull foreigners to purchase convenience goods, whereas people from the diaspora will be eager to buy African print fabrics from Woodin to celebrate their roots. Hence, Mahorgany will experience the inflow of foreigners. Mahorgany must make it top priority to ensure that its services are of high quality to leave an impressionable mark on the people wherever they go. That way, foreigners will be encouraged to return to the restaurant on their next visits to Ghana and share their good experiences with friends and family that may come to Ghana.

During the Christmas holidays of 2018, celebrities such as Idris Elba, Naomi Campbell, Boris Kodjoe, Rosario Dawson, Diggy Simmons, Anthony Anderson, Gabourey Sidibe, Jidenna, Michael Jai White and Nicole Ari Parker, among others visited Ghana (Selorm, 2019). All these indicators show that Ghana's tourism industry is a growing one. Out of the celebrities mentioned, Naomi Campell is a vegetarian (Bayley, 2019), Rosario Dawson is Vegan (Ettinger, 2019), Anthony Anderson is living a vegan lifestyle to improve his health (Akki, 2019). Hence, out of the ten people, three are vegan or vegetarian. Also, the western world is adapting to veganism far faster than Africa. For instance, a quarter of 25-43-year-old Americans, both black and white, are identifying as vegan (Banis, 2018). Therefore, it is safe to assume that the inflow of more tourists will increase demand for vegan food in restaurants. This is an opportunity for Mahorgany to capitalize on it.

Although Ghana has peaceful elections each time, one thing that could pose a threat could be the change of governance. In Ghana, change in government is one of the major contributing factors to unfinished projects in the country (Kuuire, 2018). In 2020, Ghana is set to undertake its next elections. If a new political party takes power, the Year of Return project that has the potential to grow the tourism industry might come to a stop and reducing like the rate at which the industry is likely to develop.

1.5.2. Economic Analysis

Despite having a troubled economy in 2015, Ghana's efforts to strengthen its economy is proving fruitful. From the dissolution of nine banks in an attempt to reform and strengthen the banking sector, to plummeting inflation to 9% as of January 2019, the country is en route to becoming the fastest growing economy in Africa (Ministry of Finance, 2019). The inflation rate is projected to fall further to 8% by the end of the year (International Monetary Fund [IMF], 2019).

Popularly known as the second top Cocoa producer in the world (Shahbandeh, 2019), Ghana has delved into a new profitable venture: the oil industry (IMF, 2019). Through measures regarding the cleaning up the banking system, strengthening monetary policy, and restoring debt sustainability, the country has achieved growth in its GDP, with the IMF (2019) predicting economic growth to rise to 8.8% at the end of 2019, from the initial 2.2% in 2015. Similarly, World Bank (2019a) projects economic growth to increase to 7.6% in 2019 and inflation to remain within the range of 6% to 10%, the Central Bank's target.

Overall, the economy is booming, which makes Ghana attractive to investors. Therefore, Ghana remains a lucrative place for Mahorgany to continue operations. A higher GDP suggests the likelihood of more expenditure spent on food, which could affect Mahorgany's sales.

1.5.3 Socio-cultural Analysis

Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd is a company located in Ghana. It is crucial to consider the Ghanaian food culture since a significant part of any culture is food. A lot of traditional Ghanaian dishes are mainly carbohydrates and protein-based. Osseo-Asare (2002), describes Ghanaian dishes to consist of starch profoundly, but always accompanied by protein. The proteins include meat such as goat, beef, mutton, or wild game, poultry that is usually chicken, and fish that is fresh or has been smoked or salted. They come in the form of stews or soups. The cultural background of Ghanaians shows the importance of meat in the meals of the people. According to a study by Eghan (2014), the demand for beef, poultry, and game increases as income increases, with beef being the most frequently bought and consumed. Eghan (2014) notes that "as income grows, expenditure on meats will increase more than proportionate to income growth." Hence, seeing as the GDP in Ghana continues to grow, it means that meat consumption in the country will grow at a more than proportionate rate. The government of Ghana made increasing the supply of meat and dairy to 80% of domestic demand by 2015 a set objective (Eghan, 2014). This emphasizes the importance of meat in Ghana.

In Ghana, meat consumption per capita is 9.2kg (Eghan, 2014). Despite studies showing that meat consumption results in cardiovascular diseases, obesity, diabetes, and

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stroke, many Ghanaians still find excuses to justify their expenditure in meat, such as vegetarianism and veganism being expensive (Badu, 2017). Dr. Kofi Asare debunks this argument by asking the public, "what is more expensive, a kilo of meat or a kilo of tomatoes?" (Badu, 2017).

The amount of meat consumption in Ghana poses a threat to the success of vegan/vegetarian industry in Ghana, and more precisely, Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd. Mahorgany needs to manage this by letting Ghanaians understand the impact of vegetarianism and veganism on the health of a person and the well-being of the environment. Obesity is a significant problem for Ghanaians, especially those that reside in Greater Accra, which is the location of Mahorgany. Nearly 43% of Ghanaians are considered to be either overweight or obese, with Greater Accra Region recording 55.2% of residents to be as such (Ofori-Asenso, Agyeman, Laar, & Boateng, 2016). Hence, the restaurant can create awareness of the adverse effects of obesity and the diseases it gives rise to and how healthy living can eradicate these problems. Thus, Marhorgany can reduce the impact of this threat by putting measures in place that educate the general public and, as such, motivate more people to eat vegan and vegetarian food. Also, the restaurant can target foreigners or expatriates who form a decent percentage of people in the capital of Ghana, where Mahorgany finds itself.

1.5.4 Technological Analysis

The internet is useful in many businesses by making processes easier and more convenient. It has given way to online transactions that Ghanaian business owners have leveraged. Customers can make payments online, using their card details. Also, card

transactions allow customers to make cashless payments on the spot, and this is possible

through POS systems. Mobile money is also a new technology that allows mobile phone

users to perform transactions, such as transferring money and making payments without

the use of the internet (MTN, 2014). All one needs is a registered sim card. However,

there are other requirements if one wants to be an agent (MTN, 2014). Mobile money has

also helped in making transactions easier and more convenient for both business owners

and their customers.

The internet and other technological devices, such as laptops and mobile phones,

give businesses the ability to market their goods and services and provide additional

information, which can be made possible by creating websites or social media accounts.

Through this, the businesses can upload useful information to their clients online, such as

menus, contact details, opening time, and others.

The internet also provides information on new trends in the vegan and vegetarian

industry, which Mahorgany can leverage to be able to meet their customers' needs

consistently. Mahorgany can use the internet as a platform to create awareness on the

health benefits of living a vegan and vegetarian lifestyle.

Also, there are inventory management tools that can aid in managing stock levels,

purchase orders, recipes, and menu costs in restaurants (Brophy, 2019). Loyverse is an

appropriate restaurant inventory management software that Mahorgany can be utilized.

Loyverse provides a low-cost option for restaurants, aiding in vendor management,

purchase orders, and ingredient tracking (Brophy, 2019). Looking at the size of

Mahorgany and its current customer base, a low-cost option will be a great start. Another

restaurant inventory management software that Mahorgany can use is Toast. Toast is a

user-friendly alternative that aids in inventory management and POS, with a focus on the minimization of food waste. Reducing wasted food is in line with Mahorgany's objectives regarding the safety and well-being of the planet since it is known to lower methane and carbon emissions (Washington State Recycling Association, n.d.).

These are all strategies, processes, and tools that Mahorgany can leverage on to make business simpler.

1.5.5 Legal Analysis

According to Vinorkor (2019), the national daily minimum wage will increase by 11% from GHS 10.65 to GHS 11.82. Similarly, the base pay will increase by 12% from GHS 9.10 per day to GHS10.19. Both will be effective on January 1, 2020. Based on the Labour Act 2003, all employers must pay employees at or above the minimum wage rate. In the scenario where employees are being paid at the minimum wage rate of GHS 10.65, the 11% increase in the minimum wage has the potential of increasing the cost of production, the prices of their goods and services, or both, since Mahorgany has to adhere. The potential increase in cost or prices has a threat to Mahorgany.

Regarding lawful authorization, Mahorgany has met the legal requirements and acquired the necessary licenses from the Food and Drugs Authority, Ghana Tourism Authority, Fire Safety, Environmental Health Care, and Police Clearance. Therefore, the restaurant will not be facing any threats regarding the unavailability of these requirements

1.5.6 Environmental Analysis

In 2015, the General Assembly design seventeen goals to achieve sustainable development for all by 2030 (United Nations, 2019). Out of the seventeen goals, goals three, thirteen, and six pertain to Mahorgany.

Goal three is to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages" (United Nations, 2019). To help achieve the goal of ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, Mahorgany is selling the idea of healthy food and healthy living to the public but packaging healthy food in a way that is not viewed to be "healthy." The more people to eat healthily, the higher the life expectancy of Ghanaians will be, which is beneficial to meeting SDG Goal 3. Hence, it is an opportunity for Mahorgany to publicize based on aiding the SDGs.

Goal thirteen is to "take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts" (United Nations, 2019). The plastic bags that most restaurants put food in when providing take-outs to are made from mostly polyethylene, which is a by-product of petroleum and natural gas. According to Martinez (2013) of the Climate and Society Institute at Columbia University, plastic bags take a long time to decompose. As they do, they release harmful greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. Mahorgany plays a role in combating climate change by packaging their take-out orders in biodegradable bags. They use other biodegradable items such as paper straws and the pack that contains the food.

Goal six is to "ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all" (United Nations, 2019). Mahorgany directly contributes by using biodegradable items to improve recycling.

1.6 The Vegan/Vegetarian Restaurant Industry in Ghana

The section analyzes the vegan or vegetarian industry. According to Doyle (2016), a vegan is a person who lives a lifestyle that excludes all forms of exploitation and cruelty to animals, by avoiding the use of animal products for clothing and avoiding meat consumption. Hence, a vegan is a person that refrains from eating or using any animal products (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). Similarly, Ruby (2012) defines a vegetarian to be a person does not eat meat because of a) the unethical concept of raising and slaughtering animals, b) the concern for personal health, c) the impact of meat consumption on the environment, d) spiritual purity, and e) disgust at the texture, appearance, and smell of meat.

The industry will be analyzed to determine possible threats or opportunities to the industry and, as such, Mahorgany. The sector will be examined on a global level and then narrowed down to Ghana.

The world is growing towards a more animal-friendly one. In France, the vegan and vegetarian market has grown by 24% over the past year, generating a revenue of $437 million from large retail stores and supermarkets (Fresh Plaza, 2019). Forbes declared 2019 to be the year of Vegan due to the interest in veganism rising, with a quarter of 25-43-year-old Americans identifying as a vegan (Banis, 2018). In the UK, a Netherlands based vegan-fast food company introduced plant-based steak to Tesco, a supermarket in the UK, and sold nearly 40,000 steaks within a week of being stock (Banis, 2018). In America, sales of vegan foods from the beginning of 2018 to June rose ten times faster than overall food sales (Parker, 2018).

The introduction of plant-based "meat" is an innovative addition to the industry as it will draw more people to eat such foods. Parker (2018) describes the plant-based burger patties to taste and look like meat, with detailing down to blood oozing out of the meat in the form of beetroot juice. The introduction of plant-based meat will make the transition from eating meat to plant-based options easy for someone that has eaten meat their whole life. If Mahorgany introduces these to their menu, it could help the transition for Ghanaians, who prioritize meat, into healthier alternatives, easier.

Overall, the vegan or vegetarian industry across the globe is growing with innovations making the transition from non-vegan to vegan smooth. Also, more awareness around the topic is causing more people to understand the health benefit it poses to the human body as the well-being of the earth. Despite this, it is important to delve deeper into the Ghanaian industry to determine if it is growing at a similar rate.

