

**EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RETAIL STORES WITHIN THE SUPPLY
CHAIN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS (FMCG)
IN NIGERIA.**

ABSTRACT

Fast-moving consumer goods have become a part of people's daily lives, as they meet basic but essential needs. Thus, ensuring access to these types of consumer goods (FMCG) is crucial, as without it, living a normal life becomes difficult, making the concept of a supply chain management system even more necessary. This study, therefore, examined the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market.

Following this main objective, the study employed a quantitative research method, collecting data from 161 respondents, using a questionnaire. Further, the study analysed the data obtained, using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics, including regression analysis and correlation.

Based on the analysis, the study found that there was a moderately high level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of FMCGs among consumers. Also, pricing strategy, and store location and layout were factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of FMCGs. Despite this effectiveness, there were challenges, such as concerns over product freshness, price transparency, and limited operating hours. However, consumers still preferred physical stores for purchase of FMCGs.

In conclusion, the study viewed retail stores in the supply chain management system of FMCGs as important in the Nigerian Market. The preference for physical retail stores despite the availability of online retail stores was indicative of the significance of physical retail stores in the Nigerian market.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Consumer habits change quickly, which is why fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) have become inevitable for companies and businesses to produce and cater to the changing preferences of consumers (Delikurt and Corum, 2022). In a way, fast-moving consumer goods have become a part of people's daily lives. Take, for instance, food, medicine, clothing, daily chemical products, toiletries, beverages and other household essentials, which are examples of fast-moving consumer goods, are necessary, as they meet basic but essential needs (Guo and Liu, 2023). Thus, ensuring access to these types of consumer goods (FMCG) is crucial, as without it, living a normal life becomes difficult, making the concept of a supply chain management system even more necessary.

Supply chain management systems are necessary for fast-moving consumer goods because these types of consumer goods are in high demand and have short shelf lives (van Elzakker et al., 2014). These reasons imply that quick and reliable channels to ensure effective distribution and access to consumers are crucial, which is what supply chain management systems are all about. According to Barnes and Liao (2012) supply chain management systems refer to dealing with the general production and flow of goods, particularly from their raw component state to delivering the final product to the consumer. In the context of fast-moving consumer goods, where demands are high and shelf lives are short, distribution requirements or systems, particularly retail stores or outlets (retailers), are necessary to affect many consumers (Hsiao et al., 2012). In the supply chain system, retailers procure the final products from suppliers and sell them in relatively small quantities to consumers for consumption or use. Regular contact with consumers means that retailers have a crucial role to play in meeting high demands and ensuring that the goods (final products) remain usable for consumption.

On the other hand, the ineffectiveness of retailers (retail stores) in connecting the producers of fast-moving consumer goods to end consumers means issues, such as the inability to optimise inventory, maintain optimal stock levels and minimise excess are often inevitable.

There is also the issue of fast-moving consumer goods becoming unusable and unsaleable when retailers do not minimise excess inventory effectively.

Several studies (Akhil and Krishnannuni, 2020; Bala and Kumar, 2011; Neboh and Mbhele, 2020) have, therefore, confirmed this assertion of the significance of retail stores (retailers) in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods.

For the Nigerian retail industry, there is the stronghold of bricks-and-mortar, traditional and omnichannel commerce, all in the effort to ensure an excellent customer experience, especially in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods. Similarly, the boundaries between offline and online are blurred. Many consumers like the blend of online and offline experiences. To this end, Prabusankar (2017) asserts that most manufacturing and food processing companies of these fast-moving consumer goods are dynamic in the sense that they integrate with suppliers, increase customer relationships, form alliances with market rivals, share knowledge with a focus on achieving effective supply chain, and encourage enterprise capability to compete in the manufacturing industry while increasing productivity levels.

Consequently, all these are posing additional pressure on retailers. For instance, people prefer to make orders online but save money on delivery opting for in-store pickup. Under such circumstances, ineffective cross-channel coordination may mean lost business opportunities. It also leads to the need to boost the business's supply chain management strategy (Prabusankar, 2017). This phenomenon has complicated the retail supply chain, and retailers are continually looking for ways to optimise their supply chain. It is on these bases that this dissertation investigates the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market.

1.2 Research Rationale and Focus

There exists a booming market in the Nigerian business ecosystem and retail distribution is one of its major drivers, such that its socio-economic value is indisputable to consumers and business markets alike emphasising that at its core, retail distribution seeks to deliver products and services to consumers in the most effective and cost-efficient way possible. Adebisi (2022) observes that what may have begun in a bid to reach local customers has since evolved to contribute a significant

portion to the bottom line of businesses across industries pointing out that in Nigeria, the retail distribution sector is egged on by the demands of a huge consumer base, the result of a population explosion which means an increase in the demand for products and services and more outlets to cater to the growing population. Be that as it may, the Nigerian business sector still struggles with challenges peculiar to the region and other challenges affecting global retail distribution.

Mou et al. (2018) revealed that physical retail stores remain the primary destination for shoppers even as Internet sales escalate. However, retail stores are evolving into interaction hubs spanning online and traditional channels. Not only are e - retailers starting to open offline stores but bricks-and-mortar stores now provide online services and undertake order fulfilment – leading to a variety of new challenges and complexities in retail store operations. Although there have been numerous research works on the role of retail stores, Erbiyik et al. (2012) point out the fact that retailers are not just the most powerful actors of the distribution channels with proximity to consumers and potential to create a market, but also possessed the channel and link of point of convergence between the manufacturers and consumer via retail store.

Erbiyik et al. (2012) assert that retail stores play a very important role in connecting manufacturers of goods to the end consumer, they create a convenient environment for the customer to compare and choose between different manufacturers and choose the best price and offerings they need as well as helping to create a healthy competitive environment where manufacturers will try their best to create a good quality product, at the best possible price, to win the sale at the store, in the presence of other competing brands.

Despite the importance of and the extensive interest in, retail stores, there exists no substantial overview of existing research in ascertaining its effectiveness in supply chain management of fast-moving consumer goods.

