

Research Article

Post Sales Service Strategies and Small and Medium Enterprises Performance in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Post Sales Service Strategies play a vital role on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises. Post Sales Service is an increasingly important part of the business and is more complex than manufacturing product. Unlike product, it is not possible to produce services in advance and inventory this future consumption. Post Sales Service has become an essential factor for all organizations nowadays; organizations are merging several marketing mixes in different ways to enhance Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty. Organizations are trying to provide excellent Post Sales Service to Customers and using several techniques to retain Customers. Post Sales Service helps to produce remarkable revenue in almost every business field. This study sought to assess the role in which Post Sales Service Strategies play on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. A survey among SMEs owners in Oyo State found that Post Sales Service can become a key differentiator and a major profit source if it's being managed and carried out appropriately among the Small business owner and their customer in order to boost their operational performance and as well standardize their relationship with the customers. The study is immensely in various ways to Small Business Owners, Management, Practitioners, and Policy Makers. To the Small Business owners in Nigeria, the study will provide a more reliable scientific measure on issues affecting Post Sales Service on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises. The findings also revealed that Post Sales Services are very important in mitigating possible collapse of SMEs. There search thus, recommends that SMEs should ensure that Post Sales Service should be used as an integral part of product offering at the same value to every customer in order to increase and survive in their operational performance efficiently and effectively.

Keywords

Post Sales Service, Effective Communication, Frequent Visitation, Constant Follow-Up, Voluntary Servicing, SMEs Performance

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Received: 26 April 2024; **Accepted:** 20 May 2024; **Published:** 3 June 2024



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1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Post Sales Service has become an essential factor for all organizations nowadays; organizations are merging several marketing mixes in different ways to enhance Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty. Organizations are trying to provide excellent Post Sales Service to Customers and using several techniques to retain Customers. Post Sales Service helps to produce remarkable revenue in almost every business field.

Small and Medium Enterprises make effort to satisfy Customer needs using Products Design, Complete Product Offering, Customer Support and Post Sales Service. In Past years, many companies had only been concerned with selling durable goods in the marketplace. But now, Post Sales Service has become increasingly important in doing business. Post Sales Service is a profit source and also a key differentiator between many Business Enterprises. Gaiardelli, P. et al., If Small and Medium Enterprises concentrate on Post Sales Service, they can get Four times greater Product Sales and more than three greater Product Sales and more than three times the turnover rate of the original purchase during a given Product Life [11]. With a high quality of Post Sales Service System, Small and Medium Enterprises can convince potential Customer to purchase their product by improving Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty and Company image for longtime. [47]. The Companies with greater reliance on the service part of their business reportedly achieve better return on Sales and improve their values. [7]. The companies use more developed best practices or training practices, which contribute to better business performance by using service quality, productivity, profitability and rate of innovation. [29].

Furthermore, good and appropriate Post Sales Service strategies by Small and Medium Enterprises owners with their Customer's is very important for the purpose of efficient and effective performance in their Day to Day operation in order to achieve their goals and objectives efficiently and effectively.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

There is a tendency that when new ideas in management emerge, a lot of people tend to embrace them keenly for a while and to see them as the ultimate solution to whatever problem (s) that we perceive to exist [40]. Previous studies [8, 31, 44, 49] have shown that despite the adoption of Post Sales Service Strategies in most establishments to induce Business Performance of SMEs, the resultant effect in term of Survival is still low, due to the fact that Post Sales Service Strategy does not change of ten despite the changes in the environment. However, these few available Studies only look at the Post Sales Service from the holistic approach, Robelo, C. G. S. et al. examined the influence of Post Sales Service on Firms Profitability and Customer Satisfaction [44], Fasanmi, O. O.

examines the impact of Post Sales Service on Customer Retention in Mobile, Telecommunication Companies [8], Muhammad, A. examines the Relationship among Post Sales Service, Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty [31], and Shahnoush, S. F. and Seyed, M. H. emphasized on relative importance of Post Sales Service on Customer Satisfaction in Automotive Industry [49]. But, they did not pay attention to some of Post Sales Service dimensions such as; effective communication by supplier with customer, frequent visitation by supplier to customer, constant follow-up of purchased product performance by supplier, voluntary servicing of the purchased product by supplier as they affect performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

The relationship between Post Sales Service dimensions and SMEs performance in Ibadan metropolis has remained largely unexplored, particularly in Oyo State; hence this study to fill the gap in knowledge by focusing on Post Sales Service dimensions such as (effective communication by supplier with customer, frequent visitation by supplier to customer, constant follow-up of purchased product performance by supplier, voluntary servicing of the purchased product by supplier) and SMEs performance in selected Small and Medium Enterprises in Oyo State, Nigeria.

