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CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY AND CORPORATE EFFICIENCY OF DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS

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ABSTRACT: *In this study, our focus was to explore the effect of customer service delivery on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. It sought to establish the effects of consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service on corporate efficiency. The study adopted cross-sectional survey research design. Using a structured questionnaire, the study obtained primary data from 232 managerial and marketing-related personnel of selected deposit money banks. The data obtained were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics, while multiple regression was adopted for hypotheses testing. The findings of the study revealed that consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service had significant positive effects on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. These findings provide empirically-verifiable evidence with which we made practical implications for players in the banking industry. Consequently, we recommended, among others, that deposit money banks should expand educational programmes targeted at customers, especially prospective customers to enlighten them on the usefulness of banking services, and the available channels through which they can access the services in order to encourage customer patronage.*

KEYWORDS: Customer Service Delivery, Corporate Efficiency, Deposit Money Banks, Banking industry

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INTRODUCTION

In a highly competitive industry like the banking industry, the drive to sustainably achieve corporate efficiency is at the core of the marketing strategies of commercial banks. This is because corporate efficiency is a measure of organizational productivity in comparison with the amount of input materials committed to commercial operations (Shaturaev & Bekimbetova, 2021; Etim et al., 2021; Etuk et al., 2022). It describes how effectively an organization produces and delivers products and services to customers related to the amount of time and money invested to deliver them. According to Wong et al. (2015), corporate efficiency is a delicate and volatile goal sought after by virtually every business organization, because it determines the degree of effectiveness and profitability of the entire organization. To that end, several marketing strategies have been implemented in an effort to enhance organizational efficiency. Customer service delivery is one of those marketing strategies (Etuk et al., 2022; Abu-Nazir & Al-Tunisi, 2019; Batang et al., 2017; Jibrin et al., 2019; Juanamasta et al., 2019). According to Kwamega et al. (2015), customer service is the provision of support services to customers before, during, and after a purchase to ensure positive experiences with the brand. It describes how people are treated when they interact with a brand. This includes all experiences with the company and its employees before, during, and after a purchase. In the view of Shen and Tang (2018), customer service is fundamental to the growth and sustainability of service-oriented companies because it ensures that customers are satisfied, and increases customer retention, thereby substantially improving customer patronage, sales performance, new customer acquisition and overall organizational performance. Due to the imperatives of customer service and its proven capacity to enhance the marketing of services, Ibojo and Asabi (2015) maintained that financial service providers, such as commercial banks, around the world are developing and implementing various customer service practices to improve customers' experiences with their brands.

This study centered solely on consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up, and customer self-service. Customer education is the process whereby companies initiate programmes with the objective of enlightening customers about their mission, vision, operations, products and services in order to enable them make informed patronage decisions (Osunde, 2018; James & Inyang, 2022; Anyadighibe et al., 2021; Etuk et al., 2021). Oni et al. (2016) view complaint handling as the management and resolution of customers' complaints and issues related to service usage or consumption to ensure customer satisfaction. Furthermore, Okeke et al. (2015) maintained that customer follow-up occurs when a company contacts customers post-purchase period to ensure that they are satisfied with their purchase decision and to encourage future patronage. Whereas, customer self-service is a type of electronic support that allows customers to use technology to access information and perform routine operations without physically visiting business stores (Shahid et al., 2018; Etuk et al., 2022; Etim et al., 2021; Inyang et al., 2022). A critical observation of the Nigerian banking industry shows that these customer service delivery practices are in practice in most new-generation banks as they strive to serve customers more effectively. Commercial banks carry out various consumer education campaigns through social media, printed publications and content marketing, where vital information about a variety of banking products and services is made available to customers to improve financial literacy. To effectively manage customers' complaints, commercial banks are opening up more channels, such as social media, email, suggestion boxes and customer care units, through which customers' complaints are obtained for subsequent resolution. Also, periodically, commercial banks use emails, phone calls and social media communications to keep in touch with customers to ensure their satisfaction and encourage more patronage of their products and services by new and existing customers.

