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Non-Store Retailing and Customer Satisfaction in Asaba Metropolis, Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of non-store retailing on customer satisfaction in the small and medium enterprises in Asaba, Delta State. The cross-sectional survey research design method was deemed to be the most appropriate for this study. The stratified random sampling technique was used for the study. A sample size of 205 respondents was randomly selected from the total population of 450. The strategy for obtaining the data for this study involved the administration of validated questionnaire. To establish the reliability of the instrument, a test-retest method was employed. The study adopted descriptive statistics, correlation and multiple regressions analysis. Findings showed that mobile retailing, direct selling and mail order have significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. The study concluded that non-store retailing has positive effect on customer satisfaction in the SMEs in Asaba Delta State. The study recommended that the modern retail industry is booming across the world. Therefore, it is essential for retailers to use strategies which focus on satisfying current customers.

Keywords: Non-store retailing, mobile retailing, direct selling, mail order, customer satisfaction

1. Introduction

A revolution is under way in the store-dominated world of retailing. The major players are non-store retailers who are appearing in new forms, increasing in numbers, and gaining market share from store-based retailers. Although accurate sales figures for this non-store growth are difficult to obtain, one can predict that non-store annual sales are increasing from three to five times faster than those of traditional store outlets. The service industry and in particular, the retail market has been relevant to the global economy and has intensified competition under current crisis and economic turn-down period. The modern retail industry is thriving across the world. Therefore, it is essential for retailers to use strategies which focus on satisfying current customers.

Every business success relies on the satisfaction of the customers. Whenever a business is about to start, target customers always come first and then the profit. Those firms that are trying to satisfy their customers fully will remain in the top position in a market. Today's business has recognized customer satisfaction as a major factor for the success of the business and at the same time it plays a crucial role in expanding the market value. One of the important aspects to ensure the attention of the customers is to provide the best and the most favorable products at this competing market. If a customer's satisfaction is exceeded, then it is certain that customer loyalty will also accompany it. Furthermore, when customers are lacking, a company would not exist. In order to enhance the number of customers, improvement of customer's satisfaction is very relevant. In terms of attaining business goals, these two terms are very vital.

The major goal of every business activity in a company is to meet the needs and wants of its customers at the highest level of satisfaction. This goal had long manifested itself in the business world since the marketing concept first appeared. Every manager is now compelled to always reconcile his profit-making activity with the consumer satisfaction objective. Therefore, we can see that the caveat emptor 'buyers beware' era is past and the caveat venditor 'sellers beware' era now holds way (Basil, Ezekiel, Anyadighibe & Johnson, 2014). Sellers beware of what? Sellers beware of consumers' changing, diverse and occasionally unreliable needs and want which have to be met at the maximum level of satisfaction, even better than the competition (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

The need to be serve this loud call for the 'manufacturer or sellers' attention to customer satisfaction cannot be overlooked. Every company exists because its target customers exist. In other words, the target customers are what a firm is living for. But it is not always that a product in itself brings to the consumers all the satisfaction they need; it therefore becomes imperative to look at the role each variable of the marketing mix can play in creating and delivering utmost satisfaction to customers. It could be place, price, or even promotion. Kotler & Armstrong (2010) asserted that an effective marketing program blends all of the marketing mix factors to attain the firm's marketing objectives by delivering value to customers. From the buyer's perspective, the well-known four Ps is the four Cs: product as customer solution; price as

customer cost; place as convenience; and promotion as communication (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). All these work as one in delivering the most satisfying experience to the consumer who is designated 'the king' by the marketing concept. How better if we, marketers, pay considerable attention to consumers' 'conveniences'.

In-store retailing, in its diverse forms, has always stocked range of products to be bought by the customers who must leave their homes and travel to the store. But today's world harbours customers who like to be waited on or who are given to pampering. Customers now prefer products that can be bought and consumed without them leaving their homes (Basil, *et al* 2014). They need not compete with the time of long queues at store counters, rude and slow services by store attendants, pushing weighty trolleys about like slaves, paying high fares to carry products bought home (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). In a bid to curb these unpleasant experiences associated with in-store retailing, some Nigerian consumers have turned to non-store retailing that is mostly practiced by small and medium enterprises.

Most small and medium enterprises in Delta State operate as sole/family proprietorship business and are usually classified into commercial, industrial and agricultural categories. Depending on their activities, though commercial SMEs constitute more than 90% of the entire number of any given area (Mba & Emeti, 2014). SMEs in Nigeria are seen as the backbone of the economy and a key source of economic growth, dynamism and flexibility. A research carried out by the Federal Office of Statistics indicated that 97% of all businesses in Nigeria employ less than 100 employees, connoting that 97% of all businesses in Nigeria are small businesses (Mba & Emeti, 2014).

The central practice of retailing has undergone notable, essential changes in the past few decades. With the rise of non-store retailing (e.g., retailing by person to person, telephone, catalogues, the Internet, etc.), coupled with customers' increased willingness to purchase through these alternative channels, traditional brick-and-mortar stores are not inevitably a prerequisite in today's retailing environment (Crittenden and Wilson, 2002). As such, the old adage of retail success, 'location, location, location', may no longer be relevant as originally intended. Given the rather dramatic changes influencing retailing in general the question of what makes a successful retail establishment is pertinent for researchers and practitioners. Therefore, the study aimed to examine the effect of non-store retailing on customer satisfaction in Asaba Metropolis of Delta State, Nigeria.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Non-store retailing can save the firm a lot of cost, yet they are accompanied with unsure risk. Most customers are cautious about the misuse of this strategy and are always concerned that they may become victims of fraud. Some firms in Nigeria have employed non-store retailing as a way of increasing their sales volumes (customer acquisition) and therefore increased profits in the short-term. These firms have strived to have a superior customer acquisition strategy while paying little attention to customer satisfaction.