1.3. Aim and Objectives of the Studies

The aim of this study is to investigate the Post Sales Service Strategies on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Oyo State, Nigeria.

The Objectives are to;

1. ascertain the effect of voluntary servicing on the SMEs performance in Oyo State, Nigeria;
2. determine how effective communication by supplier with customer impact on the SMEs performance in Oyo State, Nigeria;
3. examine the effect of frequent visitation by supplier to customer on performance of SMEs in Oyo State, Nigeria; and
4. evaluate the impact of constant follow-up of purchased product performance by supplier on the performance of SMEs in Oyo State, Nigeria.

1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions were the focus of this;

1. What is the effect of voluntary servicing on the SMEs performance in Oyo State, Nigeria;
2. How does effective communication by supplier with customer impacts on the SMEs performance in Oyo State, Nigeria;
3. What is the effect of frequent visitation by supplier to customer on the performance of SMEs in Oyo State, Nigeria;

4. What impact does constant follow-up of purchased product have on the performance of SMEs in Oyo State, Nigeria?

1.5. Hypotheses

H1: Voluntary servicing of the purchased product by supplier significantly influences the performance of SMEs in Oyo State.

H2: Effective communication by supplier with customers significantly influences the performance of SMEs in Oyo State.

H3: Frequent visitation by supplier to customer significantly impacts the performance of SMEs in Oyo State.

H4: Constant follow-up of purchased product significantly influences the performance of SMEs in Oyo State.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The study is immensely in various ways to Small Business Owners, Management, Practitioners, and Policy Makers. To the Small Business owners in Nigeria, the study will provide a more reliable scientific measure on issues affecting Post Sales Service on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises. The study will help the Small Business owners in developing policies related to the issues. To policy makers, the funding and result of this study will provide valuable insight and more reliable guide to monitoring the impact of Post Sales Service Strategies on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises.

The study will also offer insight in to the relationship between Post Sales Service Strategies and Small and Medium Scale Enterprises. The result of this research will serve as impact for other researcher who interested in research on Post Sales Service Strategies.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Review

Post Sales Service is the support and helps you give your customers after they have purchased your product. And this might include advice on how to use your product or service, being available to answer questions, and checking into see if they satisfied with their purchase. Among other things Post Sales Service includes are: Thank you notes, On boarding guides, excellent, and available customer service, product training, check-ins to ensure customers are doing well, listening to customer feedback and returns and exchanges of products being purchased by customers.

Post Sales Service play an important role in determining the retention of consumers and the resulting rate of repurchase. Considering that a client with issues relating to Post Sales Services tends to switch to other competing product, it should

be reasoned that the impact of Post Sales Services on consumer perception of quality products is strong [36]. Post Sales Services catalyze to enhance buyer recognition and devotion among satisfied customers and to transform them, thereby improving company productivity [39].

Various scholars have explained the importance of Post Sales Service differently. This Post Sales Service was, for example referred to as field service [48]. The other term found in term Literature describing the same are post-sales support [1], technical support, and just services [37]. Lele, M. M. and Karmarkar, U. S. used a few other terminologies, such as product support activities [24], and [25] used customer support. Moreover, under the two perspectives in the literature, the term Post Sales Service was used. One view point is linked to the companies that provide services. Post Sales Service is considered on several additional services they provide [38]. The second view is related to companies that supply tangible products where after-sales service is linked to various operations [12]. Transport and logistics, installation, product-related training and service repair may be such services.

2.1.1. Service Consumers

Peck, H. et al. Opined that service consumers are an increasingly significant source of competitive advantage [41]. More and more companies have based their efforts in recent years on keeping existing clients, instead of gaining new ones. This was corroborated [21], hiring a new customer reflects five times the expense of holding current shareholder snappy. Gaiardelli, P. et al. describe Post Sales Service as those activities that take place after the product has been purchased, and that is dedicated to helping consumers use and dispose of the goods to make them loyal [12]. According to [43, 42] the phrase post-sales services described from two different perspectives: when stating to service suppliers, after-sales services are seen as one of the complementary components of the service provided. At the other hand, when it comes to tangible goods, they are mostly seen as one or some of the relevant parties in the organizational activities of the supply chain.

