

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SALES DISTRIBUTION AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF NESTLE NIGERIA PRODUCTS IN PORT HARCOURT

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### ABSTRACT

*This study critically examined the distribution strategies and customer satisfaction in manufacturing firms. A well designed questionnaire was used to gather data from a sample size of 111 individuals. The data collected were analyzed using tables and percentage. The hypothesis formulated were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). Findings from the study revealed that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that there is a significant association between extensive distribution and customer loyalty. Another finding from the study revealed that selective distribution improves customer advocacy.*

**Keywords: Relationship, Sales Distribution, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Advocacy, Nestle Nigeria Products.**

### 1. Introduction

As industries engage in the production of goods and services, they need to make them available to consumers at the right time right place and the least cost (price). All these cannot be without an effective and efficient system put in place. Distribution strategy is the transfer of products from one place to another or from one manufacturer such as wholesaler, retailer, agents and other means such as transportation, communication warehousing etc. (Jobber 2017). Distribution contributes no profit to companies account.

According to economic distribution channel theory, the “ideal” distribution system or the normative distribution channel can be determined by exploring what the consumers want in terms of service outputs from the distribution channel, how much they are willing to pay for a given service level, how the services can be provided to them, and what the costs of the alternative distribution channels are (Stern et al., 2006). As a result, they argue that it can be determined which distribution system most efficiently meets the customers’ wants and it can be pointed out that the distribution channel strategy adopted by a firm should take a customer perspective and analyse the output from the commercial part of the different distribution channels and relates it to the customers’ costs and benefits from the different levels of service output offered by the available distribution channels (Cohen et al., 2003).

As one of the key elements of a company's success, selecting the proper distribution channel strategy has been a focal point in both the supply chain and marketing channel structure. The distribution strategy decision is usually based on finding the most profitable way to reach a

market (Ford and Mottner, 2003). Successful distribution channel strategy selection, implementation, and management cannot only help to meet the shopping needs and habits of the target customers efficiently under the cost constraints of the seller; they must also mitigate the disadvantages caused by distribution channel conflicts such as double marginalization. According to Porter (1985), organizational competitive advantage can be achieved if the firm implements a value-creating strategy that is not simultaneously being implemented by any current or potential competitors. This can be interpreted to mean that sustained competitive advantage results from strategic assets; which Barney (1991) regards as those that are internally controlled and permit the firm to formulate and implement strategies that expand its efficiency and effectiveness. A firm's distribution strategy of its products and services is such a strategic asset.

Few studies have been undertaken internationally and not much locally on the subject area of distribution channel strategies adopted by various companies. Irimu (2009), researched the Effects of distribution channel strategies employed by sewing machine industry in Kenya on channel members 2009; a case of Amedo Centres (k) Ltd. In her study, she found out that the location of the service facility is especially important for such business since many target customers may lack the funds for public transportation or they may feel psychologically uncomfortable to visit distance outlets. On her part, Alumila (2014) researched on the distribution strategies used by Health maintenance organization in Kenya. She found out that health care customers unlike other services value the face-to-face contact with the seller and also emphasize a trustful relationship. In Denmark, Katz and Aspeden (2017) found out that Internet banking customers are very similar to the PC segment. The persons are connected to the Internet for the use of e-mail, for the search of information about special interests and do not put a high value on the personal relationship with the local bank, they are relatively price-conscious, affluent and well-educated.

Without satisfactory distribution drastically which could lead to overstock, due to low sales or patronage of consumers, redundancy in production due to shortage of low material.

This study, therefore, seeks to establish the effect of marketing channel distribution strategies on consumer satisfaction in Nestle Nigeria.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The importance of distribution system has been neglected in favour of other marketing functions, manufacturers, however, often forget the fact that the only marketing function that linked the consumer products and marketing is the distribution network. The negligence of producers as a matter of facts has hampered the effectiveness of the distribution system to function well. Allwell (2017)

The problem of poor Distribution Strategy which is usually defective due to lack of skills and expertise and reliable and accurate information on the sides of the managers, which will often lead to poor forecast and formulation of vague goals and objectives. Also, poor policies and implementation strategies is yet another problem which in most cases leads to deviation of results from the sets goals and poor feedback. Huttons (2018)