Sales representatives are usually employed on contract basis and their pay is pegged on their performance. They do not enjoy most of the fringe benefits as the permanent and pensionable employees. Incompetence sales force affects the organizations marketing performance in particular and human society economic well-being in general. It becomes apparent that the effect of poor sales force performance in sales job, is not limited to the firms alone but also to the economy by extension. As competition becomes tough, products and services become more identical and markets become reputable, it is becoming gradually tougher for firms in retailing industries to differentiate themselves from other stores.

Simply offering customers with technical solutions to challenges is not adequate anymore to be competitive and obtain and retain market share. Diverse value-added services, which begin before the real operation begins, had gone further than it, so as to stay competitive and develop customer loyalty. Furthermore, the reliability of a vendor on the Internet may be difficult to assess since the Internet offers an opportunity for fraud on a grand scale. Furthermore, the reliability of a vendor on the Internet may be difficult to assess since the Internet offers an opportunity for fraud on a grand scale.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of non-store retailing on customer satisfaction. The specific objectives are to:

- Determine the effect of mobile retailing on customer satisfaction
- Ascertain the influence of direct selling on customer satisfaction
- Determine the influence of mail order on customer satisfaction

1.3. Research Hypotheses

- Ha1: Mobile retailing has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction
- Ha2: Direct selling has a significant positive influence on customer satisfaction
- Ha3: Mail order has a significant positive influence on customer satisfaction

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Concept of Non-Store Retailing

Ebitu (2006) opine that non-store retailing is shopping without entering a store and at present it grows faster than in-store retailing in Japan and the USA because of the convenience it offers to customers. Interestingly, this feat is being attained in Nigeria as disclosed in a report published by Euromonitor International, Non-store Retailing in Nigeria. Reviewing this report, Agbaje & Ikeji (2012) noted that non-store retailing recorded a 25 percent growth in 2011 valued at

N62.4 billion, which is an additional N12.5 billion to the N49.9 billion recorded in 2010. Pushing this retail segment most is internet retailing, which recorded 25% growth during the period under review, while other non-store methods like vending and direct selling trailed behind (perhaps because) computer and internet use is growing fast in Nigeria from a very low base.

Non-store retailing means selling products to customers through catalogues phone-sales, vending machines and internet (Kotler, Armstrong, Wong & Saunders, 2008). Non-store retailing is used to complement traditional store-retailing, rather than replace it. Internet retail stores are used to complement traditional stores, giving customers opportunity to buy and order products online in cases when it is more convenient than going to physical store. Internet shops usually provide wider selection of products than retail shops, because of no-limited space. Good example of successful internet distribution is clothing company H&M that provides stylish yet affordable clothes. Although there are two stores in Tampere city center offering wide collection of H&M clothes, there is still better choice of colors, sizes and styles when shopping directly from H&M's website. In addition, customers can order their purchase for low delivery costs, benefiting from fourteen days of trial and ability to return the product without extra costs (H&M Online).

Catalogue and direct-mail retailers provide the customers with their offers in catalogue, brochure or promotional letter format. Companies put effort in making their catalogues look appealing and providing detailed information about their products to attract customers who much rather prefers to take their time when make their purchasing decisions, avoiding crowded shopping malls and pushy sales people. The fastest growing form of direct distribution is selling products through the Internet. Internet connects customers and producers around the world and therefore increases market opportunities for companies. Customers benefit from online shopping by having the convenience to browse through the products and make sales decisions without time and place limitations, such as store opening hours or distance to shopping mall.

Customers receive greater selection of products and more information about product functions online. Internet also offers customers opportunity to browse similar products and compare functions and prices. Internet gives customers all marketing power, as it operates for customers benefit. Customers can quickly exchange information about e.g., great online deals or disappointing service. Decisions on distribution channel always start with customers and their needs and expectations. Customers' needs for location, level of service, options of delivery and width of product assortment are some of the features company must find out beforehand. It is important for company that is looking for increasing their customer base to find out where the potential customers are and make their products visible for them. Attending different events, such as trade fairs gives company an opportunity to display their products and demonstrate them to gain customers attention and win their interest.

The glut of new channels has changed the nature of today's retailing environment (Neslin, Grewal, Leghorn, Shankar, Teerling, Thomas & Verhoef, 2006). Particularly Internet-based channels (i.e., mobile and online channels) and advanced technologies have formed new and innovative opportunities for retailers' marketing activities and enhanced the flexibility of their marketing decisions (Verhoef, Kannan & Inman, 2015). For instance, channels such as mobile devices, e-mail, websites and social media enables retailers to reach customers via different formats without the limitations of location and time. Technologies such as location-based services installed in mobile phones supports retailers to use the accurate locations where target customers are to transmit advertisements and coupons to them in real time (Andrews, Goehring, Hui, Pancras & Thornswood, 2016; Verhoef, Stephen, Kannan, Luo, Abhishek & Andrews, 2017). Retailers no longer depend solely on traditional channels (e.g., catalogs, physical stores) given the presence of advanced channels.

