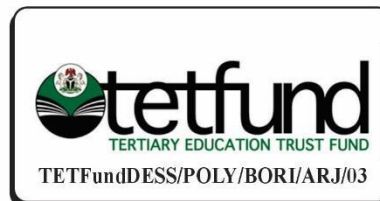


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Influence of Customer Relationship Management on Online Patronage of Fashion Products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria



By

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of customer relationship management on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Its objective was to determine the effect of commitment, communication, trust and conflict handling dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 288 fashion traders was selected using convenience sampling technique. PorHarcourt, Rivers state. Data collected were analyzed using percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings showed that commitment dimension of CRM have positive but insignificant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Also, it was found that The communication, trust and conflict handling dimension of CRM have positive and significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Recommendations made among others include that: firms that deal in fashion product should effectively adopt commitment dimension of CRM in order to promote online patronage of their fashion products.

1.1 Introduction

Increasing and intensified competition in the contemporary global business world has driven many firms into devising strategies to enhance customer patronage and sustain business growth. One of these strategies which have emerged in recent decades is Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has a growing popularity and is becoming one of the hottest academic and practical topics in the business field. It is a new marketing campaign weapon which helps the business entity to stay competitive through

serving internal and external customers efficiently (Shaon, 2015). Customer Relationship Management (CRM) refers to a marketing strategy undertaken by companies to maintain and improve customer satisfaction through customer values. It is one of the strategies used by companies by utilizing internal resources (such as technology, employees, and processes) to create a competitive advantage and improve company performance. Mushtaq Ahmad Darzi (2016) view Customer Relationship Management as the identification, establishment, maintenance, enhancement, modification and termination of relationships with customers to create value for customers and profit for the organization by a series of relational exchanges that have both a history and future.

Dimensions of CRM according to Morgan and Hunt (2019) include commitment, communication, trust, conflict handling and loyalty. Morgan and Hunt (2019) opined that commitment is a promise, pledge, or determination of the seller to establish an ongoing relationship with the buyer. Relationship commitment is an important component of relational exchanges in that it involves an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé, 2019). Communication in the words of Kotler, Armstrong and Wond (2020), is a process used by consumers and marketing organizations to share information in order to achieve mutual understanding. Trust is one of the most important aspect of establishing a commitment or promise for the future. Conflict handling according to Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh, (2017) is the ability of suppliers to avoid potential conflicts, resolve real conflicts before they create problems, and discuss solutions openly when problems arise. Customer patronage refers to customers consistently choosing to make purchases from a particular business or brand over an extended period. It reflects a sustained and loyal relationship between the customer and the business (Jung, Kim, & Kim, 2020). Customer patronage can also be seen as a behavioral commitment where customers repeatedly choose a specific brand or business for their purchasing needs (Adekunle, Isibor, Okere, Kokogho, 2023).

Online marketing or digital marketing has emerged in recent years as one of the dynamic and potent ways to promote firms customer patronage. Most companies now market their products through social media platforms like Face book, Instagram, Whatsapp, Twitter and other digital platforms. Companies or traders who engage in online marketing are expected to have increased patronage and greater competitive advantage over their counterpart. They should have improved business performance in form of greater sales, market share, return on investment, turnover and profitability. It is worrisome however, that in today's highly

competitive and globalize fashion context, increasing customer patronage emerges as the most important challenges faced by fashion marketers in Port Harcourt. They find it difficult to cultivate and maintain loyal online customers in order to secure increased sales and customer share, lower costs, and higher prices. Therefore marketing scholars emphasize the influence of relationship marketing as a strategically important tool from which customer loyalty can be secured and, as a result, the attainment of higher competitiveness and enhanced customer satisfaction can be achieved (Mohammed & Bin Rashid, 2012). In view of this, this study examined the influence of customer relationship management on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

1.3 Research Question

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the effect of commitment dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?
2. What is the effect of communication dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?
3. What is the effect of trust dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?
4. What is the effect of conflict handling dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?

