AFTER SALES SERVICES AS DETERMINANT OF CUSTOMERS' PATRONAGE OF SATELLITE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES: A STUDY OF SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *In this study, we examined whether after sales services serve as determinants of customers' patronage among selected satellite products/services companies in South-South Nigeria. To offer a novel view on the research theme, three (3) after sales service dimensions were employed, namely; product warranty, installation and delivery. Questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection, which was administered on four hundred respondents out of which three hundred and seventy-three were completely retrieved. Data obtained in were analysed using descriptive, diagnostic and inferential statistical techniques. Findings indicated that there is a significant relationship between the after sales services dimensions (product delivery, installation and warranty)and customer's patronage of satellite products. The implication of the finding is that after sales services serve as determinants of customers' patronage. In view of the findings, it is recommended that management of satellite products and services need to enhance their strategic plans aimed at further improving product delivery, installation and warranty by ensuring that their transmissions are more effective than ever before so as to attract more customers, increase profitability and market share. Again, the study recommends that management of satellite products and services need to improve on their product warranty, delivery and installation policies so as to further assure customers of improved and quality products as well as attracting more customers.*

KEYWORDS: After sales services, Customers' patronage, Satellite product, Product delivery, Product installation.

INTRODUCTION

In reality, every business organisation strives to keep existing customers and encourage new ones. One of such vital operational policies business organisations have used to retain and encourage both existing and new customers is the 'After Sales Services' (ASSs). Management literature has shown that ASSs has been in existence since the 19th century and it deals with service delivery, warranty/guarantee, installation, product quality among others (Simons, 2016; Gupta & Rati, 2015; Javed, Gupta & Saxena, 2015), and is capable of improving company's growth and customers' patronage. The level to which ASSs are used by most organisations, to a large extent, determines the level of profit margin to be made and the number of customers' patronage (Díaz & Márquez, 2014; Ladokun, Adeyemo & Ogunleye, 2013). Remarkably, ASSs may not be profitable on its own, but is often a key contributing factor in the trade of products itself, which in turn increases profitability.

The literature proposed that organisations anticipate after sales needs in product designs, but organisations in most cases do not incorporate customers' concerns actively enough in the product design phase (Mathe & Shapiro, 1993 as cited in Yusuf, Nurhilalia & Putra, 2019; Ogwo & Igwe, 2012). Ogwo and Igwe (2021) are of the view that the impact pertaining to ASSs may be of immense significance to customers' satisfaction, particularly in the aspect of business-to-business ambiance leading to increased customers' patronage. Customer satisfaction remains an advertisement in itself, which is believed to be more reliable for others than any other advertisement technique (Bhave, 2002 as cited in Osoko, Kehinde, Iyiola, Ogunnaike, Salau & Atolagbe, 2020). Kotler and Keller (2009) see customers' satisfaction as feelings resulting from the comparison between perceived expectations and performance of a particular product or service. Kotler and Keller (2009) believed that the total absence of ASSs (like product delivery, product installation, product warranty, employee training and service quality) may be detrimental to any organisation as customers' satisfaction is the key that leads to organisational growth.

Satisfaction can be divided into two (2): transaction-specific and overall satisfactions. Notably, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, Valarie, Berry and Leonard (1994) disclosed that the antecedent with service quality and customer needs is an unresolved issue. More so, customer contentment is an unresolved issue that includes individual elements of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction, which appear as customer needs, tastes, preferences and expectations, which are continuously changing. For instance, when customers are loyal to one organisation's products or services, they are not easily swayed by availability of the product/service or prices, rather they prefer to pay more and enjoy the same quality of service and product they know and love. Thus, products or services must be designed in a way that is convenient for the consumers to experience it (Shereen, Rozilah, Muhammad, Rohana & Shafiq, 2021).

ASSs can be perceived as a module of consumer service and a key contributing factor of customer satisfaction which can also serve as a competitive strategy in any industry (Domingo, 2003). In this study, we argue that in order to achieve organisational goals, organisations have to meet the required standards set by their country and that of the international standard; the reason being that better quality of products and services rendered would lead to higher numbers of patronage. In today's economy, services in after sales continue to play a vital role amidst products and service marketing. Service marketing as defined by the American Marketing Association is an organisational task and techniques of identifying or creating, communicating, and providing value to consumers and making do of customer relationships in a way to profit

the company and stakeholders. Impliedly, ASSs can be a hub for both customer and manufacturers to achieve satisfaction.

Organisations have identified that they should pay a great deal of attention to service quality in order to improve earnings and market share. According to Okoro (2014) and Okoro and Egberi (2019), market share is a vital metrics for assessing how well an organisation has performed in an industry and economy; thus, service quality has become a significant strategic factor for companies to differentiate their products and services from rivals by using service quality (Angelova & Zekiri, 2011; Javed, Gupta & Saxana, 2015). It is a noticeable philosophy that customers who are satisfied with a particular product or service will stay with it. On the other hand, it has been often argued that a bad customer experience tends to have more impact on the overall customer experience than a good one and in total, five good customer experiences would be required to compensate one bad experience to save the company's reputation. Perhaps, while goodwill can be regarded as a critical requirement for successful business operation, it is a vital competitive asset representing how well the organisation has managed to fulfil the change of its customers (Jagersma, 2010; Sheehan & Stabell, 2020).

