

# The Town of Legendary Hospitality – A Case Study of Buea Municipality, South West Region; Cameroon

<sup>1</sup>Evaristus Nyong Abam, <sup>2</sup>Godlove Tantoh Tayah Prince,

<sup>1</sup>MSc. in international Hospitality Management, <sup>2</sup>MA in Tourism Management,  
Catholic University Institute of Buea, College of Business and Technology  
Department of Tourism and hospitality Management

## ABSTRACT

*Hospitality comes from the Latin word 'hospes', meaning "host", "guest or stranger" and it includes the relationship between a guest and a host, wherein the host receives the guest with goodwill, including the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers. The extent to which one is expected to show hospitality to strangers, as opposed to personal friends will depend on the culture and subculture of the host. The quality of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, friendly and generous way will make a guest to come for a repeat visit and he/she will tell his/her friends through word-of-mouth or through the social media. Visitors to Buea are marveled by the town's picturesque landscape, iridescent vegetation, unique weather, and most especially its strategic position accentuated by the majestic Mount Cameroon, 4100m above sea level. As for the private sector, owners of some hotels have undertaken a massive refurbishment and constructions of their hotels and the Government on its part through the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure in collaboration with some proprietors have been carrying-out Nationwide training to improve on guest satisfaction during the 2016 and 2019 African cup of Nations for female and male respectively.*

**KEY WORDS:** Hospitality, Hospitality management

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Hospitality refers to the relationship between a guest and a host, wherein the host receives the guest with goodwill, including the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers. Hospitality comes from the Latin word *hospes*, meaning "host", "guest", or "stranger". *Hospes* is formed from *hostis*, which means "stranger" or "enemy" however, it still involves showing respect for one's guests, providing for their needs, and treating them as equals. Cultures and subcultures vary in the extent to which one is expected to show hospitality to strangers, as opposed to personal friends or members of one's group ([www.hospitalityguild.co.uk](http://www.hospitalityguild.co.uk)).

## 2.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY/ COMPANY REVIEW

Buea, according to social scientists was founded by a hunter in search of game; Eye Njie Tama Lifanje came from the Bomboko clan behind the Buea Mountain (Mount Cameroon or Mount Fako). On that fateful day he founded Buea, he had set out in search of animals but there were no game to be hunted only a vast peace of hospitable land that could harbor his family. Eye Njie named it "Mwea", meaning, hospitable land for farming. The settlement soon grew into a clan but made tardy progress until the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when there was an influx of Europeans into Africa for exploration and colonialism purposes ([www.bueacouncil.com](http://www.bueacouncil.com)).

Buea is presently the headquarters of the South West Region with an estimated population above 200,000 inhabitants. It is a highly complex community caught between a blend of urban, semi urban, rural and traditional settings and it covers 870 square kilometers surface area. Visitors to Buea are marveled by the town's picturesque landscape, iridescent vegetation, unique weather, and most especially its strategic position accentuated by the Majestic Mount Cameroon (4100m above sea level). Buea has a booming economy with the

agricultural, administrative, business, tourism and the financial sectors taking the central stage. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people; the rich volcanic soil, the equatorial climate and an almost all-year-round rainfall make Buea a fertile land for agriculture. The Muea Market, one of the biggest foodstuff markets in Cameroon, attracts traders from West and central Africa. Two locally based Agro- Industrial Companies produce tea and banana for export. While tea is produced and marketed by the Cameroon Tea Estate (CTE), the Cameroon Development Corporation, (CDC), operates the Banana plantations. The tertiary sector is also witnessing an impressive growth with banks, corporative societies and other financial houses dotted around the town. There has been a rapid emergence of small and medium size enterprises especially in the Molyko neighbourhood ([www.bueacouncil.com](http://www.bueacouncil.com)).

The old German colonial capital Buea was once more host to another history- making event, celebrations marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reunification of Cameroon took place at the independence square in Buea on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014. Though the event was celebrated in the ten Region of the country, celebrations in Buea was very special because it witnessed the end of a cycle of activities and the presence of the President of the Republic, top Government officials, heads of Diplomatic missions, representatives of International Organizations as well as Cameroonians of diverse cultural backgrounds that were drawn from all the Regions of the country ([www.fakonewscentre.com](http://www.fakonewscentre.com)).

### 3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The hospitality industry is much broader than most other industries and majority of business niches are composed of only a handful of different businesses, but this industry applies to nearly any company that is focused on customer satisfaction and meeting leisurely needs rather than basic ones. While this industry is very broad, there are some defining aspects that are important to understand. One of the most defining aspects of this industry is that it focuses on customer satisfaction. While this is true of nearly every business, this industry relies entirely on customers' being happy. This is because these businesses are based on providing luxury services. Very few hospitality businesses provide a basic service that people need, like food or clothing (Abam, 2017 and [www.besthospitalitydegrees.com](http://www.besthospitalitydegrees.com)).