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However, Etim et al. (2023) observed that due to the poor level of customer services at Nigerian banks, most bank customers of youthful age are migrating to smart solutions, such as financial technology companies like OPay, PalmPay, Ocash, MoniePoint to carry out financial services, while aged customers, who have little or no digital literacy skills languish in banking halls to gain access to basic banking services. In response to these service issues, some commercial banks in Nigeria are applying various customer service practices, such as consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service in an attempt to improve customers' experiences with their services and overall satisfaction. The problem of this study is that there is inadequate empirical evidence to verify whether or not these customer service practices adopted by deposit money banks have significantly enhanced their corporate efficiency due to unavailable relevant studies. How then can customer service delivery be effectively applied to significantly improve the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks in Nigeria? The study was hence carried out to provide empirically-verifiable answers to this central research concern.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Service Delivery

Customer service delivery is the provision of support services to customers before, during and after service encounter to ensure customer satisfaction (Etim et al., 2020; James & Inyang, 2023; Etuk et al., 2022; Etuk et al., 2022). It is the delivery of supplementary services known as 'customer services' in order to help customers experience satisfactory service experiences in companies. According to Cook (2017), customer service delivery is the provision of service to customers before, during, and after a purchase. The perception of success of such interactions is dependent on employees who can adjust themselves to the personality of the customer. Torpie (2020) perceived customer service delivery as the act of providing support to both prospective and existing customers. Customer service professionals commonly answer customer questions through in-person, phone, email, chat, and social media interactions and may also be responsible for creating documentation for self-service support. For Juanamasta et al. (2019), customer service delivery is the act of taking care of the customer's needs by providing and delivering professional, helpful, high-quality service and assistance before, during, and after the customer's requirements are met. Kursunluoglu (2019) opined that customer service delivery is the act of supporting and advocating for customers in their discovery, use, optimization, and troubleshooting of a product or service. It is also the processes that support the teams making good customer service happen. The goal of customer service is to foster lasting customer relationships. In the view of Janahi and Al Mubarak (2017), customer service delivery is the direct one-on-one interaction between a consumer making a purchase and a representative of the company that is selling it. Most retailers see this direct interaction as a critical factor in ensuring buyer satisfaction and encouraging repeat business. Even though in today's business world, much of customer care is handled by automated self-service systems, the option to speak to a human being is seen as necessary to most businesses, thereby amplifying the essentiality of customer services. It also plays a crucial role in both increasing and maintaining customer loyalty; the tendency of a customer to do repeat business with a company in the future. This is why, Kursunluoglu (2019) asserted that customer service is important because it sets a company apart from competitors. It can make customers loyal to an organization's brand, products, and services for the long term, if consistently and satisfactorily delivered to customers.

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Corporate Efficiency

Corporate efficiency describes how effectively an organization produces products and delivers services to customers related to the amount of time and money needed to deliver them (Benlemlih & Bitar, 2018; James et al., 2022; James & Inyang, 2022). It is a measurement of how effectively a business organization performs. It has many moving parts, from the materials the firm sources to its labor productivity and the capital it invests. All the way to its products, services, and how it delivers them to customers. Corporate efficiency measures are normally implemented by businesses to guard against efficiency, which may undermine their overall performance. According to Ullah (2020), inefficient business processes are more than just a time drag. They can put a strain on a company's profitability, hamper its ability to meet consumer demand and make it harder for employees to do their jobs. Without proper management, small issues that go undetected can mushroom into real problems that can put a business in jeopardy. This is why Minh and Quang (2022) argued that efficient companies make the most of their resources, transforming labor, materials and capital into products and services that create profit for the company. Inefficient companies, on the other hand, lack organization, which can slow down their operations, waste time and money and impact profitability. Furthermore, Barba-Sanchez et al. (2018) observed that a business that uses common efficiency measures — and takes advantage of techniques to improve efficiencies — can reduce waste across its organization, which often leads to higher profits, a happier and more productive staff, and more satisfied customers. This is why businesses are naturally always looking for ways to spend less money while making more. As they seek to improve their operations, many have two common goals: to produce more high-quality products and services without raising costs, and to increase employee productivity without needing to add more staff. The road to improvement begins with a deep analysis of current operations. Internal measures, like monitoring investment returns or analyzing profit margin trends, can help a business identify where its strengths and weaknesses lie in terms of operating as efficiently as possible (Benlemlih & Bitar, 2018; Inyang & James, 2022; Etim et al., 2023; Etim et al., 2020).