Finally, the very dynamic nature of the business environment which makes forecasting practically impossible, sometimes Jeopardizes the organizational policy. Distribution strategy attracts more business partner and improves company development by satisfying her customers. Companies like Nestle Nigeria Limited require a good distribution system to meet the supply with her competitors such as Unilever Nigeria, Plc Guinness Nigeria Plc and Nigeria Breweries Plc.). It is based on the above that the research work tends to investigate the effect of distribution strategies on customer satisfaction of Nestle Nigeria Limited. The would be based on the following hypothesis:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is a significant relationship between Intensive Distribution and Repeat Purchase.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is a significant relationship between Extensive Distribution and Customer Loyalty

H<sub>03</sub>: There is a significant relationship between Selective Distribution and Customer Advocacy

### **Literature Review**

According to Domschike and Schield "distribution encompasses a system of all activities that are related to the transfer of economic goods between manufacturers and consumers. It includes such a coordinated preparation of manufactured goods according to their type and volume, space and time, so that supply deadlines can be met or estimated demand can be efficiently satisfied (When producing for an anonymous market)" (Domschke and Schield, 2016).

Distribution system is divided into

- a. Acquisition distribution system
- b. Logistic, i.e. physical distribution system.

According to this author, acquisition distribution system management includes the management of distribution routes, i.e distribution channels. The logistic distribution system is focused on bridging the space and time by transportation and storage, as well as order processing and shipment supply logistics, i.e., the movement of materials (Compare Speech, 1988-34-45).

The term "distribution channels" can at the moment be replaced by the term "marketing channel". Marketing channel" as a more complex term has been used in the USA since the 1970s because the intermediaries include not only those who participate in the physical flow of a product from the manufacturer to the end-user or final consumer but also those that have a role in the transfer of product ownership, as well as other intermediary institutions that participate in the value distribution from the production to consumption (Tipuric, 2013, 15-16).

Therefore, there are three types of marketing channels (Kotler and Keller, 2018, 26): communication channels, distribution channels and service channels. A marketing channel is" the extend contractual organization that management operates to achieve the distribution objective. (Rosenbloom, 2016). Channel of distribution provides downstream value by bringing finished products to end-users.

This flow may involve the physical movement of the product or simply the transfer of title to it also known as a distribution channel, distribution pipeline, a supply chain, a marketing channel, a market channel, and a trade channel. "(Ostrow, 2019, 59).

"Distribution channel is one or more companies or individual who participate in the distribution of goods and services from the manufacturer to the final user or consume? Hall, (2015). Nevertheless, other types of flows should not be neglect in distribution channels, so that the following definition is also possible. Channel of distribution consists of one or more companies or individuals who participate in the flow of goods, services, information, and finances from the producer to the final user or consumer". Coyle, Bardi and Langley, (2013). These are various methods that products or services use after their production until they are purchased and used by and users.

Therefore, marketing channel, i.e distribution channel are all those organizations that a production has to go through between its production and consumption. Kotler & Armstrong, (2007). In the consumer marketing channels, the marketing channel system usually includes the following operators: producer/ manufacturer, wholesaler, intermediary and retailer. On the other hand, when it comes to business marketing channels, the following are included:

Producer/manufacturer, representative or sales subsidiary of manufacturer, business distributor and business client Kotler & Armstrong, (2006).

Different authors describe the possible options of marketing, i.e distribution channels in different ways. Nevertheless, the basic division is into direct and indirect channels. Indirect channels/manufactures to sell their goods directly to individual consumers.

### **Dimensions of Distribution Strategy**

Productions are sent to the C and F agents of the company from its manufacturing to distributor and super stockist. The distributor is responsible to manage the availability of the product in his area. Super stockiest supplies the goods to the re-distributor who is in charge of managing the available diestock the region of the distributor. The distributor and re-distributor then supply the products to wholesaler and retail in their respective region or area.

### **Intensive Distribution**

Intensive distribution aims to provide saturation coverage of the market by using all available outlets. For many products, total sales are directly linked to the number of outlets used (e.g., cigarettes, beer). Intensive distribution is usually required where customers have a range of acceptable brands to choose from. In other words, if one brand is not available, a customer will simply choose another.

This alternative involves all the possible outlets that can be used to distribute the product. This is particularly useful in products like soft drinks where distribution is a key success factor. Here, soft drink firms distribute their brands through multiple outlets to ensure their easy availability to the customer. Hence, on the one hand, these brands are available in restaurants and five-star hotels and on the other hand, they are also available through

countless soft drink stalls, kiosks, sweetmeats, tea shops, and so on. Any possible outlet where the customer is expected to visit is also an outlet for the soft drink.