The industry rewards the hard-working and dedicated with wonderful opportunities and career progression is often quicker than in any other industry. Another defining aspect of this industry is its reliance on disposable income and leisure time for this reason the majority of these businesses are for tourists or rich patrons (Abam, 2018). If disposable income decreases due to a recession, then these are often the first businesses to suffer because customers won't have the extra money to enjoy their services ([www.besthospitalitydegrees.com](http://www.besthospitalitydegrees.com)).

Hotel, motels, inns, or such businesses that provides transitional or short-term lodging, with or without food are businesses of the hospitality industry ([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)).

The quality or disposition of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, friendly, generous way will make a guest to come for a repeat visit and he/she will tell his/her friends through word-of-mouth or through the social media (Abam, 2017).

### 4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Veal (2006) indicated that an empirical approach is the collection and analysis of data; it could be quantitative or qualitative, primary or secondary. No research is purely empirical; it is usually informed by some sort of theory or conceptual frame work. Some researchers are of the opinion that a single research method may use both quantitative and qualitative techniques and procedures in combination as well as use primary and secondary data. The quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques and analysis procedure each have their own strength and weaknesses.

Secondary data that is information was collected from the Buea rural council bulletins and other documents and websites.

## 5.0 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Prior to the preparations for the long awaited Golden Jubilee of Cameroon's Reunification Senator MbellaMoki Charles, the no nonsense former Mayor of the Buea Rural Council ordered for the demolition of all the make shift sheds that littered the highway running from mile 17 to Buea town, as the historic town of Buea gets set to welcome dignitaries from within and without, for the anniversary celebration.

The University of Buea in Molyko as well as other higher institution of learning have greatly contributed to the rise in businesses around the student residential area. Given that the town is the seat of the regional administration, a reasonable number of civil servants and entrepreneurs reside therein ([www.bueacouncil.com](http://www.bueacouncil.com)).

Most of these higher institutions of learning have seen the importance of the tourism industry and they have now included the teaching of tourism and hospitality management. This is done to provide skills workers who will be employed in the numerous hotels and restaurant found in this municipality (**Abam, 2017**).

As for the private sector, owners of some hotels have undertaken a massive refurbishment and constructions of their hotels.

The Government on its part through the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure in collaboration with some proprietors have organised a five day workshop on the training of hotel managers, housekeeping managers, waiters/waitresses, bar tenders on the importance of good customer services, welcoming of guests, waste management in hotels and restaurants, good bar tending practices etc. This seminar or workshop will take place in all the ten Regions of the country and it is geared towards the hosting of the 2016 and 2019 African cup of Nations for female and male respectively (**Abam, 2017**).

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

Visitors to Buea are marveled by the town's picturesque landscape, iridescent vegetation, unique weather, and most especially its strategic position accentuated by the majestic Mount Cameroon, 4100m above sea level. As for the private sector, owners of some hotels have undertaken a massive refurbishment and constructions of their hotels (**Abam, 2017**).

## REFERENCES

- [1] **Abam, E.N (2017)** Hospitality in Cameroon – A Case Study Approach ISBN-13: 978 3659226120, LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, a trademark of ICS Morebooks Marketing SRL, 4 Industrialia street, 3100 Balti, Republic of Moldova.
- [2] **Abam, E.N (2017)** Improving Service Quality in Hotels in Buea Subdivision before the African Nation's Cup (Afcon - 2016 and 2019): The Public Sector Role. J Bus Fin Aff 6: 237. doi: 10.4172/2167-0234.1000237 (PDF: 2167-0234-1000237).
- [3] **Abam, E.N (2017)** Tourism in Cameroon – A Case Study Approach ISBN-13: 978-3330351455, LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing
- [4] **Abam E N (2018)** "The Impact of Motivation on the Performance of Employees in a Hospitality Establishment – A Case Study of Chariot Hotel Buea ". International Journal of Research in Tourism and Hospitality (IJRTH), Vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 32-35. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2455-0043.0402003>.
- [5] **Veal, A. J (2006)** *Research methods for leisure and tourism- a practical guide*, 3ed. Prentice Hall: Malaysia (CTP-VVP).
- [6] <http://www.besthospitalitydegrees.com/faq/what-exactly-is-the-hospitality-industry/> [Accessed on 17/07/2019]
- [7] <http://www.bueacouncil.com/history-of-buea/> [Accessed on 21/02/2019]
- [8] <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/hospitality> [Accessed on 19/04/2019]
- [9] <http://www.fakonewscentre.com/camerooncelebrates50th.htm> [Accessed on 04/05/2019]
- [10] <http://www.hospitalityguild.co.uk/A-Career-in-Hospitality/Career-opportunities/Career-options> [Accessed on 07/04/2019]