Consumer Education and Corporate Efficiency

Customer education is the process whereby companies initiate programmes with the objective of enlightening customers about their mission, vision, operations, products and services in order to enable them make informed patronage decisions (Osunde, 2018; Etuk et al., 2022; Anyadighibe et al., 2022). Xiao and O'Neill (2016) maintained that consumer education is the preparation of consumers to be capable of making informed decisions when it comes to purchasing products and services. It generally covers various consumer goods and services, prices, what the consumer can expect, standard trade practices, among other market factors. New dimensions of consumer education are also beginning to emerge as people become more aware of the need for ethical consumerism and sustainable consumer behaviour in today's increasingly globalized society. In the banking sector, commercial banks carry out various consumer education campaigns through social media, printed publications and content marketing, where vital information about a variety of banking products and services is made available to customers to improve financial literacy (Hensley, 2015; Etim et al., 2023; Inyang et al., 2022). In a bid to improve consumer financial literacy, commercial banks around the world are prioritizing financial education of their customers through content marketing, social media communications, publicity campaigns, seminars and conferences (Batang et al., 2017). Consumer education empowers a company's consumers to be properly informed and enlightened about the company's offerings and to be able to evaluate them in order to determine the best set of products or services to satisfy their needs (Tajurahim et al., 2020; Etuk et al., 2022). In this way, consumer education or enlightenment enables consumers to make informed and rational patronage

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and consumption decisions relative to a company's products and services. As such, companies that invest time and resources in ensuring their consumers are adequately enlightened about their products and services are invariably guiding consumers to purchase and consume their offerings, which could enhance their corporate efficiency over the long term. This premise is buttressed by the studies of Batang et al. (2017) and Jibrin et al. (2019), which revealed that consumer education had a direct significant e4ffect on corporate efficiency in the banking industry. Hence, in the context of this study, we hypothesized that:

H_1: Consumer education had a significant effect on corporate efficiency of deposit money banks

Complaint Handling and Corporate Efficiency

Consumer complaints are formal or informal communication of displeasure or difficulties experienced by consumers with a company's products or services (Honeyman, 2018). If not properly managed and handled, consumer complaints could spiral into consumer conflict, a discordance, disharmony and tension that exists between an organization and customers when its products or services consumed did not perform or function as it was purported to perform or function (Cambra-Fierro et al., 2016). For Bengül and Yılmaz (2018), customer complaints are the gaps between what business promises in terms of the product or services and what customers get. It is a mismatch between how customers perceive the brand and where they fail to obtain the desired customer service experience. The goal of complaint handling is to appease a tensioned or upset customer and to convert customers' attitude from negative to positive through customer satisfaction. This entails that by engaging in customers' complaint activities, businesses are seeking to compensate for the shortcomings or failures of their products and services as a way of soothing customers' displeasure in the hopes of pleasing or exciting them again (Ateke et al., 2015). A company's ability to promptly identify, elicit and satisfactorily resolve customers' complaints could be the difference between a successful company and a failing one (Ahmed et al., 2020). Customers typically have complaints about poor product or service quality experienced or any other difficulty with using a company's products or services. Most times, these complaints are formally lodged with the company in expectation of quick resolution; and if a company can satisfactorily resolve customers' complaints within the shortest possible time period, customers' satisfaction will be achieved and the potential for repeat patronage or customer loyalty will grow significantly, thereby buttressing the company's competitive edge (Cambra-Fierro & Melero-Polo, 2017). The foregoing viewpoint suggests that effective complaint handling enhances a company's corporate efficiency. This viewpoint is substantiated by the study of Aremu et al. (2018), which revealed that customer complaint resolution had a significant effect on customer satisfaction in the Nigerian banking industry. The viewpoint is also buttressed by the study of Abu-Nazir and Al-Tunisi (2019), which revealed that complaint handling had a significant positive relationship with corporate efficiency in deposit money banks in Tunisia. Hence, in the context of this study, we hypothesized that:

H_2: Complaint handling had a significant effect on corporate efficiency of deposit money banks

Customer Follow-up and Corporate Efficiency

Customer follow-up occurs when a company contacts customers post-purchase period to ensure that they are satisfied with their purchase decision and to encourage future patronage (Okeke et al., 2015). Follow-up services are post-sale services offered by a firm to customers after purchase in order to guarantee customer satisfaction and repeat or future purchases. It includes periodic communication and maintenance or repair of equipment by its manufacturer or supplier, during and after a warranty