### **Exclusive Distribution**

Exclusive distribution is an extreme form of selective distribution in which only one wholesaler, retailer or distributor is used in a specific geographical area. Damfil (2015) When the firm distributes its brand through just one or two major outlets in the market, who exclusively deal in it and not all competing brands, it is said that the firm is using an exclusive distribution strategy. This is a common form of distribution in products and brands that seek a high prestigious image. Typical examples are of designer ware, major domestic appliances and even automobiles. By granting exclusive distribution rights, the manufacturer hopes to have control over the intermediary's price, promotion, credit inventory and service policies. The firm also hopes to get the benefit of aggressive selling by such outlets.

### **Selective Distribution:**

Selective distribution involves a producer using a limited number of outlets in a geographical area to sell products. An advantage of this approach is that the producer can choose the most appropriate or best-performing outlets and focus effort (e.g., training) on them. Selective distribution works best when consumers are prepared to "shop around" – in other words – they have a preference for a particular brand or price and will search out the outlets that supply. This alternative is the middle path approach to distribution. Here, the firm selects some outlets to distribute its products. This alternative helps focus the selling effort of manufacturing firms on a few outlets rather than dissipating it over countless marginal ones. It also enables the firm to establish a good working relationship with channel members. Selective distribution can help the manufacturer gain optimum market coverage and more control but at a lesser cost than intensive distribution. Both existing and new firms are known to use this alternative.

### **Customer Satisfaction**

According to Hansemark and Albinson (2014) satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfilment of some needs, goals or desire. Customer satisfaction has been a central concept in marketing literature and is an important goal of all business activities.

Today, companies face their toughest competition, because they move from a product and sales philosophy to marketing philosophy, which gives a company a better chance of outperforming competition (Kotler, 2010). Overall customer satisfaction translates to more profits for companies and market share increase. The importance of customers has been highlighted by many researchers have tried to define customer satisfaction and in general, they defined it as transaction process. Kotler (2010) defined satisfaction as: "a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product received performance (or outcome) concerning his or her experience. Furthermore, researchers differentiate between attitude and satisfaction. So, an attitude is a perceived service quality whereas, satisfaction is related to a specific transaction.

Oliver (2018) summaries the specific nature of satisfaction, and differentiates it from attitude, as follows:

Attitude is the consumers relatively enduring affective orientation for a product store or process (e.g; customer service) while satisfaction is the emotional reaction following a disconfirmation experience which acts on the base attitude level and is consumption specific. Customer satisfaction has a positive effect on an organization's profitability. The more customers are satisfied with products or service offered, the more are chances for a successful business as customer satisfaction leads to respect purchase, brand loyalty, and positive word of mouth marketing. On the other hand, dissatisfied customers respond differently. Dissatisfied customers may try to reduce the dissonance by abandoning or returning the product, or they may try to reduce the dissonance by seeking information that might confirm its high value (Kotler, 2010). Therefore, companies must find ways of winning back unsatisfied customers by designing special programs for services recovery. Companies should handle customer complaints with care and not seeing them as time-consuming.

#### Reasons for customer satisfaction

1. It is a leading indicator of consumer repurchases intentions and loyalty: Customer satisfaction is the best indicator of how likely a customer will purchase in the future.
2. It is a point of differentiation: In a complete marketplace where businesses compete for customers; customer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator. Businesses who succeed in these cut-throat environments are the ones that make customer satisfaction priority. Companies who offer amazing customer experiences create environments where satisfaction is high and customer advocates are plenty. This is an example of where customer satisfaction goes full circle. Not only can customer satisfaction help you keep a finger on the pulse of your existing customers, but it can also act as a point of differentiation for new customers.
3. It reduces customer churn: Customer satisfaction is the metric that can use to reduce customer churn. By measuring and tracking customer satisfaction a business can put new processes in customer services.
4. It increases customer lifetime value: Satisfaction plays a significant role in how much revenue a customer generates for business. Successful businesses understand the importance of customer lifetime value (CLV: Customer lifetime value is a beneficiary of high customer satisfaction and good customer retention.
5. It reduces negative word of mouth: Mckinsey (2016) found that an unhappy customer tells between 9-15 people about their experience. In fact, 13% of unhappy customers tell over 20 people about their experience. What often gets forgotten is how customer satisfaction negatively impacts business. It's one thing to lose a customer because they were unhappy.