1.4 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

H01: Commitment dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

H02: Communication dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

H03: Trust dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

H04: Conflict handling dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Fashion product

Fashion is a term used interchangeably to describe the creation of clothing, footwear, accessories, cosmetics, and jewellery of different cultural aesthetics; and their mix and match into outfits that depict distinctive ways of dressing (styles and trends) as signifiers of social status, self-expression, and group belonging. As a multifaceted term, fashion describes an industry, designs, aesthetics, and trends (Adeyeye, 2018). Fashion is the style or styles most popular at a given time. The terms imply three components: style, change, and acceptance (Samiyah, Adeel & Tariq, 2023). One can define a product as a material or immaterial goods intended to be used by consumers. It can be a physical object, a service produced by a certain industry, or even an idea that presents a purchase value (Wadya Mukhtar and Sadiq Mohammad, 2014). These concepts, when applied to the fashion industry, refer to a product designed, manufactured, and delivered to the public based on the concept of fashion. Therefore, **pieces of clothing, accessories, jewelry, shoes**, or any other categories of the fashion system can be understood as fashion products.

A fashion product is an item, such as clothing, footwear, accessories, cosmetics, or jewelry, designed to be fashionable and express a particular style or trend (Samiyah, Adeel & Tariq, 2023). A **fashion product** is of great importance because it presents a form of creative individual expression, allowing any person to transmit his or her personality, views, values, and feelings in the world, as well as simultaneously giving a sense of belonging and individuality. Clothes can reveal social contexts or communicate social messages. Consequently, the fashion industry typically represents the most impact and relevancy in people's lives (Wadya Mukhtar and Sadiq Mohammad, 2014). These products are often distinguished by their cultural aesthetics, materials, and how they reflect changing consumer tastes, social status, or group belonging. The development of a fashion product involves a process from design concept to a finished, marketable item, encompassing material sourcing, pattern making, and manufacturing to meet market demands and brand vision (Samiyah, Adeel & Tariq, 2023). In the present fast changing social environment, Designers, merchandisers and marketers tries to become proactive at every level of the industry whenever it is about the concept of fashion and fashion change. Marketer tries to analyze Consumers, product cycle and their acceptances given by the consumer are all level to position its product effectively. at every point it is discussed that "how these concepts will affect product development and its effective marketing (Alvarez &

Casielles, 2025). The Designers, merchandisers and marketers keep themselves aware of all of the categories of apparel, particularly in their specialty area

1.1.2 Online Patronage

Online patronage is the act of shopping and buying via the internet, social media and other digital platforms. Fashion retail firms or traders adapt marketing and promotion techniques with the use of social media to adapt to the changing environment in the Internet era. Simons (2016) defined customer patronage as the support or approval made available by customers with regards to a specific brand. Similarly, Nkpurukwe (2020) noted that Customer patronage is the impulse, desire and consideration within customers which stimulate the purchase of goods and services from outlet. In the same vein, Customer patronage is the approval or support provided by customers with respect to a particular brand. The relevance of a customer and its patronage is so profound that business firms cannot survive without it. Every firm produces in order to make sales and gain a large market share which will increase profit. Firms cannot achieve this without customers' patronage. The high the customers' patronage, the larger the market share the firm gains which results in profit maximization. Customers often tell their good and bad experiences about a product and /or company to those within their social circles. There is every tendency that satisfied customers will keep patronizing a brand and are likely to tell up to six people while dissatisfied customers will report their negative experience to at least ten people (Angelova & Zekiri, 2011). Customer patronage is important for all businesses because it provides marketing management metrics to measure and improve customer service delivery (Oyakhire, 2021).

Online patronage refers to a customer's ongoing, habitual support for an online business or product through repeated purchases, engagement, and positive actions like recommendations or reviews. It encompasses the entire customer relationship, including factors that influence loyalty and repurchase behavior, such as product availability, competitive pricing, user experience, perceived security, and effective digital marketing efforts (Iroka & Nwaizugbo (2024) The internet provides a viable platform for a lot of marketing activities such as buying and selling of products and product promotions but it still remains an open space which could be accessed by anyone and does not offer the security, traditional stores promise their customers. Also, the idea that people would access products or their features at such person's convenience does not guarantee purchase. For this reason, one would wonder what percentage of people actually engage in online shopping because of convenience, trust, product quality and/or promotions (Nwagbara, & Obot, 2017).