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period. Follow-up refers to various processes which make sure customers are satisfied with the products and services of the organization. The needs and demands of the customers must be fulfilled for them to spread a positive word of mouth (Farouk et al., 2018). According to Finley (2017), follow-up service plays a pivotal role in strengthening the bond between the organization and customers. It entails the provision of services and support and to customers after making an initial sale. Providing follow-up services keeps customers coming back to the firm and encourages them to refer its business to others (Arori & Rugami, 2020). They provide the foundation for firms to deliver, install and educate customers on the proper functioning and precautions of the products; and they enable firms to guarantee customer satisfaction and repeat purchase as well as positive word-of-mouth communications from existing customers which are extremely effective at new customer attraction and acquisition. This viewpoint suggests that as a customer service delivery practice, follow-up has the capacity to enhance an organization's corporate performance. The viewpoint is backed by the study of Mamman et al. (2020), which revealed that customer follow-up had a significant positive effect on business efficiency in microfinance banks in Kaduna. The viewpoint is also in line with the study of Ogbueli et al. (2018), which revealed that customer follow-up had a significant positive influence on customer satisfaction of deposit money banks in Ibadan. Hence, in the context of this study, we hypothesized that:

H_3: Customer follow-up had a significant effect on corporate efficiency of deposit money banks

Customer self-service and corporate efficiency

Customer self-service entails offering customers and employees tools and information so they can find answers to their questions and have a better experience with a product or service (Magasi, 2015). It is any point of sale or service in which a customer can bypass interacting with another human and obtain services directly from the company through an automated system. The most common types of customer self-service include frequently asked questions (FAQs), knowledge base and online discussion forums (Djelassi et al., 2018). Shahid et al. (2018) explained that in the banking sector, self-service banking refers to services where customers conduct financial transactions such as deposits and withdrawal, inquiry, transfer, bill payment, loan, currency exchange, and wealth management through self-service equipment. Self-service equipment includes cash self-service equipment and cashless self-service equipment. Furthermore, Ugwuanyi et al. (2021) observed that customer self-service is an innovative service delivery mechanism that empowers consumers to independently and from the comforts of their homes or offices access services needed to satisfy their needs without physically visiting a service provider. By empowering consumers to remotely access needed services, self-service enables customers to purchase and use products and services promptly without delays form companies. Hence, customers can make convenient purchases, use services and satisfy their needs remotely by clicking a button or just making a phone call. This enhances customers' satisfaction, customers' repeat patronage intention and marketing organization's effectiveness (Pooya et al., 2020). The foregoing scholarly viewpoint suggests that customer self-service, as a customer service practice, can significantly enhance a company's business efficiency. This viewpoint is reinforced by the study of Batang et al. (2017), which revealed that customer self-service had a significant positive influence on organizational efficiency of commercial banks in Bali. The viewpoint is also corroborated by the study of Jibrin et al. (2019), which revealed that customer self-service had a direct significant effect on organizational efficiency in the banking industry of Lebanon. Hence, in the context of this study, we hypothesized that:

H_4: Customer self-service had a significant effect on corporate efficiency of deposit money banks

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Theoretical Framework

This study was underpinned by the customer bonding theory of relationship marketing, propounded by Warren *et al.* (2005). The theory of customer bonding in relationship marketing aims to help businesses gain a sustainable competitive advantage in a modern business environment. It suggests that instead of focusing on transactional marketing, firms should build long-lasting relationships with customers by utilizing various relationship marketing practices. The theory emphasizes the importance of creating strong bonds with customers to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, which includes gaining customer loyalty, preference, and market share (Warren *et al.*, 2005). The theory also highlights the cost-effectiveness of retaining existing customers compared to acquiring new ones. By maintaining cordial and value-laden relationships, addressing customer needs and concerns promptly, and treating customers with respect, businesses can foster customer loyalty and satisfaction, ultimately benefiting both the firm and the customer.

The relevance of the customer bonding theory of relationship marketing to this study lies in its basic premise which suggests that for deposit money banks to sustainably gain competitive advantage, in terms of enhanced corporate efficiency, they would have to consistently commit to efforts, such as customer service delivery, aimed at bonding with customers, rather than operating in a transactional system of marketing. The theory further asserts that in an era of intensive competition as is the case in the Nigerian banking sector, customer sophistication and selectiveness as well as technological dynamism, deposit money banks can achieve enhanced corporate efficiency by transcending the transactional marketing approach, and adopting a customer-focused approach in order to enable them bond with customers to create long lasting and value-laden relationships that benefit both banks and customers. Also. according to the theory, commercial banks can achieve customer bonding by applying various customer service delivery practices, such as consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up, customer relationship building and customer self-service, to manage their relationships with customers.