Although several papers review retailing research in general but do not focus on retail store effectiveness, especially in the Nigerian market. For example, Anajaa and Bagobiri (2022) only examined the effect of supply chain management on the organisational performance of selected fast-moving consumer goods in a local government area in Nigeria and revealed how supply chain management had a positive and significant effect on the organisational performance of selected fast-moving consumer goods but not specific as it relates to retail store. There were also several

edited volumes, such as Agrawal and Smith (2015) and Doukidis and Vrechopoulos (2005), compiling academic research on retail operations and supply chain management but these books do not provide a systematic discussion on retail store effectiveness in fast-moving consumer goods (Mou et al., 2018).

Investigating the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market has become inevitable to bridge the gaps in academic literature because the FMCG sector is a fast-paced, dynamic industry with a diverse product offering and manufacturing companies desired efficient supply chain management (Chemirmir and Charles, 2021) Surprisingly, despite series of studies conducted across the globe investigating consumers' intentions towards online shopping, no much research has been done on their preference to offline retail store and factor responsible for this especially in the supply chain management system of fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market. Therefore, justifying this dissertation which investigates the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

In examining the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market, this dissertation considered attribution theory and the theory of planned behaviour. According to Martinko and Mackey (2019), attribution theory, proposed by Fritz Heider, is a social psychology theory that deals with how individuals relate and make sense of the social world. More specifically, it is concerned with how people translate events around them and how their translations affect their thinking and behaviour. In other words, attribution theory is concerned with how individuals perceive the information they receive; interpret events, and how these form causal judgments.

The theory of planned behaviour explains individual behaviour as resulting from intentions, which in turn are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Ajzen (2018) asserts that in applying this to consumers and customers of fast-moving consumer goods in retail stores, the theory assumes that consumers, customers and clients act rationally, according to their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. These factors are not necessarily actively or consciously considered during decision-making but form the backdrop for the decision-making process.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this dissertation is to examine the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market. Specifically, the objectives of this study are as follows;

1. To ascertain consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market
2. To find out the factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market
3. To identify the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market
4. To determine consumers preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market
5. To make recommendations to the challenges of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market

1.5 Research Questions

1. What is the consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market?
2. What are the factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market?
3. What are the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market?
4. What is consumers' preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market?
5. What are the recommendations for the challenges militating against retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market?

1.6 Research Method

The research method adopted for this research is the quantitative survey research method. According to Ponto (2015), survey research refers to a particular type of research design where the primary method of data collection is by drawing up a set of structured questions where each question is designed to obtain a specific piece of information. Therefore, in carrying out this dissertation, more than 100 participants who patronise and purchase fast-moving consumer goods are selected from the Ikeja Local Government Area of Lagos state as sample size using purposive sampling techniques. The research instrument is a questionnaire containing open and close-ended questions to examine the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research would provide information/knowledge regarding the extent of adoption and use of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market. Specifically, this research would help in determining the factors that determine consumer level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the services rendered by retail stores and how all of these can be improved upon. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to the body of knowledge of the entire supply management system especially in developing countries like Nigeria where technological limitations still make physical retail stores as against online platforms and stores very crucial to the distribution of fast-moving consumer goods. It is also expected that this dissertation would serve as referential material for further work on this subject area and other related ones.

1.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter is the introduction where the background to investigating the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market is drawn with the identification of problems leading to it as a dissertation discussed. Also included in chapter one are five objectives and research questions, the rationale of the study, the theoretical foundation, the significance of the study and an insight into the research methodology.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two, a comprehensive overview of pertinent literature is presented, beginning with a conceptual analysis that clarifies important terms and ideas. The study's underlying theories are reviewed, and then the results of previous research are synthesised in an empirical review. A theoretical structure is put out, culminating in an extensive conclusion that enumerates the knowledge acquired.

2.2 Conceptual Review

This section examines key concepts and definitions relevant to the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian markets, providing a foundational understanding.

2.2.1 Supply chain management

Hugos (2024) defined supply chain management (SCM) as the coordination of multiple tasks related to sourcing, acquiring, producing, and distributing products and services from suppliers to final consumers. As per the source Saunder (2020), supply chain management (SCM) entails the deliberate planning and implementation of procedures to maximise the movement of resources, data, and funds along the supply chain network. SCM holds immense significance for businesses across industries due to several key reasons. It increases customer satisfaction by guaranteeing prompt delivery, high-quality products, and flexibility in response to shifting needs (Craighead et al., 2020). SCM also increases operational efficiency by optimising processes, cutting costs, and eliminating waste (Copacino, 2019). Additionally, efficient supply chain management (SCM) encourages cooperation and partnership between manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and suppliers, which improves trust, communication, and innovation across the whole supply chain ecosystem (Min et al., 2019).

2.2.2 Retail stores

Retail stores can be real or virtual companies that deal directly with consumers to provide goods and services (Paul et al., 2016). These stores are essential to the distribution chain because they serve as the last connection between end users and producers or wholesalers (Paul et al., 2016). There are many different types of retail outlets, such as department stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, specialty shops and internet retailers (Hubner et al., 2022). The importance of retail stores stems from their capacity to perform multiple vital roles in the supply chain and the overall economy (Davis and Hodges, 2012). Customers can quickly access a wide range of goods and services through retail outlets (Davis and Hodges, 2012). Through the establishment of jobs at all levels, from sales associates to store managers and support workers, they also aid in economic expansion and the creation of jobs (Abor and Quartey, 2010). Youngdahl and Loomba (2000) argue that stores are an essential link in the supply chain, acting as a conduit between manufacturers and customers.

2.2.3 Fast moving consumer goods (FMCG)

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) refers to products that are typically consumed frequently, have a relatively short shelf life, and are sold at a relatively low cost (Stanciu et al., 2019). Food and drink items, personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies for the home, and over-the-counter drugs are some examples of fast-moving consumer goods. High customer demand, quick sales, and high turnover rates are characteristics of FMCG (Grubor and Millocevic, 2015). FMCG is a mainstay of household consumption patterns since it is a necessity that is continuously renewed and bought (Trihatmanto, 2019). Additionally, FCGM is a major contributor to employment, retail sales, and government income creation through taxes, all of which are important factors in promoting economic activity (Trihatmanto, 2019). To attract and retain customers, FCGM is frequently aggressively marketed, with businesses making significant investments in branding, promotion, and advertising (Sharma, 2013).

2.3 Theories for the Study

Several study-related theoretical stances are examined and debated. In this section, theories from related disciplines are synthesised and their relevance and possible contributions to the objectives of the study are highlighted.