Episerver (2015) in a study showed that nearly 95% of retailers realize the significance of a multichannel strategy to target customers. Pew Research Center reported that about 86% of apparel retailers have already used up to 4 social media channels to communicate with buyers (Morrison, 2015). Ofek, Katona & Sarvary (2011) indicated that the addition of a website reduces a retailer's overall profit when competition is strong because the retailer needs to invest more in customer support provided in stores (e.g., more qualified sales staff, greater shelf display, floor samples) to enhance differentiation from rivals that do not provide comparable store support. However, not all customers benefit from the focal retailer's enhanced store support.

Huang, Lu & Ba (2016) discovered that a small percentage of website purchases shifted to a recently added mobile app because of its superior convenience. Other studies further showed that synergy and cannibalization influence co-exist and are subject on retailer uniqueness (e.g., the presence of stores) (Wang & Goldfarb, 2017). Electronic Commerce provides the potential of purchasing and selling products and information on the internet and other on-line service. Electronic commerce is changing the marketplace by altering company's business models, by determining relations among market actors, and by supporting changes in market structure (Rajneesh, 2015). Electronic commerce builds the possibility of new models for transacting business and organizing production, by offering inters modality and complementarily – not only substitution – in business models E-Commerce plays a crucial role in the economic growth and development of countries (Rajneesh, 2015).

Non-store retailing is the selling of goods and services outside the boundaries of a retail facility. It is a general concept describing retailing taking place outside of stores and shops (that is, off the premises of markets stands and of fixed retail locations). The non-store distribution channel can be divided into direct selling and distance selling, the latter including all kinds of electronic commerce. Distance selling comprise of mail order, telephone solicitations, catalogue sales and automated vending. Electronic commerce consists of shopping, travel, global distribution systems, internet trading platforms and teleshopping. Direct selling comprises of party sales and all forms of selling in customers' offices and homes, including even garage sales. Non-store retailing, occasionally also known as home shopping, is constantly attaining double-digit growth, and gradually taking a superior share of overall retailing. The non-store distribution channel is noticeable by low entry thresholds. Compared to store retailing that needs a retail outlet, cash flow to hire staff, inventory

and advertising, non-store retail start-ups typically have to invest small to reach out to potential customers of the goods and services they offer. Non-store retailing is hence not only employed by established brick and mortar business retailers who develop an online bricks and clicks business model presence, but also by the individual pure play, repeatedly him- or herself a customer, to create an online store or to run sales parties. The rise of social media helps to connect sellers to potential buyers.

2.2. Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is extremely important because it is the way of getting feedback from the customers in a way that they can use it to manage and improve their business. Customer satisfaction is the best indicator of how the business looks like in the future. Customer satisfaction helps in doing SWOT analysis that could help them to develop their business in an advance and in a systematic way. Customer satisfaction is a key indicator of the marketplace that evaluates the success of the organization.

Customer loyalty is another important factor in customer satisfaction. The impact of the satisfaction in loyalty has been the most popular subject in study of the marketing theory. Therefore, several studies have proved that satisfaction and loyalty have the direct connection between one another. As satisfied customers are loyal and dissatisfied customers are a vendor (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser & Schelsinger, 2011). Finding the loyal customer is not accessible even the customers seem to be satisfied with the products and the services. In fact, the behavior and attitude of the customers towards the particular goods and services matters the most. If the behavior of the customers is positive to the service holder, then those customers are said as a loyal customer (Abdullah, 2012).

Boora & Singh (2011) identify customer loyalty through repeat purchase behaviour. Sun & Kim (2013) posited that the influence of customer satisfaction is shown in return on assets, the profit margin and return on equity all proxies of a company's profitability. An important aim of any business strategy and objective is to satisfy customers because the obvious reason of existence for any business is the customer. Organization must understand this concept to survive and grow. Suffice to say that customer satisfaction has an influence on organizational profitability. Customer satisfaction is a psychological state.

2.3. Mobile Retailing and Customer Satisfaction

Mobile retailing involves accessing the Internet using a smartphone. Mobile devices allow customers at any time of day or night to browse retail offers, make selections, pay for goods and arrange home deliver or click and collect. Mobile retailing is a new kind of customer purchasing experience, where the customer make purchase by mobile phone and receive at home (collection point or pick-up boutique) (Eleonora & Constantinos-Vasilios, 2016). E-retailing is the selling of goods and services to customers over the Internet. Examining the younger generation may be a marketing issue, since this generation is more consumption focused than preceding ones (Eastman and Liu, 2012) and this is seen as a reliable sample for testing new technologies in retail environment (Harris & Dennis, 2011).

Increasing computing capabilities, enhancements in wireless and mobile technologies, as well as the development of automatic identification systems and elastic software architecture have led to ever-present access to data for both companies and customers (Pantano & Viassone, 2015). Indeed, these technologies modify the way customers' access and use information, and the way in which companies reach customers and offer's their services (Demirkan & Spohrer, 2014). Thus, it is not shocking that there is rise in awareness in marketing of the need to expand new mobile marketing strategies. Mobile marketing is based on the distribution of personalized and interactive information by overcoming the pattern time-space where traditional marketing strategies take place (Calvo-Porrall & Levy-Mangin, 2015). In fact, it comprises new marketing activities done via ubiquitous network that customers may access anytime and anywhere from their mobile device, based on a high level of context-awareness and connectivity (Gao, Rohm, Sultan & P. Agani, 2013; Kaplan, 2012; Strom, Vendel & Bredican, 2014).