It is another thing completely to lose 20 customers because of some bad word of mouth. To eliminate bad word of mouth a company needs to measure customer satisfaction on an ongoing basis. Tracking changes in satisfaction will help identify if customers are happy with the product or service.

### **Factors that influence customer satisfaction**

From the literature review, many factors affect customer satisfaction. Such factors include friendly employees, courteous employees, and knowledgeable employees' accuracy of billing, billing timeliness, competitive pricing, service quality, good value, convenience and quick service Hokanson, (2015). From the studies carried out in many countries, factors like Service quality and prompt service delivery, convenience, safety are the key constructs affecting the customer's satisfaction with distribution services. Studies also point out that customer satisfaction results ultimately in customer retention, customers loyally repeat purchase and perceived value.

### **Theoretical Review**

The economic distribution channel theory posits that the normative distribution channel can be determined by exploring what the consumers want in terms of service outputs from the distribution channel, how much they are willing to pay for a given service level, how the services can be provided to them, and what the costs of the alternative distribution channels are (Stern 11 and Sturdivant, 1987). Thus, it is imperative that business units establish an appropriate distribution system that is most efficient in meeting the customers' wants. Thus, an economic distribution channel model takes a customer perspective, analyses the output from the commercial part of the different distribution channels and relates it to the customers' costs and benefits from the different levels of service output offered by the available distribution channels. According to Frei et al., (2017), the interaction between the adoption and promotion of electronic channels of purchases and the changes in the customer segments is input to a change process where the structure of the distribution channel is adapted to the new environment. However, they note that this is not likely to happen overnight because of barriers and temporal constraints.

### **Empirical Literature Review**

Most organizations monitor the quality of their services regularly to ensure maximum customer satisfaction and to improve customer retention and loyalty. Customer satisfaction is attained by properly meeting the customer demands and expectations and providing services which are up to the market standards (Gitomer, 2018). A positive consumption experience of the customer ensures that overall, his feelings for the products or services consumed are positive. However, customer satisfaction does not guarantee repurchase, customer retention, or loyalty. Service quality has been suggested as a strong predictor of customer retention and customer satisfaction by many organizational researchers. Service quality is a driver of customer satisfaction that impacts customer loyalty (Cronin et al., 2016). According to Bloemer and Kasper (2015) loyalty is interpreted as true loyalty rather than repeat purchasing behaviour, which is the actual re-buying of a brand regardless of commitment. Zeithami et al, (2016) state loyalty is a multi-dimensional construct and includes both positive and negative responses.

According to Kotler (2010), good customer service often results in customer loyalty and hence customer satisfaction. If the quality of the distribution service is less than expected, customers will be dissatisfied. On the other hand, if the perceived performance exceeds expectations, customers will be satisfied. The overall satisfaction has a strong positive effect on loyalty intentions across a wide range of product and service delivery. Bowen and Chen (2011) said

that having satisfied customers is not enough; there must be extremely satisfied customers. This is because customer satisfaction must lead to customer loyalty. To Bansal and Gupta (2011), building customer loyalty is not a choice any longer with businesses. It is the only way of building a sustainable competitive advantage. Finally, loyal customers cost less to serve, in part because they know the product and require less information. They even serve as an information source for other customers. Based on the views and work by the numerous researchers and academicians, it can be concluded that customer satisfaction, hence good customer service is very important. Thus, though customer's satisfaction does not guarantee repurchase on the part of the customers, it still plays a very important role in ensuring customer loyalty. Therefore, organizations should always strive that their customer is very satisfied.

