

Perceived Satisfaction with Organizational Response to Complaints and Repeat Purchase Intention

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Abstract

Customers are very important to the survival and prosperity of firms. It is thus essential that firms satisfy their requirements. Firms strive to deliver the best service to customers consistently. Yet service glitches that pitch customers against firms do occur. In such cases, the response of the firm to customers' complaints is the key to keeping or losing them. The current study investigated the link between customers' perceived satisfaction with organisational response and repeat purchase intention. The study utilised data collected from four hundred and fifteen (415) respondents who are customers of eateries, through questionnaire and used the Spearman's Rank order Correlation (ρ) as the test statistic, relying on SPSS version 20.0. The study found that perceived satisfaction with organisational response correlate positively and significantly too, with repeat purchase intention, with interaction satisfaction having the strongest relationship with perceived satisfaction with organisational response. The study concludes that competent organisational response to customer complaints informs repeat purchase intention; and that repeat purchase intention depends on customers' perceived satisfaction with the interactions, the outcomes and the processes involved in the complaint resolution encounter. The study therefore recommends that service firms that crave the repeat business of customers, especially after a service snafu, should satisfy the customers through the interactions, the outcomes and the procedures involved in complaint handling.

Keywords: *Interaction satisfactions, outcome satisfaction, organisational response, perceived satisfaction, process satisfaction, repeat purchase intention*

1. Introduction

The current harsh economic condition and dwindling fortunes of firms in Nigeria have underscored the need for firms to maintain their current customership by keeping them satisfied. Customer satisfaction is thus the underlying objective of firms in Nigeria (Ateke & Harcourt, 2017), much as it obtains in other economies. The benefits of customer satisfaction and the costs of customer dissatisfaction have been well captured in literature (e.g. Reichheld, 2003; Jones & Sasser, 1995). Firms thrive when they secure the long-term preference of customers by leveraging the benefits that accrue from loyal and retained customers. However, satisfaction-based loyalty is not a given in service settings. The service provider must earn the loyalty of customers by proving that it want the business of the customers enough to work to fulfil its promises, so much so that the customers desire to want to continue the

relationship with the service provider. In as much as the uniqueness of services make human and mechanically induced service glitches inevitable (Ateke, Asiegbu & Nwulu, 2015); the propensity for customers to return for further business and become a firm's evangelists or spend their money elsewhere and become the firm's terrorists is determined by satisfactory or unsatisfactory handling of complaints (Blodgett, Hill, & Tax, 1997).

The service recovery paradox (Etzel & Silverman, 1981) suggests that effective organisational response to customer complaint in the event of service snafus assuage customers and provide them with greater satisfaction than if no glitch has occurred in the first place (Maxham, 2001). Effective organisational response is thus an avenue for service providers to correct mistakes and cement relationships (Ateke & Kalu, 2016). Nonetheless, Wasfi and Kostenko (2014) cited in Ateke and Kalu (2016) posits that the different socio-cultural background of individual customers condition them to expect different results from their service encounters. Thus, customers react differently to service glitches. Scholars have offered various schemes of categorisation of customers' response to snags in the service encounter. For example, Rahman, Haron, Paim, Osman, Yunus, and Wee (2016) and Mason and Himes (1973) identify public and private actions groups while Singh and Widing (1990) identify complainers, non-complainers, activists and non-activists.

Customers are inclined to behave in manners that benefit the firm if the firm's response to their complaint is satisfying (Adna, Ahmet, & Ahmet, 2014; Quy, 2011). Where the firm's responses satisfy customers; they will be delighted and exhibit behaviours that favours the firm (Duygun, Menteş, & Kubaş, 2014). However, it will be catastrophic if the firm's responses fail to satisfy the customers, as that amounts to failing the customer twice. With a view to complementing the body of knowledge on complaint handling and post-complaint behaviour, the current study seek to investigate the nexus between perceived satisfaction with organisational responses and repeat purchase intention; using process satisfaction, interaction satisfaction and outcome satisfaction as dimensions of perceived satisfaction.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Perceived satisfaction with organisational response