Empirical Review and Model Conceptualization

Batang et al. (2017) examined the “influence of customer service practices on organizational efficiency in Indonesia”. The study aimed to determine the influence of customer self-service, customer relationship marketing, complaint handling, customer follow-up, and customer education on the organizational efficiency of commercial banks in Bali, Indonesia. Primary data were collected from 178 commercial bank customers in Bali using structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, regression analysis, correlation analysis, and path analysis were used to analyze the data collected. The results revealed that all customer service practices tested (customer self-service, customer relationship marketing, complaint handling, customer follow-up, and customer education) had a significant positive influence on organizational efficiency of commercial banks in Bali. Hence, the study concluded that customer service practices had significant positive influences on organizational efficiency of commercial banks in Indonesia.

Jibrin et al. (2019) focused on the “assessment of the effect of customer services on organizational efficiency in the banking industry of Lebanon”. The purpose of the study was to unravel the effect of customer services (customer education, customer follow-up, complaint handling, customer self-service, customer relationship building) on organizational efficiency in the banking industry of Lebanon. Mailed-delivered structured questionnaire copies were dispatched to collect primary data from 400 bank customers in Beirut Metropolis. Multiple regression in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 19) was employed to analyze the data collected. The findings revealed that

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customer education, customer follow-up, complaint handling, customer self-service, and customer relationship building had direct significant effects on organizational efficiency in the banking industry of Lebanon. Hence, the study came to the conclusion that customer services had a direct significant effect on organizational efficiency in the banking industry of Lebanon.

Mamman et al. (2020) conducted a study on “customer service practices and business efficiency: A study of microfinance customers in Kaduna North Local Government Area, Nigeria”. The study specifically aimed to determine the effects of customer service practices (customer relationship marketing, customer complaint handling, customer follow-up, and consumer financial education) on business efficiency of Microfinance Banks (MFBs) in Kaduna North Local Government Area. The study adopted a structured questionnaire to collect primary data from 378 sampled respondents in Kaduna. Descriptive statistics (frequency tables and percentages) was used to analyze respondents’ demographic data, while hypotheses testing was done with inferential statistics (multiple regressions). Consequently, the findings revealed that customer relationship marketing, customer complaint handling, customer follow-up, and consumer financial education had significant positive effects on business efficiency in microfinance banks in Kaduna. Hence, the study recommended that the management of Microfinance Banks should evolve more effective customer service practices, such as customer relationship marketing, customer complaint handling, customer follow-up, and consumer financial education in order to effectively enhance business efficiency and overall marketing competitiveness.

Aremu et al. (2018) conducted a study on “exploring the impact of customer service practices on customer satisfaction in Nigerian banking industry”. The study specifically examined the effect of customer service practices on customer satisfaction in the Nigerian banking industry. The study used structured questionnaire to collect primary data from 250 customers of Nigeria Banks in Ilorin Metropolis. The techniques employed for data analysis were descriptive analysis, correlation matrix and multiple regression. Consequently, the study found that customer financial enlightenment, relationship building, customer follow-up, customer self-service, and customer complaint resolution had significant effects on customer satisfaction in the Nigerian banking industry. Therefore, the study recommended that for Nigerian banks to consistently satisfy their customers, they need to apply customer-centric customer service practices as they interact with customers before, during and after transactions.

Abu-Nazir and Al-Tunisi (2019) investigated the “customer service strategies and corporate efficiency in the Tunisian banking industry”. The study aimed to determine the relationship between customer service strategies and corporate efficiency in selected deposit money banks in Tunisia. Primary data were obtained from 123 bank customers in Tunis using mail-delivered structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using Pearson’s product moment correlation in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 23). The findings of the study revealed that complaint handling, relationship building, consumer financial education and customer self-service had significant positive relationships with corporate efficiency in deposit money banks in Tunisia. Consequently, the study concluded that customer service strategies had a significant positive relationship with corporate efficiency in the Tunisian banking industry.