The importance of the relationship between marketing strategy and channel relationalism is evidenced in the strategy literature and focuses on the fit between strategy and structure (Slater and Olson, 2001). They point out that as firms try to adopt one or more of the three marketing strategies – aggressive marketing, price leadership, and product focus (specialization) – they may find that the extent of relational norms present in their marketing channels may not be equally suitable for all three strategies. Aggressive marketing strategy is characterized by high-quality innovative products, close relationships with customers, extensive marketing research and market segmentation to identify premium target markets, selective distribution, and intensive advertising (Slater and Olson, 2001). As a result, for channel partners, such strategy refers to an intimate knowledge of the market, closer involvement with both the suppliers and customers and a willingness to invest in market research and development. based on the same, a high degree of rationalism in marketing channels is thus likely to foster closer ties amongst channel intermediaries, strong identification with the common goal, and an incline towards long term payoffs in comparison to a more transactional and short term orientation ( Dant and Schul, 1992). The literature on the use of power business-to-business relationships have traditionally suggested that an aggressive marketing strategy may be associated with the use of power by lead channel members, however, recent thinking suggests that the use of coercive power in fact results in dysfunctional outcomes ( Hingley, 2015)

Atafar et al, (2011) in their study “Assessing the Effectiveness of Distribution Channel in Isfahan Zamzam Company in their research, they gathered data by interviewing the top marketing managers who have high experiences in marketing, finally the variables in the research assumptions been used to incorporate flow table model for measuring the Effectiveness of Distribution Channel in Isfahan Zamzam Co. The study revealed that Zamzam distribution channel was successful in product transportation, gathering market Information was effective in payment procedures but distribution channel of this company is not been effective in trade promotion programs and communication with retailers and wholesalers.

Fengyi. Wu and Yuehhua. Lee (2019) in their study investigation channel power and satisfaction in a marketing channel. His study adopted a case study design in Guangzhou province-china. It was found out that the competition faced by business organizations is no longer mere inter-firm competition, but also inter-channel competition caused by adapting to



industry globalization. Considering this trend, this study found out that there was a correlation between distribution channel power customer commitment and satisfaction. The results provide noncoercive power had a positive and significant impact on the channel firms' communication and commitment, as well as the supplier communication and commitment had a positive and significant impact on the economic satisfaction and non-economic satisfaction of channel firms.

### **Material and Methods**

A descriptive research design approach was used to present current facts regarding the distribution strategy of Nestle Nigeria, Port Harcourt. According to Creswell (2014) descriptive design internals to present different facts which pertain on the nature and status of a situation, as it exists at the time of the study.

The unit of the study was the Nestle Nigeria Port Harcourt. Thus the population in this research was made up of 162 staff and customers of Nestle firm in Port Harcourt.

The data collection of this study was primary and secondary data. Three sets of questionnaire were issued out. The first to the management and staff of Nestle company. The second questionnaires are to the consumer or users of nestle product.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Since the study is descriptive and analytical, as a researcher I had to employ the most appropriate statistical methods to the nature of the data available, to analyze variables and testing hypotheses.

The data collected were analyzed using tables and percentage. The hypothesis formulated were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC).

### **Results and Discussions**

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of the result obtained through questionnaires. The data gathered were presented according to the order in which they were arranged in the research questions, simple percentage and pie graphs were used to analyze the demographic information of the respondents while Pearson correlation was adopted to test the research hypotheses.

NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED	OF	NUMBER UNRETURNED QUESTIONNAIRES	OF	NUMBER OF RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRE
111		11		100

## Biodata of Respondents

Table 1 gender of respondents

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
Female	40	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 1 above shows the gender distribution of the respondents used for this study. 60 respondents who represent 60.0 per cent of the population are male. 40 respondents who represent 40.0 per cent of the population are female.

Table 2 age grade of respondents

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid below 17years	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
18-20years	15	15.0	15.0	30.0
21-30years	40	40.0	40.0	70.0
31-40years	10	10.0	10.0	80.0
41-50years	10	10.0	10.0	90.0
above 50years	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 2 above shows the age grade of the respondents used for this study. 15 respondents who represent 15.0 per cent of the population are below 17 years. 15 respondents who represent 15.0 per cent of the population are between 18-20 years. 40 respondents which represent 40.0 per cent of the population are between 21-30 years. 10 respondents who represent 10.0 per cent of the population are between 31-40 years. 10 respondents who represent 10.0 per cent of the population are between 41-50 years while 10 respondents who represent 10.0 per cent of the population are over 50 years.

Table 4 marital status of respondents

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Single	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
Married	30	30.0	30.0	90.0
Divorce	5	5.0	5.0	95.0
Widow	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 4 above shows the marital status of respondents used for the survey 60 respondents representing 60.0 per cent of the population are single. 30 respondents representing 30.0 per cent of the population are married. 5 respondents representing 5.0 per cent of the population are divorced while 5 respondents representing 5.0 per cent of the population are widows.