In as much as it is the desire of firms to always meet the expectation of customers, it is very difficult to guarantee absolutely, that customers will always be satisfied with their experiences with the firm (Lu, Lu, & Wang, 2012). In relationships involving exchange of value for mutual benefits, complaints are common; mostly because instances of one party in the relationship feeling short-changed often surface (Ateke & Harcourt, 2017; Ateke et al, 2015). Complaining is the natural reaction that follows such feelings. Thus parties in a relationship, especially business relationships, do institute initiatives to address complaints when they arise; considering that complaints of any kind indicate unsatisfactory performance (Taleghani, Largani, Gilaninia, & Mousavian, 2011). Being intricate features of human interactions, complaints serve as feedback and help firms to gain awareness of problems (Crie & Ladwein, 2002).

Parties in a business relationship that make their dissatisfaction known are more likely to remain in the relationship than those who do not (Johnston, 2001). Firms must therefore institute schemes that could forestall issues that have the potential to trigger complaint behaviours; and also devise ways of handling complaints, knowing that complaints offer a second chance to satisfy the customer. The advice for service providers however, is to measure the success of complaint handling by post-complaint behaviour of customers, and not by their responses to complaints (Davidow, 2003). Post-complaint satisfaction expressed

in terms of repeat purchase intention and word-of-mouth is thus a clue to successful service recovery and future behaviours of customers (Quy, 2014).

Complaint satisfaction is the extent to which the complaint handling efforts of the firm meet or exceed customers' expectation and assuage their angst following unsatisfactory experiences. It is the sense of satisfaction consumers have after a complaint resolution episode (Mansfield & Warwick, 2000). Rahman et al (2016) and Stauss (2002) define complaint satisfaction as the satisfaction a complainer has with a firm's response to his complaints. Failure of firms to meet expected standards upset customers; however, complaint behaviour is triggered mostly by firms' inability to address the issue immediately (Chang, Lee, & Tseng, 2008). More so, if the failure occurs in the core service; since core service failure is the main cause of customer defection and hostile behaviour (Hoffman & Kelly, 2000). The goal of service recovery however, is to move a customer from a state of dissatisfaction to that of satisfaction (Nikbin, Ismail, Marimuthu, & Jalalkamali, 2010).

Complaint satisfaction is the satisfaction complainants derive from a company's response to their complaints (Rahman et al, 2016), and goes by several aliases including satisfaction with remedy (Harris, Grewal, Mohr, & Bernhardt, 2006), satisfaction with service recovery (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002), overall complaint satisfaction (Stauss, 2002), recovery disconfirmation (McCullough, Berry, & Yadav, 2000), recovery satisfaction (Boshoff, 1999), satisfaction with complaint resolution (Andreassen, 1999), secondary satisfaction (Etzel & Silverman, 1981), complaint response satisfaction (Blodgett & Granbois, 1992). The taxonomy notwithstanding, the common underlying idea in all of them is the confirmation or disconfirmation of the complaint response (Oliver, 1980) and in all cases; it means that customers compare their perception of the actual performance of the complaint handling procedures with their expectations towards that performance. (Rahman et al, 2016).

Ensuring that customers get fair treatment in the event of service failure does not only bring about post complaint satisfaction, it also induces loyalty behaviours. Effective complaint handling therefore engenders customer post-complaint satisfaction, which influences customer loyalty. When customers get committed to a relationship, they are likely to forgive a poor service experience (Priluck, 2003) and remain loyal to the relationship. In this regard, research suggests that customers exhibit higher levels of trust and commitment when they are assuaged through adequate complaint handling practices that foster complaint satisfaction (Priluck, 2003). Zamora, Vasquez-Parraga, Morales, & Cisternas (2004) represent such relationships in a sequence that includes trust, commitment and loyalty; this in turn informs customer citizenship behaviours wherein the customers become active advocates and defenders of the brand.

