

Telemarketing and Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firm in Port Harcourt Metropolis



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ABSTRACT: The growing trend in marketing technologies presents opportunity for maximum productivity and profitability through the adoption of mobile technologies, phone calls in particular to business organizations. Firms who see this development as opportunity of gaining consumer purchase stand a better chance for survival. The adoption of telemarketing in the food and beverage firms is increasing given the spate of consumer awareness of the usefulness of mobile phones in purchase however the measure of consumer purchase behavior in telemarketing is still minimal in marketing research. This research seeks to validate empirically, while analyzing the influence of telemarketing on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firm in Port Harcourt. The study adopted quantitative research design using a survey method. A total of 184 subjects made of marketing managers and employees in the frame of eight (8) respondents from 25 firms were surveyed through questionnaire administration. Four research questions were posed and four hypotheses were tested. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation while inferential statistics of Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient (ρ) was used to test the stated hypothesis in SPSS version 25 which was used to correlate data on the independent and dependent variables of the study. The findings from the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient analysis result reveal a significant relationship between inbound marketing, outbound marketing, B2B telemarketing, B2C telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior. It was concluded that telemarketing influence on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt is significant. The study therefore recommends that food and beverage firms' marketers should engage convenient advertisement strategies that accommodate customer feedback, extract customer data from available directories such as the network service provider data base, initiate and maintain good rapport with other firms and provide regular and up-to-date training to the telemarketers to achieve customer purchase in Port Harcourt.

INTRODUCTION

The advent of ICT brought about major breakthrough in all spheres of human endeavors, marketing sector inclusive. Time and realities had redefined marketing by shifting focus from traditional marketing to modern marketing in a systematic way that utilized more sophisticated communication protocols in initiating sales. The present day society can be rightly called as the mobile information society as Geetika and Preeti (2012) maintained that the spurt in mobile technology, the boom in mobile sale and the multiplicity of application areas has indeed been unprecedented. Telephone in marketing known as telemarketing is fast becoming popular among marketers than any other means owing to the popularity of mobile phones in our present society which has brought a revolution of its kind in the field of communication.

Telemarketing is a marketing strategy that involves connecting with customers over the telephone or, more recently, through web-based video conferencing. 'Telemarketing is a practice where a business initiates a phone call in order to propose a commercial transaction.' Hence, any marketing done over the telephone can be categorized under telemarketing, (Geetika & Preeti, 2012). To this effect, Rosette Siriban (2008) discussed telemarketing as the process of marketing goods, advertising services or customer service over the telephone. Telemarketing may be done from a company office, from a call center, or from home. It may involve a live operator voice broadcasting which is most frequently associated with political messages. An effective telemarketing campaign often involves two or more calls. The first call (or series of calls) determines the customer's needs. The final call (or series of calls) motivates the customer to make a purchase.

Telemarketing is a well-organized and professional marketing technique of generating quality business leads for business organization, and a quick technique to connect with new clients personally, arrange appointments and make deals over the

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phone. By using Telemarketers marketers can get best potential clients/prospects for the company's products or services and know their needs, and requirements, which can help the company earn more sales revenue with a telemarketing campaign. You can contact directly with your targeted audience. In Telemarketing, one can communicate and engage the targeted people to talk and convey about the business products and services. In this way, telemarketing gives business owners a quick and cost-effective method of identifying and contacting, via phone, a specific large market of prospects for the purpose of selling a product or service. With an effective script and enthusiastic telemarketers, business owners can generate sales without having to spend large amounts of money on traditional marketing vehicles.

The operational concepts within the nucleus of telemarketing identified as dimensions of this study are limited to the following: inbound marketing, outbound marketing, B2B (Business to Business) telemarketing and B2C (Business to Consumer) telemarketing. Inbound telemarketing is a kind in which a customer gets in touch with the company that is selling the products and the services he wants through phone communication. This could be based on an existing initiated process by the firm. Outbound telemarketing occurs when the company makes the first move and contacts potential customers to sell its products and services through phone calls. When a business calls another business to market or sell its products or services and establish a rapport, they are essentially engaging in B2B telemarketing. Business to Consumer telemarketing services, involves calling consumers to sell them products and services, to gain their support and participation or to provide them with customer service. The focus of telemarketing amongst others is to gain consumer purchase which is studied as dependent variable in this work. Kotler and Keller (2011) state that consumer purchase behavior is the study of the ways of buying and disposing of goods, services, ideas or experiences by the individuals, groups and organizations in order to satisfy their needs and wants. A firm's primary mission is to reach prospective customers and influence their awareness, attitudes and buying behavior, (Akwas, 2014) which they spend a lot of money on. Researchers and marketing practitioners had given considerable emphases in understanding the effect of telemarketing on different firm's variables however, consideration has not been given on this subject in the food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt which constitute research gap sought to be filled by this research.