2.3.1 Resources-Based View (RBV)

The resource-based view theory, which was created in the latter half of the 20th century by academics like Birger Wernerfelt and Jay Barney, provides a viewpoint on competitive advantage by emphasising a firm's internal resources and capabilities (Barney et al., 2011). RBV, which has its roots in the literature on strategic management, postulates that a company can outperform competitors and maintain a competitive edge by utilising its distinct set of skills and resources (Barney et al., 2011). Physical infrastructure, personnel, expertise in technology, consumer trust, and organisational culture are examples of intangible as well as tangible assets, according to Barney (2021). Furthermore, according to Akter et al. (2016), capacities also relate to a company's capacity to allocate and use its resources wisely to accomplish strategic goals. By using RBV, retail stores in Nigeria's FMCG industry are analysed for their competencies and resources inside the supply chain management system. This could entail evaluating elements like the calibre of the staff, the efficacy of technology use, the strength of brand ties, and the calibre of the physical infrastructure. FMCG merchants in Nigeria may create long-term success in the market, strengthen their supply chains, and create lasting competitive advantages by utilising and improving these internal resources and competencies.

2.3.2 Supply Chain Integration Theory

The late 20th century saw the development of supply chain integration theory in response to the rising awareness of the shortcomings of conventional supply chain models (Stevens and Johnson, 2016). Tiwari (2021) highlights that improved performance outcomes can only be attained by collaboration and integration among supply chain partners. The theory states that a more responsive and efficient system can be created by coordinating the actions of different players in the supply chain, including manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers (Mustafa Kaml and Irani, 2014).

Sharing duties, information, and resources is part of this integration, which aims to improve supply chain performance overall, shorten lead times, and streamline procedures (Min et al., 2019). According to this theory's application to the study's goal, supply chain integration in the Nigerian FMCG retail industry comprises coordinating the actions of manufacturers, suppliers, and retailers to facilitate the smooth flow of commodities from production to consumption. For example, producers should be able to modify production plans based on real-time sales data from merchants. Distributors and retailers may also work together to develop a just-in-time delivery system, which would lower the cost of storage and prevent stockouts.

2.4 Empirical Review

In this chapter section, prior empirical research that is pertinent to the objectives of the study is reviewed critically. The present study formulates research questions by synthesising findings, methodologies, and gaps in the literature.

2.4.1 Consumers level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs)

Latheera and Rajangam (2020) examined customers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in India. The study used a quantitative research approach, where a total of 120 respondents were sampled using a convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire was used for the data collection and analysis using percentage analysis, two-way tables and a chi-square test. The study results revealed that there was a high level of patronage of fast-moving consumer goods in retail stores. Most of the customers become loyal as they have been shopping for a year or longer.

Similarly, Almotairi (2021) investigated customers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in Riyadh. The study used a quantitative research approach, where a total of 297 respondents were sampled. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analysed using Smart PLS software. Findings revealed that the customer level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods was influenced by a variety of store features such as the layout of the store, and design. The study revealed that these features affect the mood of customers to achieve more customer patronage.

Additionally, Singh et al (2020) investigated customers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in Saudi Arabia. A quantitative research approach was used, and 319 retail stores were selected. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling.

The study results revealed that the level of customer patronage of fast-moving goods increases due to the attractiveness of the environment where the retail store is located. An attractive environment is important to increase the patronage of customers.

2.4.2 The factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG)

Neboh and Mbhele (2020) examined the factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in South Africa. The study was carried out using a quantitative research approach, where a total of 306 retail stores were sampled using a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analysed using multiple regression analysis. The study results revealed that transport network, technological advancement and environmental changes were factors that contributed to the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods.

Similarly, Wakasala (2020) examined the factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain resilience in Kenya. The study adopted a quantitative research approach, in which 53 retail stores were sampled using a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using the census method and questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics. The study revealed that strategic collaboration, agile practice, supply chain reengineering and risk management culture were factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods.

Additionally, Qehaja and Pula (2016) assessed the factors contributing to the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management of fast-moving consumer goods in the Republic of Kosovo. The study used a quantitative research approach, where 90 households were selected to share their view on the factors contributing to the effectiveness of retail stores.

Data was collected using questionnaires and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results showed that low prices, excellent customer service, well-thought-out offerings, and professional staff behaviour all contributed to retail stores' effectiveness in the fast-moving consumer goods supply chain management system.

This also matches with Mathu and Phetla (2018) study which examined the solution to the challenges of retail stores in the supply chain management systems of fast-moving consumer goods in South Africa. Non-probability sampling was employed in the study as part of a qualitative research methodology. Using content analysis, the gathered data were transcribed, coded, and thematically interpreted. The research findings indicate that the collaboration and integration of FMCG retailers in the supply chain improves their ability to meet customer demands.

Similarly, Salam and Khan (2018) examined the solution to the challenges of retail stores in the supply chain management systems of fast-moving consumer goods in Thailand. The research methodology employed in the study was qualitative, and non-probability sampling was used. Content analysis was used to transcribe, code, and interpret the collected data thematically. Results indicated that stores should import the practice of choosing suppliers based on performance. Additionally, the programme for managing and selecting suppliers can effectively help to raise the performance of suppliers.

Finally, Sarker and Rahman (2020) also assessed actors contributing to the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management of food-moving consumer goods in Comilla. The study adopted a quantitative research approach, in which 100 customers were sampled using a convenience sampling technique. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analysed using SPSS 16.0 version and multiple regression analysis. The study's conclusions showed that several factors, including cost, product variety, familiar retailers, income level, demand, salesperson, product quality, product display, and advertising, contributed to retail stores' effectiveness in the fast-moving consumer goods supply chain management system.

2.4.3 The challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG)

Ray and Pati (2016) examined the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in India. The study used a qualitative research design, analysing the data through the application of thematic analysis and literature reviews. The study's findings showed that challenges associated with shopping at retail establishments in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) supply chain management system included dealing with counterfeit goods, a complicated tax system, infrastructure, and the rise of third-party logistics providers.

Similarly, Akhil and Krishnanunni (2020) examined the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in India. The convenience sampling technique was used to choose businesses that have been a part of the supply chain for more than five years, and the study incorporated both descriptive and exploratory designs. To collect the data and analyse it using the Likert Scaling technique, a questionnaire was employed. The supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) retail stores faced challenges from counterfeit products, pricing strategies, and product quality variations depending on the region of operation.