Scholars have in efforts to explain complaint satisfaction, proffered differing dimensions of the construct. Taking a cue from the justice theory, Homans (1961), Thibaut and Walker (1975), Deutch (1985), Lind and Tyler (1988) and Bies and Shapiro (1988) propose distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice as dimensions of complaint satisfaction. Stauss (2002) on the other hand propose outcome satisfaction and process satisfaction as dimensions of complaint satisfaction. This study adopts the dimensions of Stauss (2002) and adds interaction satisfaction as another dimension. This addition is influenced by the justice theory, and informed by the conviction that a complaining customer must necessarily have an interaction with the firm's customer service personnel. These interactions usually occur in the encounters involved in the process that leads to outcomes in the complaint handling episode. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the satisfaction a

complainant gets from the interaction in the processes that leads to the outcomes of complaint handling.

2.1.1 Process satisfaction

Process satisfaction results from the perceived fairness of the procedures that the organization uses to arrive at the outcomes in a complaint resolution episode. It describes the justness with which service personnel implement the policies and rules of the organization consistently, and without bias (Colquitt, 2001). Customers assess the fairness of the procedures firms use in handling complaints based on the promptness with which established structures of complaint resolution attend to customers and offer meaning explanations, and also the quality of interpersonal treatment the customer receives (Yulianti, 2015). When consumers hold a fair perception of the complaint resolution procedures of the firm, the evaluation of the attractiveness of the firm's procedures is enhanced, and this influences customers' post-complaint satisfaction and behavioural intentions (Maertz, Baur, Mosley, Posthuma, & Campion, 2004; Schmit & Ryan, 1997).

Satisfaction with complaint resolution processes is informed by the perceived fairness of the process. The methods a firm uses to resolve customer complaints and the accessibility, promptness and flexibility of the methods gives the customer a sense of being well-treated (Nikbin et al, 2010; del Río-Lanza, Vazquez-Casielles, & Diaz-Martin, 2009). The fairness of the process involves policies, and procedures that the firm uses to support communication with customers and specifically, the time taken to process complaints and to arrive at a decision (Davidow, 2003). Process satisfaction is therefore a function of the customer's perception of fairness of the procedures and processes utilized in resolving a complaint (Mattila & Cranage, 2005). It stems from the procedures involved in data gathering, data usage, the opportunities customers have to make a point, accessibility, timing, flexibility of the procedures and the conclusion of the complaint resolution encounter (Quy, 2014).

The focus of procedural fairness is on the ways an outcome is reached (Nikbin et al, 2010). Flexibility, accessibility, process and decision control, promptness and taking responsibility are various forms process fairness may take (del Río-Lanza et al, 2009). Failure to meet customers' expectation of fairness in the complaint resolution triggers perception of unfairness, which is a harbinger of dissatisfaction; while effective complaint resolution foster complaint satisfaction and customer loyalty (Ateke & Kalu, 2016; Ateke et al, 2015). Also, the processes should not be stressful and customers should not be made to wait unendingly. Customers' perception of waiting influences their evaluation of service in terms of quality and satisfaction (von Bergh, Ghijssen, Gelderman, & Tuninga, 2015).

2.1.2 Interaction satisfaction

Satisfaction with interactions with service personnel over complaint handling stems from interpersonal communication in the complaint handling process. It takes into consideration, the manner in which decisions on how to address customer complaints are reached and implemented (Davidow, 2003). Davidow (2003) further state that interaction satisfaction is a perception customers hold about service personnel attitude and personal interaction as it has to do with their courtesy, respect and empathy. To Quy (2014), interaction satisfaction involves the politeness and appropriateness of the behaviour of service personnel and the combination of honesty, kindness, empathy and attentiveness in listening to, and responding to customer complaints.