In Ghana, there is a not-for-profit organization known as Veg Ghana, whose aim is to educate Ghanaians about the health benefits that come with a vegetarian diet. According to VegGhana (2019), there are roughly fourteen vegetarian eateries in Ghana, nine health shops, and nine natural food brands. This list is not exhaustive as Mahorgany is not listed; however, a rough estimate is provided. There are not many vegetarian eateries in the country, which may be due to the low demand for vegetarian food.

Ghanaians prioritize meat in their meals, hence lower patronage on vegetarian foods. However, it is not as hard to eat healthy as many presume. Describing her personal vegan experience in her blog post, Mbruehl (2012) confesses her apprehension about being a vegetarian in Ghana before her move to the country. However, she found it easy with many options from the local market, restaurants, and what she can cook up in her

room, but this came with adapting to the Ghanaian lifestyle (Mbruehl, 2012). Bannor (2016) also points out the ease of "veganizing" local Ghanaian dishes and how many restaurants had started incorporating vegetarian options. The only problem is getting a chef who would make the whole meal without meat, rather than only remove the meat when serving vegetarian orders (Bannor, 2016). These are blogs by people who do not permanently live in Ghana. However, it just goes a long way to show that in as much as Ghanaians believe that being a vegetarian or vegan is difficult and expensive, it is not impossible.

The industry has potential because a large percentage of Ghanaians are obese or overweight, as mentioned earlier. The vegan or vegetarian sector can help people live healthy lifestyles that will aid in weight loss. Mahorgany can take advantage of the fact that there are few well-established shops and restaurants in Ghana that specialize in vegan and vegetarian foods.

The industry may not be developed to its full potential, but by creating awareness, more people will be drawn to the industry because of the benefits it promises to their health and the well-being of the earth. Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd can leverage this by finding creative ways of marketing to become a well-known brand and work towards holding a significant market share in the industry.

The success and growth of this industry could help improve the Human Development Index (HDI) of the country. The HDI is a metric for determining the welfare level within a country (Meier & Rauch, 2005). A component of the HDI measures the length and health of the lives of people within a country using the life expectancy at birth (Meier & Rauch, 2005). In 2017, Ghana was ranked 169th and

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recorded an overall life expectancy at birth of 63.46 years with the women's and men's

life expectancy to be 64.50 and 62.44 years, respectively (World Bank, 2019b). Hence,

with more Ghanaians choosing healthier options that vegetarian and vegan meal options

offer, the industry will be growing while the health and length of the lives of the people

will improve.

<div align="center">1.7 SWOT Analysis</div>

The SWOT analysis below is generated from communicating with the manager,

employees, and some customers. When the needs assessment is complete, it will be

updated.

Table 1

SWOT Analysis of Mahorgany Health Foods Limited

STRENGTHS (+)	WEAKNESSES (-)
• The menu takes culture into consideration • Vegan Menu and Fresh Food • Situated at a Mall • Convenient location • Cleanliness and good presentation	• Long food serving time • Mediocre customer service • Unavailability of menu items • Cold food
OPPORTUNITIES (+)	THREAT (-)
• A lot of Ghanaians are overweight or obese • Not many well-branded Vegan restaurants in Ghana	• The culture of Ghanaians prioritizes meat. • Low electricity current affects the functionality of the equipment used.

STRENGTHS (+)	WEAKNESSES (-)
	• It is an outdoor restaurant hence affected by adverse weather conditions.

1.7.1 Strengths

Mahorgany provides meals that most restaurants, vegan ones included, do not, which offers variety for vegetarians and vegans customers. In the menu design, the culture of the Ghanaians was taken into consideration; therefore, it not only provides variety to their vegan and vegetarian customers but also makes meals more satisfying to their customers who eat meat. The dishes are made in such a way that one does not feel the absence of meat to a great extent. Mahorgany provides vegan versions of local meals such as banku and okro, Jollof, plantain, and beans, among others.

The restaurant is situated at a mall. Hence it is easier for them to reach out to new customers. The location being a mall and also being at East Legon is also a convenient after-work meet-up location for already existing customers, where they spend leisure time.

The food provided by Mahorgany is always presented palatably, and the employees practice proper hygiene in their processes to ensure cleanliness at the restaurant.

1.7.2 Weaknesses

The food serving time is too long. The back-end processes taken to present meals to customers take much time, thus, resulting in a long period before customers receive their orders.

Employees do not express warmth or care in their interactions with clients. Also, employees do not respond well to customer complaints. For instance, a customer once complained about hair in their order. The employee asked the customer to take out the hair and eat the meal.

Although Mahorgany provides a variety for vegans in its menu compared to other restaurants, it fails to provide everything on their menu, which is frustrating to customers. It takes away the effect of a menu with variety as customers feel limited. However, moving from a larger space in ANC to a smaller one resulted in a confined area to contain the necessary equipment that will allow this to be possible.

Also, the food tends to be on the cooler side rather than warm when served to the customer, which can be frustrating, especially when the food still takes a long period to be served to the customer.

1.7.3 Opportunities

As mentioned earlier, nearly 43% of Ghanaians are either overweight or obese. Some studies show that meat consumption causes obesity. Hence, Mahorgany can leverage this by creating awareness of how healthy eating and living can eradicate diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, obesity, diabetes, and stroke.

There are not many well-branded Vegan restaurants in Ghana. Hence, Mahorgany can make veganism "a thing" and Mahorgany the go-to place for vegan and vegetarian food.

1.7.4 Threats

The culture of Ghanaians prioritizes meat in their meals. Meat is an essential part of a typical Ghanaian's meal, which makes it hard for vegan products to penetrate the market.

The electricity current affects the speed at which equipment works, and this slows down food serving time. It also dulls the light bulbs reducing the vision of the employees.

It is an outdoor restaurant. Hence, when it is too sunny, it affects the customers who decide not to order a take out. Also, when it rains, the drops splash on the customers, but not as severely as the scorching sun, since there is a canopy. However, the angle of the sun allows it to shine on the customers, even with the canopy.

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CHAPTER TWO: PROJECT NEEDS ANALYSIS

2.1 Chapter Overview

A needs assessment is a procedure used for evaluating the gaps that exist between the current and the desired states in an organization and selecting the most pressing one that will be eliminated, or its impact reduced (Leigh, Watkins, Platt & Kaufman, 2000).

The purpose of this needs assessment was to study and understand the significant issues affecting the restaurant and narrow it down to the problem(s) to be addressed in this paper. Thus, the research objectives of this needs assessment were to:

◈ Identify and understand the current situation, including the key issues affecting Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd.

◈ Understand the desired situation at Mahorgany regarding the key issues.

The findings from the needs assessment will be used to:

◈ Define the problem and its scope

◈ Determine the root cause(s) of the problem(s) at Mahorgany.

◈ Develop an appropriate solution(s) to aid Mahorgany in reaching set targets to improve customer satisfaction at Mahorgany.

2.2 Methodology

For the needs of Mahorgany Healthy Foods to be accurately assessed, the contents of the methodology were planned ahead of time, and below is a description of the methods used in data collection.

This needs assessment used the qualitative research approach mainly through interviews and observations. Qualitative research, according to Firestone (1987), is a phenomenological study that believes that "reality is socially constructed through individual or collective definitions of the same situation," hence it seeks to understand the "social phenomenon" from the perspective of a group of people that the particular study discusses. As per the aforementioned definition, qualitative research was deployed in this project, consisting of a combination of interviews from existing customers, the client, and the employees. Using the qualitative research approach helped gather meaningful information from stakeholders. This was to ensure that the solution captures the culture of the organization as well as the needs of the customers. Observations were also used to delineate the processes and procedures the restaurant goes through to provide their service, which helped to determine the non-value-adding areas.

2.2.1 Interviews

This needs assessment used the semi-structured method of interviewing in data collection. Interviews are verbal interchanges between two people where the one questioning attempts to gather useful information from the interviewee (Clifford, Cope, Gillespie, & French, 2016). Interviews were used as they are suitable for a sample with small numbers, which is an appropriate approach since Mahorgany, and its customer base is a relatively small group. Interviews also allow participants to provide details in their own words rather than choose from a set of fixed responses, and this helped to give an in-depth understanding of the problems Mahorgany faces.

There are three types of interviews; structured, semi-structured, and narrative (unstructured) interviews (Stuckey, 2013). This needs assessment used semi-structured interviews because they fall in between structured and unstructured, creating an adequate balance of the two. With semi-structured interviews, the researcher simply outlines the questions to be asked or topics to be covered to guide the conversation. In contrast, the interviewee determines the way the interview should be directed based on his or her responses.

For this needs assessment, the client (the managers), the existing customers, and the employees are the three groups of people that were interviewed. The interviewing process employed the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a nonrandom technique that can be defined as the sampling method that selects participants based on the qualities they possess and their willingness to provide the information by virtue of experience or qualities they possess (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). This method was chosen because this research requires data collection only from people who have worked or are customers of Mahorgany. Hence, participants will be selected based on the quality of the "affiliation of Mahorgany."

Interviews with both the employees and the manager, before the commencement of the needs assessment, revealed that Mahorgany received approximately 50 customers every week. Thus, along with the manager, it was decided that 15 respondents would provide insights representative of Mahorgany's customer base. Out of Mahorgany's three employees, two were interviewed based on availability. Additionally, one out of the two managers were interviewed. The interview guide for the various groups can be found in appendix 1, 2, and 3.

2.2.2 Observations

To properly understand the processes and procedures that Mahorgany undertakes to provide their service, observations were made. Observations are the process of utilizing all the senses being sight, feeling, sound, and smell to gather information about a place, event, or people (Flick, 2009). This method allows one to assess processes and document what is occurring. This is a suitable approach for a needs assessment at Mahorgany as it will give the researcher the ability to document the processes. This helped to identify the non-valuing adding time that leads to long food serving time. During the needs assessment, the food order time as against when the order is received, and the process the employees went through to provide the service was recorded.

The observations were performed by documenting the processes from when the restaurant opens in the morning to prepare for the day, through the time when the restaurant opens to the public to offer their services, till when the last customer is served, and Mahorgany is closed. Mahorgany was observed on both the weekdays and weekends to highlight any differences. This process helped in understanding the current situation at Mahorgany while aiding the researcher in identifying blind spots that were not mentioned in the interviews. The observation guide can be found in appendix 4.

2.3 Key Findings

This section of chapter two will address the findings derived from the various methods used for data collection. The needs assessment conducted provided a good understanding of the overall service process that Mahorgany goes through to provide value to customers. The service blueprint in figure 3 below throws light on how

Mahorgany interacts with and provides its services to customers. Furthermore, mapping this out helped in identifying the gaps that contribute to the low level of customer satisfaction experienced by Mahorgany's customer base.

2.3.1. Overall Findings

Mahorgany was observed to be an outdoor restaurant with an informal, casual ambiance. The establishment is eco-friendly as they chose to use bio-degradable items for packaging meals. Due to its outdoor location in the mall, the sitting area for customers tends to be very sunny, leading to the customers feeling hot and uncomfortable.

Despite the issues recorded in this paper, there are merits of being a customer of Mahorgany. The interviews with the 15 respondents also shed light on the reasons customers love Mahorgany. There were three running themes identified to be the main reasons customers chose Mahorgany. They include cleanliness and good presentation, convenient location, and the mere fact that Mahorgany is a vegan restaurant. Out of the 15 respondents, 33.33% commended Mahorgany and its employees on cleanliness and hygiene. They also stated that the kitchen area was always clean, and the food served was adequately presented.

Additionally, 33.33% of respondents acknowledged Mahorgany's convenient location at ANC. The location was considered convenient because it provides a suitable hangout spot after work where customers are allowed to enjoy their leisure with friends. Also, 66.67% expressed their love for Mahorgany simply because it was vegan and provided healthy fresh food.