Additionally, Alam (2021) examined the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in Kosovo. Utilising a convenience sampling technique, 400 traditional retailers were selected for the study, which employed a quantitative research approach. Software called SPSS was used to analyse the gathered data. The results showed that challenges of visiting retail stores in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) supply chain management system included declining sales and revenue, keeping a more hygienic environment, guaranteeing the availability of quality products, and introducing the use of technology in the emergence of organised retailing.

Furthermore, Bhakat and Arif (2021) examined the challenges and solutions of retail stores in the supply chain management systems of fast-moving consumer goods. The study used a qualitative research approach. Content analysis was used to transcribe, code, and interpret the collected data thematically.

The study found that retail stores faced difficulties in the supply chain management systems of fast-moving consumer goods. The solutions included re-emphasising digital platforms and partners, proper planning and assessment of consumer demand, logistics infrastructure, and warehousing capabilities.

Finally, Umair et al (2019) examined the challenges and solutions of retail stores in the supply chain management systems of fast-moving consumer goods in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. A quantitative research strategy in which convenient sampling techniques were used to select 200 stores in total. Data were collected via a survey questionnaire, and descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis. The study found that retail stores faced challenges in the supply chain management systems of fast-moving consumer goods. These challenges could be addressed by an effective interaction with inventory, lead time, transportation, and logistics.

2.4.4 Consumers preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs)

Vijaya et al. (2020) assessed customer preference for purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in India. The study used a convenience sampling technique to sample 100 customers as part of a quantitative research design. The data were collected via a questionnaire, and multiple regression analysis was performed for analysis. The study's findings demonstrated that brand name, product details, price consciousness, and general awareness were the factors that drive customers to shop at online retail stores instead of traditional brick-and-mortar stores in the fast-moving consumer goods supply chain management system.

Similarly, Mofokeng and Tan (2021) examined customer preference for purchase between online retail stores and physical retail stores in South Africa. The study used a convenience sampling technique to sample 287 customers as part of a quantitative research design. The data were collected via a questionnaire, and multiple regression analysis was performed for analysis. The study found that perceived security, information quality, product delivery, and product variety all had an impact on online shoppers' satisfaction.

Additionally, Nagbadia (2021) examined the customer preference for purchase between online retail stores and physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in India. Utilising a quantitative research methodology, the study sampled 1,200 respondents. A questionnaire was used to gather the data, and descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the results.

According to the survey, respondents favoured online retailers because of their reputation, informational availability, payment security, privacy, easily navigable websites, ease of use, and educational attainment.

Finally, Ogbunankwor and Madumere (2023) assessed the customer preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in Nigeria. Convenience sampling was used to sample 138 retailers as part of a quantitative research approach. A questionnaire was used to gather the data, and multiple regression analysis and SPSS version 20 software were used to analyse the results. The results showed that factors such as product quality, store location, and customer service influenced customers' choice of stores.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This section provides a conceptual framework that arranges important variables and relationships, building on the conceptual and theoretical considerations. It provides a guide for the study's methodology and analysis by fusing theoretical understanding with empirical data.

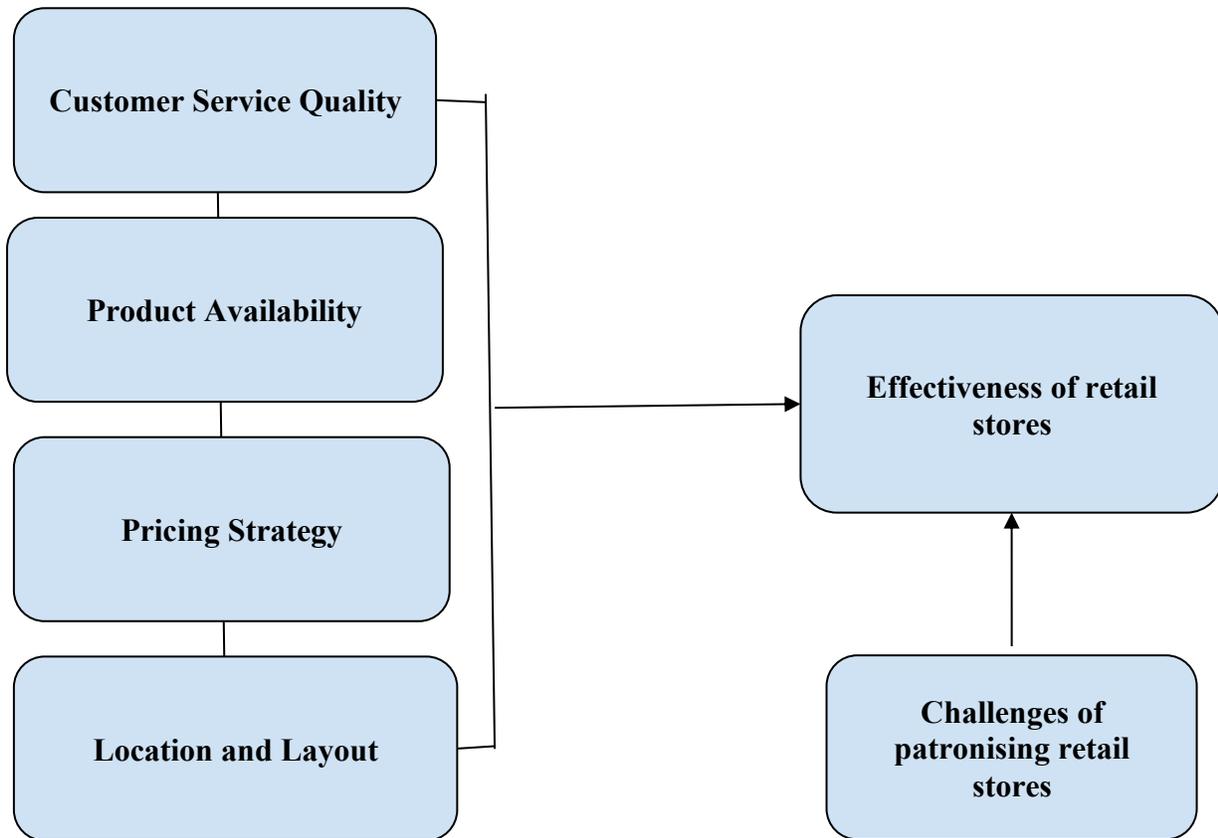


Figure 2.1: The effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG)