Statement of the Problem

Telemarketing is a more dominant method of direct marketing being used by companies to reach out to customers through the medium of telephone. The focus is creating product awareness that translates to purchase however, telemarketing has become one of the most divisive strategies in modern marketing because many organizations have been known to use irritating or unethical practices which discourage customer purchase. The intrusive nature of telemarketing, as well as reports of scams and fraud perpetrated over the telephone, has spurred a growing backlash against this direct marketing practice. Li and Edwards (2002) complained that receiving promotional calls on the telephone can be considered an interruption of task performance by consumer. Consumers find the ringing of the phone while being engrossed in work a great deal of disturbance, and may develop a negative feeling towards the source of such calls.

According to Aaker and Bruzzone (1985), frequent telephone calls could cause irritation among consumers, meaning negative, impatient and displeasing feeling of individual consumers caused by various forms of advertising stimuli which is consequential on consumer purchase behavior. The cause of irritation is represented by various criticisms on advertising such as targeting the wrong audience, manipulative messages, misplacements of ads, excessive repetition within a short time, and forced exposure. Fennis and Bakker (2001) observed that the higher the customer's perceived sense of being intruded on and irritation related to telemarketing calls, the less likely he/she is to respond favorably to such calls. Hence, consumers are unhappy, if they get telephone calls with market managers often. Telemarketing can also be resented particularly when dealing with business-to-consumer customers, and when calls are made in at odd times.

Hence, Alexander and Campbell (1997) maintained that business using direct marketing as the basis upon which to engage in relationship building must proceed in a manner that acknowledges and minimizes consumer concern about privacy. Telemarketing has received significant emphases in Consumers' attitude (Thamizhchelvan, 2012), performance indicators, (Young & Sang 2014) consumers' perception, (Geetika & Preeti, 2012) etc. However telemarketing on consumer purchase behavior has not been conducted on food and beverages firms in Port Harcourt. Against this backdrop, this study sought to investigate the influence of telemarketing on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt metropolis.

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of this study is shown in figure 1.1 below:

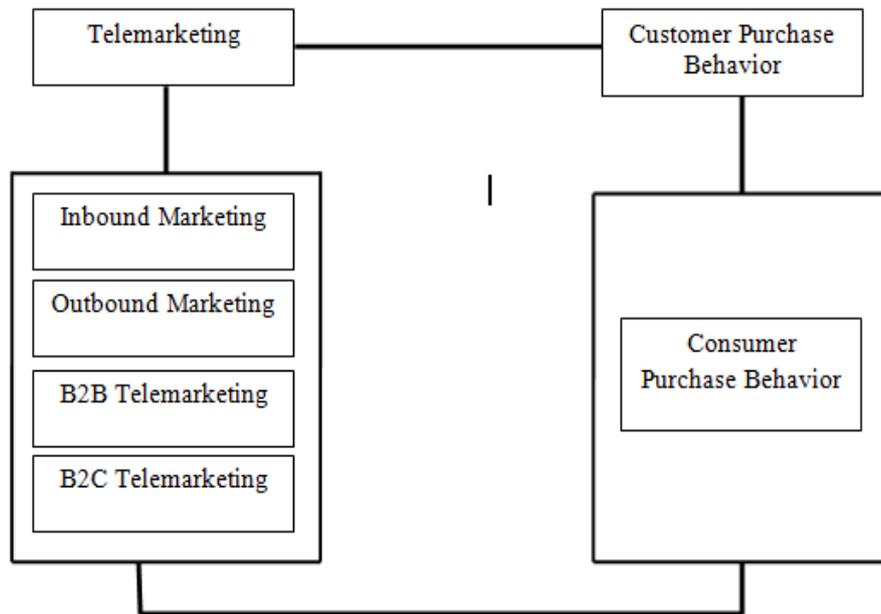


Fig.1.1: Conceptual Framework Construct

Source : Review of Literature: Dimensions of Telemarketing adapted from Brooke, H. (2017); Jesnoewski, J. (2018).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of telemarketing on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives are:

1. To find out whether inbound marketing influences consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.
2. To determine whether outbound marketing influences consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.
3. To ascertain whether B2B (Business to Business) telemarketing influence consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.
4. To investigate whether B2C (Business to Customer) telemarketing influence consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. To what extent does inbound marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?
2. To what extent does outbound marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?
3. To what extent does B2Btelemarketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?
4. To what extent does B2C marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses tested in this study are stated thus:

1. **Ho₁**:there is no significant relationship between inbound marketing and consume To what extent does inbound marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?
2. To what extent does outbound marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?