### Analysis of Research Questions

Table 6 INTENSIVE DISTRIBUTION IMPROVES REPEAT PURCHASE

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
Agree	50	50.0	50.0	90.0
Undecided	2	2.0	2.0	92.0
Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	97.0
Strongly Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 6 shows the responses of respondents that intensive distribution improves repeat purchase.

40 respondents representing 40.0 per cent strongly agree that intensive distribution improves repeat purchase. 50 respondents representing 50.0 per cent agree that intensive distribution improves repeat purchase. 2 respondents representing 2.0 per cent were undecided. 5 respondents representing 5.0 per cent disagree that intensive distribution improves repeat purchase while the remaining 3 of the respondents representing 3.0 per cent strongly disagree that intensive distribution improves repeat purchase.

**Table 7 THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT ASSOCIATION BETWEEN INTENSIVE DISTRIBUTION AND REPEAT PURCHASE**

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
Agree	25	25.0	25.0	75.0
Undecided	5	5.0	5.0	80.0
Disagree	10	10.0	10.0	90.0
Strongly Disagree	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 7 shows the responses of respondents that there is a significant association between an intensive distribution and repeat purchase.

50 respondents representing 50.0 per cent strongly agree that there is a significant association between an intensive distribution and repeat purchase. 25 respondents representing 25.0 per cent agree that there is a significant association between an intensive distribution and repeat purchase. 5 respondents representing 5.0 per cent were undecided. 10 respondents representing 10.0 per cent disagree that there is a significant association between intensive distribution and repeat purchase while the remaining 10 of the respondents representing 10.0 per cent strongly disagree that there is a significant association between an intensive distribution and repeat purchase.

**Table 8 EXTENSIVE DISTRIBUTION STIMULATES CUSTOMER LOYALTY**

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
Agree	30	30.0	30.0	80.0
Undecided	3	3.0	3.0	83.0
Disagree	10	10.0	10.0	90.0
Strongly agree	7	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 8 shows the responses of respondents that extensive distribution stimulates customer loyalty.

50 respondents representing 50.0 per cent strongly agree that extensive distribution stimulates customer loyalty. 30 respondents representing 30.0 per cent agree that extensive distribution stimulates customer loyalty. 3 respondents representing 3.0 per cent were undecided. 10 respondents representing 10.0 per cent disagree that extensive distribution stimulates customer loyalty while the remaining 7 of the respondents representing 7.0 per cent strongly disagree that extensive distribution stimulates customer loyalty.

TABLE 9 THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT ASSOCIATION BETWEEN EXTENSIVE DISTRIBUTION AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	40	40.0	40.0	40.0
Agree	50	50.0	50.0	90.0
Undecided	3	3.0	3.0	93.0
Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	98.0
Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 9 shows the responses of respondents that there is a significant association between an extensive distribution and customer loyalty.

40 respondents representing 40.0 per cent strongly agree that there is a significant association between an extensive distribution and customer loyalty. 100 respondents representing 50.0 per cent agree that there is a significant association between an extensive distribution and customer loyalty. 3 respondents representing 3.0 per cent were undecided. 5 respondents representing 5.0 per cent disagree that there is a significant association between an extensive distribution and customer loyalty while the remaining 2 of the respondents representing 2.0 per cent strongly disagree that there is a significant association between an extensive distribution and customer loyalty.

**TABLE 10 SELECTIVE DISTRIBUTION IMPROVES CUSTOMER ADVOCACY**

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	30	30.0	30.0	30.0
Agree	25	25.0	25.0	55.0
Undecided	24	24.0	24.0	79.0
Disagree	17	17.0	17.0	96.0
Strongly Disagree	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 10 shows the responses of respondents that selective distribution improves customer advocacy.

30 respondents representing 30.0 per cent strongly agree that selective distribution improves customer advocacy. 25 respondents representing 25.0 per cent agree that selective distribution improves customer advocacy. 24 respondents representing 24.0 per cent were undecided. 17 respondents representing 17.0 per cent disagree that selective distribution improves customer advocacy while the remaining 4 of the respondents representing 4.0 per cent strongly disagree that selective distribution improves customer advocacy.

**TABLE 11 THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SELECTIVE DISTRIBUTION AND CUSTOMER ADVOCACY**

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
Agree	10	10.0	10.0	60.0
Undecided	21	21.0	21.0	81.0
Disagree	10	10.0	10.0	91.0
Disagree	9	9.0	9.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 11 shows the responses of respondents that there is a significant association between a selective distribution and customer advocacy.