Ogbueli et al. (2018) conducted a study on the “influence of customer services on customer satisfaction of deposit money banks in Ibadan”. The purpose of the study was to determine the influences of customer follow-up, complaint resolution, relationship building and customer self-service system on customer satisfaction of deposit money banks in Ibadan. A self-administered structured questionnaire was adopted to collect primary data from 164 bank customers in Ibadan

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metropolis. Simple linear regression in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 21) was employed to analyze the data collected for the study. Consequently, the findings of the study revealed that customer follow-up, complaint resolution, relationship building and customer self-service system had significant positive influences on customer satisfaction of deposit money banks in Ibadan. Hence, the study came to the conclusion that customer services had significant positive influences on customer satisfaction of deposit money banks in Nigeria.

Informed by a review of existing literature, this study adopted consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service as proxies of customer service delivery, while corporate efficiency was measured through proxies such as quality service delivery, customer satisfaction, and customer retention. In light of existing empirical evidence by previous researchers, this study hypothesized that customer service delivery is related with the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. To demonstrate the hypothesized relationship between the study variables, a conceptual model in Fig. 1 was adapted from existing studies to suit the context of the present study.

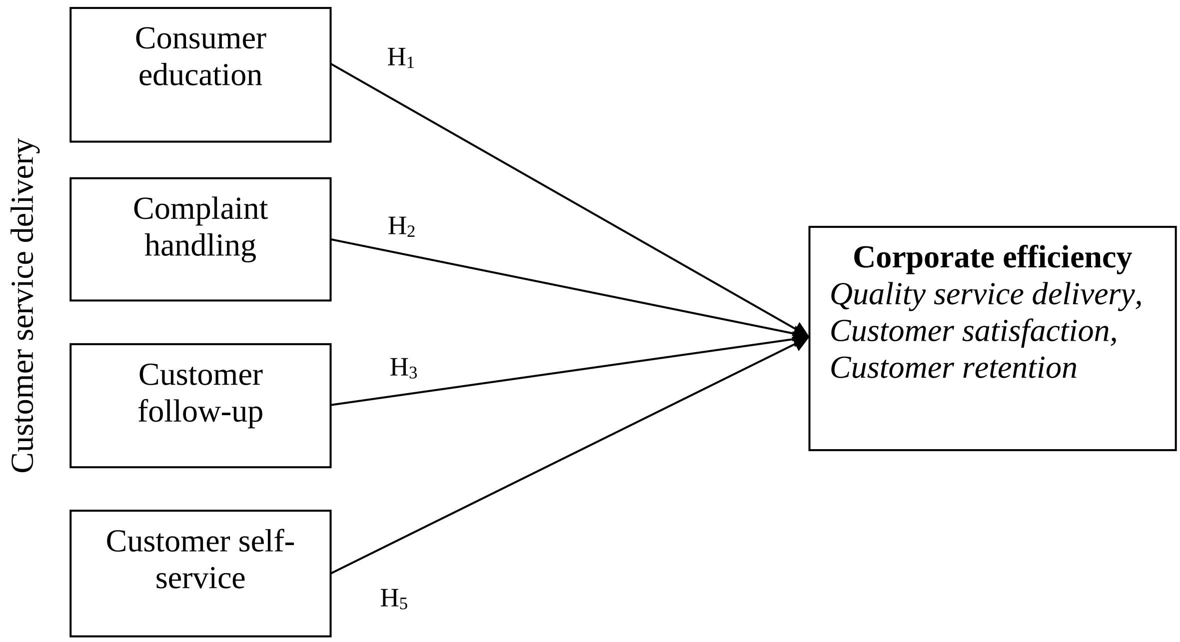

FIG. 1: Conceptual model of the study

Source: *Independent variables adapted from Batang et al. (2017); Jibrin et al. (2019); Mamman et al. (2020). Parameters of dependent variable adapted from Abu-Nazir and Al-Tunisi (2019).*

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METHODOLOGY

This research employed a cross-sectional survey design to examine the current relationship between customer service delivery and corporate efficiency in the context of deposit money banks. The survey was conducted at a single point in time to gather data from respondents. The target population consisted of 284 managerial and marketing-related personnels from deposit money banks located in Calabar, Nigeria. Since the population size was manageable and known to be 284 individuals, it was considered appropriate to adopt the entire population as the sample size. In survey studies, it is generally not necessary to further reduce smaller populations (typically 500 or below) into samples as they are already small and easily manageable (Odigbo, 2018). Due to the shared characteristics of the population elements, particularly their employment organization and location, total population sampling technique was employed in this study. A team of three enumerators administered a structured questionnaire to the respondents to collect the required data. The questionnaire utilized a 5-point Likert scale design, incorporating statements adapted from previous studies by Batang et al. (2017), Jibrin et al. (2019), Mamman et al. (2020), and the parameters of the dependent variable were adapted from Abu-Nazir and Al-Tunisi (2019). The collected data were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics. Multiple regression analysis was employed to test the developed hypotheses, using the specified model thus:

$$CORPEFF = a + \beta_1 CONSEDU + \beta_2 COMPHAN + \beta_3 CUSFOL + \beta_4 CUSTSELF + e$$