Mahorgany has a small employee base with only three employees, usually running a two-person shift. On some days, all three employees work simultaneously on one shift. These servers are limited in their interactions with customers. Beyond taking orders, serving food, providing bills, and collecting payment, not much goes into interactions with customers. The employees never call out or try to sell Mahorgany to people walking by the restaurant, nor do they welcome already existing customers with smiles. From the interviews, 66.67% of 15 respondents described Mahorgany to have mediocre customer service, with employees lacking the eagerness to wait and a smile.

From the observations carried out at Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd, the average time a customer spent waiting for their order to be served was 22 minutes and 15 seconds. Out of 16 orders observed, 62.50% were found to be served within 15 to 30 minutes, while 25% of were served under 15 minutes; however, it is essential to note that these were all finger foods that were ready to be sold, such as tofu kebabs and pies. This time was typically for re-heating and packaging the finger foods.

2.3.2. Findings from Interviews

This section provides a summary of the key insights derived from interviews with the manager, employees, and customers. Insights were broadly related to menu, customer service, and food serving time. The bar chart below gives an overview of the key themes identified from these interviews, showing the percentage of respondents that found them to affect the level of satisfaction experienced.
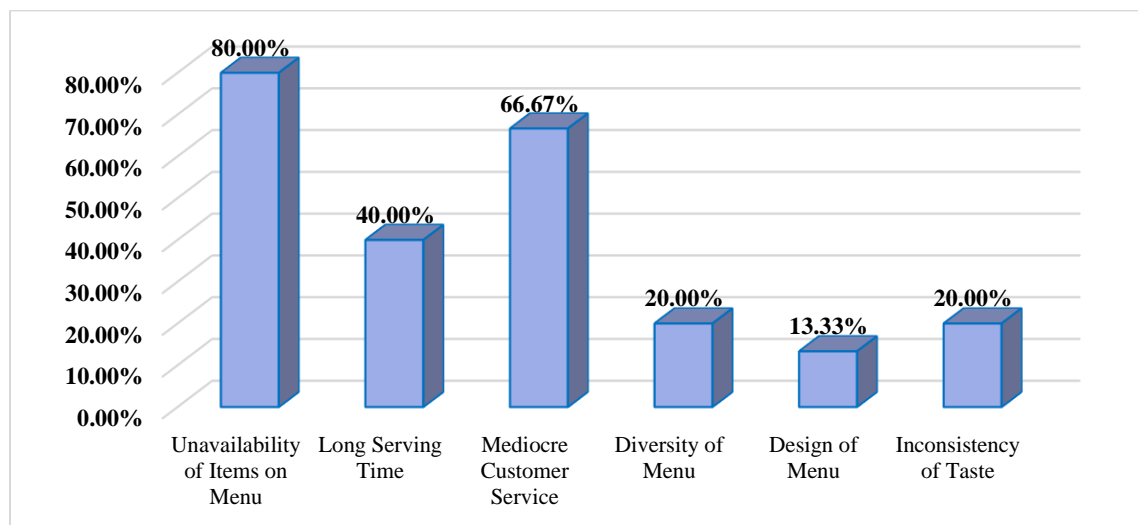
Figure 1. Key Problems Identified at Mahorgany Health Foods Limited

From the chart above in figure 1, the most pressing issues affecting customer satisfaction for Mahorgany are the unavailability of menu items and mediocre customer service and long serving time. Problems related to the menu besides unavailability of menu items include the diversity of the menu, design of the menu, and inconsistency of taste.

Menu

An issue that 80% of respondents acknowledged in their interviews was the unavailability of items on the menu. These respondents revealed that they had experienced their heart sinking at least once or every visit to Mahorgany because the meal they wanted to eat was not available. When describing her worst experience at Mahorgany, a respondent expressed her excitement in celebrating her birthday at Mahorgany. She had the mindset of changing the perception of her friends concerning veganism and vegetarianism since they likened such food to "grass." However, due to the

unavailability of many menu items, the birthday celebration was moved to Honeysuckle, another restaurant at AnC. They serve a range of variety of meals, including ones that contain meat, which made her birthday less fulfilling than it could have been.

Many interviewees mentioned that more items tend to be unavailable after 5 pm. It appears that Mahorgany does not plan properly on how to meet demand. Firstly, some items are almost never available, whereas those that tend to be available do not always make it past 5 pm. This leads to inconsistencies in providing their service.

Three respondents complained that the menu was not diverse enough. However, further questioning revealed that if Mahorgany provided nearly every item on the menu, it would feel more varied. Thus, the unavailability of items gives off a feeling of limitedness, thus making the menu appear not diverse. Nevertheless, 20% of respondents believe that a more diverse menu containing more local dishes would provide more options and heighten their overall experience at Mahorgany.

The employees of Mahorgany noted that the relocation from a store with about 40 square meters of space to an outdoor kiosk of 7.5 square meters limited the amount of kitchen space they owned. Some necessary Kitchen equipment could not be brought in from the larger space because they would not fit well in the small kiosk leading to them lacking the equipment to prepare certain dishes. The lack of equipment affected the variety of dishes they could make.

Furthermore, the employees revealed that some meals from the menu, when cooked, do not sell during the day. When the meal is made, no one would order it during the day. However, on days that such meals are not prepared, customers tend to order for

them. In an attempt to limit losses and the level of food wasted, the employees make only the meals they have observed to sell daily.

Interestingly, 13.33 % of respondents felt as though a menu with pictures would properly communicate the menu to customers. One participant mentioned that he was unaware that rice was available on the menu. The other respondents also indicated that it would be preferred to have the ingredients of a meal to be listed underneath each item on the menu. This would be helpful for customers to easily identify ingredients they do not prefer or are allergic to, to ask for them to be removed or replaced.

Out of 15 respondents, 20% complained of experiencing inconsistency in the taste of the food. On some days, they described the food quality to be heavenly, whereas, on other occasions, it was "just okay." This is a result of the change in the shift of the staff. On each day, a different employee prepares the meals. Lack of a precise and documented receive is the major contributor to this issue.

Long-Serving Time and Mediocre Customer Service

Out of the 15 respondents, 66.67% of the respondents described Mahorgany to have mediocre customer service. Many complained that the eagerness to wait and a smile were missing from the employees when they visited. The average rating of the customers' customer service experience was 5/10.

An interview with the manager revealed that out of the three employees, two of them went through training for a period of two to three weeks. The third employee had been with Mahorgany since the beginning. Thus, the already existing employee, along with the chef (who no longer works at Mahorgany), took the two employees through

training. This indicates that the employees lack the skill and experience that comes with

being trained by experienced professionals on how to handle customers in their line of

business. This accounts for their mediocre performance.

From observations, it was noticed that the same employees that arrive at 8 am to

prepare the meals, and officially open to the public at 9 am, also close Mahorgany at 8

pm. This means that employees work 12 hours per shift. Additionally, interviews revealed

that employees worked six days a week, indicating that they worked 72 hours a week.

This is one of the reasons employees offer mediocre service. Interviews with employees

revealed that living far from Mahorgany made this worse, as commuting to and from

work demanded more of their already limited personal time. An employee working 12

hours a day will be focused on conserving energy to make it to the end of the shift rather

than to make small talk with customers and have a smile plastered on their faces all day.

The mediocre customer service is closely related to the long-serving time. With a

better-trained staff that works for fewer hours, employees would be quicker in delivering

food to customers. The interviews revealed that approximately 40% of respondents

complained that order serving time was too long. Further questioning revealed that

generally, both Ghanaians and foreigners have set their standards low because of

experiences in the restaurant industry in Ghana. Respondents acknowledged spending a

more significant amount of time waiting for food to be ready at other restaurants. It was

insightful to notice that the respondents who found that the orders took too long to be

served, seemed to come around peak hours. From observations and interviews with all

groups of stakeholders, Mahorgany's peak times are after 5 pm every day, with the

extreme peak times occurring mainly on Friday nights. Respondents who came around

during the peak hours expressed high levels of frustration in the amount of time it took to receive their orders. An interview with the manager also revealed that, in extreme cases, customers have left due to this frustration.

An interview with employees also revealed that ANC experienced low electrical current on numerous occasions. Since Mahorgany uses an electric stove, the low current reduces the effectiveness of the electric stove, thus heating at a higher temperature than it should. This contributes to why the food takes longer to prepare. This happens to be worse when it occurs at peak times.

Although some customers may be content with the long-serving time because it is "normal" in Ghana, the manager is unhappy with the timing seeing as the food is already prepared and only needs to be heated and served.

2.4 Ishikawa Diagram

In figure 2 below, the three critical problems identified from the restaurant are visually represented using an Ishikawa diagram, also known as a fishbone diagram, to help map out the cause and effects of each significant problem identified. The Ishikawa diagram is used to visually show the cause and effect, whether material, method, machine or manpower, of customer service or any other problem at Mahorgany. According to Render, Griffin, and Heizer (2011), a fishbone diagram is a tool used to aid one in discovering the cause(s) of quality issues. Mahorgany has problems with the service quality it offers to its customers, which affects the level of customer satisfaction. Out of the 15 respondents, 80%, 66.67%, and 40% noted that the unavailability of menu items, mediocre customer service, and prolonged food serving time, respectively, were the

aspects of Mahorgany's service quality that negatively affected the level of satisfaction

they experienced. Hence, this tool is used to depict the three major problems identified at

Mahorgany, along with their causes, which provides a better understanding of the

different aspects that feed into low customer satisfaction at Mahorgany.
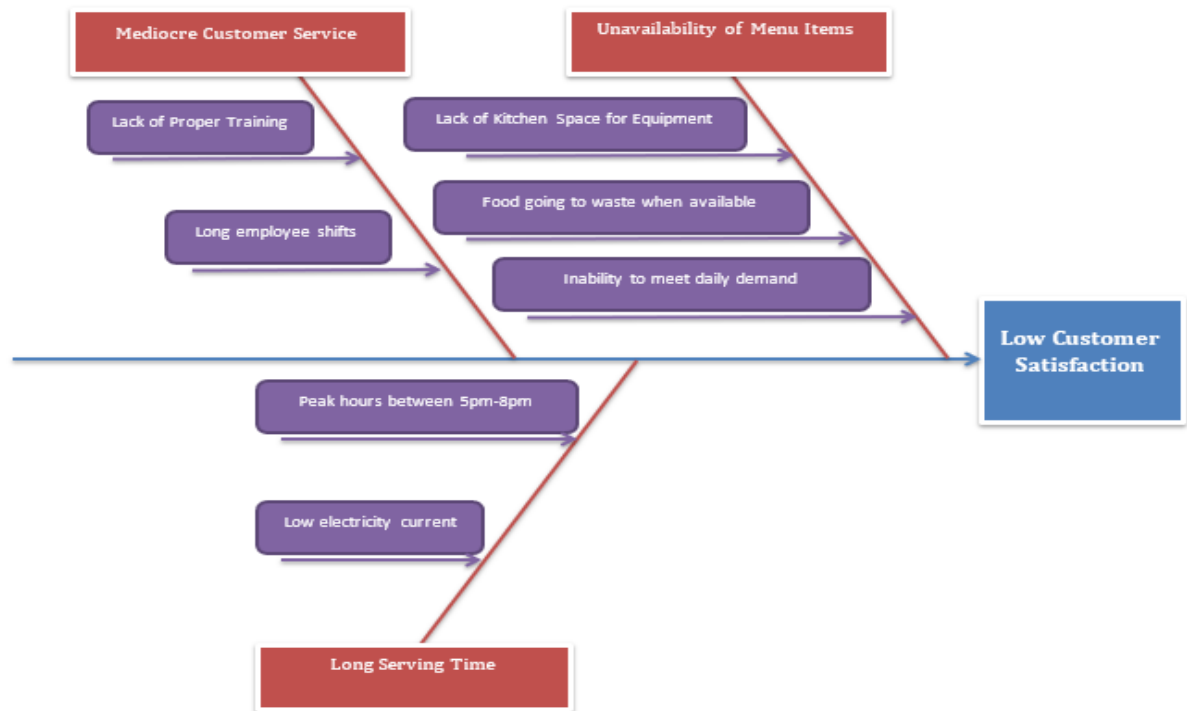
Figure 2. Ishikawa Diagram for Key Problems Identified at Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd

From the diagram above, it appears that mediocre customer service is a people

problem. The issue arises due to people or manpower. Management did not plan proper

employee shifts that ensure efficiency; neither did they ensure adequate training of staff.