2.1.2. Customer/Organizational Loyalty

Loomba, A., the critical aim of after-sales is to connect with the customers by the organization's loyalty, reputation and sense of security, and create enduring relationships that lead to improved success for sustainable outcomes [26]. Gaiardelli, P. et al. said that an efficient post-sales service strategy is crucial for streamlining service management and fulfilling consumer needs, enabling you to enjoy customer satisfaction while still saving on the result and generating income [12]. Henley headlight vision centre [27] shows more than 1,800 buyers who have purchased all of the care products offered in the United States. Not only does outstanding service improve ties with consumers who still feel committed to a company. This can also preempt till will, which allows the company to get bad-mouth from disaffected consumers. According to [42],

post-sales service delivery is becoming increasingly important as companies do everything in their power to make a product or service more cost-effective, raise sales and profits, and satisfy the consumer demand.

2.1.3. Customer Satisfaction

Many corporate organizations, therefore, are unaware of the after-sales service issues and their influence on customer satisfaction. Failure to understand the value of the factor may lead to a challenging and catastrophic business relationship. It may result in customer dissatisfaction switching to a competitor or the company losing new customer potential related to adverse word-of-mouth effect. Every enterprise should, therefore, understand the intent and value of providing after-sales service and enforce it to please customers by making them satisfied. Loomba, A. P. shields more light on the post-sales goals of keeping customers satisfied through the organization's confidence, credibility and sense of security, and retaining the right people that contribute to enhanced performance for improved outcomes [25]. Post Sales Service can create sustainable relationships with customers and contribute significantly to customer satisfaction, as [22] have pointed out. The supplier can ensure product functionality and thus the satisfaction of customers by providing different Post Sales Service during the different phases of the product life cycle, which can help build a fruitful relationship between the supplier and the customer overtime, allowing for more transactions [5]. The most profitable customers are returning [16, 18] and the cost to attract a new customer is five times higher than that to keep existing customers happy [21]. Post Sales Service has, therefore acquired a critical role as a means of improving the satisfaction and retention of customers [14].

2.1.4. Customer Retention and Loyalty

Retention represents a coordinated initiative to minimize or eliminate problems. The retention process is to fulfill their needs and to take specific actions to meet their needs. The preservation of consumers is the activity in which a selling organization reduces customer defects. A company begins with a customer and maintains a partnership for good customer retention over its entire lifespan. A company can draw new customers and retain existing ones. It is not only linked to its goods or services but also to how it represents its future clients and generates a market-wide brand identity [38]. Customer retention is much more than just giving the consumer what they anticipate; it's about moving beyond their expectations to become loyal customers for their company. Customer loyalty brings customer value" instead of maximizing business strategy profits [13]. Customer retention is a strategic mechanism that maintains or preserves current customers and does not encourage them to converge or migrate for business with other suppliers or organizations, and this is only feasible if a quality partnership exists among customer and supplier. Generally, a consumer is likely to stick to one

product or service over another brand or company to the degree that its basic needs continue to be appropriately met. The more you hold your customers, the higher the opportunity for market growth [6].

2.1.5. After-Sales Service, Customer Retention and SMEs Performance

The following studies have shown that the quality of the post-sales service has a positive impact on perceived value, behavior ailment and customer satisfaction [4, 43] studies. Post-sales is an essential means of gaining customer loyalty [33]. A business can build, retain and enhance consumer loyalty by providing superb post-sales services, such as prompt response to customer complaints, replacement of the defective goods or full reimbursement of a product or service when customers are not satisfied [33].

Maintenance and repair are also an integral part of post-sales support or service [26]. One approach to get fast consumer feedback is to offer loaner product, especially in the breakdown incident, where possible [25]. Maintenance problems should be resolved before any failure happens [9]. The best solution for organizations, however, is to provide the repair goods facility [24]. Another critical aspect of the post-sales operation or customer care is updating. That gives consumers a chance to boost the existing product's efficiency [3].

The primary goal of every company is to satisfy its current customers and attract new customers. In this respect, post-sales service activities contribute significantly to customer satisfaction; after selling the product or service, they are provided by the seller to the buyer [32]. Generating superior customer service is the secret to establishing a long-term relationship and increasing customer loyalty. It aims to boost consumer satisfaction [55]. Yet service on request, social interaction, problem-solving, and advertising approaches have a strong relationship to retention and loyalty [55]. Maghsoudiou, Z. et al. found a clear link between post-sales services and satisfaction services [28]. The quality of post-sales service [34] is a primary factor in influencing the customer purchasing decision.