This is because of system ability to adjust its behaviour to individual usage, in other words to depend on customers by repeatedly identifying some information about them, such as their location. For example, a tourist might get recommendations about attractions to visit because the system identifies his/her current geographical position (e.g., via GPS). In this circumstance, a vast number of 'contactless technologies', especially automatic payment and self-checkout, are becoming the most promising means of supporting the retail process (Lai & Chuah, 2010). These are based on nearness sensors that enable payment without entering any pin when the customer's and retailer's devices are within a particular distance of each other. To lessen waiting times and queues, a lot of retailers are encouraging users to accept this system. In this framework, ubiquitous retailing is acquiring significance by involving ever-present access to information (Pantano, 2013).

It is based on ever-present computing, a kind of extension of mobile computing based on portable access technologies (i.e., Ubiquitous Sensor Network, cameras, Location Based Service, etc.), always linked to a network, and connected to web-based multimedia content repositories that adjust the content provided to users' attributes (i.e., location) (Lin, Huang, Wu, & Hong, 2011; Pantano, 2013). Therefore, these innovations are expanding the traditional time and space limits of traditional retail settings (Demirkan & Spohrer, 2014; Pantano, 2014), while supporting retailers to restructure the traditional practices and traditional business model, especially in terms of the mobile channel (Wang, Malthouse & Krishnamurthi, 2015). Hence, retailing is changing to a new concept of space based on the wide usage of mobile technologies which are more incorporated into everyday life. In reality, while the traditional point of sale is restricted to the store location, opening hours and spatial dimensions, the new stores are not connected to an exact location but distributed, in terms of access, anywhere and anytime within an area enriched with the highlighted technologies (Pantano, 2013). Therefore, the customer is always ready to buy and the retailer is always ready to sell.

The use of mobile phone has highly increased in recent years. This has attracted marketers' attention to use it as a medium for marketing purpose. Moreover, increased use of mobile phones coupled with attractive costs of mobile messages has inclined marketing companies to consider mobile phones as a viable medium for mobile marketing. Moreover, with a view to increase sales and bring awareness about product and services, means of communications with the customers through mobile device is also considered as mobile marketing. Mobile phones are becoming an attractive means for the company to communicate with the customers for marketing objectives using diverse forms of mobile communication means including MMS, SMS and other web-enabled mobile device centered communications.

The need to achieve set organizational goals and objectives compel companies to conceptualize, design, and implement various strategies in the fight for corporate survival. In this regard marketing strategies constitute one of such functional areas essential for enhancing performance. Mobile advertising seems to have raised considerable interest as mobile technology has advanced and companies world-wide are starting to use not only text messages, but also multimedia messages in their mobile commercial communications. Mobile marketing has established its peculiarity in many industries due to its exclusive innovative technology and the important magnitude of the wireless industry. Various national Mobile Marketing Associations have been established recently and the wireless industry has embraced the new concept of employing mobile devices to drive marketing functions and activities. Telecommunication in Nigeria received support in 2001 with the deregulation of the sector, which allowed private Global System of mobile communication service providers to come into the country to help the existing national operator NITEL. The explosive adoption of mobile media is re-inventing and expanding customer interactions globally. Mobile marketing connects customers with each other and with the firm, creating an ever-changing landscape of influencers.

Marketers understand the tremendous potentials of these Channels and are making major investments in their mobile marketing efforts. Mobile marketing is a fast-growing industry and has steadily transformed the marketing world – developing new lexicon and design such as smart-phones, mobile Internet or location-based services, etc. Mobile internet consumption compared to computer-based Internet consumption will increase and, according to prediction, it will overshadow PC Internet in 2013 (Microsoft Tag, 2011). About 91% of mobile Internet is used to connect social platforms compared to 79% on desktops. The mobile telephones are most frequently used for gaming (61%), accessing search engines (50%), checking weather forecasts (55%), reading news (36%) as well as social networking (49%) (Microsoft Tag, 2011).

These numbers shows that the mobile marketing industry is growing and developing in bounds and leaps. The growth of mobile technology in this digital age varied considerably between Countries with large Mobile subscribers in the developing countries, (ITU World Communication, 2013). In 2013, statistics from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) showed that the penetration rate of mobile phone subscribers is 96.2 per 100 inhabitants worldwide and the report also indicated that there are now more mobile phone users in the developing world than in the developed world (ITU World Communication, 2013). Moreover, customers are becoming difficult to please: they are more price conscious, smarter, more demanding, less forgiving, and they are approached by several competitors with better offer (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Mobile phone marketing connotes direct marketing to customers through cell phones. Technologies such as Bluetooth, MMS, SMS and Infrared are used to share commercial message to mobile phones. This commercial content includes marketing a new product, information about a sale, information about products and services, sales promotion and other commercial activities. It is also important to note that mobile phones can also access the internet making them very versatile mediums.

Wireless communication networks have become pervasive than anyone could have anticipated when the cellular idea was first deployed in 1960's and 1970's (Mohammad & Sumit, 2015). The speedy global growth in cellular telephone subscribers has shown convincingly that wireless communications is a viable voice, robus and data transport system. The broad stretch success of cellular has led to the growth of newer wireless standards and system for several other types of telecommunication traffic in addition to mobile voice telephone calls (Mohammad & Sumit, 2015).