The staff does not provide excellent customer service, not because they choose to, but

simply because they do not know how to.

A mixture of method and machine causes the long-serving time that is experienced. The machines used are susceptible to low performance when there are power fluctuations. Additionally, the current procedure or method does not allow the process of serving to be quick and efficient.

The unavailability of menu items is also due to method and machine. Due to the lack of machines in the small kitchen space, Mahorgany is not able to provide as many menu items as they would like to. Also, the current method or procedure in place for ordering food leads to under or oversupply of food, which leaves customers unhappy or leads to food wastage, respectively.

Thus, the fundamental problems that will be addressed in this paper will be the unavailability of menu items, mediocre customer service relating to poor employee attitude, and prolonged food serving time.

2.5 Service Blueprinting

A service blueprint was used to analyze the way Mahorgany interacts with and provides its services to customers. Service blueprinting is a technique popularly used in analyzing processes of an organization, with a critical focus on how the service providers interact with their customers (Render, Griffin, Heizer, 2011). As such, this tool aided in identifying the gaps and areas that need to be modified to deliver higher service quality.
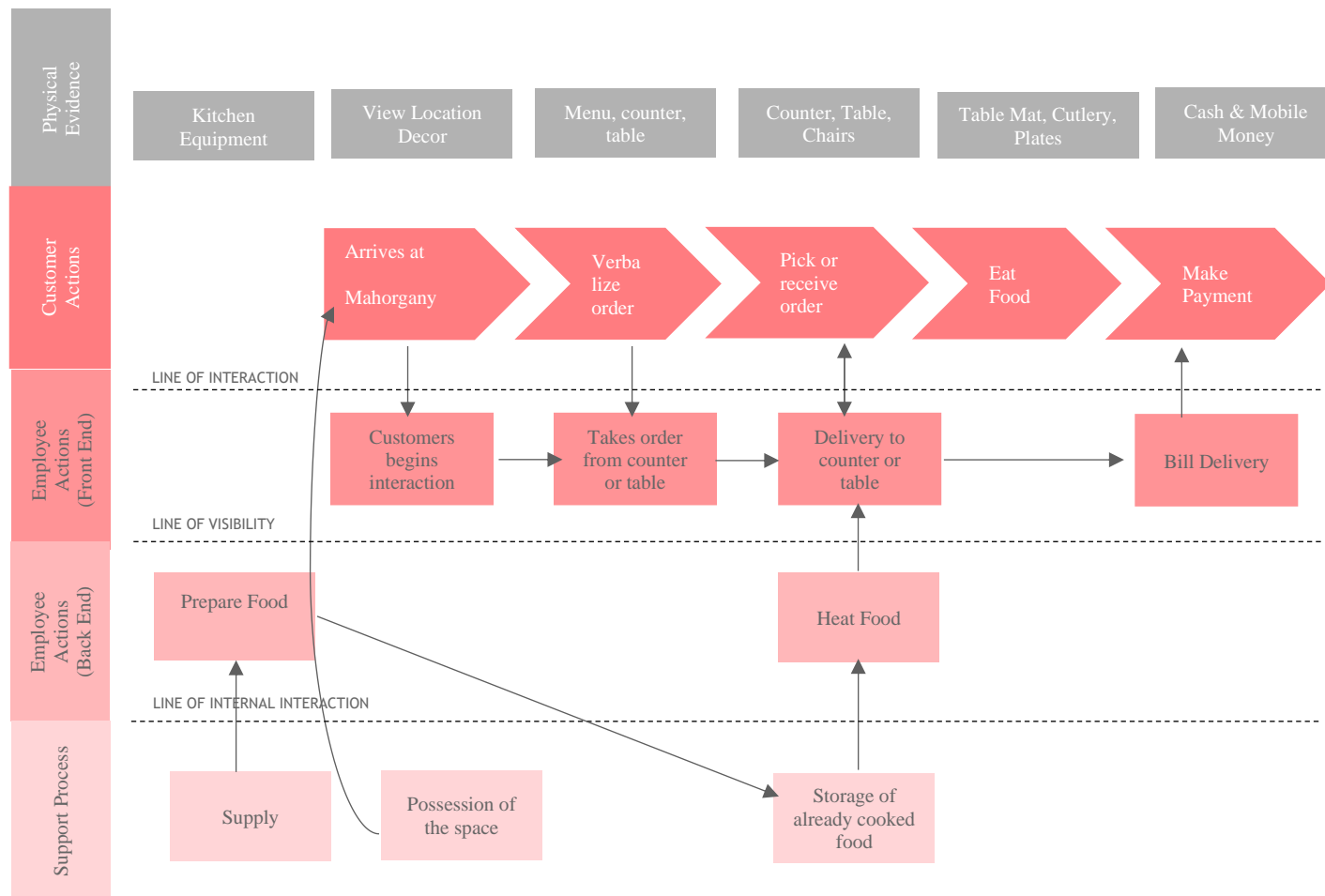
Figure 3. Existing Service Blueprint of Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd

From the service blueprint, it is shown that Mahorgany prepares meals before the

arrival of any customers. Employees show up before opening hours to prepare meals for

customers. Once a customer arrives, they begin the interaction at the counter. Mostly,

orders are taken from the counter. In a few instances, the employees walk to tables to

collect orders. Many times, menu items tend to be unavailable. One gap in Mahorgany's

service is menu item unavailability, which is caused by the lack of kitchen space to house

all equipment necessary for the preparation of meals. It is also caused by the inability to

sell food prepared during the day. When customers want certain meals food, they are

unavailable, but when they are prepared and made available, no one orders it, leading to wastage.

When orders are unavailable, employees motion to customers to come to the counter where customers are informed that the menu item is unavailable. The employees do not ask customers their preference, nor do they suggest another meal in such instances. An interview with a customer revealed that she had no idea that Mahorgany sold full meals; all she knew were finger foods. Employees lack the skill, care, and remorse that comes with handling disappointed customers. This causes another gap in Mahorgany's service, being poor employee attitude. This gap is caused by a lack of proper employee training and long working hours.

Next, the pre-prepared meals are heated on an electric stove. Seeing as meals are pre-prepared before customers arrive, the time it takes for meals to be heated and served is thought to be time-consuming, causing a gap in Mahorgany's service. This mostly occurs during the peak hours of 5 pm – 8 pm on Fridays. Aside from this, the gap inefficient time use when serving food is caused by low electricity current experienced at ANC Mall. The long working hours of an employee lead to burnouts, which also contribute to the long serving time.

Next, when orders are ready, customers are motioned to come for collection and payment at the counter when it is finger food or takeaway orders. Full meals that are eaten at Mahorgany are typically served to customers, and the bill brought to the table. Customers then pay at the counter on their way out.

Thus, the gaps in customer service, serving time, and menu availability contribute to the low level of customer satisfaction experienced by Mahorgany's customer base.

2.6 Additional Findings

Poor Advertisement

From personal experience with the service and interviews with employees, it was noticed that Mahorgany seriously lacks good advertisement. Two respondents, 13.37% of the total number, mentioned that he found Mahorgany by chance while leisurely walking around the ANC Mall, whereas another found it through googling "Vegan restaurants in Accra." One respondent mentioned that he had been coming to ANC Mall for years but never knew there was a vegan restaurant in the building. The participant also said that the international community had a broader market of vegetarian and vegan people than the Ghanaian society. Thus, more work towards advertisement would surely attract a large customer base. During his interview is when another respondent found out that Mahorgany was a vegan place. He thought the tofu kebab Mahorgany sold was chicken kebab.

2.7 Justification for Problem selection

Exceptional service leads to higher satisfaction, which results in customer loyalty and improves the perception customers have of the firm. (Hwang and Lambert, 2006). Thus, improving the profitability of a firm. The needs assessment conducted for Mahorgany revealed that the primary reason customers patronize Mahorgany is that it is one of the few vegan and vegetarian restaurants in Accra. The emergence of new entrants into the vegan industry with better service quality will be a threat to Mahorgany if their service quality is not improved. It is, therefore, crucial for Mahorgany to establish its place in the industry by addressing these critical elements related to customer

satisfaction: inconsistency with the menu, food serving time, and customer service. This will increase customer satisfaction and, in turn, brand loyalty, resulting in improved profitability.

2.8 Problem Statement

Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd, which began operations in 2016, provides fresh and healthy vegan and vegetarian food to its customers. It is among the few vegan and vegetarian restaurants in the country, thus providing a differentiated product to the market. Despite the delicious and healthy meals it offers to its customers, Mahorgany faces recurring service quality issues surrounding the availability of menu items, customer service, and food serving time that leads to long waiting times. This has contributed to the low level of customer satisfaction among their client base.

2.9 Chapter Conclusion

The findings from the needs assessment pointed to low customer satisfaction at Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd due to recurring issues surrounding the availability of menu items, customer service, and long-serving time. The rest of this paper will focus on developing a solution that will improve customer satisfaction. The next chapter will use literature to show how the recurring issues mentioned earlier contribute to the level of customer satisfaction. It will also provide details on conceptual frameworks that will guide in developing the solution.

CHAPTER THREE: MASTERY OF SUBJECT MATTER

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will focus on understanding service quality and the role it plays in the food industry, particularly in the vegan industry. It will also elaborate on information and tools Mahorgany can use to enhance the level of customer satisfaction experienced by its client base. The information will be gathered through a literature review of articles and publications focused on the role of customer service and service quality in customer satisfaction in the restaurant industry. It will also address possible conceptual frameworks and various models that could be leveraged to improve the efficiency of processes in delivering services in restaurants.

3.2 Outcomes of Customer Satisfaction on Restaurants

Customer satisfaction is the result of comparing one's expectations to one's perceived performance of a product or service (Lahap, Azlan, Bahri, Said, Abdullah & Zain, 2018). It can also be defined as the degree to which a product or service is made to meet customer expectations (Institute of Customer Service, 2017b).

Customer Loyalty

There exists a positive relationship between customer loyalty and profitability of an organization (Bowen & Chen, 2001). According to research by Reichheld and Sasser (1990), companies that can retain 5% more of its customers are likely to experience a 25% to 125% increase in profits. Bowen and Chen (2001) also found that an increase in

one unit of customer satisfaction leads to an over 100% increase in customer loyalty and vice versa. Lahap et al. (2018) explain that customer loyalty is a "manifestation of customer satisfaction." This shows that a small increase in the level of customer satisfaction in a restaurant could lead to remarkably high increases in customer loyalty, which will ultimately result in repeat customers and higher customer retention.

Word of Mouth

Sabir, Ghafoor, Hafeez, Akhtar, and Rehman (2014) describes the word of mouth to be an informal form of communication between a customer and his/her friends or family. Positive word of mouth promotes a product or service in the market while portraying a positive image of the business in society. Thus, it results in the arrival of new customers, thus increasing the customer base and improving profitability.