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3. To what extent does B2B telemarketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?
4. To what extent does B2C marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between outbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between B2B telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between B2C telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Telemarketing

Telemarketing is an age old marketing practice, which involves utilizing the telephone that is commonly used by lots of businesses having a planned strategy to market and sell products with an aim to achieve high volume of leads or sales. As the name implied, telemarketing is blended with 'telecommunication' and 'marketing', and in respect to the fact that it uses telephone as a medium it is similar to telephone selling. Telemarketing according to Rosette (2008) cited in Geetika, and Preeti (2012) is the process of marketing goods, advertising services or customer service over the telephone. The Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA), (2003) 'defined it as a practice where a business initiates a phone call in order to propose a commercial transaction.

Telemarketing is an interactive process between a company and its customers that uses a comprehensive system of media and methods to elicit a response (Duncan, 2001) also it is the art and science of getting the right offer, to the right people, at the right time, and recording and fulfilling their request for products or services. Telemarketing is a more dominant method of direct marketing being used by companies to reach out to customers in which contact between customers and salespersons is established via the medium of telephone. The telephone as a medium is ideal for building and maintaining close relationships with customers, (Anton & Gustin, 2000; Peppers, Rogers & Dorf, 1999).

Most of the telemarketing calls are known as cold calls because the recipient of the call has not requested the telemarketer to contact them. Telemarketing is normally done from a corporate office or from a call centre. It may involve either a live caller or a pre-recorded message. Telemarketing can also be applied to other forms of electronic marketing using e-mail or fax messages. Telemarketing is seen as an effective means to reach a prospective customer as an essential tool in building relationships and retaining customers. Prospective customers are identified by various means, including past purchase history, previous requests for information, credit limit, competition entry forms, and application forms. Names may also be processed from another company's consumer database or obtained from a telephone directory or another public list.

Direct marketing has registered massive growth owing to changes in market behavior and declining effectiveness of traditional media, (Young & Sang 2104). This growth is set to continue, particularly in terms of telemarketing and direct response advertising aided by technology. Technological advances in this area provide an opportunity for more personalized, even distinctively new, forms of customer relationships (McCartan-Quinn, Durkin & Donnell, 2004; Wickham & Collins, 2004).

Dimensions of Telemarketing

Inbound Marketing

Inbound telemarketing refers to the manner in which a company accepts calls from consumers which involves prompting prospects to call, (Adams, 2019). Here the telemarketing operators handle incoming calls placed by customers and prospects. These callers might include prospective customers responding to advertisements or direct marketing communications, or those simply making general inquiries about a product or service. Inbound telemarketing can be a high value sales channel for organization if managed properly. It can be achieved in a number of ways, directing people to call after seeing the companies' website, social media message, email, media advertising, or direct mail, (Brooke, 2017). When the consumer calls, the telemarketers will provide information on the product or service, but their primary function is to take orders rather than proactively sell the product or service to the consumer.

The telemarketer's role is to move the sales opportunity forward by qualifying the prospect, arranging an appointment for a field sales representative to follow up, or taking an order over the phone, (Grindstone, 2019). This form has several advantages

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including higher volume of sales, greater profits, increased lead generation, reduced costs per sale, increased number of qualified telemarketing leads, increased number of appointments, increased customer base, higher number of closed sales, and maximum phone productivity. Many companies miss the opportunity to capture additional revenues from incoming calls because the team that handles the calls is not trained on how to sell the company's products or services, (Adams, 2019). For this type of telemarketing to be effective, the company needs to engage the target market. This can be achieved through media advertising, social media, email marketing, or direct mail. When prospects call, the role of the telemarketer is to give information on products and services.