Organization's reputation is a vital factor in the labour market from which it attempts to hire the best available workforce characterised by the highest available productivity to support the organisation's operation (Love & Singh, 2011; Sheehan & Stabell, 2020). Notwithstanding the organisation's reputation to maintain good product and quality service delivery, it is strategic to have a customer database, which indicates the progress of customers' patronage in any organisation. Simons (2016) opined that customer patronage can be accomplished when the anticipation of customers are fulfilled; this can only be achieved via an effective customer's services rendered to customers as it after sales mechanism. Dei-Tumi (2005) sees customer service as an attitude, a view that an organisation can only retain and create customers based on the attitude given by the organisation. Consequently, if a company is able to render services constantly and consistently to customers by meeting their needs and wants, it is termed as customer service.

Haroon (2010) stated that customer services play a crucial role in increasing the customer loyalty and customers highly consider the price of these services. This means that delivering excellent and superior customer service is about bringing the customer back and making them have a unique experience that makes them produce positive feedback about the company and also repeating the transactions they do with the organisation. A study by Hyun (2010) showed that loyalty of customers is a major and integral factor for increasing patronage and profitability thereby ensuring that an organisation remains in business for a long time. Similarly, Huaug and Hsu (2007) found that relatively, it is a gain to retain existing customers rather than seeking to win new ones. Anderson and Narus (1999) as cited in Itunuoluwa, Ayodele, Adesuyi and Ayo (2021) asserted that in order to gain customer patronage, retaining existing customers is a much more effective strategy for the organisation than attempting to attract new ones to replace lost ones. In other words, achieving customer patronage, sustainability and profitability by firms is likewise linked to customer retention. Customer retention expands customers' lifetime usefulness and boosts revenue; it also aids in building relationships with customers.

Without an effective and efficient after sales support system, product and service might be difficult to trade (Jonke, 2012). In Nigeria, ASSs has also witnessed enormous change in satellite product and service delivery. Satellites companies have visualised how ASSs tools like installation, contents, quality service, discount and warranty can be strengthened to improve

their businesses eventually. By definition, after sales is any support provided to customers when the products/services have already been purchased. Organisations use after sales support as a trade blueprint as it typically leads to higher customer satisfaction, brand loyalty and even word-of-mouth-marketing. ASS is regarded as a tool for enhancing a valuable advantage for customers and trade opportunity to the organisation (Saccadic, Johansson & Perona, 2007).

Services of after sales are winning for both customers and the organisation. Fundamentally, after sales refer to the period of time during which the seller or manufacturer guarantees to the buyer assistance, maintenance or repairs of what has been purchased (Díaz & Márquez, 2014). It is obvious that the aim of after sales is to fulfil warranty; also, the motive of ASSs is therefore to support options for extended warranty that assures product/asset reliability and minimised servicing costs as well as base warranty that rectifies product defects or failures (Johnstone, Dainty, & Wilkinson, 2008; Díaz & Márquez, 2014; Rahman & Chattopadhyay, 2015). Most organisations have used ASSs more frequently because of the advantages it has to their organisation. In describing it, ASSs are services that are provided to customers who purchase a product/service which have been delivered to them (Vetasek, 2015). ASSs/support initiates is a process to discover customers' wants and develop a strategic driven method towards customers' patronage. Thus, the after sales process is a connection that customers have with the brand (Gallagher, Mitcchke & Rogers, 2005).

ASSs allow for continuous product quality and service (Thoben, Jagdev & Eschenbaecher, 2001). For organisations to remain in business, they must improve service quality and the exemption of physical expression makes evaluating service quality strenuous. In the view of Gupta and Rati (2015), in order to improve the performance of business, organisations must acknowledge the significance of quality as a strategic tool towards achieving operational efficiency and effectiveness. Customer's service is the procedure applied after the organisation might have completed its dealings with customers to assure its customer. A dynamic degree of aftersales has the capacity that will lead to customers' retention; it is mostly important especially to small growing satellite companies since various individual company services differ. It is wisdom for the small enterprises to give in their best when it comes to after sales service to enable them compete favourably in the competitive environment.

According to the Nigerian Tribune Report (2021), the House of Representatives approved the reduction of cable TV tariff such that customers can either enjoy cable TV or satellite services on a pay-as-you-go or pay-per-view as obtainable in some African countries. The House of Representatives passed a vote of confidence sequel to the assumption of the reports and endorsement of the ad-hoc body on "non-execution of pay-as-you-go and suddenly step up of subscription fee plan by broadcast digital satellite service provider. The house also tasks stakeholders and customers to patronise indigenous satellite company providers to avoid full monopoly by some satellite companies like Multichoice Nigeria. In addition, the ad-hoc committee was tasked to persuade satellite providers to live up to expectations by giving more value to customers in order to meet customers' expectations.

In Nigeria, there are numerous Pay-TV companies; these include but not limited to Multichoice Nigeria, StarTimes, ConSat and MyTv. Other operators are Telecom Satellite TV (TSTV), Kwese TV, Daarsat, among others. Recently launched into the market include Our-TV and FSTV which have been chased out of satellite business due to their inability to compete favourably as well as the absence of ASSs. Furthermore, most developed nations are using dish-less processes for receiving their Pay-TV such as the 'Internet Protocol Television'

(IPTV), online streaming and Video on Demand (VOD). Most recently, some of the big Pay-TV providers have started VOD, box office, YouTube and also watching live sport, films programs via mobile phone. In order to match up or compete with the big Pay-TV providers in Nigeria, smaller Pay-TVs are striving towards achieving success by applying ASSs.