3.3 The Effect of Customer Service on Customer Satisfaction

Customer service includes the identifiable, but sometimes intangible, activities undertaken by businesses that result in value generation for customers (Berman, & Evans, 2007). It is also described as the efforts or activities of a company geared towards meeting customer expectations and producing customer satisfaction (Institute of Customer Service, 2017a). Yarimoglu (2011) describes it to be the tangible or intangible value-increasing activities by an organization directly related to products or services to meet customer expectations and provide customer satisfaction and loyalty, directly or indirectly. From these descriptions, it is noted that weak or exceptional customer service will affect the level of satisfaction a customer faces. Based on a study by Yarimoglu

(2011), customer service accounts for 13.9% of the differences in the level of customer satisfaction, thus stating that customer service does affect customer satisfaction but not by a significant amount. Although it has little impact, it still has an effect and is therefore necessary for improving customer satisfaction. Yarimoglu (2011) notes that other tools such as service quality, product variety, product quality, among others, have an effect (a possibly higher one) on the level of customer satisfaction than customer service.

3.4 Long Waiting Times and Customer Satisfaction

Generally, the level of customer satisfaction tends to reduce when the whole dining experience is felt to be too slow or too fast (Noone, Kimes, Mattila, & Wirtz, 2007). Noone et al. (2007) also find that customers are particularly sensitive to the pace of the meal itself. Based on a study by Bielen and Demoulin (2007), waiting time satisfaction has a direct influence on customer satisfaction. Long waiting times can reduce customer loyalty, which makes sense that many customers tend to be loyal to fast-food restaurants (Bielen & Demoulin, 2007). Interestingly, although the long waiting time is known to reduce the level of customer satisfaction and customer evaluations of restaurants, it is the perceived wait time of the customers and not actual wait time that has the most significant effect on customer satisfaction (Noone et al., 2007). Therefore, restaurants can use mechanisms to make waiting times appear less timely.

From a study conducted by Hwang and Lambert (2006), it was revealed that customers deemed waiting times to be satisfactory if it is below 15 minutes and 18 seconds, whereas unsatisfactory and very unsatisfactory waiting times are approximately below 23 minutes and 42 seconds, and 34 minutes and 24 seconds, respectively. The

study used a questionnaire to capture what the customers deemed as the adequate wait

time for the six service stage in a casual restaurant. For the greet, seat, order, service,

check, and pay stages, respondents were asked how many minutes would contribute to a

satisfactory, unsatisfactory, and very unsatisfactory wait. The study used a sample of 270

respondents, with 125 being males and 142 being females, with the mean age being 38.

The focus for Mahorgany would be serving to wait, because greeting, ordering, checking,

and paying happened typically immediately over the counter. The findings of this study,

with some adjustments, guided the researcher in the construction of table 2 below. This

was used to measure the level of service quality with regards to food serving time at

Mahorgany.

Table 2

Rating for Food Serving Time.

Level	Service Quality	Signals
1	Good	Food is prepared under 15 minutes
2	Medium	Food is prepared between 15 – 30 minutes
3	Weak	Food is prepared over 30 minutes

From observations carried out at Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd, it was concluded

that the average food serving time for a customer at Mahorgany was typically considered

to be medium quality. Out of 16 orders being observed, 62.5% were found to be medium

service quality, meaning that food is generally produced within 15 to 30 minutes. 25% of

the observations were deemed to be good, meaning prepared under 15 minutes; however,

it is essential to note that these were all finger foods that were ready to be sold, such as tofu kebabs and pies. The observations recorded orders of 10-15 minutes, which were only used to heat the finger foods. Only 12.50% were considered to be weak.
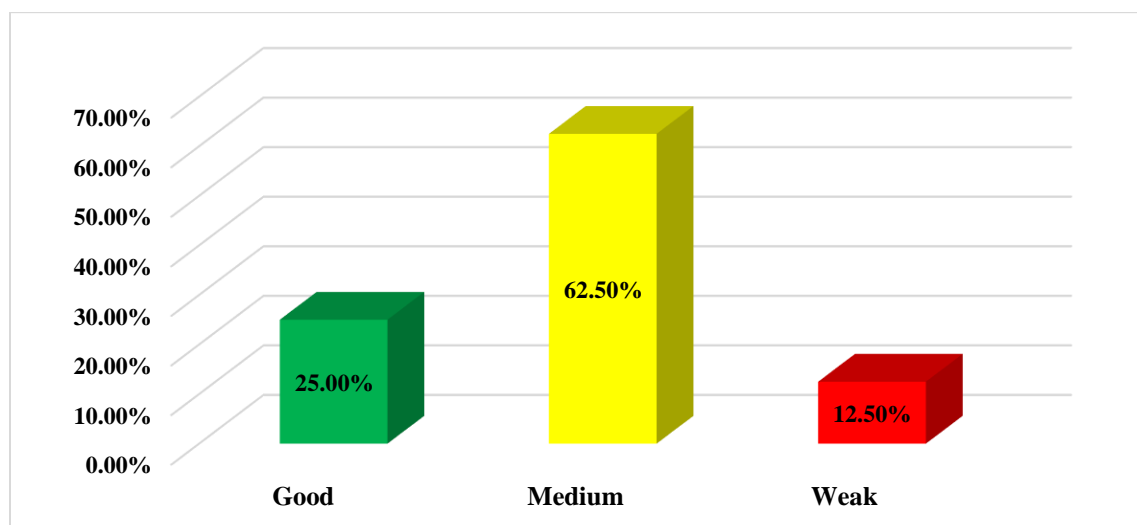
Figure 4. Level of Service Quality Regarding Food Serving Time from Observations

The chart above summarizes the level of service quality offered regarding food serving time from observations of 16 orders at Mahorgany. Thus, Mahorgany provides a medium to good service quality regarding serving time. Ideally, this would not be an issue; however, because Mahorgany's service blueprint (see figure 3) indicates that food is pre-prepared before the customer arrives at Mahorgany, the waiting time is too long considering that the time is used for only heating and dishing food.

3.5 The role of Service Quality in Customer Satisfaction

Service quality plays a vital role in the success of many service industry businesses, such as restaurants. Customers who feel satisfied are known to return to the service provider and remain loyal, which are essential profit drivers for firms (Hwang and

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Lambert, 2006). Customers who experience perceptions of a service exceeding their

expectations are deemed to be satisfied (Hwang and Lambert, 2006).

3.6 Service Quality Models

3.6.1 DINESERV Model

The DINESERV model, derived from the SERVQUAL model, is an instrument used

to measure service quality in the restaurant industry. The SERVQUAL model, popularly

referred to as the "Gaps model," is an instrument used to measure service quality by

comparing customer expectations as opposed to their perception of a service delivered

(Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). While the SERVQUAL model is used in

unearthing any short-comings that may be present in companies in the service industry,

the DINESERV model narrows it down to the restaurant industry. The DINESERV model

is made of 29 variables, which are grouped into five main service quality areas (Hansen,

2014; Marković, Raspor, & Šegarić, 2010).

◈ Tangibility: This refers to the physical facilities aspects of a restaurant's service

quality provided. It evaluates the physical design of a restaurant as well as the

appearance of staff and overall cleanliness. This dimension is made up of ten

variables and considers ones such as physical facilities, equipment, areas, and

appearance of personnel.

◈ Reliability: This evaluates a restaurant in terms of the freshness and temperature

of the food, accurate billing, and receiving ordered food. It compromises five

variables, including the correctness of information provided and the reliability of

the restaurant and service providers.

◈ Responsiveness: This appraises a restaurant based on the staff's ability to assist with the menu or wine list as well as the promptness in response to customers' needs and requests. This is measured using three variables, including the willingness or readiness of employees to help customers and provide prompt service.

◈ Assurance: This looks at the level of trust and confidence a customer puts in a restaurant with regards to recommendations by staff and hygiene. This dimension comprises of five variables, including the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence.

◈ Empathy: This evaluates how well a restaurant is providing personalized attention to customers by anticipating special dietary requirements or by being sympathetic towards customers' problems. This dimension comprises of six variables, such as caring, individualized attention, among others

Based on a study by Diab et al. (2016), four of the DINESERV variables, being assurance, empathy, tangibility, and reliability, are positively influenced by customer satisfaction. Thus, by working towards improving the variables that directly affect customer satisfaction, a company can improve its profitability. If Mahorgany can enhance any of these variables, customer satisfaction will be heightened.

3.6.2. Hierarchical Service Quality Model

This model has three primary dimensions of service quality, interaction, environment, and outcome, which are broken further into three subdimensions, as shown in the diagram in figure 5 below. Customers' perceptions of each dimension sum up the

overall perception of service quality of a business (Brady & Cronin, 2001). The

combination of aspects of four existing models, being the SERVQUAL model by

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), the Nordic model by Grönroos (1984), the

Three-Component model by Rust and Oliver (1994) and the Multilevel model by

Dabholkar, Thorpe, and Rentz (1996), form the Hierarchical Service Quality model

(Brady & Cronin, 2001). The three primary dimensions of service quality in the

Hierarchical Service Quality Model are:

❖ *Interaction Quality*

This dimension looks at the intangible aspects of the service provided by a firm. It

tends to have the most significant effect on a customer's perception of service quality

(Brady & Cronin, 2001). In other words, it evaluates customer-employee interaction

and can be described to be "the key element in a service exchange" (Brady & Cronin,

2001). Attitude, behavior, and expertise form the three subdimensions of this

dimension.

❖ *Physical or Service Environment Quality*

This dimension is broken into subdimensions of ambient conditions, design, and

social factors. Services often require the customer to present while the process of

production is occurring; thus, this dimension focuses on aspects of the service that

relate to the physical environment where the means of production occurs.

❖ *Outcome Quality*

This dimension is described to be the end product that customers receive once the

production process is over (Brady & Cronin, 2001). Thus, it is the primary determinant in

a customer's perception of service quality. This dimension is further broken down into

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three subdimensions; waiting time, tangibles, and valence, which all feed into the

customer's perception of service quality regarding the end product.
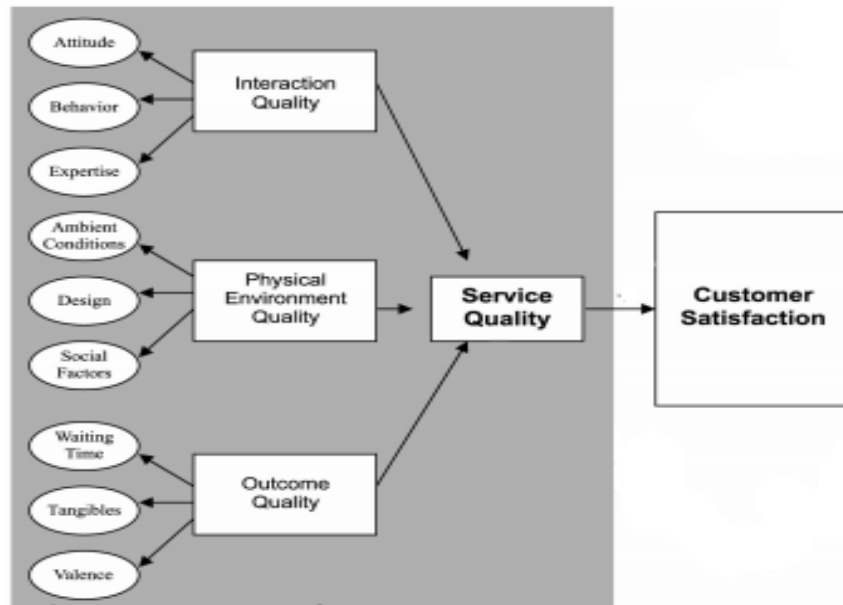
Figure 5. The Hierarchical Service Quality Model

Source: Brady & Cronin (2001)

3.7 Service Mapping Models

3.7.1 Service Blueprint

Service blueprints are the most customer-focused process-oriented design tools

that allow businesses to visualize their service processes and points of customer contact

from the point of view of a customer (Bitner, Ostrom, & Morgan, 2008). It also

visualizes how the back end and supporting processes connect and link to front end

actions to support customer-focused service execution (Bitner, Ostrom, & Morgan, 2008).