Interaction satisfaction comes from interactional fairness. The focus of interactional fairness is interpersonal interactions between service personnel and the customer in the complaint resolution process (Nikbin et al, 2010). Interaction satisfaction is based on customers' evaluation of how well they have experienced fair treatment in human interactions from service personnel in complaint handling situations. del Río-Lanza et al (2009) identify courtesy, honesty, empathy, offering explanations and offering apologies as service personnel dispositions that drive interaction satisfaction. Marketing traditionally emphasize influencing customers through persuasion and inducement (Liu, 2007). However, the trend in contemporary times is building relationship with customers in view of the increasing roles they play as co-producers (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

Firms have thus paid increased attention to providing customer satisfaction not only through products, but also through interaction. Customers evaluate the fairness of the complaint resolution process and the actual outcome separately (Singh & Widing, 1990), often being more concerned with obtaining satisfaction with procedures than with a specific result (Davidow, 2003). The customer-firm interaction is thus a critical aspect of complaint handling. Hence, Gruber, Szmigin, and Voss (2006) aver that complaining customers cherish service personnel who are genuinely friendly, courteous, honest, listen carefully, open to suggestions and give the impression of being motivated and willing to help.

The communication-model based relationship marketing theory (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998) suggests that a two-way communication process built on balance, symmetry, and reciprocity is the essence of communication with customers. Suggesting that the cooperation of customers is required, if true dialogue must be achieved. Customer feedback is thus a necessary component in the marketing process (Liu, 2007). Often, customers send their feedback to the firm in the form of complaints; and the satisfaction they get from their interaction with employees during complaint handling determines their future behavioural intentions. Through the interactions, information is shared, and a common understanding is established between the firm and the customer (Liu, 2007). Gummesson (2004) observe that interaction should be the third essential business activity besides the traditional production and consumption activities because consistent customer-firm interaction is central to building strong relationships and delivering value (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998). Interaction is thus an important component of the marketing process (Stewart & Pavlou, 2002).

2.1.3 Outcome satisfaction

Outcome satisfaction refers to the satisfaction customers get from the outcome of their complaints. There is no substitute for error-free service. However, when service failure occurs, the dispatch with which the firm handles the problem and the result that follows the firm's reaction to service failure goes a long to put smiles on the face of the customer. Overall, the satisfaction a customer gets from the outcome of his complaint determines whether he will remain with the firm. Where the outcome is positive and satisfying, the customer may be counted upon; but where the customer is unsatisfied with the outcome, the firm has just lost another customer. Outcome satisfaction is driven by the firm's ingenuity in assigning tangible resources to compensate complainants. Outcome satisfaction can be deduced from the perceived fairness of the outcome of the complaint resolution encounter (Nikbin et al, 2010); and is enhanced where the complaint outcome is greater than the costs of complaining; that is, the higher the outcome, the greater the satisfaction.

Outcome of the complaint handling episode could range from offering apologies to the customer to compensating the customer by refund, replacement, offering a discount on the

current purchase or in subsequent purchases (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011). Outcome satisfaction is a product of the perception of the tangible remedies offered by the service provider being valuable and sufficient to meet the necessity for the customer in the complaint resolution process (Quy, 2014). Evidence from previous studies suggests that compensation increases post-complaint satisfaction, and prompts favourable post-complaint behaviours (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011). Studies further suggest that compensation is a common remedy used by firms to address customer complaints (Hoffman, Kelley, & Chung, 2003). Giving the customer something tangible and valuable is thus an effective complaint handling strategy. Satisfaction with the outcome of complain handling is a key determinant of customers' perception of distributive justice (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011; Gelbrich & Roschk, 2010), which according to Orsingher, Valentini, and de Angelis (2010) has a strong correlation with post-complaint satisfaction, and leads to favourable post-complaint behaviour.

2.2 Repeat Purchase Intention

Maxham and Netemeyer (2002) define repurchase intention as the predisposition of customers to continue patronizing a brand in the future. Wirtz and Lwin (2009) on the other hand state that repeat patronage is the readiness and willingness of an individual to patronize a firm repeatedly. It describes a situation where a customer is favourably disposed to doing business with a brand again after an initial purchase episode. Customers who repeatedly patronize a brand are customers that are satisfied emotionally, intellectually and physically by the brand's value offering (Nwulu & Asiegbu, 2015). In business relationships where long term commitment and mutual respect obtains, repeat business is a norm (Nwieve & Ateke, 2016). Thus, Caudill and Murphy (2000) suggests that customers revisit a firm based on their conviction that the firm is conducting, and will continue to conduct its business in a manner that protects their interest; while Maziri (2015) suggest that favourable purchase experience reinforces customers' repeat purchase intention. Hence, the more frequent the customers get a favourable experience, the more likely they will return for more business (Chao-Min, Meng-Hsiang, Hsiangchu, & Chun-Ming, 2010).