The conceptual framework offers a thorough comprehension of all factors affecting retail outlets' efficacy in the FMCG supply chain. Fundamentally, the efficacy of retail stores is the dependent variable, subject to the influence of numerous factors. These elements come in different forms: product features like availability, quality, brand reputation, packaging, and ease of use; retail store attributes including ambience, location convenience, product variety, pricing, and promotions; and customer service. Furthermore, how well retail establishments manage the supply chain has a significant impact on customer behaviour. Factors like distribution channels (network, transportation, and warehousing efficiency), supplier relationships (reliability, negotiation power, and cooperation with FMCG manufacturers), and stock management (stock availability, replenishment speed, and stockouts) all influence this effectiveness. But there are obstacles including limited infrastructure, fake goods, pricing policies, inconsistent product quality, a convoluted tax code, and the emergence of third-party transportation companies. The scenario is further complicated by consumer preferences for buying channels, which take into account online versus physical retail establishments.

To improve retail store effectiveness and consumer patronage in the FMCG supply chain, it is ultimately imperative to address infrastructure constraints, counterfeit products, pricing strategies, product quality variations, a complex tax system, and the emergence of third-party logistics providers.

2.6 Conclusion

The study's second chapter probes further into the nuances of comprehending retail outlets' efficacy inside the FMCG supply chain. A comprehensive conceptual study sets the foundation for the following investigation by providing definitions for keywords including supply chain management, retail store, and fast-moving consumer goods. The objectives of the study are theoretically supported by the review of ideas, which includes the supply chain integration theory and the resource-based view. The present study conducts a critical examination of previous research findings about customer patronage, factors that impact the performance of retail stores, obstacles associated with store patronage, consumer preferences for purchasing channels, and strategies to overcome store challenges. These results are integrated into the conceptual framework that is suggested, outlining the intricate interactions among variables that affect retail store efficacy in the FMCG supply chain.

It draws attention to how important it is for supply chain management techniques, retail store obstacles, product and retail store features, and customer preferences to shape the success of retail stores and encourage customer loyalty within the FMCG supply chain. The end of chapter two lays the groundwork for chapter three, which presents the research approach. The methodology for data collection, analysis, and interpretation will be covered in full in this chapter, which also serves as a guide for the empirical study that will further our understanding of this area.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the systematic approach adopted to collect and analyse data pertinent to the study's investigation into the efficacy of retail stores within the Nigerian Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) supply chain. The methodology was designed to provide a robust framework that aligns with the multidimensional aspects of the research as outlined by Saunders et al. (2019), captured within the research onion model depicted in Figure 2.2. This model underpinned the sequential layers of the research design, encompassing the philosophical stance, approach to theory, methodological choice, research strategies, and the selected time horizon. Each layer was examined to reveal the rationale behind the choices made, ensuring that each step is methodologically sound and directly contributes to addressing the central research questions. By adopting this structured approach, the study yielded insights that were both valid and reliable, offering a comprehensive understanding of the role and effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management of FMCGs in Nigeria.

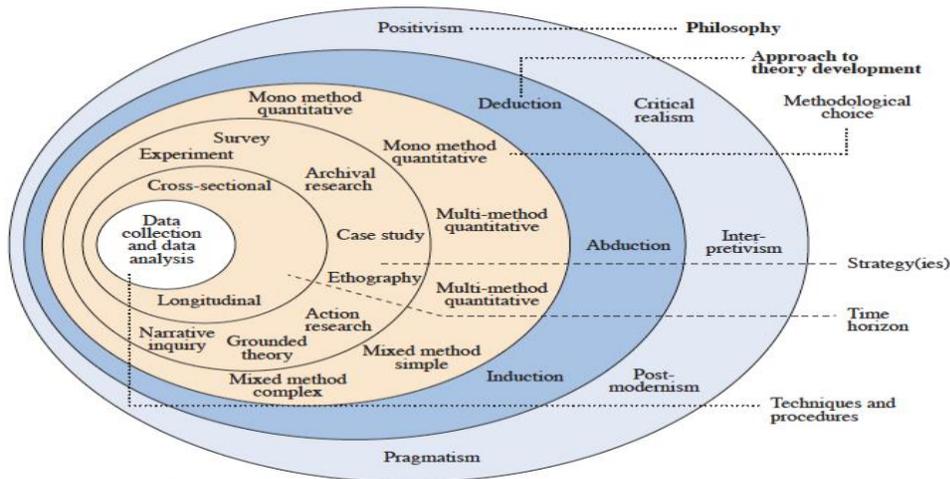


Figure 3.2: Research Onion

Source: Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 108)

3.2 Study Philosophy

In broad terms, research philosophy can be defined as a guide that helps researchers grasp and clarify what knowledge is, and it also sheds light on how knowledge can be acquired Madhavan (2019). Various perspectives on research exist in the views of Saunders et al. (2019) and they are realism, pragmatism, interpretivism and positivism. However, the focus of this study was positivism philosophy.

According to Majeed (2020), positivism philosophy has come to be used to refer to the idea that reality is made up of specific events that can be directly experienced and observed through the senses of humans. Also, the positivism paradigm is generally understood to mean a method of undertaking research that focuses on using real-life data that can be seen and measured while learning about the world (Pathak and Thapaliya, 2022).

The benefit of the positivism approach is that it emphasises using accurate measurements, clear explanations, and consistent methods to make research findings more reliable and clearer (Maksimović and Evtimov, 2023). Within the framework of this study, it worked effectively with quantitative research methods, enabling thorough numerical data presentation and statistical analysis, which strongly supports research conclusions.

3.3 Approach to Theory Development

Inductive and deductive are common techniques used in doing research work, (Soifermann, 2010) however, looking at the study's objective which is to examine the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market, the deductive method was employed.

Although differences of opinion still exist, there appears to be some agreement that the deductive method refers to the starting of a broad idea or theory and then researchers gather particular data and see if real-life facts support it (Woiceshyn and Daellenbach, 2018). Again, this method is beneficial because it offers an ordered framework for research, helping researchers create theories, and analyse and test data in a structured and systematic way (Casula et al., 2020).