Kurata, H. and Nam, S. H. investigated the impact of uncertainty on post-sales service decisions by comparing different information structures in a two-stage supply chain [22]. The model showed that uncertainty may temporally reduce the discrepancy between customers' optimal service level and a company's service decisions according to profit maximization. Nevertheless, uncertainty will never contribute on supply chain performance. They detected whether such accidental out performance could mislead the company in to making erroneous post-sales service decisions due to misunderstandings regarding uncertainty. Moreover, they showed that a firm's effort to provide efficient service operations could improve the likelihood of accidental out performance.

According to [20], performance-based contracting is changing service support supply chains in several industries

such as aerospace and defense. Known as “power by the hour” in the private sector and as “performance-based logistics” (PBL) in defense contracting, Kim, S. H. et al. planned to replace traditionally implemented fixed-price and cost-plus contracts to contribute product availability and reduce the cost of ownership by tying a supplier's compensation to the output value of the product created by the customer (buyer) [20]. They introduced a multi-task principal-agent model to support resource allocation and implemented it to investigate commonly observed on tracts. In their model the customer encountered a product availability requirement for the “up time” of the end product.

Kasper, H. and Lammink, J. Concentrated on the perceived quality of post sales services for a case study on a large supplier of office equipment active in the Dutch market [19]. In this study, the perceptions of the industrial customer on post sales services were then compared with the view the service managers in the company had about these customer perceptions. Van-Birgelen, M. et al. studied the interaction between perceived service performance and national cultural characteristics in the formation of customer satisfaction for three forms of post-sales service contact facilities [52]. They reported that, in contrast to the traditional face-to-face service encounter, the perceived quality–satisfaction relationship was specifically moderated by national culture in the case of a post-sales service contact mode mediated by technology. Cavalieri, S. et al. Provided a comprehensive review of the existing body of knowledge about post-sales performance measurement systems [2].

2.2. Theoretical Review

Every business needs to understand what its customers want and need. The one thing that a customer would never compromise while making any purchase is their satisfaction. A customer is more likely to make a repeat purchase from a business if they are treated well in terms of good post sales services and given the best possible options to choose from for the purpose of future patronage. Customer satisfaction is a general principle of customer service. It measures a customer's perception of the quality and utility of a product or service. Customer satisfaction can be measured by offering a service or product or by having a relationship with a company, brand, or individual.

2.2.1. Customer Service Theory

Customer service theory was propounded by [23]. Customer service theories and models are all about attracting customers and keeping them with your business. The key thing to aim for in this case is loyalty. Although this is called customer theory, it is more practical than most of the theories you will find, because this theory is practical. Without understanding the principles of customer service in an intimate way, your business will not be able to survive. In the contemporary world, no one wants to do business with a firm that

seems to have no regard for its customers, their concerns or their comfort.

The history of customer service is almost as old as the history of business itself. In fact, it was at the center of the idea of the father of economics himself, [50] book, *The Wealth of Nations*, he stated that customer service is the very foundation of the concept of competition. If a manager or the owner of a firm wants his business to succeed, then he must meet the customer's needs. The customer needs to be involved in the business and must obsess over it. Although all firms seek profit, which is the chief motivation behind that business' operation, the nature of the market place forces the owner to relegate that motivation to second place. In first place, the motivation must treat the customer in such away as to entice the customer to be loyal to a business so that the customer returns again and again to that business.

2.2.2. Elements of Customer Service

Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are at the heart of customer service. In fact, it can be argued that the two are synonymous with customer service. Ultimately, theories related to customer satisfaction contribute to theories that are all about customer loyalty. These are the main links in a chain. When you provide good customer service to your employees, your business then leads to their satisfaction. In turn, customer satisfaction, leads to customer loyalty.

2.2.3. Features of Customer Service

The elements of customer service are what it is all about. They are the things that define it at its very core. Meanwhile, features of customer service are the things by which we recognize good customer service. These are also the things by which we ensure that we are providing good customer service.

Ultimately, there are five features of customer service that leads to customer satisfaction:

1. Reliability in the firm's services: Whatever services the firm offers, whether as its main offering or as a bonus on the products sold by the firm, It should be able to perform those services in a reliable manner. Take an ecommerce firm, for example. Such a firm will likely include delivery as a service that comes with the purchase of the service's products. It is important that the firm ensures that its delivery service is reliable.
2. Flexibility: A firm needs to be able to respond, not only to changing the industry and overall market conditions but also to the changing needs of the customer. It is only by being responsive to the customer that a firm can be flexible enough to stay afloat in any kind of economic atmosphere.
3. Trust: For the customer to fully trust the firm, the customer should be assured that the firm will meet his needs consistently. The customer needs to feel as if the firm will give him what he needs when he needs it, and how he needs it. This is the basis of the trust that causes a

client to be comfortable doing repeat business with a firm.