1.1.3 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Customer relationship management is the process through which organizations manage interactions with actual, potential and past customers. It is the combination of practices, strategies and technologies used by companies to manage, analyze and understand customer's interactions and data throughout the customers' life cycle. Kotler in Ohazulike (2019) described customer relationship management as a skill which enables companies to provide excellent real time customer service by developing a relationship with each valued, involved customer through the effective use of individual account information. Customer relationship management (CRM) is perhaps the most important concept of modern marketing until recently.

Customer Relationship Management is an upright concept or strategy to solidify relations with customers and at the same time reducing cost and enhancing productivity and profitability in business. Its system is implemented for small businesses as well as large enterprises as the main goal is to assist the customers efficiently (Salomoun, 2015). Customer relationship management is the procedure that is crucial for every business as the customer is the most important part of the business. Customer relationship management consists of different components including key customers, customer relationship management organization, knowledge management and technology. This categorization is derived from the fact that the successful customer relationship management results from four areas including strategy, employees, technology and process (Salomoun, 2015).

2.1.4 Communication

Communication is the verbal and nonverbal transmission of information between someone wanting to express an idea and someone else expected or expecting to get that idea. Ogundele in Adeyemi (2021) defined effective communication as a "translation of ideas or directions, commands or guides, into oral or written words or action. This is, in such a manner that will transfer the ideas from the mind of the communicator to the mind of the receiver, with the aim that the receiver will react in a manner as envisaged by the communicator". The above definition indicates that effective communication is a two-way process. Sekaran in Adeyemi (2021) also noted that communication can be described as an interpersonal process of sending and receiving symbols with meaning attached to them, in any communication, there is a person who sends out the message (sender) there is

also one or more person(s) who receives the message (receiver) and there is also a medium through which the message is communicated. Communication is considered to be effective when the receiver ends up with the same message that the source intends to send, Enzeanya in Adeyemi (2021) defined effective communication as “essentially messages sent and received and confirmation of their receipt and interpretation is returned from a receiver, to ensure a two-way process. Cole (2012) defined communication as the process of creating, transmitting and interpreting ideas, facts, opinions, and feelings. It is a process that is a sharing one, that is, a mutual interchange between two or more persons. George and Jones (2016) viewed communication as effective when people share information and all those involved understand the information clearly. Miller in Adeyemi (2021) stated that communication is the process of sending and receiving messages. However, it is said to be effective only when the message is understood and when it stimulates action or encourages the receiver to think in new ways. Eyre in Adeyemi (2021) also defined communication as the transferring of a thought or a message to another party so that it can be understood and acted upon. Fisher in Adeyemi (2021) saw communication as the process by which verbal and nonverbal symbols are exchanged between two or more persons. Sereno and Mortensen in Adeyemi (2021) said communication is the transfer of information from person to person, creature to creature, or point to point. In line with all the above definitions, this research work focuses its attention on the definition of communication given by Miller (2015) who defined it as the process of sending and receiving message and belief to be effective only when the message is understood and stimulates actions or encourages the receiver to think in new ways.

2.1.3 Commitment

Commitment is an important dimension and a determinant of the strength of a customer relationship management strategy. It is a useful construct for measuring the likelihood of customer loyalty and predicting the frequency of future purchase, and it is one of the most common dependent variables used in buyer-seller relationships (Sharma, 2021). Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2011) viewed commitment as the implicit or explicit pledge of relational continuity between exchange partners, adoption of a long-term orientation toward the relationship - a willingness to make short-term sacrifices to realize long term benefits. They highlighted the emotional hidden motive for creating commitment. Knowing consumer's attitude toward the product or service is necessary for understanding customer's repurchase behavior (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2011). That's why some scholars refer to commitment as the attitudinal loyalty. It is believed to be close to the heart of CRM, and it is defined as the biased behavioural response

expressed over time by customers with respect to one supplier out of a set of suppliers, which is a function of decision making and evaluating process in brand or store commitment (Brink and Brendt, 2008). Commitment is a stable desire to maintain the value of communication, meaning that a higher level of commitment creates a successful, profitable, and mutually satisfactory relationship (Chung and Shin, 2010). It is an exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important as to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it; that is, the committed party believes the relationship endures indefinitely". According to Luarn and Lin (2013), commitment is "a consumer's psychological attachment to a service that develops before a customer would be able to determine that their repeat purchase behavior was derived from a sense of loyalty" (Elbeltagiand Agag, 2016).