As a way of matching up with big Pay-TVs, smaller Pay-TVs have further engaged their staff in training programmes that can enhance their technological skills and increase their talent and behavioural process in order to respond to customers' problems on time; a move towards building effective customer services. For instance, satellite companies with good customer services will enhance their companies' image, customers' rating, accuracy and speed in discharging their services as well as in resolving technical problems when they surface as customers use their products and services. Again, customers' retention is only possible when customers experience customer service satisfaction. In the light of the above discussion, this study seeks to investigate whether certain after sales services (product delivery, installation and warranty) may serve as determinants of customers' patronage of satellite products and services in South-South Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customers' Patronage

Practically, it is customers that make up patronage; by definition, customer patronage is a procedure whereby a group of people or individuals buy goods and services for immediate or personal consumption (Adiele, Grand & Chinedu, 2015). Thus, customers' patronage stands out to be an individual that purchases goods/services for his/her consumption. Consumers patronise organisations' products/services at one time or the other considering the expected benefits they get or receive. Also, the organisation should double-check that their service quality and delivery strategies need to be improved upon while looking for new avenues to regularly attract and retain new/existing customers. Increased customers' patronage has the capacity to increase sales quantity, which in the long run will affect the organisation profitability level (Adiele et al., 2015).

Consumer patronage theory tries to analyse and explain consumer behaviour. The theory of customers' patronage suggests that patronage of a service/product by various consumers differs. The theory of customers' patronage explains what precisely influence consumers' behaviour in purchasing or not purchasing a product/service. Adiele et al. (2015) opined that an organisation can only align well with its customers to increase patronage through service quality, service personnel, among others. In addition, customers' patronage plays a pivotal role in a company's capability to captivate new customers and keep existing customers.

Customer patronage informs us about what individuals believe about a brand or its offering; what they believe can be negative or positive, inhibitions, predispositions, presupposition or individual ordeals. Thus, customers' patronage influences not only consumers who buy the products/services, but also individuals who see the product service quality and pricing. According to Anderson and Sullivan (1993) as cited in Itunuoluwa, Ayodele, Adesuyi and Ayo (2021), organisations that furnish excellent products and services on a constant basis will have increased satisfied individuals and these individuals will likely repeat the service/product. Thus, organisations that render high quality services/products have the capacity of satisfying

their customers as well as having higher returns on investment than their competitors.

Furthermore, Drucker (1973) cited in Ogwo and Igwe (2012) opined that for organisations that seek to increase customers' patronage and satisfaction, they usually engage in what is termed as 'after sales services (ASSs). Notably, customers' satisfaction leads to customers' patronage and the import of customers' patronage is to keep the organisation functioning (Ogwo & Igwe, 2012). From a marketing perspective, customers' patronage is a reciprocated procedure where individuals receive a service/product in trading for money and/or other remunerations. Customers' patronage is therefore the purchase of a product/service from a trader by a customer or a company. The customer purchases and expects to gain benefits or satisfaction from the goods or services as payment for the exchange for money paid.

Some recent researches (Sari, 2020; Shereen et al., 2021; Itunuoluwa et al., 2021) had proven that the link between meeting customers' expectations and customers' loyalty is not reliable. For instance, Sari (2020) on the one hand claimed that there exists a strong relationship among profitability level, customers' satisfaction, customers' loyalty and usefulness of products and services provided to customers. On the other hand, Itunuoluwa et al. (2021) submitted that the link between satisfaction and loyalty is not necessarily linear, even customers' satisfaction is spotted as a key driver for loyalty. For instance, as maintaining existing customers is cheaper than getting new ones, the benefits of customer loyalty are cumulative and long-term. Again, Jones and Sasser (1995), as cited in Waluya, Iqbal and Indradewa (2019), showed that the effect of customers' satisfaction on customers' allegiance varies from industry to industry.

Consequent upon the above, there is ample evidence that service quality has been well and thoroughly studied, and the studies have found more complex issues underneath the relationship between the customer and the supplier. Thus, customers' patronage influences not only the customers who buy the product/service of an organisation, but also those who see the product service quality as effective or efficient. Organisations therefore do desire a satisfaction-profit sequence. Supporting the above viewpoint, when product service quality is efficient, it results in customers' retention and preference for the products or services of the organisation.

After Sales Services (ASSs)

The concept of after sales services (ASSs) has been widely defined in the literature; ASSs is deemed as an important mechanism for promoting valuable advantages for customers and business opportunities (Saccadic, Johansson & Perona, 2007). According to Diaz and Marquez (2014), ASSs can be described as the timeframe during which an organisation guarantees buyers, assistance, maintenance and warranty of their product/service. ASSs create room for customers' relationships as well as bringing back lost customers. According to Vitasek (2005), ASSs is a service that is rendered to customers after making a purchase of a product/service from an organisation.