Repeat patronage that is the result of customer satisfaction informs long term business sustainability and profitability because repeat purchase often predicts loyalty. Higher repeat purchase value tells of a satisfied and well retained customer, and can inform higher profitability because the firm will not incur new customer acquisition costs (Nwieve & Ateke, 2016). Firms are concerned about customers' repeat purchases because it indicates consumers' preference for a given brand in a product category and because of its nexus with profitability (Pooladireishahri, Asgari, Hamid, & Asgarpour, 2015). Firms can induce repeat purchase by responding proactively to customers' feedback about their value offerings (Nwulu & Asiegbu, 2015) and by providing value adding services to the customers' experience. Qureshi, Imdadullah, and Ahsan (2012) suggest that repeat purchase intention signals customer loyalty-the greatest concern of business organizations.

2.3 Perceived Satisfaction with Organisational Response and Repeat Purchase Intention

Frequently, mistakes and failures occur in service deliveries (Duygun et al, 2014). Firms must understand these issues and contrive appropriate remedial measures. Finding ways of assuring customers of the firm's readiness to provide them with satisfaction in processes, interaction and outcomes in complaint resolution encounters is a prime concern of business organizations. The fairness with which the firm handles customer complaints is the focus of the justness of the processes, the interactions and the outcomes (Karande, Magnini, & Tam, 2007) of complaint handling. The concept of justice is rooted in social psychology (Matos, Henrique, & Rossi, 2007), and finds application in studies on marital relations, fairness of

employee salaries, employee relations, legal disputes and customer-seller relations (Duygun et al, 2014). The concept of justice is really important when explaining reactions to solutions in marital, company-employee and customer-firm relations (Baris, 2006; Tax, Brown, & Chandershekar, 1998). In complaint resolution encounters, the justness of the responses of the firm's employees is perceived and evaluated based on the processes, the interactions and the outcomes.

Marketing literature reveals that post-complaint behaviour has been a subject of research interest for decades (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011), with the earliest studies like Gilly (1987) and Gilly and Gelb (1982) examining the effect of organizational responses to complaint on post-complaint satisfaction and customers' post-complaint behaviour. With the mediation of justice perceptions, organizational responses and post-complaint satisfaction have been empirically shown to be correlated (Gelbrich & Roschk, 2011; Karande et al, 2007; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2003). These early enquiries establish that complaint satisfaction fosters favourable post-complaint behaviours, including repurchase intention, positive WoM and loyalty (Gilly 1987). The interest in studies on complaint satisfaction and its outcomes has continued unabated; with studies revealing a significant variation in the level of dissatisfaction consumers feels, depending on the kind of service (Berry & Parasuraman, 1991). However, firms must avoid the negative consequences of failing the customer twice (Roos, 1999). Consumers are apt to continue doing business with a firm if they perceive a higher satisfaction with its complaint handling interactions, processes and outcomes; as they are known to evaluate their satisfaction based on these criteria (Tax et al, 1998) and form future behavioural intentions based on them.

Komunda and Oserankhoe (2012) and Stauss and Schoeler, (2004) states that efficient complaint handling impacts on repurchase intention, loyalty and positive WoM. Effective and efficient complain handling informs complaint satisfaction and strengthens customer relationships through enhanced customers' perceptions of service quality and organizational reputation, which in turn leads to positive post-complaint behaviours. However, the type of service involved, the type of failure experienced and the speed of response affects the level of complaint satisfaction customers may have (Komunda, 2013). The consequence of poor complaint handling is that the customer feels disappointed twice; and this may lead to loss of confidence in the organization, and ultimately, defection and negative post-complaint behaviours (Komunda, 2013). Yet, Oh (2006) posit that effective complaint handling leads to complainant's satisfaction and positive post-complaint behaviours. Based on the foregoing, we hypothesises the following relationships and advance fig. 1 below to provide direction for the study.