In this study, the deductive procedure was important because it could be related to wider groups in that the things learnt from studying retail stores in Nigeria may also be true for other similar places in the FMCG industry.

3.4 Methodological Choice

For Saunders et al. (2019), methods of doing research are of three kinds and they are quantitative, mixed and qualitative procedures. In the present study, the quantitative procedure was adopted. Pilcher and Cotrazzi (2023) define quantitative methods as using certain methods, plans, and ideas to learn about how people behave in groups, in their minds, and in economic situations by looking at patterns in numbers and analysing. A further elaboration of the term 'quantitative method' is given by Hasan (2024) who described it as the inclusion of structured observations, experiments, tests and questionnaires or surveys which help quantify factors.

The merit of this choice of method is that it is interpreted with statistical analysis which helps describe and understand why things happen and their impact in most instances (Apuke, 2017). Hence, this study was useful in obtaining comprehensive details about supply chain management and retail effectiveness. In short, the need to achieve objectivity in findings following the use of numbers and statistical analysis informed the choice of the quantitative method.

3.5 Research Strategy

The term 'research strategy' is employed by Melnikovas (2018) to refer to a framework that assists researchers in deciding on what steps and methods to use to gather and analyse data to find answers to the research questions. In Saunders et al. (2019) onion model, the research strategies are grouped as case study, archival research, grounded theory, ethnography, experiment, narrative inquiry, action research and survey.

Thus, out of the various strategies available, the survey approach was employed to collect data for this study. One of the people who defined the survey strategy was Abdelhakim and Badr (2021) who wrote that it is a common way to collect information from a group of people by asking them questions. In this sense, this study used a survey research technique to understand the opinions of individuals.

In other words, the survey method was applied to find out how effective retail stores were in the supply chain management system for participants who patronised and purchased fast-moving consumer goods in the Nigerian market.

3.6 Time Horizon

In this research, the term 'time horizon', in the broadest sense, means the specific moments in time when data will be gathered, thus, in the views of Creswell and Creswell (2017), whether it is all at once (cross-sectional) or across a timeframe (longitudinal).

The study gathered information from all the respondents at one specific time implying the use of a cross-sectional design. Abdelhakim and Badr (2021) have shown that a cross-sectional design means gathering data from many people all at once to see what things are like at that moment. The present study used this time horizon because it helped people to see how different things are related to a particular instance without trying to change them.

3.7 Procedures and Strategies

This segment provided the procedures and strategies for how data was collected and examined.

3.7.1 Source of Data

The study looked into the dissertation's aim using information collected directly from sources, also referred to as primary data. In the case of Taherdoost (2021), information that is directly gathered by talking to people or directly observing things can be generally understood as primary data.

An example was surveys carried out to learn about people's experiences or opinions on the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). This source was used because it helps collect exact and updated information needed in the study.

3.7.2 Study Population

The 'study population' pertains to the subset of the general populace who are integral to the research inquiry (Tengli, 2020). Anecdotal observations within the Ikeja Local Government Area of Lagos State suggest that, on average, approximately 270 individuals engage daily in the purchasing of fast-moving consumer goods. This figure was used to delineate the study population, encompassing a representative sample of consumers whose purchasing behaviours provide insights into the dynamics of FMCG retail effectiveness. This number not only reflects the active consumer base but also ensures a manageable scope for in-depth analysis.

3.7.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

I. Calculation of Sample Size

The formula for calculating the sample size was given by Yamane (1967) and is represented by

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n symbolises sample size, N denotes Total population, e stands for the margin of error and 1 is a constant.

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{270}{1 + 270 (0.05)^2} \\ n &= \frac{270}{1 + 270 (0.0025)} \\ n &= \frac{270}{1.675} \\ n &= 161.1940 \end{aligned}$$

In total, 161 respondents who patronised and purchased fast-moving consumer goods from the Ikeja Local Government Area of Lagos state were the study's sample size.

II. Sampling Technique

In alignment with the study's population and sample size parameters, a systematic sampling method was adopted to ensure a statistically representative selection of participants. Systematic sampling, as defined by Saunders et al. (2019), is a probabilistic sampling technique where the researcher selects members from a larger group at regular intervals.

This interval, known as the sampling interval, is determined by dividing the population size by the desired sample size. Thus, with the sample size calculated as 161, the sampling interval (k) was determined by dividing the total population (N) by the sample size (n):

$$k = N / n$$

$$k = 270 / 161$$

$$k \approx 1.68 \text{ (rounded to the nearest whole number, } k = 2)$$

This calculation indicated that every second individual from a sequentially ordered list of the population, starting from a randomly determined point, was selected. This procedure continued until the sample size of 161 was reached, ensuring a systematic and unbiased selection of participants for the study. By adhering to this methodical selection process, the research aimed to obtain a sample that was genuinely indicative of the wider community's purchasing behaviour within the FMCG sector.

3.7.4 Data Collection Instrument

The data for this study was collected using a questionnaire and was explained in the broadest sense as a collection of questions provided with several choices to answer (Taherdoost, 2022). Furthermore, it was structured into six parts: A, B, C, D, E and F. Part A asked about the respondents' demographic details while the second part asked about the consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs). Part C delved into the factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG).

Likewise, Part D focused on the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). Part E asked about consumers' preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) and Part F dealt with the solutions to the challenges of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market. Furthermore, each question in parts B, C, to F was rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with "Strongly disagree" and "Strongly agree" as the two endpoints of the scale.

3.7.5 Procedure of Data Collection

The collection of data was done using a Google Form link implying that the questionnaires designed were turned into a Google Form and shared with the participants. This process happened via their emails or contact numbers given after the study was explained to them.

This meant that using the Google form link helped all participants to easily fill out the questionnaire from different destinations which automatically made the process quicker and easier.

3.7.6 Data Analysis

All the questionnaires collected from the online Google forms were exported into the Excel sheet to commence data processing. The data is subsequently imported into the database of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 24 for further processing. In analysing the demography of the respondents, descriptive statistics of percentage and frequency were used. Also, descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to address objectives related to the consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs), the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast moving consumer goods and consumers' preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast moving consumer goods. Again, the regression analysis, such as correlation, was used to analyse the factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods in the Nigerian market.