2.1.6 Trust

In customer relationship management, trust has over the years been recognized as one of the critical elements in the creation of successful relationships, whether for business-to-business market or business-to-consumer market. It is the behavioural and visible form of reliance of a partner which results mainly in positive outcomes. Supattana and Borworn (2015) described trust as the belief that somebody or something is good, sincere and honest, and will not try to harm or trick one. It involves the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to be trusted, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party. Johnson and Cullen (2002) also revealed that trust is a notion that a relationship partner will act in the best pursuits of alternative companions. A consumer's trust in the firm, company and brand could be affected by the perceived trust of the business context in which it operates (Grayson, 2008). Grayson referred to interpersonal trust and organization-specific trust as narrow-scope trust, and the level of trust of an industry or a country as broad-scope trust. Interpersonal trust is more influential in shaping exchange activities in a business context where broad-scope trust is low because it will perform a safeguarding function to reduce the perceived risk inherent in the purchase (Grayson, 2008). Trust refers to one's belief that others in an exchange will not act opportunistically by taking advantage of the situation. It includes ability, benevolence, and integrity. Ability refers to a set of characteristics, competencies, and skills within some specific domain. Benevolence refers to an exchange-partner's willingness to keep to customers' interests. Integrity is an individual's perception that a partner adheres to a series of principles in an exchange process. Benevolence reduces social uncertainty by ruling out

undesirable behavior (i.e., opportunistic behavior). Trust is confidence in exchange partner. It is the perceived credibility and benevolence of a target. Arcand, Promtep, Brun, and Rajaobelina (2017) stated that trust is described as the tendency to depend on another entity (such as the service provider) in which the customer trusts the service provider and believes that the service provider works in a predictable way and will always act in a trustworthy and honest manner.

2.1.7 Conflict handling

Conflict, according to Paswan, Spears and Ganesh (2017), is a perpetual giving of life; it is a disagreement between two parties in which one party feels cheated either through their needs, interests or concerns. Paswan, Spears and Ganesh posited that many people view conflict from a negative perspective or situation which could be prevented. Many others also view it as occurrence which necessitates management while many authors view it as a disagreement and argument about something important. However, conflict occurs every day, as it cannot be avoided since human interaction must continually take place. In the words of Agbor (2021), conflict is a positive sign of highly dedicated organizational members. It is normal because of the nature of organization. Agbor added that modern managers are challenged not to avoid or suppress conflict but to constructively resolve it. It is in view of this fact that organizations make deliberate efforts to ensure that conflicts are managed and resolved in the work environment, for the sustenance of peace and stimulation of sustainable development.

Conflicts are categorized by Robbins and Decenzo (2019) as: intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal conflict, personal group conflict, inter group conflict and system conflict. According to them intrapersonal conflict is the type of conflict that occurs within an individual. The experience takes place in the person's mind. Interpersonal conflict occurs between two or more persons in an organization. Personal group conflict occurs in a situation where an individual may decide to challenge the norms or rules of behaviour that controls group membership. Inter-group conflict occurs between people who are working together in a department. It is caused by issues pertaining authority, jurisdiction, control of work flow and access to scarce resources. Jimoh- Kadiri(2012) classified inter-group conflict sources into: bargaining conflict which takes place when groups struggle for power, influence and even scarce resources within the organization. System conflict occurs when different departments in an organization are working

towards different objectives which are completely different from the overall organizational goals. The system conflict can be resolved through the use of task forces and rotating members of departments among work units.