- H₁:** Customers' satisfaction with organisation's complaint handling processes does significantly correlate with repeat purchase intention.
- H₂:** Customers' satisfaction with organisation's complaint handling interactions does significantly correlate with repeat purchase intention.
- H₃:** Customers' satisfaction with organisation's complaint handling outcomes does significantly correlate with repeat purchase intention.

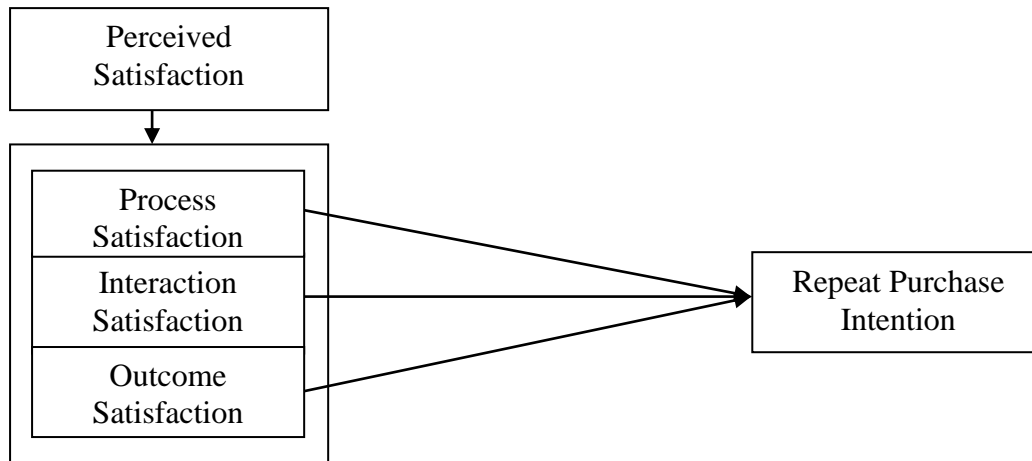


Fig.1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source: Researchers' Conceptualisation from Review of Literature (2017)

3. Methodology

The focus of the current study is to determine the association between perceived satisfaction with organisational response and repeat purchase intention. The study adopted a correlational research design because it is the most suitable when the aim of a study is to determine relationship between variables (Lomax, 2007). The study aligns with the realist ontologists and positivist epistemologists. It subscribed to the deterministic nature of human interactions and relied on a nomothetic methodology. Thus, questionnaire was employed as the instrument of primary data collection. The study was conducted in a natural setting without any form of manipulation; hence the researchers do not have control over the test units.

The population of the study comprised of patrons of eateries in Port Harcourt. Choosing a sample size depends largely on how much sampling error a researcher is willing to tolerate; even as a large sample size increases the chances that a sample is adequately representative of the population (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The current study thus surveyed four hundred and fifteen (415) patrons of eateries. In view of the merit of convenience sampling in easing access to test units (Collis & Hussey, 2009), it was employed as the sampling technique in selecting test units.

The validity of the instrument of the study was confirmed through the opinion of academic experts and practitioners with adequate knowledge of the subject of the study; while the internal consistency of the measurement items was confirmed through the Cronbach's Alpha test of reliability with a threshold of 0.70 set by Nunnally (1978). Process satisfaction, interaction satisfaction, outcome satisfaction, and repeat purchase intention were measured by eleven (11), eleven (11), five (5) and seven (7) items respectively. The result of the test of reliability indicated a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.772, 0.713, 0.752 and 0.802 for process satisfaction, interaction satisfaction, outcome satisfaction, and repeat purchase intention respectively. The study used the Spearman's Rank order Correlation coefficient (rho) as the test statistic. All analyses was done using SPSS version 20.0.