3.7.7 Validity and Reliability

1. Validity

Validity refers to the level at which a measurement measures what it intends to measure, and there are several aspects of validity, such as face validity, content validity, construct validity and criterion validity (Ong, 2012). In the context of the current study, the face validity of the questionnaire was ideal.

Face validity refers to experts of a research subject reviewing and establishing that the questionnaire measures the construct or characteristics of interests (Bölenius et al., 2012). Thus, from the perspective of the current study, experts, including an academic in business management, a retailer (retail store managers) and a supply chain manager to look at, and examine the items (questions) in the questionnaire. Their opinions and suggestions helped to refine the questionnaire to its final state used for the data collection.

2. Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which results generated by a measurement or a procedure can be reproduced or replicated (Ong, 2012). There are three aspects of reliability, and they are internal consistency, stability and equivalence. In the context of the current study, internal consistency was ideal because of the need to ensure that the items contained in the questionnaire were accurate and homogeneous. This meant the need to ensure that items (questions) measured the intended variables, leading to reliability of the data, informed the choice.

Regarding the internal consistency approach, the study employed Cronbach's Alpha, a measure of scale reliability. Specifically, Cronbach's Alpha quantified the level of agreement on a standardised scale, where values starting from 0.7 and higher indicated an acceptable consistency, and this was the case for the current study.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Approval from the University of the West of Scotland was obtained to make sure the study matches ethical standards before starting. Likewise, individuals were provided with a consent form that clearly outlines the motive and procedures of the study and no personal information, including names, was collected to maintain anonymity.

Then again, individuals were informed that their involvement was voluntary, and they were not to receive any monetary compensation for sharing their views. This suggested that they also had the choice to turn down participation without facing any backlash. Lastly, any information from an author's work was properly paraphrased, and the author acknowledged by stating the reference.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

In the fourth chapter, the outcomes discovered from the analysis were explained and a comprehensive discussion was engaged. The results of the study along with insights from prior research endeavours were incorporated for a thorough discussion.

4.2 Demographic profile of respondents

This section provides details about respondents who participated in the study. It comprises details like gender, age, marital status and occupation.

Gender

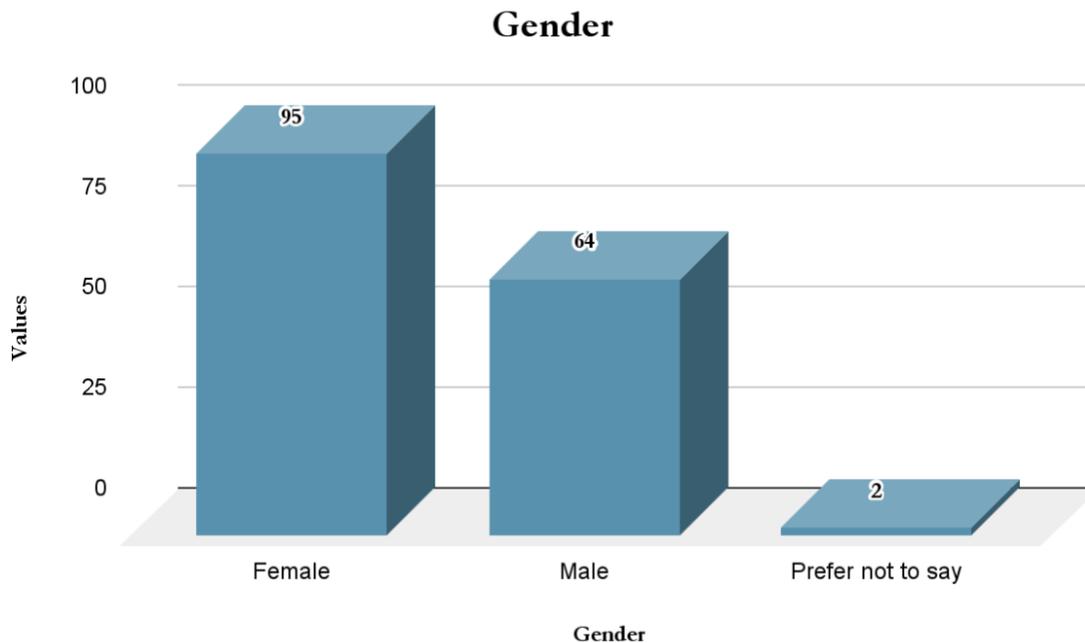


Figure 4.3: Gender

As illustrated in the Figure 4.3, the majority of respondents were female, with 95 (59.0%) participants, while males accounted for 64 (39.8%) of the sample. A small number of participants, 2 (1.2%), chose not to specify their gender. This distribution suggests that while there is a notable

predominance of female respondents, male perspectives are also significantly represented in the study.