Outbound Marketing

Outbound Telemarketing involves a proactive sales approach wherein telemarketers make calls from the company to a target group of consumers to sell them your product or service. It allows businesses to make sales calls, to upgrade mail orders, do prospecting, or speed up cash flow to the corporation through accounts receivable collection efforts, (Brooke, 2017). Outbound telemarketing can also be used to build retail traffic, get appointments for sales reps, and even re-sell customers who have cancelled their order, (Adams, 2019). This initiative includes high contact rates, agent productivity and close rates. They also answer questions customers may have about products or services, and records sales in a computer program. This task is more demanding, making calls to customers who have not shown any particular interest in company's products or service is much, much harder than converting prospects who have contacted the company and already with some preliminary interest, into a sale.

B2B Telemarketing

B-to-B (B2B) refers to business to business e-commerce, where business firms sell their products and services to other business firms using the phone calls, (Gandhi & Dalian, 2011). B2B Telemarketing is solely involved in business via calls to initiate sales with different businesses in the market. When a business calls another business to market or sell its products or services and establish a rapport, they are essentially engaging in B2B telemarketing. Through these calls, companies reach out to potential business customers (as opposed to consumers) to communicate the value of their product or service, receive feedback, and decide on the next steps to establish a relationship. B2B Telemarketing can be outbound, where a business contacts another company to target prospects and give them solutions for their pain points, or inbound, where it handles incoming calls from contacts as a result of say, their email campaigns. B2B telemarketing is extremely important for businesses for several reasons, right from finding suitable clients for their products to building mutually beneficial relationships with other companies.

B2C Telemarketing

Business to Consumer, also known as B2C telemarketing services, involves calling consumers to sell them products and services, to gain their support and participation or to provide them with customer service. It refers to business to consumers, where business firms sell their products and services to the consumers, (Kelvin, 2005). B2C Telemarketing directly targets individual customers (the direct consumer) who would like a product or any service which is product driven as they deal directly with the end users. The strategies to increase sales are very crisp and directly depend upon the sales person in B2C organization hence, B2C comprises emotional purchasing which includes brand of the product, price and desire to purchase.

Concept of Consumer Purchase Behavior

Consumer purchase behaviour is the totality of consumers' decisions with respect to acquisition, consumption, and disposition of goods, services, time and ideas by human decision-making units over time (Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997). According to Manali (2015), consumer buying behavior is the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect to satisfy their needs. Kotler and Keller (2011) discussed consumer buying behaviour as the study of the ways of buying and disposing of goods, services, ideas or experiences by the individuals, groups and organizations in order to satisfy their needs and wants.

The entire purchasing process involves giving a thought on what should be bought, which brand is good or suitable, from where or whom should the purchase be made, when to purchase, how much to spent, and how many time to buy and in what intervals. Consequently the end result of the buyer behavior is the customer's final decision regarding the product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchase timing, purchase amount and purchase frequency. Hence, a good knowledge of consumer behavior is critical to the success of a marketing campaign because it reveals consumers' needs, wants, preferences, buying habits, demography, psychography, etc which aid the formulation and execution of appropriate marketing programs, (Gandhi & Dalian, 2011).

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The study of consumer behavior is considered very important for organizations, because such a study reveals the needs and wants of the consumers, how consumers think, feel and select a particular brand of a product. Moreover, the study of consumer behaviour, as maintained by Goodrich and Mooij (2003) further reveals various attitudes shown by a consumer before taking a purchase or buying decision. Further supporting the imperatives of the study of consumer buying behavior, Wagar (2004), maintains that understanding consumer buying behavior is an imperative for every business, which is why authors such as Kaynak and Samli (2006) consider study of consumer behavior a top priority for businesses.

Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by Information Processing Theory by (Atkinson and Shiffrin, 1968) which exposes the significance of information processing on consumer purchasing behavior and such product information can be accessed by telemarketing.

Information Processing Theory

The information processing theory by Atkinson and Shiffrin (1968) is based on the idea that humans process the information they receive, rather than merely responding to stimuli. This perspective equates the mind to a computer, which is responsible for analyzing information from the environment. According to the standard information-processing model for mental development, the mind's machinery includes attention mechanisms for bringing information in, working memory for actively manipulating information, and long-term memory for passively holding information so that it can be used in the future. Information is taken in through the senses and then put through the short-term memory. The information is then encoded to the long term memory, where the information is stored and retrieved when necessary. The information processing approach is based on a number of assumptions, including information made available by the environment is processed by a series of processing systems (e.g. attention, perception, and short-term memory) and these processing systems transform or alter the information in systematic ways.