4. Empathy: The firm should try to put itself in the shoes of its customers as often as possible. It is only by practicing empathy with customers that a firm can build lasting bonds and relationships with its customers. The firm will then become more of a small family, in which the customer and the firm are getting on well together and to become profitable business "partners" with each other.
5. Aesthetics: There are many tangible aspects that the firm should take care of, so that it can attract the customer. These include how the logo looks-the logo's size, font and any other design elements-how the store front looks and the atmosphere inside the shop-should emphasize whatever the firm considers as its unique personality. The firm should always create a welcoming ambience, which many believe is on the decline in our social relationships.

2.2.4. Benefits of Good Customer Service

When you execute customer service just right, then you ultimately get customer loyalty. So how do you ensure that the customer service is done just right for the person that walks in to your establishment so they keep coming back again and again? The first step and perhaps arguably the most important is to greet the customer in a warm and welcoming manner. Make the customer feel as if he is walking into his own home. This is where the phrase "feel at home" comes in. Once you have given the customer a welcome and a feeling of warmth, you should seek to figure out what that customer's specific needs are. You can do this by watching her closely or by asking her what her specific needs are. Once you have determined the needs of this customer, you need to do everything you can to meet those needs. You must do this in a manner that is effective and efficient. The point here is this: create a personal relationship that is satisfying and friendly, and that goes beyond the product you provide the customer. When the customer associates your corporation with positive feelings, then she is more likely to want to return. Once you have met your customer's needs, the relationship doesn't end there. You should analyze the situation as many times as you need to reassure yourself that you haven't left out anything in your process. The final part is this: Always leave your door open and tell your client that your door *is always so open*. When the client sees that you *do* incentivize your customer store turn again and again, it is the realization itself that makes your customers more hopeful, and therefore, more likely to return to buy more products or services.

2.2.5. The Main Theory of Customer Service

Customer service is regarded as something of a tree, whose branches represent the more-specific aspects of customer services, whereas the trunk represents the general aspects of customer services. So, what does the customer see first? She sees

the environment of the product or service and whether or not she can find a solution for her needs. In the customer's experience, this represents the tree's trunk. Her rare experience will pretty much determine how the rest of her customer experience will be. It represents the basics of customer service, from which everything else follows. After all, it is only from the customer's perception of the initial environment that other wants and needs follow. Once the customer has sorted out the basics, she will then care about specific aspects of the service, such as the price of the product or service; the staff's reliability and general friendliness; and if maintenance services are available after customers have purchased the product. These are the branches of the customer service tree, which "grow" out of the customer's experience with the trunk. *Once the customer has sorted out the basics, she will then care more about the services*, such as the price of the product or service; the staff's reliability and the staff's general friendliness; and, if maintenance is available, after customers have purchased the product.

2.2.6. Customer Satisfaction Theory

Customer satisfaction is a general principle of customer service. It measures a customer's perception of the quality and utility of a product or service. Customer satisfaction can be measured by offering a service or product or by having a relationship with a company, brand, or individual.

Customer satisfaction theory was introduced by Fred Reichheld in his book *The Ultimate Question: Driving Good Profits and True Growth* which was published in [10]. It was based on a study of over 25,000 customers from [10].

Customer satisfaction is the cornerstone of any business, not just those in the service industry. Understanding your customers and creating a system to create a satisfying experience for them will enable you to boost your profits and repeat customers.

To achieve customer satisfaction, you must understand your customers' needs and wants and their pain points. Only then can you make sure they are fulfilled with each interaction. Understanding the customer satisfaction theory is crucial that may help you save your business if you are in the middle of a crisis resulting from a decline in customer satisfaction. It lays down important steps you can use to solve the problem that will bring back your customer base and prevent you from losing your business to competitors who have higher customer satisfaction than you do.

2.2.7. Various Types of Customer Satisfaction Theories

(i). Dissonance Theory

Dissonance Theory (also known as dissonance reduction theory) is a term used in psychology that refers to the mental stress experienced by someone who simultaneously holds two or more contradictory beliefs, ideas, or values. In other words, they find themselves in conflict. It also suggests that a person

who expected a high-value product and received a low-value product would recognize the disparity and experience cognitive dissonance. That is, the disconfirmed expectations create a state of dissonance or psychological discomfort. Dissonance Theory can explain our present experience of cognitive dissonance when a customer experiences the physical manifestation of a company's brand promise but does not receive the level of customer service he or she expected.