Where:

a = The intercept (or constant)

β_1CONSEDU = Coefficient of consumer education

β_2COMPHAN = Coefficient of complaint handling

β_3CUSFOL = Coefficient of customer follow-up

β_4CUSTSELF = Coefficient of customer self-service

e = Error margin (5 percent)

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In order to gather data for the research, a survey was conducted among individuals working in managerial and marketing roles within deposit money banks. A total of 284 questionnaires were distributed. Out of these, 232 questionnaires (equivalent to 81.7 percent) were collected and deemed suitable for analysis, while the remaining 52 questionnaires (18.3 percent) were found to be unusable due to technical reasons. The formulated null hypotheses for the study were then subjected to a multivariate analytical procedure to assess their validity as follows:

(i) **H_o:** Consumer education has no significant effect on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks.

(ii) **H_o:** Complaint handling has no significant effect on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks.

(iii) **H_o:** Customer follow-up has no significant effect on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks.

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(iv) **H₀:** Customer self-service has no significant effect on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks.

Predictors: Consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service

Outcome: Corporate efficiency

Decision rule: The null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected when the P-value is below 0.05 ($p < .05$). Conversely, if the P-value is above 0.05 ($p > .05$), the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 1: Model summary of the effect of customer service delivery on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.785[a]	.535	.522	.59319

a. Predictors: (Constant), Consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service

Source: *Authors' calculations via SPSS (2023)*

Table 2: ANOVA[a] of the effect of customer service delivery on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.583	4	6.146	17.466	.000[b]
	Residual	79.874	227	.352		
	Total	104.458	231			

a. Dependent Variable: Corporate efficiency

b. Predictors: (Constant), Consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service

Source: *Authors' calculations via SPSS (2023)*

Table 3: Coefficients of the effect of customer service delivery on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.731	.213		8.136	.000
	Consumer education	.024	.053	.488	3.458	.007
	Complaint handling	.149	.078	.501	1.908	.000
	Customer follow-up	.403	.078	.340	5.183	.000
	Customer self-service	.405	.059	.366	6.823	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Corporate efficiency

Source: *Authors' calculations via SPSS (2023)*

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INTERPRETATION

The findings presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate the effect of customer service delivery on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. The correlation coefficient (R = 0.785) in Table 1 indicates a strong relationship of 78.5 percent between customer service delivery and corporate efficiency. This signifies a significant association between the variables within the scope of this study. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.535$) reveals that customer service delivery accounts for 53.5 percent of the variation in the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks, assuming other factors remain constant. In Table 2, the results show that F = 17.466 and p = 0.000, indicating the statistical significance of the effect of customer service delivery on corporate efficiency.

Moreover, Table 3 provides standardized coefficients, shedding light on the contributions of different variables to the regression model. Complaint handling emerges as the highest contributor with a beta coefficient of 0.501 or 50.1 percent. The second-highest contributor is consumer education, with a beta coefficient of 0.488 or 48.8 percent. On the other hand, customer follow-up has the least effect on the model, with a beta coefficient of 0.340 or 34.0 percent. Additionally, Table 3 demonstrates that all tested variables have p-values lower than the 0.05 error margin, accompanied by positive t-test values: consumer education (p-value = 0.007, t = 3.458), complaint handling (p-value = 0.000, t = 1.908), customer follow-up (p-value = 0.000, t = 5.183), and customer self-service (p-value = 0.000, t = 6.823). These results indicate that consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up, and customer self-service significantly and positively influence the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. Consequently, the corresponding null hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4 were rejected in favor of the alternative hypotheses based on these findings.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the test of hypothesis one, it was revealed that consumer education has a significant positive effect on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. This finding is buttressed by the studies of Batang et al. (2017) and Jibrin et al. (2019), which revealed that consumer education had a direct significant effect on corporate efficiency in the banking industry. In the context of this study, the implication of this finding is that consumer education, as a customer service delivery practice, has been confirmed to possess the capacity to substantially improve corporate efficiency of Nigerian deposit money banks. The test of hypothesis two revealed that complaint handling has a significant positive effect on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. This finding is substantiated by the study of Aremu et al. (2018), which revealed that customer complaint resolution had a significant effect on customer satisfaction in the Nigerian banking industry. The finding is also buttressed by the study of Abu-Nazir and Al-Tunisi (2019), which revealed that complaint handling had a significant positive relationship with corporate efficiency in deposit money banks in Tunisia. In the context of this study, the implication of this finding is that complaint handling, as a customer service delivery practice, has been confirmed to possess the capacity to substantially improve corporate efficiency of Nigerian deposit money banks.