In the view of Lele and Karmarkar (1983), as cited in Yadav and Joseph (2017), ASSs is a support or technical support services offered to customers, hence it is termed customers' support services. ASSs can be divided into two (2): one is related to the organisation that provides the services while the other relates to the organisations that provide tangible goods. According to Gairdelli, Saccani and Songini (2007), whichever forms ASSs takes, it can be linked to operational activities. Such operational activities can be transportation, installation, repairing services, among others. The value chain of ASSs comprises timely delivery of

products, installation of products to buyers, agreed warranty terms, improved service quality, and actual feedback from buyers about their experiences when using a product.

Specifically, ASSs involve several processes targeted at satisfying customers. Bhave (2002), as cited in Osoko, Kehinde, Iyiola, Ogunnaike, Salau and Atolagbe (2020), asserted that a satisfied customer is a valuable asset to an organisation and directly works as a reliable and credible advertisement. In this regard, it is better and important that customers experience high levels of quality services conveniently. Irini (2008) noted that aftersales delivery, installation and warranty are the most important towards enhancing customers' patronage. In this study, three ASSs dimensions were and are briefly discussed as follows:

Product Delivery

Product delivery is a very essential component in any business-related concern, due to its essential process in ASSs. Delivery of products is essential to the ASSs that have effect on the customers. It is basically the first thing to do among aftersales dimensions. Notably, it is a process where customers receive their product at the door step of the organisation after payment has been made, thereby making the product available to customers (Rigopoulou, Chaniotakisim, Lymperopoulos & Siomkos, 2008 as cited in Etim, Joseph & Bassey, 2018). According to Choudhary, Akhter, Choudhary, Siddique and Mughal (2011), delivery of product guarantees the right time together with quantity and it is dependent on factors, such as speed, quality services and reliability. Like that of satellite providers which have products aimed at gaining customers' confidence, they have to create an account for decoder purchase and make sure pictures are up before delivery to the customers.

In product delivery research, the most imperative factors for buyers include reliability, assurance, tangible, empathy and responsiveness (Parasuraman et al., 1994). Product delivery is seen as a key driver for perceived value. Hence, Heskett, James, Sasser, Earl Jr. Hart and Christopher (1990) as cited in Sari (2020) asserted that product delivery relates closely with customer satisfaction. For instance, a customer buys what creates the most value for him/her. It is when customers are satisfied with services rendered by the organisation that they will buy a product or subscribe to services rendered by the organisation. Thus, a good delivery system is required to guarantee that the products can reach the customers at the right time and place without an extra cost or carrying cost to previously agreed price of the products. In view of the above, we thus hypothesised that:

H_o1: There is no significant relationship between product delivery and customers' patronage of satellite products.

Product Warranty

Product warranty is the assurance a manufacturer of a product offers to the consumers concerning the quality of their products and what gratification they will get if the products do not meet customers' satisfaction as advertised and/or expressed in the manual of the product. Basically, there are three (3) types of warranty - express, implied and extended. *First,* express warranty assures consumers that the product will perform certain prescribed conditions of quality and performance; *second,* implied warranty guarantees that a product will function as designed or advertised; and *third,* extended warranty (known as service agreement) is a service contract or maintenance agreement offered to consumers in addition to the standard warranty.

In other words, warranty basically reassures customers or consumers that the product is original, durable or exempted from error (The New Economics Education, 2012). Warranty is also adopted by companies to please customers and their dedication to social responsibilities which forms the groundwork for quality public relations campaigns (Oko & Eboh, 2013). A manufacturer or wholesaler pays more to ensure warranty goals are carried out completely (i.e., they try by all means to guarantee customers satisfaction throughout the warranty period).

Murthy, Solem and Roren (2004) stated that a customer can be disappointed when offered with a substandard quality of warranty service, which may lead to switching to a competitor brand or the organisation losing potential customers. When a product is faulty before the expiration of the warranty period, it gives the users great deal of unsatisfaction, knowing fully-well that the organisation promises maximal satisfaction using their services or products. Oumlil (2008) as cited in Shaharudin, Omar, Hassan and Anuar (2011), showed that consumers always have confidence that an exceptional warranty will be interconnected with greater quality and less trouble (i.e. all warranty should be embedded on quality and not just only warranty).

Apparently, even if there are warranties, customers need assurance that the product will perform satisfactorily over the useful life of the product. A warranty is assumed as a commitment for sellers; it is a duty for sellers and contentment for the consumers that the product will last in long-term (Udell & Anderson 1968 as cited in Itunuoluwa et al., 2021). The main reason for offering warranty is to reassure prospective customers about their purchases as well as to show that the products will function and last for a longer time when compared to competing products.

Jack and Schouten (2000) as cited in Shaharudin, Omar, Hassan and Anuar (2011) observed that manufacturers should be willing to rectify all failures and damages that take place within the warranty period. According to Kwashie (2012), customers may feel hurt when there is no one to assist them to resolve their issues. Hence, this explains the sources of bad customers' services to include failure of customer care representatives to answer queries, long unmanageable queues and no help to explain issues concerning a product or services to them. In this regard, customers feel less valued when prompt attention is not given to their problems, and feel valued when prompt attention is given to their problems and they become happy and forget the poor feedback they had in mind. In view of the above, we thus hypothesized that:

H_o2:	There is no significant relationship between product warranty and customers' patronage of satellite products.