(ii). Contrast Theory

It is another well-known theory of customer satisfaction. Contrast Theory suggests the opposite of the Dissonance Theory. According to this theory, when actual product performance falls short of the consumer's expectations about the product, the contrast between the expectation and outcome will cause the consumer to exaggerate the disparity. It implies that the negative impact of actual product performance on customer satisfaction is greater than the positive impact of higher performance over lower performance. Contrast Theory states that, when the expectation of a product is high and the actual product performance is perceived to be low, the consumer will exaggerate the difference between the expectation and the outcome. Contrast theory proposes that we do not judge qualities on the basis of absolute standards, but rather on the basis of how they compare with other qualities.

(iii). Comparison Level Theory

According to the HLT, satisfaction is not the evaluation of a product or service after it has been consumed. Instead, it is the comparison level, or the degree to which a product or service is better than any of the other options that are available in the market. The theory suggests that consumers set a comparison level in their minds with respect to several aspects while they begin evaluating a product or service. These aspects include:

1. The price at which the product was purchased
2. The expectations pertaining to quality
3. The expectations pertaining to performance
4. The expectations pertaining to features and functionalities of the product
5. The comparison level set by an individual's peers, family members, and friends
6. The comparison level was set by all other customers who bought the same brand

The extent to which a product meets or exceeds the comparison level (CL) is the basis of customer satisfaction. The comparison level theory is a branch of marketing theory that states that consumers evaluate their level of satisfaction based on an implicit comparison to an internal standard, rather than the outcome they actually experienced.

(iv). Value Percept Theory

Value percept is a popular theory on customer satisfaction. This can be seen clearly in many of the current types of cases, such as cases involving brand switching, cases in-

volving the failure of trial products, and cases involving the purchase of services.

A common characteristic in such cases is that consumers base their evaluations on products, services, and brands that are absent from their initial perceptions. Value-Percept Disparity theory has also been applied to explain why consumers value some brands, products, and services over others, even if these other brands, products, and services are more highly expected. The Value-Percept theory explains customer satisfaction by two factors that are central to customer perception of value—Actual Value (AV) and Ideal Value (IV). AV is the actual quality or performance of a product that is perceived by a customer. [54]

(v). Attribution Theory

The Attribution theory has been mostly used in dissatisfaction / complaining behavior models than in satisfaction models. According to this theory of the customer satisfaction model, consumers are regarded as rational process or soft he information who seek out reasons to explain why a purchase outcome, for example, dissatisfaction, has occurred. These reasons may include the product itself, the service, the price, and even the person who sold the product. Frequently these reasons are highly correlated to each other, a state of affairs we refer to as inter-correlated attributions. In that case, we can use as impel model that attributes the "blame" to one of these reasons. The most frequently occurring reason is then called the primary cause. The attribution theory was developed in the domain of social psychology by Fritz Heider, Dorwin Cartwright, and Leonard Bostwick in a publication entitled "The Psychology of Judgment". In this publication, the authors pointed out that people are rational in their judgment processes and that there are conditions under which their judgment is rational.

(vi). Equity Theory

Equity theory in customer satisfaction is the idea that individuals require consistency between what was expected and what was experienced. Consistency between both sides of this equation is a key to providing customers with a positive customer experience. Learning how to manage expectations and consistently deliver an experience that meets and exceeds those builds goodwill and trust, which leads to strong customer satisfaction. From my understanding, equity theory in customer satisfaction applies to any kind of purchase. The buyer has a sense of how the product or service is going to turn out, with what to expect from the business or brand.

When that buying decision takes place, the seller needs to make sure that the experience is consistent with the seller's promise of what is to be received. If not, then the buyer has been provided with an uneven or inequitable exchange of money for goods or services.

(vii). Evaluative Congruity Theory

Evaluative congruity theory (sometimes abbreviated as EC theory) is a dual process model of attitude formation and change. The goal of EC theory is to explain the formation and change of attitudes, although it has a broader application as well.

The EC theory posits that attitudes are formed from two different types of evaluations: “incorporating” evaluations and “social comparison” evaluations. It assumes that incorporating evaluations are automatically processed whereas social comparison evaluations require additional effort to process. Evaluative Congruity describes the extent to which a consumer’s emotions with respect to the evaluative beliefs and attitude she or she holds about the consumption experience. It can be applied to all types of services such as hospitality, retail, leisure, and healthcare. Evaluative congruity has also been extended to other areas such as organizational behavior, marketing, and management.