2.4. Benefits of Wireless Communication

Wireless technology is differentiated on the basis of its range. Some provide connectivity within few feet's viz. Bluetooth and other cover means sized office space. The mobile phone covers the entire continents. Wireless technology offers e-commerce in-expensive ways and more flexible to send and receive data. Mohammad & Sumit (2015) affirm that the four major benefits of wireless technology are as under:

- Rarely out of touch: No need to carry adapters or cables in order to access office Networks.
- Greater flexibility for users: Wireless employees in the office can be networked without sitting at specified PC's.
- Increased efficiency: High technology communication systems lead to speedy transfer of information within the company and between customers.
- Reduced Cost: Wireless networks are generally cheaper to maintain and install than wired networks.

2.5. Direct Selling and Customer Satisfaction

Direct selling is a retail channel in which salespeople interact with customers face-to-face in a convenient location, either at the customer's home or at work. Direct salespeople display merchandise benefits and/or describe a service, take an order, and deliver the merchandise. Direct selling is a vastly interactive retail channel in which significant information is shared with customers through demonstrations and face-to-face discussions. Nevertheless, providing this high level of personalized information, including extensive displays, is costly.

In the contemporary world, direct selling strategy is rapidly becoming a noteworthy technique to one's business. Most companies use this strategy as a means of ensuring a high level of impact on their customers. Customers' perceptions

about a company's products and services are effortlessly fast-tracked. Euromonitor (2012) posit that direct selling strategy has been in reality for a considerable long period of time in the developed countries. This has led to the creation of strong direct selling strategy compared to the developing countries. Companies are now investing considerable income on training, management and development of direct sales force (Sixtus, Walter, Andrew, Obenge, Wesonga & Nyamasege, 2014). This effort on direct sales has led to companies, particularly in the service industry, to invest greatly on the management of the sales force. The successful execution of the sales strategy has led to a rise in sales volumes. Selling is conversely a very competitive field and this has led to compromises on the work ethic that ultimately influences customer loyalty.

Direct selling strategy is held as an important first step in creating or growing one's business (Sixtus, *et al* 2014). For a company to succeed or survive, it's imperative to have effective sales strategies. Direct sales can be seen as a strategy employed by a sales person to acquire a sale by concentrating on the product attributes and its importance to the customer against the competition during the sales process (Sixtus, *et al* 2014). The management of direct selling strategy is an industry that is very mobile and focuses on interpersonal relationships. Direct selling can save the firm a large number of costs, yet they are followed with uncertain risk. Direct selling is a form of sales channel where goods are sold directly to customers, eradicating the need for middlemen – wholesalers, retailers and advertisers (Gupta, 2016). Direct selling can be done one-on-one, in a party format or group, or online. Direct selling is a vibrant, dynamic, fast growing channel of distribution for the marketing of products and services directly to customers (Gupta, 2016).

A direct sales strategy connotes going feature for feature, head-to-head against competitors. It's a difficult way to sell unless a marketer has clear advantage over competitors (Brown, 2009). This approach allows an organization to focus resources like sales managers and give them rewards based on achievable and measurable goals. It involves large sales team with sales managers to focus them. They are normally paid a retainer for achieving a specific target and commission for sales above target. Direct selling provides an option to traditional employment for those who need flexible income earning opportunity to supplement income (Brown, 2009). Customers benefit from direct selling because of the service and convenience it provides together with personal justification and demonstration of products, home delivery and getting service at a customer convenience. Direct selling increases the retail distribution infrastructure of the economy and serves customers with a suitable source of quality products.

Communication between employees and customers is termed service encounter or service interaction. In most communication process, interpersonal communication is the centre of every interaction. Interpersonal communication is a procedure in which people interact with each other to transfer messages, feelings, or behaviors through verbal and non-verbal language. Interpersonal communication or face-to-face interaction between individuals is another feature of organizational communication. Problems occurring during a process of interpersonal communication could become a threat for the effectiveness of organizations' activities and performances. Thus, it is critical that organizational individuals should possess strong interpersonal skills that can help them to overcome barriers easier, develop, and reinforce relationships with others. Interpersonal communication in customer meetings is one of various activities that take places outside organization. The quality of interpersonal interaction between service representatives and customers can affect directly on customer satisfaction and relationship. Thus, through interpersonal communication, organizations can show their interests to customers for attracting and building long - term relationships with them, and vice versa, customers can recognize that their demands are listened attentively.

Some researchers have examined the influence of communications technology on subjective well-being, i.e., on people's point of view of their satisfaction with life and their well-being (Schiffrin, Edelman, Falkenstein & Stewart, 2010). For example, in Schiffrin *et al.* (2010)'s study, respondents rated face-to-face communication exceedingly high for its usefulness in developing interpersonal relationships, and felt that individuals were more expected to care about them and to provide sensible support face-to-face than online.

Operating at the edge between the organization and its environment, salespeople execute important boundary-spanning roles. The skills and efforts of salespeople have bearing on their individual outcomes as well as the effectiveness of their organizations. Sales firms are encouraged to visibly manage and define the salesperson role in order to support job performance and increase satisfaction for the salesperson and also for targeted customers (Walker, 2013). Today, salespeople, telecommunications technology, have become gradually more empowered and independent from their organization's headquarters (Hyokjin, Rolph, Thomas & Scott, 2019). Salespeople are more like customer relationship managers or field marketing managers in terms of the decisions that they have to make while communicating with prospects and customers (Hyokjin, *et al* 2019). Recognizing that their salespeople are the final customer relationship managers, several firms have provided them with increased responsibility and authority.