2.2 Theoretical Frameworks

This study is anchored on the theory of relationship marketing by Berry (1983) and Jackson (1985)

Relationship marketing Theory was first propounded by American marketing scholars: Berry (1983) and Jackson (1985). The theory holds that it is cheaper to maintain already existing customers than getting new ones. Berry (1983) argued in a conference about the field of service marketing that relationship marketing is a marketing activity for enterprises to obtain, maintain and promote effective relationships with customers. After a long-term study on the marketing process of the service industry, it was concluded that the ultimate goal of enterprise marketing is not only to develop new customers but also to focus on maintaining existing customers. Ultimately, the goal is to improve the long-term interests of both parties through cooperative relationships. The study also argues that the cost of maintaining an old customer is far lower than the cost of developing a new customer and that maintaining a relationship with old consumers is more economical than developing new customers. Jackson (1985) further modified the concept in the aspect of industry marketing. He argued that the essence of relationship marketing is to attract, establish and maintain a close relationship with enterprise customers. The relationship marketing theory is relevant to this study in that it emphasizes benefits derivable from maintaining and retaining existing customers. It follows therefore, that customer relationship management which is in line with the theory of marketing relationship enhances online patronage of fashion products and consequently promotes retention of customers in a company.

2.3 Empirical Studies

Some studies have explained the relationship between CRM and organizational performance such studies include:

Olayiwola (2023) who investigated the extent to which relationship marketing variables predict customers' satisfaction. The study adopted a case study approach. A sample 360 respondents were selected across branches of Guaranty Trust Bank within Lagos metropolis to complete a structured questionnaire. The

simple percentage was used for the bio-data and frequency counts, while Pearson correlation and multiple regressions were used to test the hypotheses of the study. The study found a positive and significant relationship between organizational trust, communication and customers' satisfaction.

Also, Laith (2020) empirically investigated the impact of relationship marketing orientation on customer loyalty. The study adopted descriptive survey research design and used a sample of 450 respondents selected using convenience sampling technique. Structured questionnaires administered to bank customers within the area of Amman, Jordan was used for data collection. The data were factor analyzed to determine the key dimensions of relationship marketing orientation measurement scale. Results of regression analysis showed that conflict handling is significant in explaining the variation in customer loyalty. It is obvious that none of those studies focused on online patronage of fashion product in Port Harcourt, rivers state.

Iroka and Nwaizugbo (2024) conducted a study on Effect of Content Marketing on Customer Patronage of Online Shops. The study's objective was to determine the significant impact of content marketing on customer patronage. A cross sectional design was adopted, and primary data were collected using a structured online questionnaire. As it was not possible to obtain the total population for the study, the Cochran formula was employed for sample size determination with an unknown population. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 384 online customers in Abia State, Nigeria. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The analysis revealed that content marketing had a significant positive effect on customer patronage of online shops. Based on these findings, the study concluded that content marketing significantly enhances customer patronage. Among the recommendations, it was suggested that online shops should focus more on the quality and relevance of their advertisements rather than on their quantity.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design and collected data using questionnaire tagged: "Influence of Customer Relationship Management on Online Patronage of Fashion Products in Port Harcourt, Questionnaire" (ICRMOPFPQ) structured by the researcher. The instrument was validated by three experts; one from the Department of Statistics and the other two experts from Department of Marketing Ebonyi state university. A sample of 288 fashion traders was selected using convenience sampling technique. PorHarcourt, Rivers

state. The reliability of the instrument was determined by subjecting it to a trial testing using 20 fashion trader in Ebonyi State which was not part of the area of study. The data collected were used to determine the reliability coefficient using the Cronbach alpha approach in statistical package for social science (SPSS). The analysis gave the coefficient index of 0.83. The instrument was administered to the respondents. Data collected were analyzed using percentages, mean and standard deviation. Percentage was used to analyze the demographic data while mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis. Items that score 2.50 and above was be accepted, while items that scored less than 2.50 was rejected as the decision rule. In addition, the rejection or acceptance of the null hypotheses was determined by comparing the p-value with the alpha .05. Therefore, the null hypotheses were rejected if the p – value is less than 0.05 level of significance and accepted if the p-value was greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One

What is the effect of commitment dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?