Product Installation

Product installation is an intrinsic aspect of after sales or delivery of products and it is factored to generate increased profitable sales. Product installation can be described in two (2) broad terms: virtual and physical. *First,* physical installation refers to installing physical gadgets, such as modem, computer, hard drives, decoders, and camera, among others. *Second,* virtual installation has to do with software installation. Installation of cable network televisions and decoders requires a greater technical know-how which the installer must possess after being trained by satellite providers for effective and competent installation services. When it comes to satellites, especially the dish installation, customers will not find it friendly because it requires training to get it right.

While certain products have a particular installation process which can be understood easily by customers, others do not have, and some product installations are not customers' friendly. When installation goes wrong, then it may cost the organisation, if the customer decides to make a case, the organisation may have to pay a large sum of money to the customer or spend a lot on the case (Wetmore, 2004). In other words, customers' satisfaction is an advantage to increased sales, profit margin and also results in increased customers' patronage. One among the major components in after sales service is installation. Rigopoulou, Chaniotakis, Lymperopoulos and Siomkos (2008) as cited in Shaharudin, Omar, Hassan and Anuar (2011) opined that installation is a principal tool to after sales service which has the most influence on customers. It is the procedure of fixing a recently bought product by a company.

To put it differently, it is the number one intrinsic value in the after sales service (Choudhary, Akhter, Asif, Choudhary, Siddique & Mughal, 2011). Rigopoulou and Chaniotakis (2016) opined that product installation as a service quality are those activities and behaviour organisations put in place to secure proper phase of a product installation, such as good knowledge of the technical requirement, politeness, attention and perfect technical know-how, among others. A quality product installation can enhance customers' repeat buying behaviour that will lead to organisational growth. The vital reason for granting product installation to customers is to gain competitive advantage and customers' demand. In view of the above, we thus hypothesized that:

H_o3:   There is no significant relationship between product installation and customers' patronage of satellite products.
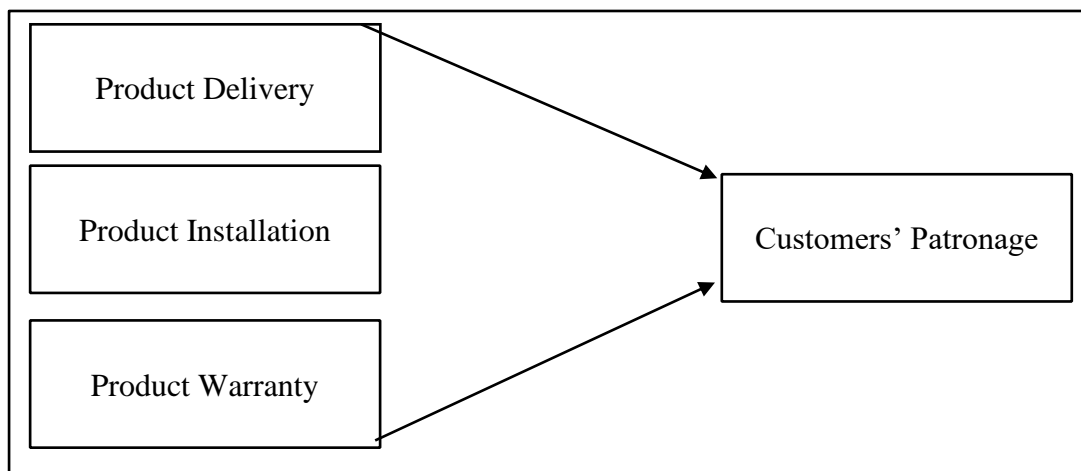

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study

(Source: Conceptualized by the Researchers, 2023)

Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on utility theory. First, utility theory was advocated by Fishburn (1970). Fishburn (1970) described utility as the preference of users towards services or products, which implies that users or customers repose their trust in certain products or services either because of the organisation's image or products and services efficiency. The theory tries to describe the nature of single consumers in an economy, which argues that each individual given a list of choices can classify those choices in a precise order of preference.

Bhave (2002) as cited in Osoko et al. (2020) posited that a satisfied customer is a valuable asset, which organisations must strive to retain their loyalty and ensure continued patronage. The utility theory is relevant to the current study because it shows that only satisfied customers can patronise any enterprise that renders satisfactory services or products.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research design that was used for this study is the descriptive survey (quantitative). The choice of descriptive survey design was to enable the researchers collect data from diverse individuals on their perceptions on aftersales services (ASSs) and customers' patronage of satellites products and services in South-South region of Nigeria. The study population were Pay-TV subscribers in South-South, Nigeria, namely: Delta, Edo, Bayelsa and Rivers States. The study population is one million, five thousand, and nine hundred (1,005,900) active Pay-Tv subscribers to Multichoice/Startimes as shown as follows:

Table 1: Population Distribution

S/N	State(s)	Population (Active Subscribers)
1	Delta	327,300
2	Edo	276,872
3	Bayelsa	93,200
4	Rivers	308,528
	Total	1,005,900

Source: Multichoice/Startimes Office, Nigeria (2023)

The multi-stage sampling technique involving probabilistic (quantitative) and stratified random sampling were employed in the sample size determination. First, the Taro-Yamane sample size determination formula was used in obtaining the actual sample size of four hundred (400). This is then followed by the stratified random sampling technique, which was used in dividing the actual sample size of four hundred (400) according to the diverse Pay-Tv subscribers in South-South, Nigeria (Delta, Edo, Bayelsa and Rivers) as shown in Table 2.