Along with this rising empowerment has become control by salespeople over their own individual success strategies. Nevertheless, sales roles still differ significantly in the extent of latitude that salespeople have to set their own strategic direction. In entrepreneurial selling perspectives, such as where the salesperson is an autonomous agent or manufacturer paid basically on a commission basis, the salesperson is individually accountable for his/her sales outcome (Hyokjin, *et al* 2019). Even in seller company-buyer company boundary across types of sales jobs, the salesperson may have substantial latitude in making deliberate choices in the areas of product emphasis, customer selection and territory management. However, in firmly defined and controlled sales force contexts, lots of these decisions may be made basically at the company level (Hyokjin, *et al* 2019). In these latter circumstances, prominence is more expected to be placed on role transparency and sales force control to make certain that the company level sales strategy is understood and carried out in the field (Miao & Evans, 2013).

2.6. Mail Order and Customer Satisfaction

Mail order is the buying of goods or services by mail delivery. The customer places an order for the preferred products with the merchant via some remote technique such as via a web site or telephone call. Then, the products are delivered to the customer. The products are usually delivered directly to the address given by the customer, such as a home address, but sometimes the orders are delivered to a close retail location for the customer to pick up. Some merchants also ensure that the goods are shipped straight to a third-party customer, which is a useful way to send a gift to an out-of-town recipient. A mail order catalogue is a publication containing a list of general merchandise from a firm. Firms who operate and publish mail order catalogues are known to as cataloguers within the industry. Cataloguers manufacture or buy goods then market those goods to prospective customers. Cataloguers may rent names from cooperative databases or list brokers. The catalogue itself is published in an analogous fashion as any magazine publication and distributed via a range of means, typically via the internet or a postal service. Sometimes supermarket products do mail order promotions, whereby customers can send in the UPC plus shipping and handling to get a product made particularly for the firm.

Bergemann (2010) affirmed that Direct Mail supports for better customer targeting. Santana (2013) posited that customers remember more information from Print media in contrast to online media. Since the rise of the Internet there has been an increased literature in comparing offline and online marketing. Danaher (2011) study centers more on perceptions in his literature comparing views of marketing communication channels, include a view of opinion on the differential between a range of marketing tools. Direct marketing had the second highest score on the area of purchase intention, providing strong proof towards direct marketing as a future intermediate. This indication suggests that even in the birth of the Internet, customers are still aggressively employing direct marketing as their ideal medium. However, being conducted in Australia, this research has limited applications to the UK consumer, as culture is a huge determinant in consumer choice (Yakup, 2011). However, later research from Leeftang, Spring, Van Doorn & Wansbeek (2013) counters their previous opinion to identify a direct mail-prone consumer, establishing a link between socio-economic group and preferences of marketing communications. Through a quantitative testing of hypothesis, they find 1) Younger people are more likely to be direct mail prone and 2) Younger individuals are more likely to purchase through direct mail, which contradicts the view of Greco (2011) that highlight 60-74 as the main users of direct mail.

The choice of influence tactics used by salespeople is informed by online customer click-through data obtained through an earlier e-mail advertising received by the customer. Thus, if customers click via advertisements based on emotional influence strategy, they should be more positively influenced by emotional influence strategy often employed by salespeople in offline sales interactions with the same customer. In this way click via data can drive superior influence tactics picks in initial sales interactions. Supposing that customers react consistently to influence tactics across different sales channels media, it is expected that using the 'right' influence tactic with a customer increases his or her satisfaction with the salesperson and sales outcomes (Román & Iacobucci 2010). Being able to target particular customers is one of the most significant objectives of marketing in common and of digital marketing in particular. Search engines and display ad networks have become means for advertising that support targeting customers based on their search behaviour and online browsing. Likewise, email marketing has become a channel that enables firms to target customers with discounts or personalized messages. Further, email offers can cause consumers to search immediately because the websites with product information are just a click away.

Electronic mail enables rapid communication between two people located at different computers. Messages can be transferred from one mailbox to another within minutes or hours and at little unit cost per message. Computers within the Internet support mail servers which control the routing of mail between computers. Furthermore, some sites support newsgroups, mail locations through which people with similar interests can communicate. Messages placed with these user groups are available to anyone who wishes to access them. Alternatively, people with similar interests can subscribe to an interest group. Here messages are sent to a central mail base where they are forwarded to all members of the interest group. Some of these groups are moderated. This involves a level of self-censorship by the group members, in which freedom of speech is to some extent sacrificed in order to increase the quality of the material available on the newsgroup.

There is the sale of information, where the product being bought and sold can be transmitted over the Internet. The products may be information services accessible by subscription or information retrieval services which provide access to browsers. The Internet offers software companies the possibility of distributing software directly to the customer's computer. However, none of the software companies questioned was doing this. There is the sale of goods and services in which the Internet provides the means of carrying out the transaction, while the goods or services are delivered by other means. Most commonly, this is done through electronic mail order. Mail order catalogues can be displayed electronically and goods ordered over the Internet. It should be noted that this represents no more than the transfer of existing ways of doing business to the Internet. It does not involve new approaches, or ways of providing an improved service to the customer which are suggested by the new technology.

American catalog firm mailed 12.5 billion catalogs to US homes in 2011 according to Direct Marketing Association data. About 90 million Americans bought an item from a catalog in 2011 (Fox, 2012). Print catalogs always play an important role in the retail sector and represent a vital part of a multichannel marketing mix. In a 2009 Oracle affiliate (ATG)cross-channel study of 1,054 US consumers, 179% of respondents indicated that they use catalogs to browse and search for products at least four times in a year, while close to half the customers do so at least once a month (Morris, Kumar & Dhruv, 2013).