Table 1: Effect of commitment dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products

N= 288

S/N	Effect of commitment dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products	$\bar{X}$	Std	DECISION
1	Provision of guarantees to match products to satisfy consumer needs increase online patronage of fashion products	2.72	1.02	Agreed
2	offer of quality products to meet the needs of the intended consumers increase online patronage of fashion products	2.90	0.78	Agreed
3	Being flexible in providing services to consumers increases online patronage of fashion products	2.81	0.84	Agreed
4	being able to fulfill its promises to consumers increases online patronage of fashion products	2.78	0.91	Agreed
5	Being consistent in offering increases online patronage of fashion products	2.64	1.13	Agreed
	Grand mean	2.77	0.94	Agreed

The result in table 1 showed that item 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 which had the mean responses of 2.72, 2.90, 2.77, 2.81, 2.78 and 2.64 respectively, indicated that majority of the respondents agreed that Provision of guarantees to match products to satisfy consumer needs increase online patronage of fashion products, offer of quality products to meet the needs of the intended consumers increase online patronage of fashion products, being flexible in providing services to consumers increases online patronage of fashion products, being able to fulfill its promises to consumers increases online patronage of fashion products and being consistent in offering increases online patronage of fashion products. In all, the grand mean of 2.77 revealed that commitment dimension of CRM promote online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Research question two

What is the effect of communication dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?

Table 2: Effect of communication dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products

N= 288

S/ N	Effect of communication dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products	X	Std	DECISION
6	Being able to provide information in a timely manner enhances online patronage of fashion products	3.02	0.92	Agreed
7	Being able to provide the latest marketing information enhances online patronage of fashion products	3.10	0.88	Agreed
8	Being able to provide accurate information increases online patronage of fashion products	2.76	0.72	Agreed
9	communicating without pressure enhances online patronage of fashion products	2.84	0.83	Agreed
10	Communicating both way enhances online patronage of fashion products	2.91	0.77	Agreed
	Grand mean	2.93	0.82	Agreed

The result in table 2 showed that item 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 which had the mean responses of 3.02, 3.10, 2.76, 2.84 and 2.64 respectively indicated that the respondents agreed that being able to provide information in a timely manner, provide the latest marketing information, provide accurate information, communicating without pressure and Communicating both way enhance online

patronage of fashion products. The grand mean of 2.93 revealed that communication dimension of CRM promote online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Research question three

What is the effect of trust dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?

Table 3: Effect of trust dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products

N= 288

S/N	Effect of trust dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products	$\bar{X}$	Std	DECISION
11	Being very concerned about security when consumer transactions promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.60	1.02	Agreed
12	Promising customers reliable products and services promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.55	1.11	Agreed
13	Being consistent in providing quality services promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.92	1.04	Agreed
14	employees showing respect to customer promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.73	1.33	Agreed
15	Fulfilling of obligations to consumers by firms promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.84	1.07	Agreed
	Grand mean	2.72	1.11	Agreed

The result in table 3 showed that item 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 which had the mean responses of 2.60, 2.55, 2.92, 2.73 and 2.84 respectively indicated that the respondents agreed that being very concerned about security when consumer transactions, Promising customers reliable products and services, being consistent in providing quality services, employees showing respect to customer and fulfilling of obligations to consumers by firms promotes online patronage of fashion products. The grand mean of 2.72 revealed that trust dimension of CRM promote online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Research question four

What is the effect of conflict handling dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?

Table 4: Effect of conflict handling dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products

N= 288

S/N	Effect of conflict handling dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products	$\bar{X}$	Std	DECISION
16	Being ready always to face the possibility of conflict promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.88	1.13	Agreed
17	trying to resolve conflicts that occur in the service process promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.95	1.01	Agreed
18	having the ability to openly discuss solutions when problems arise promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.63	1.05	Agreed
19	Ability to provide satisfactory solutions above promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.59	1.10	Agreed
20	Resolving consumer complaints effectively promotes online patronage of fashion products	2.92	1.12	Agreed
	Grand mean	2.79	1.08	Agreed

The result in table 4 showed that item 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 which had the mean responses of 2.88, 2.95, 2.63, 2.59 and 2.92 respectively indicated that the respondents agreed that being ready always to face the possibility of conflict promotes online patronage of fashion products, trying to resolve conflicts that occur in the service process promotes online patronage of fashion products, having the ability to openly discuss solutions when problems arise promotes online patronage of fashion products, ability to provide satisfactory solutions above promotes online patronage of fashion products and resolving consumer complaints effectively promotes online patronage of fashion products. The grand mean of 2.92 revealed that conflict handling dimension of CRM promote online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Test of hypothesis