The modern day marketing uses various information tools e.g. telephone to communicate product information to the consumers hence "telemarketing". Consumers need adequate information about products to facilitate purchase since they don't just react to stimuli but work with available information which necessitate the use of telemarketing. Therefore telemarketing must be efficient in providing necessary product's information in detail and more frequently to consumers. In adopting this theory, the food and beverages firms should initiate calls through her telemarketers to new and old customers, communicating complete information about products and services that will influence consumer purchase behavior when processed. Leveraging on the knowledge that consumers processed information received before action, telemarketers will communicate complete information which will help the organization achieve consumer purchase.

Empirical Review

Geetika and Preeti (2012) carried out a study of Indian consumers' perception on telemarketing. The study attempt to know the perception and attitude of the customers towards telemarketing; benefit derived by the company in the perception of customers and an overall assessment of this marketing tool. The convenience sampling method was used and the sample size is 300 respondents were determined using the questionnaire for data collection. Simple percentage and tables were used for data analysis and presentation. Findings reveal that people always ignore any telemarketing call whether through recorded voice, SMS or manual calls, respondents had experienced maximum call on information about new services, majority of the respondents did sometimes get influenced by telemarketing calls and SMS and made their purchases after getting such information, majority of the respondents were of the opinion that at times useful and trustworthy information was provided through telemarketing calls and SMS and finally respondents agreed that telemarketing generated sales for company. The study by Geetika and Preeti (2012) relates the present study by both researching on the subject "telemarketing" but while Geetika and Preeti focused consumers' perception the present study examined telemarketing on consumer purchase behavior. Also Geetika and Preeti revealed mixed reaction on the subject while the present study established a positive relationship between the variables, hence could be as a result of difference in geographical location of the studies as the former is conducted in India and the later in Nigeria.

Ankit and Reeti (2009) conducted a research titled, Classifying customers on the basis of their attitudes towards telemarketing in Indonesia. The objective of the study was to use intelligent techniques such as Feature Selection and Classification and Regression Techniques (C&RT) to classify customers according to their positive or negative attitudes towards telemarketing. Likert scale responses were collected from a sample of 400 respondents using a structured questionnaire for data collection. This study builds a model to classify customers according to their positive or negative attitudes towards telemarketing. The

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application of Feature Selection and C&RT resulted in the identification of two segments of customers: Acceptors and Rejecters. The findings show that customers view telemarketing as an approach used by companies to sell their products 'any which way', with lack of concern for customers' choices and comfort. The study by Ankit and Reeti focused on classifying customers according to their attitude towards telemarketing hence was relevance to the present study since attitude determines purchase behavior. Adopting a model for data interpretation, Ankit and Reeti revealed that companies used telemarketing to sell their products without given concern to customers concern. Such aggressive moves is responsible for the present study's findings which revealed a significant relationship between telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior.

Gandhi and Dalian (2014) carried out a study on the impact of electronic marketing on customer purchase behavior in the Indian hospitality industry. The study was conducted in order to provide empirical evidence as to how electronic marketing impacts customer purchase behavior with particular reference to the Indian hospitality industry. The research methodology adopted was the survey and descriptive research design. The study elicited primary data from 205 hotel guests in Delhi Metropolis of India using structured questionnaire. Simple regression was employed in analyzing the data and the findings revealed that electronic marketing strategies (social media marketing, search engine marketing, video marketing, phone calls marketing and email marketing) had a significant impact on customer awareness, patronage and loyalty. It was concluded that electronic marketing had a significant impact on customer purchase behavior in the Indian hospitality industry. The study recommended that hospitality firms in India should move away from conventional marketing techniques and inculcate electronic marketing into their marketing plans in order to better stay connected with customers. The elements of concern in Gandhi and Dalian (2014) study are the bases in the present study. Social media marketing, search engine marketing, video marketing, phone calls marketing and email marketing are all related to telemarketing which give close gap on the present study.