Table 3.2: Sample Size Distribution

S/N	Number of Subscribers	Percentage Distribution
1	Pay-Tv subscribers to Multichoice/Startimes in Delta	327,300/1,005,900 x 400= 130
2	Pay-Tv subscribers to Multichoice/Startimes in Edo	276,872/1,005,900 x 400 = 110
3	Pay-Tv subscribers to Multichoice/Startimes in Bayelsa	93,200/1,005,900 x 400 = 37
4	Pay-Tv subscribers to Multichoice/Startimes in Rivers	308,528/1,005,900 x 400= 123
	Total	400

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

The structured questionnaire on a four adjusted point likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was employed. Scores were awarded to the questionnaire items as follows: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Agree, and 4-Strongly Agree. The research instrument (questionnaire) was administered to the satellite customers in Nigeria on a face-to-face basis by the researcher, alongside two (2) research assistants to ensure full retrieval of the administered questionnaire.

The study adopted the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient technique in ascertaining the reliability of the research instrument. In order to achieve this, ten percent (10%) of the study sample (40 respondents) was used. Thus, questionnaires were administered to forty (40) respondents who did not form part of the test group. The data collected was analysed using Cronbach Alpha method to establish the internal consistency of the research instrument. The Cronbach Alpha results for the research instruments were presented as follows:

Table 3: Reliability Coefficients of the Research Instruments

Item	Obs.	Sign	Item-test correlation	Item-rest correlation	Average interitem covariance	Cronbach Alpha
Satprdel	40	+	0.8518	0.7903	0. 5741	0.8868
Satinsn	40	+	0.8957	0.8325	0.5011	0.8781
Satwrty	40	+	0.9023	0.8466	0.5088	0.8756
Satcusp	40	+	0.8547	0.8001	0.5890	0.8877

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the research instruments ranged from 0.8756 to 0.9023; the lowest being satellite product warranty (Satwrty: 0.8756) which is above the benchmark of 0.7. Thus, the research instruments are considered reliable since all the items beat the benchmark of 0.7 as recommended as for a reliable instrument. The study builds on existing models of Mojekeh et al. (2021), Oladele et al. (2019), and Ladokun et al. (2013) that

assessed after sales services on customer's satisfaction and patronage. Given the formulated hypotheses, the following models were specified:

satcusp= f(satpdeli)   -   eq. 1

 satcusp= f(satinsn)   -   eq. 2

satcusp= f(satwrty)   -   eq. 3

Equations 1-3 are the implicit forms of the regression model expressing the individual relationship between after sales dimensions and customer's patronage. However, equations 4-6 were expressed in their explicit form as follows:

$$satcusp_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 satpdel_{it} + u_{it} \qquad \text{- eq. 4}$$

$$satcusp_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_2 satinsn_{it} + u_{it} \qquad \text{- eq. 5}$$

$$satcusp_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_3 satwrty_{it} + u_{it} \qquad \text{- eq. 6}$$

Where: $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3 > 0$; Satcusp = Customer Patronage; satprdel = Product Delivery; satinsn = Installation; satwrty = Warranty; Sat = Satellite; U_{it} = Error Term; B = Intercept; $\beta_1 - \beta_3$ = Coefficient of the Independent Variables.

In this study, customer patronage behaviour measured the degree of preference a customer has and their intention to continue to use the Pay-TV and the intention to recommend to other people. Three constructs were used and were adopted from Chaiyasoonthorn and Suksa-Ngiam (2011), and Ogwo and Igwe (2012). Customer service constructs were measured using the content of customer service packages and style of delivery which were adopted from Aliyu and Tasmin (2012).

Furthermore, other constructs like product warranty and installation were self-designed to adequately cover the intentions of satellite service providers in attracting patronage to the products and services. Data obtained were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The descriptive tests used comprised frequency counts, simple percentage, mean, median, standard deviation, kurtosis, skewness, Pearson correlation while the post-estimation test consists the variance inflation factor and Ramsey Regression Specification-Error Test for Omitted Variable. On the other hand, all formulated hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics (simple regression).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4: Demographic Variables of Respondents Representing After Sales and Customers Patronage of Multicohice/StarTimes Products and Services in South-South, Nigeria

No.	Parameters	Items	Frequency=373	Percent(%)
1	Gender	Male	235	63.0%
		Female	138	37.0%
		Total	373	100%
2	Marital Status	Single	130	34.85%
		Married	180	48.26%
		Divorced	20	5.36%
		Widowed	27	7.24%
		Co-habiting	16	4.29%
		Total	373	100%
3	Age	18-25years	47	12.60%
		26-35years	117	31.37%
		36-45years	103	27.61%
		46-55years	81	21.72%
		Above 56years	25	6.70%
		Total	373	100%
4	Educational qualification	Primary School Leaving Cert.	32	8.58%
		WASC/SSCE/GCE	98	26.27%
		NCE/OND	150	40.21%
		B.Sc./HND	78	20.91%
		M.Sc./PhD	15	4.02%
		Total	373	100%
5	Usage periods of Multichoice/ StarTimes products & services	1-12months	62	16.62%
		1-2years	46	12.33%
		2-3years	90	24.13%
		3years & above	175	46.92%
		Total	373	100%
6	State(s)	Delta	121	32.4%
		Rivers	115	30.8%
		Edo	104	27.9%
		Bayelsa	33	8.9%
			373	100%

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

Table 4 illustrates the demographic variables of 373 respondents who are customers of Multichoice/StarTimes companies in Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States. The result indicates that 235 (63%) and 138 (37%) of respondents are male and female respectively. The data revealed that 47 (12.6%) and 117 (31.4%) of the respondents are within the age brackets of 18-25 years and 26-35 years respectively while 103 (27.6%) and 81 (21.7%) are 36-45 years and 46-55 years respectively. The remaining respondents fall within age brackets 56 years and above (25, 6.7%).