Poor response rates to catalog mailing usually shoot from insufficient customer selection. Furthermore, most catalog customers place an order less than 3 times annually. Because catalog orders are not frequent, retailers cannot just

recognize the most reactive customers; rather, they must foresee when each customer will place an order (Morris, *et al*2013). Morris, *et al* (2013) posited that for a single class of catalog retailer, major mailing decisions consists 1) how frequent and when customers should receive catalogs and (2) how many customers should receive their catalog. Nevertheless, most catalog retailers sell products in several categories and customers purchase from diverse categories in dissimilar time periods. For instance, a customer may buy a hunting accessory during spring from the 'outdoor' category and a school bag during summer from the 'luggage' category. This pattern varies from one customer to the other, which focuses on the need to recognize which category a customer is expected to buy from to be able to send him the right catalogs (Morris, *et al*2013).

2.7. Theoretical Review

2.7.1. The Regulatory Focus Theory

The study also used the Regulatory Focus Theory by Higgins, 1997, to better understand and identify buyer's characteristics (For example, personalities, beliefs and motivational states) through their goal orientation. Specifically, this study proposes the idea that regulatory emphasis can be a valuable technique for recognizing buyer's differences. The self-discrepancy identifies:

- The 'actual-self' (self-concept)
- The 'ideal-self' (representations of an individual's beliefs about his or her own self, or a significant other's hopes, wishes, or aspirations for the individual)
- The 'ought-self' (representations of an individual's beliefs about his or her own self, or a significant other's beliefs about the individual's duties, responsibilities, or obligations).

Building upon his self-discrepancy theory, Higgins suggested that the behaviors and goals associated with a focus on the actual/ ideal discrepancy are different from the behaviors and goals linked with a focal point on the ought/actual discrepancy. The RFT involves a promotion focus whereby the individual acts to limit the difference between actual and ideal selves. It also deals with a prevention focus whose aim to reduce the discrepancy between the actual and ought self. The prevention focus is reliable with an avoidance orientation away from undesired results, as it results in improved motivation if failure is impending, whereas the promotion focus is reliable with an orientation towards desired results, as it results in improved motivation if success is realizable (Higgins, 1997). Whether people endeavor to fulfill their aspirations or duties relies on both their disposition as well as the immediate context.

People can use two different orientations or strategies when they track goals (Higgins, 1997; 1998; 1999). They can concentrate on aspirations in the future, determined to increase gains. Alternatively, they can focus on accomplishing their instantaneous obligations and duties, trying to lessen shortfalls (a prevention focus). These two orientations considerably influence the emotions, cognitions, behaviour and preferences of people. This study utilizes RFT to help understand how buyers can be influenced by various types of adaptive selling behaviors. Specifically, it attempts to identify the adaptive selling behaviors that will resonate with buyers on the basis of their regulatory focus orientation.

3. Methodology

The overall framework this study adopted was the cross-sectional survey research design method, which is usually concerned with the systematic gathering of information from the respondents at a particular point in time. Cross sectional survey research design method was deemed to be the most appropriate for this study since the issue of concern deals with opinions, perceptions and attitudes of individuals which cannot be measured directly because we cannot observe them.

The target population of the study includes 450 employees and owners of some selected small and medium enterprises in Asaba Metropolis of Delta State.

The subset of the population which is studied in place of the entire population was determined by using Krejcie & Morgan (as cited in Kenpro, 2012) sample size determination table. To make up this subset, the approximate number is two hundred and five (205). A sample size of 205 staff was randomly selected from the total population of 450.

The stratified random sampling technique was used for the study. It involves sampling of every item in the research population. A stratified random sampling technique was employed for this study as this technique gives every member an equal chance of being selected. This is due to the fact that the population was divided into sub strata.

The instrument that was used for data collection for the study is a single set of structured questionnaires which was developed in accordance with generally accepted survey research principles. With the help of key employees whom the researcher established contacts with, copies of the validated questionnaire were administered through Chain-referrals. This approach is deemed appropriate because it aided easy access to the study participants. A period of 7 working days was given for this process, after which the researcher picked up the filled questionnaire from her contacts.

To establish the reliability of the instrument, a test -retest method was employed. A faulty research instrument can go a long way to nullify the reliability of the research findings. Using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test to measure the measurement scale reliability, the internal consistency of the study variables was confirmed. The recommended coefficient value for Cronbach's Alpha test score is set at 0.7 (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2006). From table 1 the calculated Cronbach alpha ranged from 0.711 - 0.715 and are higher than the recommended acceptable measure of Cronbach alpha 0.7 which makes measurement of the model reliability accepted.

Dimension of Study Constructs	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Mobile Retailing	4	0.713
Direct Selling	4	0.715
Mail Order	4	0.714
Customer Satisfaction	4	0.712

Table 1: Reliability Coefficients of Study Constructs

The demographic profile was answered using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequencies, correlation analysis was used to analyze the employee's response on the questions presented to them while the hypotheses was tested using inferential statistics such as multiple regressions analysis. All analysis was done by using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software version 23.

4. Results of Data Analysis

It was indicated that out of the 205 copies of questionnaire distributed to the various employees and owners of SMEs that made up the selected sampling element, within Asaba metropolis, 200 were successfully retrieved of which a total of 194 were seen to be suitable for analytical purposes representing the entire sample size. Therefore, the response rate is 95%.