The key features of a service blueprint include; physical evidence, customer

actions, employee actions front-end, employee actions back end, and supporting

processes (Gounaris et al., 2012). An example of a service blueprint, along with its

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components, can be found in figure 6. Service blueprinting is valuable in an organization

because it aids in differentiating between the front end and the back end and supporting

activities while providing managers with the opportunity to pinpoint sensitive areas that

could pose a significant risk to an organization (Hossain, Enam, & Farhana, 2017). It is

particularly helpful in the case of Mahogany as it aids in evaluating the current

procedure regarding customer-related interactions, which will allow problem areas to

surface. This will help in developing a solution to improve customer service with a re-

designed service blueprint that will improve how employees relate with customers,

thereby increasing customer satisfaction.
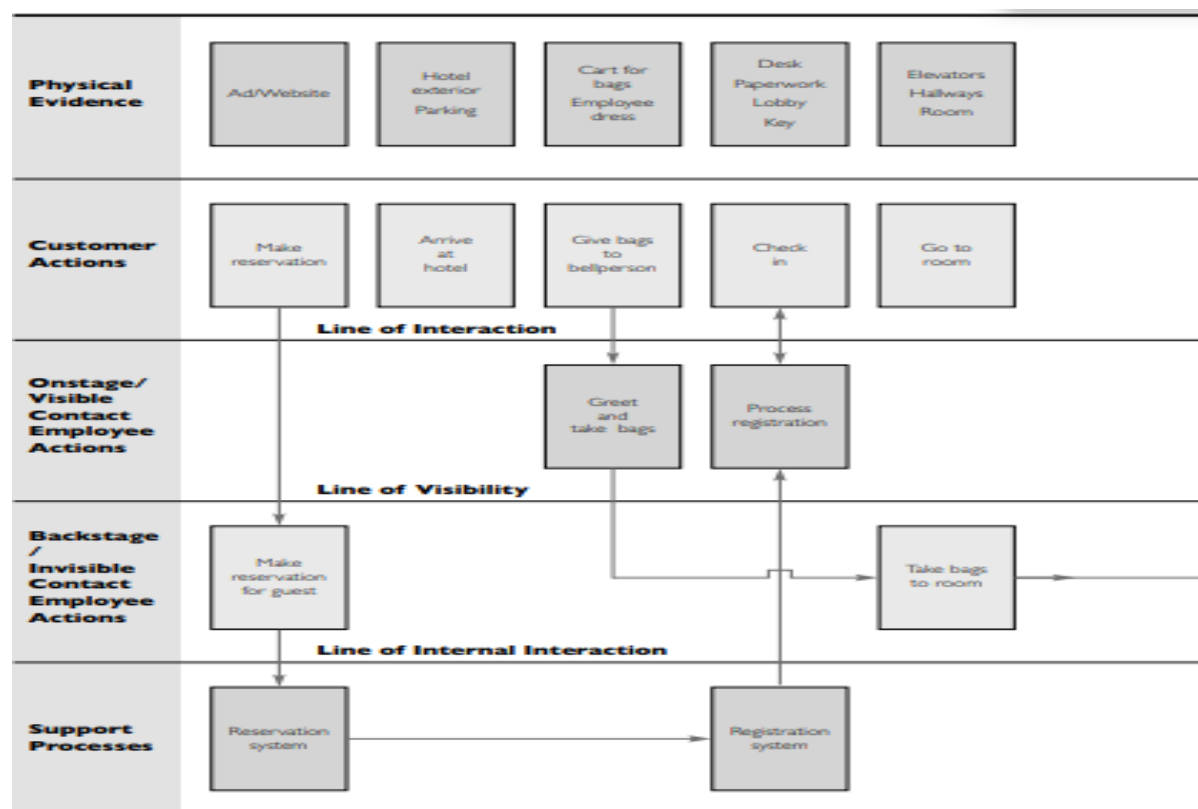
Figure 6. Example of a Service Blueprint

Source: Bitner, Ostrom, & Morgan (2008)

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3.7.1 Flowcharts

A flowchart is a graphical representation of service or manufacturing processes

and uses symbols to depict meaning as a way of forming a logical sequence of events,

which aid in defining, analyzing, or solving a problem (Rodrigues, 2010). Flowcharts

communicate how processes occur and improve one's understanding of a process.

(Verma, 2015). Due to this, people can discover problem areas that should be adjusted for

a more efficient and effective process (Verma, 2015).
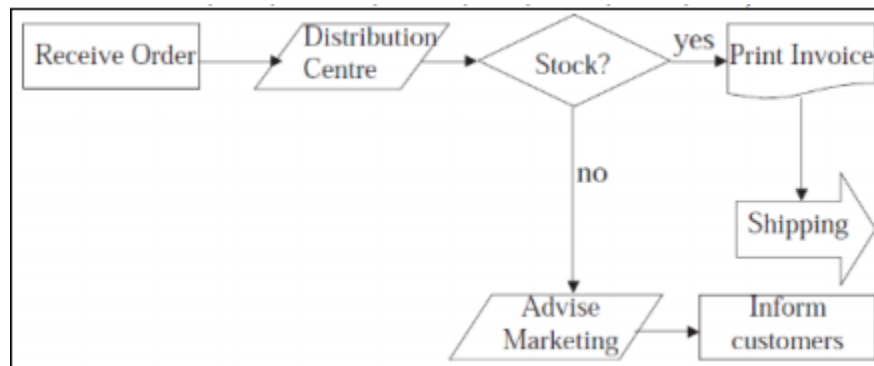
*Figure 7.*Example of a Flowchart

Source: Rodrigues (2010)

Flow charts are handy in making sense of a process; thus, it is well suited to

analyzing short-comings in a process. They provide the easiest communication tool for

services. However, they prove to be cumbersome when creating or modifying. Although a

flowchart would have been useful in defining, analyzing, and solving the problem in

Mahorgany, it lacks the demarcation between front-end and back-end that comes with

service blueprinting. Due to these characteristics of the service blueprint, it is more

customer-centric, which makes it beneficial in addressing customer satisfaction; a purely

customer-related problem at Mahorgany.

CHAPTER FOUR: SOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will describe in detail the solution that best addresses the problem of low customer satisfaction, as discovered at Mahorgany. It will do so by addressing the causes of the three main contributors to low customer satisfaction, as shown in the fishbone diagram in figure 2 of chapter two. Additionally, the section will delineate an implementation plan mapping out the necessary processes Mahorgany needs to follow to adopt the proposed solution successfully. In this chapter, the selected model that guided the solution will be discussed with regards to the reasons for selection and its benefits regarding the solution.

4.2 Goals of Mahorgany

The main goal of Mahorgany Health Foods Limited is to be the leading healthy lifestyle brand in Ghana. The company hopes to achieve this by opening more branches and by maintaining a high level of quality service.

4.3 Proposed Solution

The three areas identified as contributing to the problem are complex and interconnected. The proposed solution considers this complexity and consists of different aspects that together address the problem holistically. Figure 8 below shows the various aspects of the solution and how they are connected to the three areas noted.
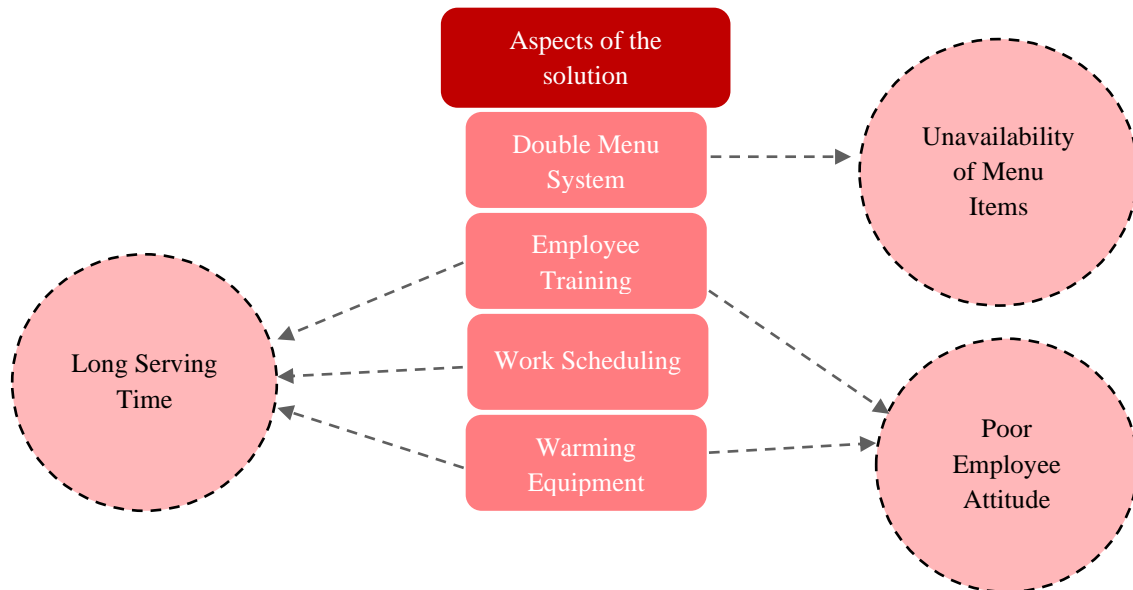
Figure 8. Aspects of the proposed solution

The proposed solution required remodeling Mahorgany's current service blueprint. A service blueprint is used because it is customer-centric. Thus, it will be used to address the underlying causes of low customer satisfaction at Mahorgany in an entirely customer-focused way, which will improve the quality of service offered. Also, the service blueprint can be adapted in any of the branches that would be opened in the future. This will help aid Mahorgany to become the leading healthy lifestyle brand in Ghana. The service blueprint found in figure 9 below is an update to the one constructed in chapter two using data from the needs assessment. It details the interactions between Mahorgany and its customers while delivering services. The boxes in the color green represent the modifications made to the existing service blueprint to tackle the three issues that contribute to the low level of customer satisfaction experienced by

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Mahorgany's customer base, which includes; poor employee attitude, long food serving time, and, and unavailability of menu items.