The marital status of respondents depicts that 130 (34.85%) and 180 (48.26%) are single and married respectively while few segments of the respondents indicated that they are divorced, representing 20 (5.4%), widowed 27 (7.24%) and cohabiting 16 (4.29%). It was shown that 32 (8.6%) and 98 (26.3%) of the respondents had first leaving school certificate (FLSC) and WASSCE/SSCE/GCE qualifications respectively while majority of the respondents indicated that they had obtained NCE/OND 150 (40.2%), B.Sc./HND 78 (20.9%) and M.Sc./PhD 15 (4.02%). The table further illustrates the years of usage of Multichoice/StarTimes products and services by the respondents.

In this regards, it was seen that 62 (16.62%) and 46 (12.33%) had used Multichoice/StarTimes products and services for 1-12 months and 1-2 years respectively, while a sizable portion of the respondents representing 90 (24.1%) and 175 (46.9%) had used Multichoice/StarTimes products and services for 2-3 years and 3 years and above. Furthermore, it was found that one hundred and twenty-one (121) 32.4% active subscribers were sampled from Delta State, one hundred and fifteen (115) 30.8% from Rivers State, one hundred and for (104) 27.9% from Edo State and thirty-three (33) 8.9% from Bayelsa State.

Table 5: Summary of Descriptive Statistics

Stats	Satcusp	Satprdel	Satinsn	Satwrty
Mean	3.4530	3.4658	3.4242	3.4470
Std. Dev.	0.1926	0.3061	0.2542	0.3122
Skewness	0.1224	0.0598	-0.0126	0.0901
Kurtosis	3.7505	2.2814	2.6152	2.1970

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

Table 5 showed the descriptive statistics involving the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis of the summarised perceptions of respondents on the variables of customers patronage (satcusp), product delivery (satprdel), installation (satinsn) and warranty (satwrty), for the Multichoice/Startimes users in Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States, Nigeria. The mean values for after sales products and services measures (satprdel = 3.46; satinsn = 3.42; satwrty = 3.4) and customers patronage (satcusp = 3.4) clearly depict that the viewpoints of the respondents on the research theme are common (i.e., they shared similar views on after sales services and products and customers patronage of Multichoice/Startimes).

Additionally, the standard deviation revealed that the highest standard deviation value was recorded by satwrty (std. dev. = 0.31) and the least by satinsn (std. dev. = 0.25); this result implies that customers perceive the warranty of products and services as the most vital after sales services of Multichoice/Startimes. Skewness values showed that the variables of satprdel

(0.059) and satwrty (0.09) were positively skewed while the other variable, satinsn (-0.01) was negatively skewed, suggesting that product delivery and warranty moved favourably together in one direction with customers' patronage while product installation moved in the opposite direction with customers' patronage.

Table 6: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Stats	Satcusp	Satprdel	Satinsn	Satwrty
Satcusp	1.0000			
Satpdel	-0.1256	1.0000		
Satinsn	-0.3476	0.3112	0.5071	1.0000
Satwrty	-0.2420	0.2255	0.6333	0.6266

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

Table 6 illustrates the Pearson correlation matrix to assess the extent of relationship between the dependent (customers' patronage) and independent variables (product delivery, installation, and warranty) of the study. The results depicted that the Pearson r for the independent variables were negatively correlated with customers' patronage; this implies that there is a negative link between after sales services and customers' patronage. More so, none of the Pearson correlation r exceeded 0.8; an indication of the nonexistence of multicollinearity in the model of the study (Gujarati, 2003 cited in Okoro & Ekwueme, 2021; Okoro, 2016).

Table 7: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Stats	VIF	1/VIF
Satpdel	1.07	0.9323
Satwrty	1.07	0.9354
Satinsn	1.01	0.9947
Mean VIF	1.05	

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

The mean VIF = 1.05 (as shown in Table 7) is less than the accepted mean VIF of 10.0; suggesting that there is non-existence of multicollinearity problem in the empirical models of aftersales services and customers' patronage.

Table 8: Ramsey Regression Specification-Error Test for Omitted Variables

F = 7.25	
Prob. >. F = 0.0001	

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

Table 8 illustrates the Ramsey regression specification-error test for omitted variables and the fitted values of the dependent variable (satcusp). The result showed that the F = 7.25 with Probability > F = 0.0001, indicating that the model has no omitted variables and hence fits adequately well.