50 respondents representing 50.0 per cent strongly agree that there is a significant association between a selective distribution and customer advocacy.10 respondents representing 10.0 per

cent agree that there is a significant association between a selective distribution and customer advocacy. 21 respondents representing 21.0 per cent were undecided. 10 respondents representing 10.0 per cent disagree that there is a significant association between a selective distribution and customer advocacy while the remaining 9 of the respondents representing 9.0 per cent strongly disagree that there is a significant association between a selective distribution and customer advocacy.

TABLE 12 DISTRIBUTION GENERALLY IMPROVES PURCHASE

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
Agree	30	30.0	30.0	80.0
Undecided	3	3.0	3.0	83.0
Disagree	10	10.0	10.0	93.0
Strongly agree	7.0	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, May 2022.

Table 12 shows the responses of respondents that distribution generally improves purchase.

50 respondents representing 50.0 per cent strongly agree that distribution generally improves purchase. 30 respondents representing 30.0 per cent agree that distribution generally improves purchase. 3 respondents representing 3.0 per cent were undecided. 10 respondents representing 10.0 per cent disagree that distribution generally improves purchase while the remaining 7 of the respondents representing 7.0 per cent strongly disagree that distribution generally improves purchase.

### Test of Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between intensive distribution and repeat purchase.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between intensive distribution and repeat purchase.

Level of significance: 0.05

Decision rule: reject the null hypothesis if the p-value is less than the level of significance, accept the null hypothesis if otherwise.

Correlations

	There is a significant relationship between intensive distribution and repeat purchase	Intensive distribution influences repeat purchase
There is a significant relationship between intensive distribution and repeat purchase	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 .803** .000 100
Intensive distribution influences repeat purchase	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.803** 1 .000 100

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

The correlation coefficient R= 0.803 indicates a strong relationship between intensive distribution and repeat purchase. We therefore conclude that intensive distribution significantly influences repeat purchase.

Hypothesis 2

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between extensive distribution and customer loyalty.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between extensive distribution and customer loyalty.

Level of significance: 0.05

Decision rule: reject the null hypothesis if the p-value is less than the level of significance, accept the null hypothesis if otherwise.



Correlations

	There is a significant relationship between extensive distribution and customer loyalty	Extensive distribution improves customer loyalty
There is a significant relationship between extensive distribution and customer loyalty	1	.713**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100
Extensive distribution improves customer loyalty	.713**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

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

The correlation coefficient of R= 0.713 indicates a strong relationship between extensive distribution and customer loyalty. We therefore conclude that extensive distribution significantly influences customer loyalty.

Hypothesis 3

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between selective distribution and customer advocacy.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between selective distribution and customer advocacy.

Level of significance: 0.05

Decision rule: reject the null hypothesis if the p-value is less than the level of significance, accept the null hypothesis if otherwise.

Correlations

	There is a significant relationship between selective distribution and customer advocacy	Selective distribution improves customer advocacy
There is a significant relationship between selective distribution and customer advocacy	1	.713**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100
Selective distribution improves customer advocacy	.713**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

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

The correlation coefficient of R= 0.713 indicates a strong relationship between selective distribution and customer advocacy. We therefore conclude that selective distribution significantly influences customer advocacy.

**Conclusion**

On a global scale, a number of manufacturing companies are competing and offering the customers a plethora of products. The customers are demanding quick and better service from the service providers. For manufacturing companies to survive competition, they have to upgrade the quality, transparency and integrity to acquire and retain customers in long-range. They need a set of offers and the value proposition to be delivered to the target potential customers, which needs thorough market research to understand the needs of the customers and accordingly launching the products to match with customer's expectation for which organisations must continuously search for the development of its product and services through marketing innovation and creativity. This will play a very important role in achieving competitive advantage especially in the manufacturing industry where competition is much stiffed, through the forces of change brought into the industry by recapitalization and consolidation. The study was carried out to find out whether marketing innovation and creativity have an impact on achieving competitive advantage in the manufacturing industry. The study shows that marketing innovation and creativity are crucial in organisational success. It also concluded that through marketing innovation and creativity, the manufacturing industry can satisfy their customers which will improve their businesses and achieve a competitive advantage

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