The discussion following details the variations from the current way of doing things as indicated on the service blueprint and discusses how these will help tackle the three issues identified as causing low customer satisfaction. Note that the boxes labeled "Employees Welcome Customers," "Take order from Counter," and "Delivery to the table" fall under the collective name of "Employee Training" in figure 9 above. Each speaks on essential practices to improve attitude and is linked to employee training.
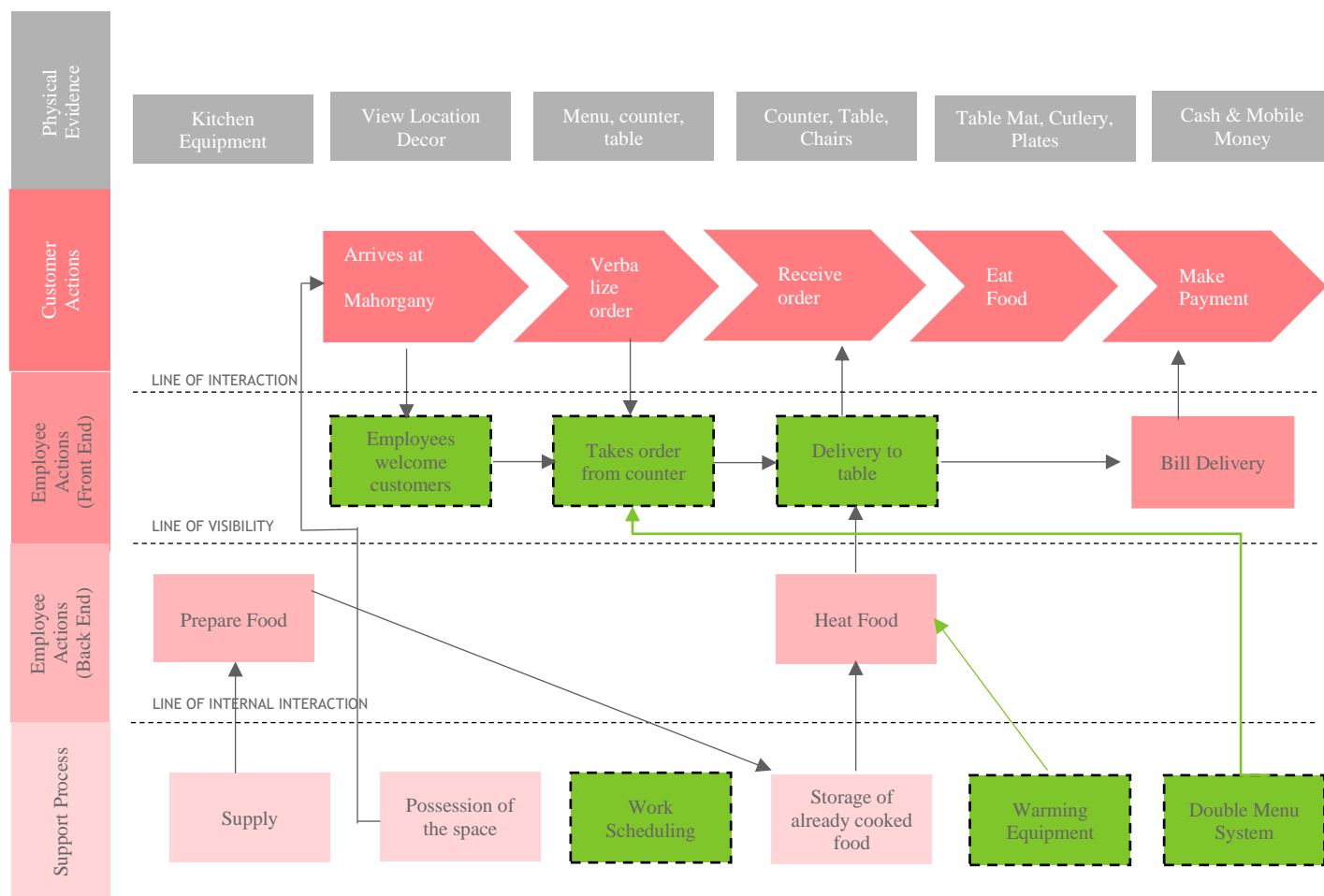
Figure 9. Proposed service blueprint of Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd

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Employees Welcome Customers

Empirical evidence and research by human resource personnel have shown that training is the key to high-performance human resource management (Lee, 2012). Training offers a variety of benefits to an organization by improving the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees while facilitating participation, self-determination, and teamwork (Lee, 2012). Thus, the proper training of employees in their necessary fields will improve their overall performance and productivity. Hence, the staff at Mahorgany should be adequately trained by professionals. Although it may attract costs, the improved service is bound to improve customer satisfaction and, as such, brand loyalty, which will work to increase the client base at Mahorgany.

A study by Diab et al. (2016) concluded that assurance and empathy of the DINESERV model for, rank the top two most important factors that influence the level customers' satisfaction of a restaurant's service quality. Assurance is defined as "the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence." Thus, the training program must teach employees to portray confidence, empathy, and trustworthiness.

Although training will be hosted by professionals, the following are vital practices that should be incorporated into the daily processes at Mahorgany as they are the customers' preferences as gathered during the needs assessment.

When a customer approaches Mahorgany, they should be welcomed by the employees with a greeting and smile. The menu should be offered, and employees should inquire about what the customers feel like eating, to make well-informed suggestions that would be helpful and time-effective for the customer. This will contribute to improving

the responsiveness dimension, which looks at the ability of staff to assist with the menu

or wine list as well as the promptness in response to customers' needs and requests, from

the DINESERV model. It will also affect "empathy" of the DINESERV model, which

looks at how employees are by being sympathetic towards customers' problems. These

will improve the level of service quality.

When possible, employees should welcome any passersby and inform them about

the vegan menu they offer. This is a technique used by many restaurants, both in and out

of Ghana, to attract more customers, typically to spark awareness and interest in

customers.

Take order from Counter

Many employees complained about the lack of direction at Mahorgany. They were

unsure of whether ordering happened at the counter or their seats. It would be

advantageous to Mahorgany to have a standardized method of offering service to

customers, which should be practiced during training and implemented on a day-to-day

basis.

The suggestion is to communicate to customers upon arrival at Mahorgany. From

the counter, employees may, after welcoming them, find out from customers what they

would like to order. Phrases such as "Can we take your order?" "Would you like to see

our menu?" and "What would you like to have today" are encouraged. Also, a small note

can be left at tables that say, "Ordering happens at the counter," as a way of

communicating and directing customers.

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Delivery to the table

Similar to the point above, customers are unsure of whether delivery of order happens at the counter or their table. The standard procedure should entail order delivery occurring at tables, whether take out or eat in.

Additionally, whenever employees find that menu items are unavailable, customers should not be motioned to the counter; instead, the information should be delivered to their tables in an empathetic and caring manner. The best ways of handling customers would be taught to employees when undergoing proper training from professionals.

Work Scheduling

From the needs assessment, one cause of mediocre customer service was the long working hours. As part of the proposed solution, Mahorgany is encouraged to alter their current work scheduling system where two to three employees work 12-hour shifts six days of the week. The issues of customer service and long serving time are closely related. The work schedules of the employees, if modified, have the potential to enhance productivity and customer service, thus killing two birds with one stone.

A study by Boles and Babin (1996) revealed that long working hours lead to employee dissatisfaction. Pencavel (2016) noted that long hours coupled with long working days, leads to lower productivity by individuals at their workplace. At Mahorgany, a total of three employees work 12-hour shifts, six times a week. Taking into consideration the fact that some employees live far from Mahorgany, it shows that the

journey to and from work, and the time used in getting ready to come to work, add to hours that relate to work. Thus, employees barely have enough time for leisure.

This type of scheduling leads to burnout among workers. Long working weeks require employees to have a recovery period, but the long working weeks means that the amount of time available after working is short (Pencavel, 2016). Research shows that workers require time to recover from work. "Just as machines tend to depreciate with use over time and need repair and maintenance to ensure their value in production, so also labor requires repair and recovery from work to maintain its productivity at the workplace" (Pencavel, 2016). Thus, it is crucial for work hours and working days to be modified in a way that employees can have enough recovery time for their various needs. Therefore, the proposed solution requires the addition of a work scheduling system that would provide a longer recovery time for employees.

Below is a suggested work schedule where the employees of Mahorgany work through a mixture of full and half days during the week.

Table 3

Proposed Scheduling

Week 1							
Working hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00am – 14:00pm	A & B	B & C	C & A	D & B	B & C	C & A	
14:00pm- 8:00pm	A & C	B & A	C & B	D & C	A & B & C	C & B	A&B
Week 2							
Working hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00am – 14:00pm	B & C	C & A	A & B	D & C	C & A	A & B	
14:00pm- 8:00pm	B & A	C & B	A & C	D & A	A & B & C	A & C	B & C

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Week 3							
Working hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00am – 14:00pm	C & A	A & B	B & C	D & A	A & B	B & C	
14:00pm- 8:00pm	C & B	A & C	B & A	D & B	A & B & C	B & A	A & C

Key

A = Employee A

B = Employee B

C = Employee C

D = Employee D

Table 4

Breakdown of Working Hours Per Week

	Employee A	Employee B	Employee C
Week 1	42 hours	54 hours	54 hours
Week 2	54 hours	42 hours	54 hours
Week 3	54 hours	54 hours	42 hours

From the table above, each employee works 54 hours for two weeks, and in the

third week, they work 42 hours. This way, the required two employees per shift is

achieved without employees having to work 72 hours per week. Additionally, Fridays

after 5 pm are known to be the peak periods of the restaurant; thus, this shift would

require three employees on duty. In week 1, employee A and employee C are off on

Thursday and Sunday, respectively. In week 2, employee B and employee A are off on

Thursday and Sunday, respectively. Lastly, in week 3, employee C and employee B are

off on Thursday Sunday, respectively. This scheduling still accommodates an off day for

two weeks while working every day of the third week (in a combination of half and full-day schedules). Thus, they have enough recovery time over the week to come to work refreshed.

Also, the employee that is doing the morning shift only should handle the cleaning while both parties work to cook. The employee working the full day will be in charge of the front-end interaction with customers such as welcoming, order collection, and order delivery. When the morning shift is over, the front-end interaction becomes the duty of the employee working the second shift only. This ensures that burned out employees do not have to interact with customers. Thus, during the second shift, the full day employee works at the back-end.

Another suggestion would be to hire employee D as a part-time employee who only works on Thursdays. The employee could be another employee from other shops or restaurants at ANC or could be a student from Lancaster University, which is also situated at ANC Mall. Such labor would prove to be relatively cheaper.

Double Menu System

The proposed solution requires the addition of a double menu system to combat the issue of unavailability of menu items. This is caused by a lack of kitchen space for equipment, food going to waste when available, and the inability to meet daily demand. The lack of kitchen space for equipment cannot be changed as they are limited to space. However, the food going to waste when available and the inability to meet daily demand go hand in hand. Thus, by providing two menus, one for preparation on request, and the other for daily food preparation, it would help to minimize this problem. It is advised that

the daily menu, labeled "Today's Menu" is provided to customers upon arrival. Thus, customers will choose from a list of options that will be available by all means. As customers are seated and waiting for order to be served, they should be provided with the "Special Order Menu," from which they can order two to three days in advance. To prevent the no-show of customers, they can be asked to make a part or full payment before the order is processed. This will help ensure that food wastage is minimal, and demand and supply are equal.

On Friday nights, where all three employees work, the employee that works only the night shift will handle front end action that occurs, such as food delivery, bill delivery, and payment collection. In contrast, the other two employees will work between taking orders and heating food.

Warming Equipment

Mahorgany prides itself on providing fresh food to its customers. In doing so, microwaves are a no-go zone; hence, re-heating is done in a pan on the electric stove. However, the electric stove is subject to low electrical current, and even when it is not, some foods are difficult to heat in a pan such as tofu and burgers. Thus, using the electric stove often leads to cold food being served or long serving time, or both. Therefore, better equipment is required to help improve the dynamics of the situation.

When it comes to low electrical current, not much can be done to solve the problem. However, whenever there is the potential of delay due to low current, customers should be informed about it. A study by Bielen and Demoulin (2007) "reveals a positive influence of received information in case of delay on waiting time satisfaction." The

study noted that when customers receive information about a delay, it communicates that people in charge of greeting customers are sensitive to customer needs and take care of their customers' welfare (Bielen & Demoulin, 2007). This will improve customer satisfaction by improving customer service.

To combat the issue, however, the proposed solution encourages the use of a shelf countertop heated display warmer to keep finger foods such as tofu kebabs and pies consistently warm as they are on display. Figure 10 below shows an image of the equipment. This is a good fit at Mahorgany because it can replace its already exiting shelf countertop display with the heated alternative, which means it will not require any additional kitchen space. Also, food will be kept warm always; thus, there will be no need to heat food upon ordering. Therefore, food serving time will be shortened by far.

Figure 10. Shelf Countertop Heated
Display Warmer

Figure 11. Warming Oven

For the menu items that were main meals, such as burgers, sandwiches, and rice meals, a warming oven is suggested for heating. Warming ovens are typically used to keep food warm until it is ready to be served to customers (McdonaldPaper, 2019). Figure 11 shows an image of a warming oven. It is convenient because it is mobile, thus can be put at any suitable location in the kitchen. Similar to the shelf countertop heated display warmer, the warming ovens are used to keep any type of food, from vegetables to rice at a suitable temperature. Thus, food prepared should be kept inside these to ensure that they are ready for serving upon order. If all food cannot fit into the warming oven, portions of each can be kept inside and replaced when taken out for delivery. "Reliability" of the DINESERV model evaluates a restaurant in terms of the freshness and temperature of the food. Therefore, by ensuring that food is always served hot, it will improve the reliability of the service provided, leading to a higher level of service quality.