Table 9: Regression Result for Product Delivery and Customers' Patronage

Source	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	No. of Obs.	373
Model	0.8007	1	0.8007	F(1, 371)	5.95
Residual	49.956	371	0.1346	Prob. F	0.0152
Total	50.757	372	0.1364	R-Squared	0.0158
Satcusp	Coeff.	Std. Error	t	Prob.	
Satprdel	-0.0667	0.0273	-2.44	0.015	
_Cons.	3.8442	0.1052	36.53	0.000	

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

Table 9 illustrates the regression result for product delivery (*satprdel*) and customers' patronage (*satcusp)*. The R-Squared is 0.0158, indicating that the independent variable (product delivery) explained about 1.58% of the systematic variation in the dependent variable (customers' patronage). The small R-Squared value implies that product delivery has a low predictive ability on customers' patronage and that most likely, there are other variables predicting customers' patronage. The f-ratio indicates that product delivery (F=1, 371 = 5.95; Prob. > F = 0.0152< 0.05) significantly affects customers' patronage.

Furthermore, the t-value (t= -2.44; P>/t/ = 0.015 < 0.05) revealed that there is a negative and significant relationship between product delivery and customers' patronage in Multichoice/StarTimes products and services in Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States of Nigeria. This result conforms to Karl Pearson correlation coefficient which was carrying a negative sign. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is a significant relationship between product delivery and customer's patronage of satellite products.

Table 10: Regression Result for Product Installation and Customers' Patronage

Source	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	No. of Obs.	373
Model	6.1343	1	6.1343	F(1, 371)	51.00
Residual	44.623	371	0.1202	Prob. F	0.0000
Total	50.757	372	0.1364	R-Squared	0.1209
Satcusp	Coeff.	Std. Error	t	Prob.	
Satinsn	-0.215	0.0301	-7.14	0.000	
_Cons.	4.2403	0.0925	45.80	0.000	

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

Table 10 illustrates the regression result for product installation (*satinsn*) and customers' patronage (*satcusp)*. The R-Squared is 0.1209, indicating that the independent variable (product installation) explained about 12.09% of the systematic variation in the dependent variable (customers' patronage). The small R-Squared value implies that product installation has a low predictive ability on customers' patronage and that most likely, there are other

variables predicting customers' patronage. The f-ratio indicates that product delivery (F=1, 371 = 51.00; Prob. > F = 0.000 < 0.05) significantly affects customers' patronage.

Furthermore, the t-value (t= -7.14; P>/t/ = 0.000 < 0.05) revealed that there is a negative and significant relationship between product installation and customer patronage in Multichoice/StarTimes products and services in Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States of Nigeria. This result conforms to Karl Pearson correlation coefficient which was carrying a negative sign. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is a significant relationship between product installation and customer's patronage of satellite products.

Table 11: Regression Result for Product Warranty and Customers' Patronage

Source	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	No. of Obs.	373
Model	2.9721	1	2.9721	F(1, 371)	23.07
Residual	47.784	371	0.1288	Prob. F	0.0000
Total	50.757	372	0.1364	R-Squared	0.0586
Satcusp	Coeff.	Std. Error	t	Prob.	
Satinsn	-0.148	0.0308	-4.80	0.000	
_Cons.	4.0485	0.0968	41.79	0.000	

Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023)

Table 11 illustrates the regression result for product warranty (*satwrty*) and customers' patronage (*satcusp)*. The R-Squared is 0.0586, indicating that the independent variable (product warranty) explained about 5.86% of the systematic variation in the dependent variable (customers' patronage). The small R-Squared value implies that product warranty has a low predictive ability on customers' patronage and that most likely, there are other variables predicting customers' patronage. The f-ratio indicates that product warranty (F=1, 371 = 23.07; Prob. > F = 0.0000 < 0.05) significantly affects customers' patronage.

The t-value (t= -4.80; P>/t/ = 0.0000 < 0.05) revealed that there is a negative and significant relationship between product warranty and customer patronage in Multichoice/StarTimes products and services in Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States of Nigeria. This result conforms to Karl Pearson correlation coefficient which was carrying a negative sign. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted; this means that there is a significant relationship between product warranty and customer's patronage of satellite products.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The global practice of organisations is to keep existing customers and encourage new ones as much as they can. One of such vital operational policies organisations use in retaining and encouraging existing and new customers is the after sales services (ASSs). This study examined the relationship between ASSs and customers' patronage of satellite products/services in South-South Nigeria. In order to give a novel view, this study employed three (3) ASSs

dimensions, such as product warranty, product installation, and product delivery. Data obtained in the field work were analysed using descriptive, diagnostic and inferential statistical techniques.

Specifically, the study concluded that there is a significant relationship between the ASSs dimensions (product delivery, product installation, and product warranty) and customer's patronage of satellite products in Nigeria. Thus, the study concluded that ASSs serve as determinants of customers' patronage. In view of the findings, it was recommended that there is the need for management of Multichoice/StarTimes Company to enhance their strategic plans aimed at further improving product delivery, installation, and warranty by ensuring that their transmissions are more effective than ever before in order to attract more customers, increase profitability and market share. The study found that product warranty, installation and delivery of Multichoice/StarTimes products negatively affect customers' patronage.

Consequently, management of Multichoice/StarTimes needs to improve on their product warranty, delivery and installation policies so as to further assure customers of improved and quality products as well as attracting more customers. This study contributes to knowledge by filling the literature gap on the link between ASSs and customers' patronage of satellite products in Nigeria. The majority of the studies on ASSs and customers' patronage were obtainable in other countries. In addition, this study contributes to knowledge by establishing that variables of ASSs (such as product delivery, installation, warranty) significantly and negatively affect customers' patronage of satellite products in Nigeria.

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