2.3. Empirical Studies

Nguyen, H. L. and Nguyen, T. V. investigated Improving the Post Sales Service: An Empirical Investigation in to Toyota Motor Vietnam [35]. This study aimed to improve the post-sales service of Toyota Motor Vietnam. By using qualitative research method interview was conducted among 10 customers and 10 service managers and dealers, the study found the strengths and weaknesses of post-sales service of Toyota Motor Vietnam. From the research findings, some recommendations are accordingly proposed.

Hussain, N. et al. investigated an empirical analysis of post sales service and customer satisfaction [17]. The research measured the quality of service in Atlas Battery, selling product with the brand name of AGS by using the Servqual method which is commonly use to measure service quality. The data was collected using an instrument from previous study to study the impact of quality of post sales services on customer satisfaction. The main variables effecting customer’s satisfaction are product quality and social responsibility. The results in this study revealed that customer satisfaction increases with better service delivery.

Fasanmi, O. O. studied Post Sales Service on Customers’ Retention of Mobile Telecommunications in Nigeria [8]. The study explored the impact of post-sales services on customers’ retention of mobile telecommunication in Nigeria. Survey research was adopted, and the aim of using this design is premised on the fact that the study relied on obtaining information from the field using a questionnaire. Subsequently, a simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents from each of the mobile networks. The regression of [t-statistics] value of 01 and (2.63) demonstrates that the relationship between post-sale service and retention of customers is essential because the alpha level of 0.05 is higher than the p-value.

Rose, N. and Chrispen, M. investigated the relationship

between Post-Sales Service Strategies and Customer Satisfaction in Selected Diesel Power Generator Firms in Nairobi City County Kenya [46]. The specific objective of the study was to establish the influence of quality of customer service, complain-compliant handling, maintenance practices, and product-service deliveries on customer satisfaction. The study utilized a stratified sampling technique to get her respondents to the study questionnaire. The study findings indicated that quality of the customer service, complement /compliment handling, maintenance and repair practices, and product and service deliveries were significant in predicting the; level of customer satisfaction among the selected firms.

Songini, L. et al. carried out a study titled “Performance measurement systems in post-sales service: an integrated framework [51]” The study provides are view of the existing body of knowledge about Post Sales performance measurement systems, proposes an integrated framework for Post Sales performance measurement consisting of four levels of business such as process, activity, development and innovation, and provides an empirical application of the framework to four case studies in durable consumer goods—automotive, home appliances and consumer electronics.

Muhammad, A. investigated the relationships between post-sales service, customer satisfaction, and loyalty [31]. Moreover, this study also explains how post-sales services such as delivery, installation, product warranty, telephone /online supports, up gradation, and complaint influence customer loyalty with the mediating role of customer satisfaction. Online data were collected using a convenience sampling technique from 204 respondents who were currently using the Internet (i.e., 3G, 4G devices or fixed broad band) in Pakistan. This study explains how service sector organizations maintain a profitable long-term relationship with customers, and how to get customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Rolstadas, A. et al. claimed in their study that it is not possible to produce services in advance and inventory these for future consumption [45]. Instead an unpredictable event such as a machine failure triggers a need for manufacturing of parts for replacement and allocation of resources for the service. Various aspects of post-services are discussed with regards to business model, methodology, performance metrics, service portfolio and production planning and control business activity.

2.4. Gaps in the Study

Many of the empirical studies reviewed such as [35, 17, 8, 46, 11, 31, 45] dealt largely on analysis, measurement and how to improve post sales and customer satisfaction. Many of these studies mainly focused on public sector without paying critical attention to post sales services strategies (dimensions). More so, most of the studies are of foreign origin whose findings may not be compatible with the Nigerian situation considering environmental, economic, legal and social dif-

ferences.

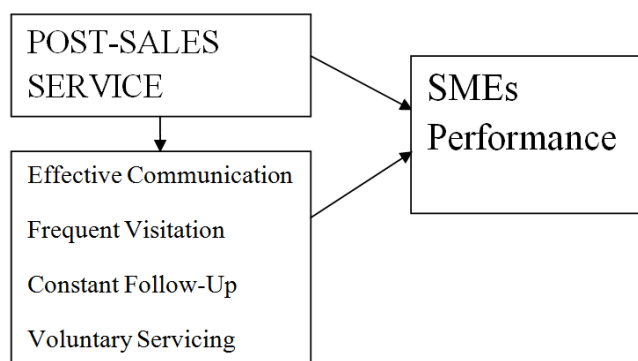


Figure 1. Author's Conceptual Framework.

Based on the above, this study aims at filling the existing gap and to provide empirical evidence from Nigeria on the role of post-sales service dimensions on the operation and performance of SMEs.