From the test of hypothesis three, it was revealed that customer follow-up has a significant positive effect on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. This finding is backed by the study of Mamman et al. (2020), which revealed that customer follow-up had a significant positive effect on business efficiency in microfinance banks in Kaduna. The finding is also in line with the study of Ogbueli et al. (2018), which revealed that customer follow-up had a significant positive influence on

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customer satisfaction of deposit money banks in Ibadan. In the context of this study, the implication of this finding is that customer follow-up, as a customer service delivery practice, has been confirmed to possess the capacity to substantially improve corporate efficiency of Nigerian deposit money banks. Finally, from the test of hypothesis four, it was revealed that customer self-service has a significant positive effect on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. This finding is reinforced by the study of Batang et al. (2017), which revealed that customer self-service had a significant positive influence on organizational efficiency of commercial banks in Bali. The finding is also corroborated by the study of Jibrin et al. (2019), which revealed that customer self-service had a direct significant effect on organizational efficiency in the banking industry of Lebanon. The implication of this finding, in the context of this study, is that customer self-service, as a customer service delivery practice, has been confirmed to possess the capacity to substantially improve corporate efficiency of Nigerian deposit money banks.

CONCLUSION AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study centered on customer service delivery and corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. It was conducted to determine the effects of customer service delivery practices such as consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. Through a structured questionnaire survey, the study obtained primary data from 232 managerial and marketing-related personnels of selected deposit money banks. Subsequently, descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted to analyze the data obtained. The findings thereof revealed a significant positive effect of customer service delivery on the corporate efficiency of deposit money banks. Specifically, consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service were found to significantly and positively influence the corporate efficiency of the banks. Based on the evidence generated in these findings, the study concludes that the corporate efficiency of Nigerian deposit money banks could sustainably and substantially be improved through the application of customer service delivery practices.

For this to be achieved, we recommend that deposit money banks should expand educational programmes targeted at customers, especially prospective customers to enlighten them on the usefulness of banking services, and the available channels through which they can access the services in order to encourage customer patronage. We also recommend that customer-friendly complaint handling systems should be implemented in deposit money banks in order to promptly and accurately resolve customers' issues and complaints during service failures and prevent customer dissatisfaction or brand switch. Through an effective and customer-friendly complaint-handling system, commercial banks can greatly reduce the prospects of customer dissatisfaction and discourage brand-switching behaviours. Furthermore, we recommend that there should be a robust follow-up system in deposit money banks charged with the task of communicating regularly with bank customers to identify areas of service difficulties they are experiencing in order to mitigate incidents of service failures. By following up on customers, commercial banks can ensure that service failures are anticipated and eliminated, while improving service delivery to meet customers' requirements. Finally, we recommend that interactive banking, mobile banking, internet banking and other self-service banking technologies should be made simpler and more easily operable by customers in order to encourage customers to carry out bank transactions unassisted by bank personnel. This will greatly reduce pressure on deposit money banks and lessen the crowds in banking halls, since customers can access banking services from the comforts of their homes with little or no assistance from bank personnel.

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LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was constrained to only four dimensions of customer service delivery: consumer education, complaint handling, customer follow-up and customer self-service; hence, we suggest that future researchers should adopt more customer service delivery practices other than the ones considered in this study to predict corporate efficiency of financial service institutions. Similarly, this study was limited to deposit money banks. It is important for future researchers to include other industries in their studies to obtain larger samples for a broader investigation. The findings from such studies with larger samples are likely to be more representative and generalizable.

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