The combination of better equipment, work schedules, and employee training should help solve the root cause of long food serving time. By providing a work schedule that gives more recovery time to employees, their increased energy levels will ensure higher productivity in carrying out processes. Also, scheduling ensures that three employees were on the Friday night shift, which is usually the peak time. Thus, the combined effort of more extended recovery time and three hands-on-deck will improve the pace at which work is carried out. Additionally, employee training will ensure that employees learn to work under pressure to deliver services effectively. By doing these, the outcome quality, from the Hierarchical Service Quality Model, of the service provided will be improved. By improving the waiting time, which is an aspect of outcome quality, customers' perception of service quality will be raised.

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4.4 Implementation Plan

This section of chapter four provides the necessary procedures that must be followed for the successful adoption of the solution into the restaurant's status quo. The implementation plan will detail out the who, what, where, when, how, and why of each activity in the proposed solution. See Table 5 below.

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Table 5

Implementation Plan

Activity	Who	When	Why	Where	How
Training	Anich Azanlekor - Mahorgany's Manager and Hired professional.	2nd and 3rd week of July 2020	This is to improve overall customer service, which will enhance customer satisfaction.	Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd	Management will be in charge of researching and recruiting professionals of their choice based on quality and affordability. Hospitality professional(s) will be contracted to offer training for two weeks to the staff on appropriate ways of handling customers and ways of ensuring productivity in peak periods.
Facilitate adjustment into new work schedules	Anich Azanlekor - Mahorgany's Manager and employees.	1st and 2nd week of June 2020	This is to reduce burnout in employees and increase energy levels and productivity.	Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd	The duty rooster with new work schedules can be found in table 3. The duty rooster will be shown and discussed at a meeting with management and employees. Both parties will agree on who is A, B, and C, in the scheduling system. Thus, it will be updated with the appropriate names and emailed to employees.
Purchasing and setting up of warming equipment	Anich Azanlekor - Mahorgany's Manager and Project Consultant	August 2020	Owning the required equipment will help shorten the serving time, which will improve customer satisfaction. ,	Electronics shop and Mahorgany Health Foods Ltd	Management will provide information regarding the amount of space available and money willing to be spent. Based on this information, possible options will be researched and produced by the project consultant. Management will then decide on the brand and size of warming equipment to be purchased from the list provided.

| Designing and Printing of New Menus | Project Consultant | 2nd, 3rd and 4th week of July | This will commence the double menu system, which has the aim of solving menu unavailability to increase customer satisfaction. | Pictures of some meals will be taken at Mahorgany.

The designing of the menu will be done by graphic designers, while printing will occur at a café.

The finished results will be delivered to Mahorgany for use. | Two menus will be designed, one named "Today's Menu" and the other "Special Order Menu." The list of items for each menu will be decided and provided by management. Pictures of the meals served at Mahorgany will be incorporated into the design of the menu. The graphic designers will send the designs to the project consultant, who will share it with management for approval. The chosen design will be printed and laminated at a café, and later provided to Mahorgany. |

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CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION, LIMITATION, AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter brings the paper and the project to a conclusion. It will highlight the limitations of the proposed solution, and potential challenges the organization might face regarding its use. It will include suggestions and recommendations that Mahorgany will need to adopt to ensure the maximum optimization of the proposed solution. Lastly, it will discuss the challenges faced and the key insights gathered from this and the overall project.

5.2 Limitations of the proposed solution

◈ The proposed solution has many human elements, and therefore, the success of it relies on people's interest and ability to accept change.

◈ The solution is costly, as it will require money to be spent. Mahorgany may not have cash readily available to invest in the necessary areas.

5.3 Suggestions and Recommendations

The underlying recommendation is for Mahorgany to invest in better management for the restaurant. Managers at Mahorgany are committed to multiple projects. Finding management that is solely committed to Mahorgany will ensure proper implementation of the solution. It is essential to note that poor management is detrimental to the success of any business, including Mahorgany. Thus, for the solution to be fully optimized, proper management is recommended.

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Additionally, Mahorgany should consider investing in an effective advertisement plan. Many of the customers found Mahorgany by chance, with a respondent suggesting that improved advertisement would help catch the eye of the international community, which consists of more vegans/vegetarians relative to Ghanaians. The use of advertisement was not included in the solution as this project was geared towards improving the quality of service as it directly affects customer satisfaction. However, improved advertisement, coupled with the proposed solution, would help Mahorgany achieve its goal of becoming the leading healthy lifestyle brand in Ghana.

Lastly, Mahorgany should keep records of its daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly sales. This would serve as a Key Performance Indicator (KPI), which will prove useful in calculating growth and return on investments in the business. Additionally, proactively seeking feedback and reviews from customers would help evaluate progress. This way, Mahorgany can determine its growth each month to determine what aspects of the service need to be sharpened. This will also help decide if management is doing their job, and when it is time to let go of unproductive staff and hire new ones.

5.4 Challenges Faced and Lessons Learnt

One of the major challenges faced during the project occurred during the data collection period. The times I would be available to come to Accra during the week would typically be between 2 pm-5 pm. Unfortunately, that was the period where Mahorgany faced the least volume of customers. Thus, reaching the goal number for participants to be interviewed was difficult, as I had to go more often and spend more money on transportation between Ashesi and East Legon, and back. Still, deadlines were

approaching, and I was interviewing one or two people per trip. From this, I learned there are smarter ways of doing everything, with a little creativity. I asked the manager to give me a list of his regular customers, along with their phone numbers. Consent forms were shared and approved over WhatsApp, and interviews happened over the phone. Thus, in four days, I was able to collect more data than I had over the weeks.

Another challenge I faced was with regards to drawing and applying the tools I used in this project. I learned how to apply class knowledge into a real-life setting.

Lastly, I learned the importance of literature review in problem-solving, even in a place like a restaurant. Aside from primary data collection, research is also required as it reveals models that help problem-solve in any industry, including the restaurant industry. These contributed to the reasoning behind my solution and paired well with class learned knowledge to produce the final result. Research is essential in understanding a problem and knowing your possible options for solving the problem.

5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to improve the level of customer satisfaction experienced by Mahorgany's customer base. To develop a well-informed solution, both a needs assessment carried out at Mahorgany, and online research through literature review was conducted. The proposed solution is a re-designed service blueprint to address the issues of poor employee attitude, long serving time, and unavailability of menu items. The components of the proposed service blueprint were designed in a way to address each of the three major contributors to the low level of customer satisfaction while taking into consideration the culture of Mahorgany.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Questions for the Managers

1. How many employees do you have?

2. How many employees work per shift?

3. What are the short-term and long-term goals and objectives for Mahorgany?

4. What is the strategic plan to meet Mahorgany's goals and objectives?

5. How do you measure when the goals have been achieved?

6. What are some of the problems that Mahorgany has faced in the past?

7. What has been done to solve them?

8. What worked, and what did not work for Mahorgany?

9. Approximately how many customers do you receive per day on the weekend versus the weekday?

10. What is the worst customer service experience you have witnessed?

11. What is the best customer service experience you have witnessed?

12. How do you collect feedback from customers?

13. What are your expectations of customer service at Mahorgany?

Appendix 2: Interview Questions for Employees

1. How many employees work per shift?

2. How do you begin your day?

3. What processes do you go through to deliver the service?

4. What challenges do you face in the processes you go through?

5. What challenges do you face outside of your process?

6. What are the problems at Mahorgany?

7. How is your relationship with customers?

8. What is your best experience regarding customer service?

9. What is your challenge with customer service?

10. What is your worst experience regarding customer service?

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Appendix 3: Interview Questions for Customers

1. How often do you come here?

2. What days and times do you come to Mahorgany the most?

3. What do you like or love about Mahorgany?

4. Are your needs always met?

5. What could Mahorgany offer you to satisfy your needs better?

6. What are your expectations from Mahorgany?

7. What are your main issues or concerns with Mahorgany's customer service?

8. What is your best experience with Mahorgany customers?

9. What is your worst experience with Mahorgany's employees?

10. How could Mahorgany improve their overall service as well as customer service?

11. What are your expectations from Mahorgany regarding customer service?

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Appendix 4: Observation Guide

1. Food order time

2. Time food is received by the client

3. How many times the food is prepared under 15 minutes

4. How many times the food is ready between 15 – 30 minutes

5. How many times the food is cooked over 30 minutes

6. How employees begin the day and provide their service

7. How employees interact with customers

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Appendix 5: Written Informed Consent

My name is Keshia Elikem Benson. I am a final year student at Ashesi University, currently undertaking my capstone project. This project entails solving a problem at an organization, in this case, Mahorgany Health Foods Limited.

I would like to seek your permission to be part of my research towards improving customer service at Mahorgany Health Foods Limited. The purpose of this study is to gather relevant data that will help in devising a solution to improve customer service at Mahorgany, which will be beneficial to both Mahorgany and its customers. Customers will experience higher satisfaction as the services at Mahorgany will be improved. Managers and employees will benefit because they will be better equipped at satisfying customers, which will improve their reputation and draw more customers.

Your participation is strictly voluntary; hence, you are free to withdraw at any time and will not suffer any consequences whatsoever. The category you fall under will be mentioned, but not your name. For instance, my final report could include a phrase like "From an interview with an employee…". If you have any questions, you can contact the Head of Department at searmah@ashesi.edu.gh or my supervisor at rdodd@ ashesi.edu.gh.

This study and consent form have been reviewed by Ashesi IRB for Human Subjects Research. For further information about this, contact the committee through irb@ashesi.edu.gh.

If you agree to be part of the study, a brief unstructured interview will take place. Before that, please sign this consent.

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Participant's Name: ………………………………………

Participant's Signature: …………………………………………

Date: …………………………………………………………

Place: ……………………………………………………

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Appendix 6: Client Dashboard

Implementation Plan:

Activity	Who	Why	How
Training	Anich Azanlekor - Mahorgany's Manager and Hired professional.	This is to improve overall customer service, which will enhance customer satisfaction.	Management will be in charge of researching and recruiting professionals of their choice based on quality and affordability. Hospitality professional(s) will be contracted to offer training for two weeks to the staff on appropriate ways of handling customers and ways of ensuring productivity in peak periods.
Facilitate adjustment into new work schedules	Anich Azanlekor - Mahorgany's Manager and employees.	This is to reduce burnout in employees and increase energy levels and productivity.	The duty rooster with new work schedules can be found in table 3. The duty rooster will be shown and discussed at a meeting with management and employees. Both parties will agree on who is A, B, and C, in the scheduling system. Thus, it will be updated with the appropriate names and emailed to employees.
Purchasing and setting up of warming equipment	Anich Azanlekor - Mahorgany's Manager and Project Consultant	Owning the required equipment will help shorten the serving time, which will improve customer satisfaction. ,	Management will provide information regarding the amount of space available and money willing to be spent. Based on this information, possible options will be researched and produced by the project consultant. Management will then decide on the brand and size of warming equipment to be purchased from the list provided.
Designing and Printing of New Menus	Project Consultant	This will commence the double menu system, which has the aim of solving menu unavailability to increase customer satisfaction.	Two menus will be designed, one named "Today's Menu" and the other "Special Order Menu." The list of items for each menu will be decided and provided by management. Pictures of the meals served at Mahorgany will be incorporated into the design of the menu. The graphic designers will send the designs to the project consultant, who will share it with management for approval. The chosen design will be printed and laminated at a café, and later provided to Mahorgany.

Reccomendations

❖ Invest in Management that prioritizes Mahorgany.

❖ Invest in an effective advertisement plan, especially to target the international community which tends have a higher proportion of vegans and vegetarians.

❖ Keep record of sales and other documentation which could help in measuring KPIs.