Figure 1 presents a summary diagram of the proposed conceptual framework for the prediction of SMEs performance from the concepts: effective communication, frequent visitation, constant follow-up, and voluntary servicing.

3. Methodology

This chapter discusses the method and procedures employed in carrying out the research. It also discusses the research design, study area and data gathering.

3.1. Study Area

This research work was carried out among the some selected small and medium enterprises business owners in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo state, Nigeria. Ibadan is located in south-western Nigeria. It is the capital of Oyo state, and it is the capital of Oyo state, and is reputed to be the largest indigenous city in Africa, south of Sahara, Ibadan had been the centre of administration of the old Western Region, Nigeria state the days of the British colonial rule.

3.2. Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design as a systematic, empirical inquiring into which the researcher does not have a direct control of independent variable as their manifestation has already occurred or because the inherently cannot be manipulated. Descriptive studies are concerned with the what, where and how of a phenomenon hence more placed to build a profile on that phenomenon [30]. Descriptive research design is more appropriate because the study seeks to build a profile about the relationship between post sales

service strategies and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) performance. Descriptive research design was employed because is an efficient way of gathering data to help address are search question and one can collect unbiased data and develop sensible decision based on analyzed results [53].

3.3. Population of the Study

The study comprises some selected small and medium enterprises owners in Ibadan metropolis Oyo state, Nigeria.

3.4. Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study was drawn from the entire population of some selected business owners in Ibadan metropolis. Purposive method was used to select some small and medium enterprises business owner in Ibadan metropolis while simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondent for the study.

3.5. Description of Research Instrument

The study made use of survey question and structure interview in obtaining the data needed for the study was adapted from the previous studies in alignment with a specific variable and objective that it was set out to explore. In general, the questionnaire was divided into two parts, A and B. Part A is meant for descriptive and demographic profiles of the respondent. While Part B, which comprises of different sections consist of the critical questions that are examined the research variables. The interview guide was designed to cover general understanding of the problems and innovation activities of the selected SMEs in the study areas. The questionnaire and structured interviewed are attached as appendix1 and 2 respectively.

3.6. Method of Data Collection

Data collection technique involves the procedures for collecting needed data and making contact with the selected respondents and interviewees administering of questionnaires, scheduling interview data and time and explaining the interviewing process to interviewees. Prior to administering the questionnaires, a pilot test was conducted with few selected SMEs in Ibadan Oyo State, Nigeria. The selected firms were classified into small and Medium Enterprises using the number of employees. The business owner or their representatives were included as respondent and the same set of questionnaires were administered on them irrespective of their firms' sizes. However, the number of questionnaires administered on each category of sampled SMEs was based on its proportion in the sample and on the number of each SME that were in the study area.

3.7. Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed with aid of Descriptive Statistical tools such as Frequencies, Percentages, Weighted Mean Score and Inferential Statistical tools such as, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Ordinary Least Squares method of estimation. Specifically, Weighted Mean Score will be used to analyze the level of Post Sales Service and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient will be used to establish the relationship exist between and among Post Sales Service Strategies, SMEs Performance and Sustainability while Multiple Regression Analysis was used to determine the effect of Post Sales Service Strategies on SMEs Performance and Sustainability.

4. Conclusion

The relationship between post-sales service strategies and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) performance is crucial for the success and sustainability of SMEs. Effective post-sales service strategies can significantly impact the performance of SMEs by ensuring customer satisfaction, retention, and loyalty, as well as providing ongoing support and value-added services.

It is important for SMEs to carefully consider and implement post-sales service strategies that align with their specific needs and goals. This may include investing in customer support, training, maintenance, and other post-sales activities to enhance the overall customer experience and drive positive business outcomes.

Moreover, it is essential for post-sales service providers to operate with transparency, integrity, and a clear focus on the best interests of the SMEs they serve. By prioritizing the success and well-being of SMEs, post-sales service providers can contribute to improved performance and long-term growth for their clients.

Overall, a strong collaboration and partnership between Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and post-sales service providers, characterized by effective strategies and a commitment to mutual success, can lead to enhanced performance, competitiveness, and resilience in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector and can as well make Small and Medium Enterprises to effective and efficient in their operation.

Abbreviations

SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
PBL	Performance Based Logistics
CL	Comparison Level
EC	Evaluative Congruity
AV	Actual Value
IV	Ideal Value

Author Contributions

Akinbo Tina: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft

Oladeji Adesola Alaba: Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Supervision, Validation, Writing – original draft

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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