Table 5: Hypothesis Test of CRM Dimensions on Patronage of fashion products

		Coefficients ^a		t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	22.242	5.327		4.175 .000
	Commitment	.027	.055	.024	.487 .627
	Communication	.376	.066	.262	5.719 .000
	Trust	.493	.059	.405	8.386 .000
	Conflict handling	.439	.060	.342	7.326 .000

a. Dependent Variable: patronage

H01: Commitment dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

The result in table 5 shows that t-test 0.48 is significant at the P-value of 0.627. Since the P-value of 0.000 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was upheld, hence, it was concluded that commitment dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

H02: Communication dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

The result in table 5 shows a t-test 5.71 and the P-value of 0.000. Since the P-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected, hence, it was concluded that communication dimension of CRM has significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

H03: Trust dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

The result in table 5 shows a t-test 8.38 and the P-value of 0.000. Since the P-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was

rejected, hence, it was concluded that trust dimension of CRM has significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

H04: Conflict handling dimension of CRM has no significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

The result in table 5 shows a t-test 7.32 and the P-value of 0.000. Since the P-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected, hence, it was concluded that conflict handling dimension of CRM has significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Discussion of finding

Effect of commitment dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products

The first finding is that commitment dimension of CRM has positive but insignificant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The result in table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that Provision of guarantees to match products to satisfy consumer needs increase online patronage of fashion products, offer of quality products to meet the needs of the intended consumers increase online patronage of fashion products, being flexible in providing services to consumers increases online patronage of fashion products, being able to fulfill its promises to consumers increases online patronage of fashion products and being consistent in offering increases online patronage of fashion products. This finding connotes that adopting commitment dimension of CRM would moderately promote online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. This finding agrees with Anderson and Narus (2018) who noted that relationship commitment is at the core of all successful working relationships and that it is an essential ingredient in successful long-term relationships, including supplier–buyer relationships

Effect of communication dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products

The second finding showed that communication dimension of CRM has a positive and significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The result in table 2 showed that the respondents agreed that being able to provide information in a timely manner, provide the latest marketing information, provide accurate information, communicating without pressure and

Communicating both way enhance online patronage of fashion products. The finding revealed that communication dimension of CRM promotes online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Olayiwola (2023) who found that a positive and significant relationship exist between organizational trust, communication and customers' satisfaction

Effect of trust dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products

The third finding of the study is that trust dimension of CRM has positive and significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The result in table 3 showed that the respondents agreed that being very concerned about security when consumer transactions, Promising customers reliable products and services, being consistent in providing quality services, employees showing respect to customer and fulfilling of obligations to consumers by firms promotes online patronage of fashion products. This result implies that trust dimension of CRM promote online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. This finding is in consonance with Olayiwola (2023) who found that a positive and significant relationship exists between organizational trust, communication and customers' satisfaction.

Effect of conflict handling dimension of CRM on online patronage of fashion products

The fourth finding showed that conflict handling dimension of CRM has positive and significant effect on online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The result in table 4 showed that the respondents agreed that being ready always to face the possibility of conflict promotes online patronage of fashion products, trying to resolve conflicts that occur in the service process promotes online patronage of fashion products, having the ability to openly discuss solutions when problems arise promotes online patronage of fashion products, ability to provide satisfactory solutions above promotes online patronage of fashion products and resolving consumer complaints effectively promotes online patronage of fashion products. This implies that conflict handling dimension of CRM promote online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The finding is in agreement with Laith (2020) who found that conflict handling is significant in explaining the variation in customer loyalty.

Conclusion and recommendation

Technological advancement has caused a paradigm shift in the business environment. People now buy and through various digital platforms such as

facebook, whatsapp, instagram, twitter etc. this study established that: commitment, communication, trust and conflict handling dimensions of CRM promotes online patronage of fashion products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. it was therefore recommended that: firms that deal in fashion product should effectively adopt commitment dimension of CRM in order to promote online patronage of their fashion products; the fashion traders should ensure effective communication among stakeholders and customer in order to maintain enhanced online patronage of their fashion products; the organization should develop strategies to build trust among online customers for an increased patronage of fashion product; appropriate and periodic training should be made available for employees in conflict handling and other areas of competence required to handle customers' complaints effectively.

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