Gap in Literature

Telemarketing belongs to a new breed of potent technology-driven business tools that have evolved in direct response to the changes in today's business environment. Being rooted in a technological foundation, its offering of flexibility and lower costs of reaching customers had created relevance around it in marketing research and operation, hence telemarketing had received overwhelming concern in the academic space. Most studies examined consumers' perception and attitude towards telemarketing, (Geetika & Preeti, 2012), classification of customers on the basis of attitudes towards telemarketing, (Ankit & Reeti, 2009), examining elements like social media marketing, search engine marketing, video marketing and email marketing on consumer purchase behavior in India. These and many other studies carried out on telemarketing did not examine inbound marketing, outbound marketing, B2B marketing and B2C marketing on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms which creates both geographical, content and variable gaps sought to be filled by this research. this research is therefore titled, telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was a descriptive survey design, as information was collected from a sample of the population and findings were generalized to the entire population. The population of the study consists of 30 identified operating food and beverage firms in different locations of Port Harcourt metropolis. The sample size consisted of 25 firms based on Krejcie and Mongan (1970) table for determining the sample size of a given population as quoted by Amadi and Wali, (2017). A total of 200 subjects made of marketing managers and other employees in the frame of eight (8) respondents from each firm were surveyed through questionnaire administration. The items used in measuring each variable in this study were based on theory and largely drawn from the literature. The instrument for data collection contains 16 questions for the independent variable and 6 questions for the dependent variables. Two instruments used for this study are titled: "Telemarketing of Food and Beverages Firms Questionnaire (TFBFQ) and Consumer Purchase Behavior Questionnaire (CPBQ). The (TFBFQ) has a four point Likert scale ranging from (Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 making it a total of 10 points divide by 4 = 2.5) was used as a benchmark for decision. Responses below 2.5 were considered not significant, while 2.5 and above were deemed significant. The questions were pre-tested for comprehension, relevance of completeness and validity through 5 marketing managers of food and beverages firms and four scholars in the field of marketing. The pilot survey participants were asked to identify inadequate content of the questionnaire and their response formed the bases for improving upon the final copies. An impressive response rate of 92% representing 184 usable copies of questionnaire was retrieved and formed the bases for analysis. Cronbach alpha was calculated to confirm the reliability of the study construct. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.87 which exceeded the rule of thumb cut-off mark of 0.70 as suggested by Hatcher (1994). The data generated from the four (4) research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. To determine the extent of

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significance that exists between the independent and dependent variables at 0.05 level of significance, the researcher uses the Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient (ρ) to test the stated hypotheses while SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 25.0 was used to correlate the data on the independent and dependent variables of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1

To what extent does inbound marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?

Table1: Computation of Mean Responses of Inbound Marketing on Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Inbound Marketing and Consumer Purchase Behavior	184	3.6793	.28826	.02125
Our initiated platforms generate high call traffic daily on information seeking and order placement.	184	3.80	.517	.038
When the consumer calls, our telemarketers provide satisfactory information on our product and services.	184	3.85	.485	.036
Our team that handles customer calls is well trained on how to sell our products which give us opportunity to capture additional revenues.	184	3.88	.325	.024
My company ties the right compensation plan with appropriate incentives to sales results initiated through phone calls.	184	3.18	.728	.054

Source: SPSS output (Base on questionnaires' Data 2020)

Analysis in table 1 showed that all questionnaire items on inbound marketing practice and consumer purchase behavior have mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating an acceptance that inbound marketing influence consumer purchase behavior. In summary, with a grand mean of 3.67, the respondents confirmed that the influence of inbound marketing on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt is to a high extent.

Research Question 2

To what extent does outbound marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?

Table2: Computation of Mean Responses of Outbound Marketing on Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Outbound Marketing and Consumer Purchase Behavior	184	3.7677	.29804	.02197
My organization make minimum of 50 calls daily to initiate sales with new customers.	184	3.84	.458	.034
We are satisfied with the level of patronage resulted from sales initiated with phone calls.	184	3.83	.421	.031
We make calls to target group of consumers to create awareness, advertise our products and make sales more often.	184	3.55	.691	.051
We talk with customers on brand suitability for each consumer category, from where or whom should the purchase be made and when to effect purchase in our phone conversations.	184	3.85	.403	.030

Source: SPSS output (Base on Questionnaires' Data 2020)

Analysis in table 2 showed that all questionnaire items on outbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior have mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating an acceptance that outbound marketing influence consumer purchase

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behavior. In summary, with a grand mean of 3.76, the respondents confirmed that the influence of outbound marketing on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt is to a high extent.

Research Question 3

To what extent does B2B telemarketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?