4. Results

Table 1: Summary of Analysis of Association between Perceived Satisfaction with Organisational Response and Repeat Purchase Intention

Type	Variables	Statistics	Repeat Purchase Intention
Spearman's rho	Process Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.772**
		Sig. (2-tail)	.000
		N	415
	Interaction Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.892**
		Sig. (2-tail)	.000
		N	415
	Outcome Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.882**
		Sig. (2-tail)	.000
		N	415

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Simulation from SPSS Output of Data Analysis on Perceived Satisfaction and Repeat purchase Intention (2017).

Table 1 above shows the summary of result of test of relationship between perceived satisfaction with organisational response and repeat purchase intention. Perceived satisfaction with organisational response is viewed in terms of process satisfaction, interaction satisfaction and outcome satisfaction. The result indicates that perceived satisfaction with organisational response associate with repeat purchase intention on a coefficient of .772**, .892**, and .882** respectively for process satisfaction, interaction satisfaction and outcome satisfaction. The PV of .000 generated by all the relationships indicate that the link between the variables is statistically significant; while the positive sign of the correlation coefficient means that the variables have positive relationship.

5. Discussion

This study sought to determine the extent of relationship between perceived satisfaction with organisational response and repeat purchase intention. From the result of the analyses, it was found that perceived satisfaction with organisational response positively correlates with repeat purchase intention. The strength of association between the variables shows that process satisfaction, interaction satisfaction and outcome satisfaction correlates with repeat purchase intention with a rho coefficient of .772**, .892** and .882** respectively, thus denoting a statistically significant relationship between perceived satisfaction with organisational response and repeat purchase intention.

This finding coheres with the finding of Ateke and Harcourt (2017) that complaint satisfaction correlates significantly with repeat purchase intention, and Ateke et al (2015) that complaint handling is significantly associated with relationship quality metrics such as conflict resolution, customer satisfaction, repeat purchase and trust. The finding of the current study is also corroborated by Adna et al (2014) and Quy (2011) who in separate studies found that customers' satisfaction with organizational responses strongly influence post purchase behavioural intentions.

Additionally, the finding of this study is in agreement with the informed statements that customers who experience gracious and efficient organisational response often become a company's best customers as the responses of the firm transforms them into loyal customers (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002; Maxham, 2001). Hence, understanding customers and addressing their complaints satisfactorily through honest interactions, accessibility to complaint procedures and offering something tangible and valuable to the customers induces repatronage intention and other loyalty behaviours (Ateke et al, 2015).

Furthermore, the finding of this study is supported by the finding of Valenzuela et al (2006) that effective service recovery directly relates with trust and indirectly relates to both commitment and loyalty. Repeat purchase is an indicator of commitment and loyalty. The finding of the current study also in agreement with that of Ateke and Kalu (2016) who found that effective complaint handling informs post-complaint satisfaction and loyalty behaviours including repeat purchase intentions.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The intensity of competition in contemporary markets has heightened customers' awareness of acceptable or tolerable levels of service delivery. Service providers are therefore mindful of the quality of service they deliver to their customers, as service incongruity and its attendant customer discontent cannot be overlooked. In the event that customers complain of unmet expectation-which are yet common phenomena owing to human and non-human frailties-the firm is challenged to restore or reassure the customers of its expertise by responding to the complaint in a way that delights the customers. Instituting a formidable complaint handling procedure to deal with customer complaints when they arise is thus a prerequisite in today's business-scape.

Based on the finding of this study and the discussion that followed, the study conclude that effective organisational response to customer complaints informs repeat purchase intentions; and that repeat purchase intentions depends on customers' perceived satisfaction with the interaction, the outcome and the processes of the complaint encounter. The study therefore recommends that service firms that seek to secure the repeat business of customers, especially after a service failure has occurred, should ensure that they deliver satisfaction to the customers through their complaint handling interactions, the outcome of the complaint handling encounter, as well as the procedures in the complaint handling episode. This requires that service providers must have established complaint lodging procedures, empowered employees that are competent to handle customers' complaints and measures of restitution to assuage complainants. Such measures will enable service providers to have a satisfied customership that does not only return for further business, but that also recommends the firm to others.

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