S/N	Study Variables	1	2	3	4
1	Mobile retailing	1			
2	Direct selling	.546**	1		
3	Mail order	.589**	.142*	1	
4	Customer satisfaction	.673**	.742**	.379**	1
5	Mean	19.17	19.10	19.05	19.04
6	Std. Deviation	.757	.910	1.166	1.015
7	N	194	194	194	194

Table 2: Correlations Coefficients and Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

** . Correlation Is Significant at the 0.01 Level (2-Tailed)

* . Correlation Is Significant at the 0.05 Level (2-Tailed)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	131.744	3	43.915	124.528	.000 ^b
	Residual	67.003	190	.353		
	Total	198.747	193			

Table 3: Analysis of Variance

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Mail Order, Direct Selling, Mobile Retailing

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2.552	1.156		-2.207	.029
	Mobile retailing	.384	.086	.287	4.486	.000
	Direct selling	.632	.058	.567	10.863	.000
	Mail order	.113	.047	.130	2.401	.017

Table 4 Regression Analysis of Non-Store Retailing and Customer Satisfaction

a. Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.814 ^a	.663	.658	.5938

Table 5: Extent of Variations

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mail Order, Direct Selling, Mobile Retailing

5. Discussion of Results

It was indicated on the gender composition of the respondents representing 49% (95) of the sample were males while 51% (99) were females. The age bracket of the respondents showed that 54 of the respondents being 28% were

below 30 years of age; 89 of the respondents representing 46% falls within the age bracket of 31-40 years of age, while the remaining 51 respondents representing 26% of the sample were 41 years and above. The marital status of the respondents showed that; 81 of the sample respondents were single being 42%; 88 respondents being 45% were married while the remaining 25(13%) of the respondents were divorced.

Table 2 showed that mobile retailing exhibited a strong positive correlation coefficient with customer satisfaction (0.673**, $p < 0.01$) which implies that mobile retailing is a very good construct of non-store retailing. Table 4 showed that mobile retailing which is the second variable has positive effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.287$, $P < 0.05$). In furtherance the test of H_{a1} in table 4 indicated that mobile retailing has a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction ($0.000 < 0.05$). This is consistent with Lai & Chuah, (2010) finding that an enormous number of contactless technologies, mainly self-checkout and automatic payment, are rising as the most capable way of sustaining the retail processes. This supports Demirkan & Spohrer (2014) finding that mobile retailing technologies have change both the way customers' access and use information, and the way in which companies reach customers and deliver their services. Thus, it is not shocking that there is a rising awareness in marketing of the need to expand new mobile marketing strategies. This implies that retailing is changing to a new concept of space based on the widespread adoption of mobile technologies which are much more incorporated into daily life.

Table 2 showed that direct selling exhibited a strong positive correlation coefficient with customer satisfaction (0.742**, $p < 0.01$) which means that is a very good measure of non-store retailing. In table 4 it was observed that direct selling has the highest positive effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.567$, $P < 0.05$). In furtherance, the test of H_{a2} exhibited in table 4 indicated that there is a significant relationship between direct selling and customer satisfaction ($0.000 < 0.05$). This finding is consistent with Sixtus, *et al* (2014) finding that direct selling strategy is seen as a vital first step in creating or developing a business. This is also in agreement with Gupta (2016) finding that direct selling is a vibrant, dynamic, speedily expanding channel of distribution for the marketing of products and services directly to customers. This implies that direct selling improves the retail distribution infrastructure of the economy and serves customers with a suitable source of quality products.

Table 2 showed that mail order exhibited a moderate positive correlation coefficient with customer satisfaction (0.379**, $p < 0.01$) which indicates that mail order is a very good measure of non-store retailing. Table 4 indicated that mail order has positive effect on customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.130$, $P < 0.05$). In furtherance, H_{a3} the level of significance that was calculated in table 4 is lesser than the established p-value ($0.017 < 0.05$), which implies that mail order has a significant relationship with customer satisfaction. This finding support Bergemann (2010) finding that direct mail allows for greater customer targeting. Leeflang, spring, Van Doorn & Wansbeek (2013) identified a direct mail-prone consumer, establishing a link between socio-economic group and preferences of marketing communications. This implies that mail order can influence customer satisfaction.

The F -ratio in table 3 test showed that the measures of non-store retailing significantly predict customer satisfaction, $F(3, 190) = 124.528$, $p < 0.05$. This connotes that the regression model is a good fit of the data. The Adjusted R Square value in table 5 showed that 66% (0.658) of the change in customer satisfaction was brought about by the variables of non-store retailing.

The general form of the equation to predict CS = $\beta_0 + \beta_1MR + \beta_2DS + \beta_3MO + \varepsilon$
 $CS = -2.552 + (0.384 \times MR) + (0.632 \times DS) + (0.113 \times MO)$

6. Conclusion

The study concluded that non-store retailing has positive effect on customer satisfaction in the SMEs in Asaba Delta State. Findings showed that 66% of the change in customer satisfaction was brought about by the variables of non-store retailing. It was also indicated that mobile retailing, direct selling and mail order have significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. This implies that retailing is changing to a new concept of space based on the widespread adoption of mobile technologies which are much more incorporated into customers' daily life.

7. Recommendations

In line with the findings and the conclusion of the study, it was recommended that:

- Firms should not only design superior customer acquisition strategy, but should also pay more attention to customer satisfaction.
- Online marketers should provide information of internet security and the potential risks to internet customers who use credit card to make purchase.
- Customers' needs for location, level of service, options of delivery and width of product assortment are some of the features companies must find out beforehand.
- The modern retail industry is booming across the world. Therefore, it is essential for retailers to use strategies which focus on satisfying current customers.

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