Table 3: Computation of Mean Responses of B2B Telemarketing on Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Business to Business Telemarketing and Consumer Purchase Behaviour	184	3.6209	.29100	.02145
We find suitable clients for our products by building mutually beneficial relationships with other companies through phone conversation.	184	3.79	.460	.034
We regularly call other businesses to market or sell our products to them to establish rapport.	184	3.80	.449	.033
We use calls to reach out to potential business customers to communicate the value of our products, receive feedback, and decide on the next steps to establish a relationship.	184	3.14	.804	.059
My firm does contact other companies (our target prospects) and give them solutions for their pain points.	184	3.75	.470	.035

Source: SPSS output (Base on questionnaires' data 2020)

Analysis in table 3 showed that all questionnaire items on B2B telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior have mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating an acceptance that B2B telemarketing influence consumer purchase behavior. In summary, with a grand mean of 3.62, the respondents confirmed that the influence of B2B marketing on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt is to a high extent.

Research Question 4

To what extent does B2C marketing relate with consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt?

Table 4: Computation of Mean Responses of B2C Telemarketing on Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Business to Customer Telemarketing and Consumer Purchase Behaviour	184	3.8410	.27449	.02024
By contacting wide range of consumers, we identify potential customers who are a good fit for our product.	184	3.80	.517	.038
By reaching out to people who interacted with our business, we can define which customers are interested in our product.	184	3.85	.485	.036
When targeting a new niche or audience base customer, we make them aware of the solutions we provide.	184	3.88	.325	.024
We frequently call consumers to sell them our products to gain their support and participation and to provide them with quality customer service.	184	3.83	.434	.032

Source: SPSS output (Base on questionnaires' data 2020)

Analysis in table 4 showed that all questionnaire items on B2C telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior have mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 indicating an acceptance that B2C telemarketing influence consumer purchase behavior. In summary, with a grand mean of 3.67, the respondents confirmed that the influence of B2C marketing on consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt is to a high extent.

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Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between inbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between Inbound Marketing and Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Correlations					
			CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	INBOUND MARKETING	
Spearman's rho	CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.826**	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	
		N	184	184	
	INBOUND MARKETING	Correlation Coefficient	.826**	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	
		N	184	184	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result in table 5 above shows that spearman's rank correlation coefficient (rho) is calculated at 0.82. The value is significant, hence it suggest that a very strong relationship exist between inbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior. The positive sign of this correlation coefficient gives the evidence that consumer purchase behavior is positively related to inbound marketing of the food and beverage firms, i.e. success in the application of inbound marketing is likely to yield high consumer purchase in the food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt. Given the significant 2-tail value (PV) = 0.000 < 0.01, the researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis of no significant relationship inbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior, and conclude that a significant relationship exist between them.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between outbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 6: Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between Inbound Marketing and Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Correlations					
			CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	OUTBOUND MARKETING	
Spearman's rho	CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.678**	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	
		N	184	184	
	OUTBOUND MARKETING	Correlation Coefficient	.678**	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	
		N	184	184	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).)

The result in table 6 above shows that spearman's rank correlation coefficient (rho) is calculated at 0.67. The value is significant, hence it suggest that a strong relationship exist between outbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior. The positive sign of this correlation coefficient gives the evidence that consumer purchase behavior is positively related to outbound marketing of the food and beverage firms, i.e. success in the application of outbound marketing is likely to yield high consumer purchase in the food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt. Given the significant 2-tail value (PV) = 0.000 < 0.01, the researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis of no significant relationship outbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior, and conclude that a significant relationship exist between them.

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Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between B2B telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 7: Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between B2B Telemarketing and Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Correlations				
			CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	BUSINESS TO BUSINESS TELEMARKETING
Spearman's rho	CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.793**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	184	184
	BUSINESS TO BUSINESS (B2B) TELEMARKETING	Correlation Coefficient	.793**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	184	184

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result in table 7 above shows that spearman's rank correlation coefficient (rho) is calculated at 0.79. The value is significant, hence it suggest that a strong relationship exist between B2B telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior. The positive sign of this correlation coefficient gives the evidence that consumer purchase behavior is positively related to business to business telemarketing of the food and beverage firms, i.e. an effective application of B2B telemarketing is likely to generate high consumer purchase in the food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt. Given the significant 2-tail value (PV) = 0.000 < 0.01, the researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis of no significant relationship B2B telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior, and conclude that a significant relationship exist between them.

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant relationship between B2C telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 8: Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between B2C Telemarketing and Consumer Purchase Behavior of Food and Beverage Firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Correlations				
			CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	BUSINESS TO CUSTOMER TELEMARKETING
Spearman's rho	CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.616**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	184	184
	BUSINESS TO CUSTOMER (B2C) TELEMARKETING	Correlation Coefficient	.616**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	184	184

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result in table 8 above shows that spearman's rank correlation coefficient (rho) is calculated at 0.61. The value is significant, hence it suggest that a strong relationship exist between B2C telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior. The positive sign of this correlation coefficient gives the evidence that consumer purchase behavior is positively related to business to customer telemarketing of the food and beverage firms, i.e. an effective application of B2C telemarketing is likely to generate high consumer purchase in the food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt. Given the significant 2-tail value (PV) = 0.000 < 0.01, the researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis of no significant relationship B2C telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior, and conclude that a significant relationship exists between them.

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Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis of data, the following findings were made:

Inbound marketing practice influence consumer purchase behavior to a very high extent

Outbound marketing practice influence consumer purchase behavior to a very high extent

B2B telemarketing practice influence consumer purchase behavior to a very high extent

B2C telemarketing practice influence consumer purchase behavior to a very high extent

There is very strong relationship between inbound marketing practice and consumer purchase behavior. A correlation coefficient of ($r = .826$) reveal that the value is very significant; it shows that a significant relationship exist between inbound marketing practice and consumer purchase behavior.

There is a strong relationship between outbound marketing practice and consumer purchase behavior. A correlation coefficient of ($r = .678$) reveal that the value is very significant; it shows that a significant relationship exist between outbound marketing practice and consumer purchase behavior.

There is a strong relationship between B2B telemarketing practice and consumer purchase behavior. A correlation coefficient of ($r = .793$) reveal that the value is very significant; it shows that a significant relationship exist between B2B telemarketing practice and consumer purchase behavior.

There is a strong relationship t between B2C telemarketing practice and consumer purchase behavior. A correlation coefficient of ($r = .616$) reveal that the value is very significant; it shows that a significant relationship exist B2C telemarketing practice and consumer purchase behavior.

Discussion of Findings

Discussion in this study is done according to the findings of the study. The study intends to ascertain the relationship between telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt. Specifically, the researcher's intention was to find out extent to which inbound marketing, outbound marketing, B2B telemarketing and B2C telemarketing influences consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms.

Analysis of primary data collected from 184 respondents representing the totality of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt reveal that Tele Marketing is significantly associated with Consumer Purchase Behavior.

This finding corroborate with Gandhi and Dalian (2014) who found that electronic marketing strategies had a significant impact on customer awareness, patronage and loyalty and concluded that electronic marketing is significant on customer purchase behavior. This was upheld by Eric (1996) that telemarketing is seen as an effective means to reach a prospective customer as an essential tool in building relationships and retaining customers. In a similar finding, Geetika and Preeti (2012) revealed that useful and trustworthy information is provided through telemarketing calls and SMS which generate sales for company. Conversely Ankit and Reeti (2009) present that customers view telemarketing as an approach used by companies to sell their products 'any which way', with lack of concern for customers' choices and comfort which affect patronage behavior. However, Anton and Gustin (2000) Peppers, Rogers and Dorf (1999) maintained that the telephone as a medium is ideal for building and maintaining close relationships with customers. Hence the researchers accept the findings of this research which reveal a significant relationship between telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior.

CONCLUSION

The mean results of our findings reveal that telemarketing in inbound marketing, outbound marketing B2B telemarketing and B2C telemarketing influence consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt, also the spearman's rank correlation coefficient(ρ) analysis result reveal a significant relationship between inbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior, also a significant relationship between outbound marketing and consumer purchase behavior, a significant relationship between B2B telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior and finally, a significant relationship between B2C telemarketing and consumer purchase behavior of food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt. This result reports success in telemarketing operation strategy adopted by the food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings and conclusion, it was therefore recommended that:

1. The food and beverage firms should engage convenient advertisement strategies that accommodate customer feedback and be efficient in supplying adequate information necessary for initiating sales with customers.

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2. The telemarketing department of food and beverages firms in Port Harcourt should extract customer data from available directories such as the network service provider data base and create appealing calls that will effects sales with the consumers.
3. The marketing department of the food and beverage firms in Port Harcourt should initiate and maintain good rapport with other firms to gain customer referral and other technical supports where necessary.
4. The food and beverage firms should provide regular and up-to-date training to their telemarketers in conducting sales on telephone with all manner and categories of consumers in Port Harcourt.

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