Age Group

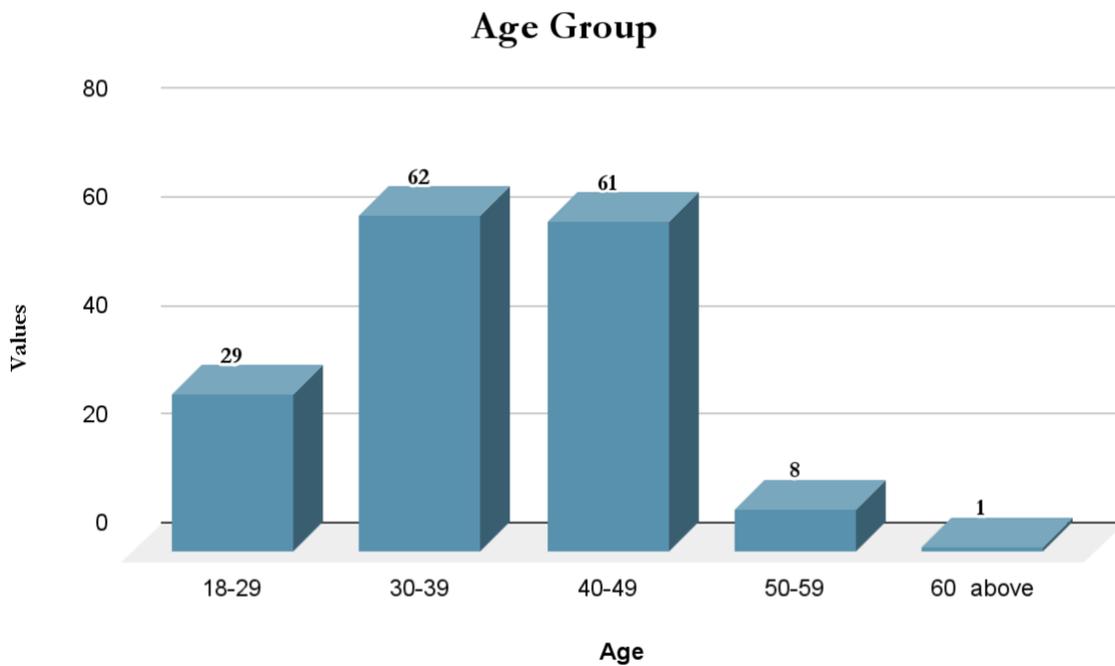


Figure 4.4: Age group

The age group with the highest representation was those between 30 – 39 years, with 62 (38.5%) respondents, followed closely by the 40 – 49 years age bracket, which included 61 (37.9%) of the participants. Younger adults, aged 18 – 29 years, were less represented, with 29 (18.0%) respondents, while older age groups, such as those aged 50 – 59 years and 60 years and above, had 8 (5.0%) and 1 (0.6%) participants, respectively.

Marital Status

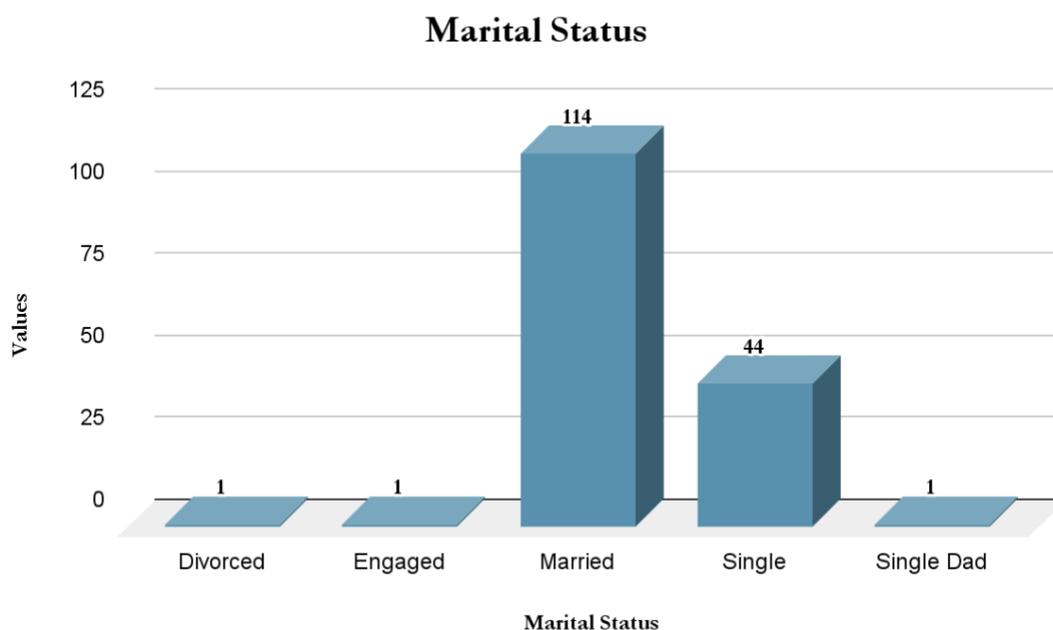


Figure 4.5: Marital status

Marital status revealed that a majority of the respondents were married, with 114 (70.8%) participants, while 44 (27.3%) were single. A very small number were divorced or engaged, each accounting for 1 (0.6%), and a single respondent was a single dad (0.6%).

Occupation

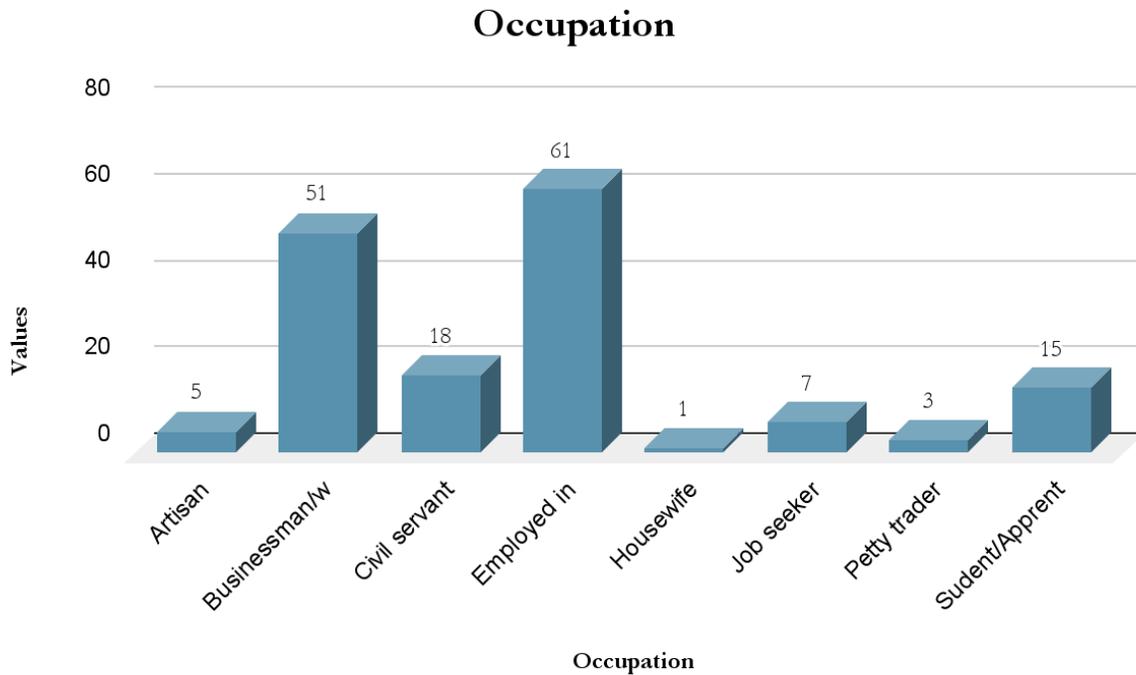


Figure 4.6: Occupation

Regarding occupation, the largest group was businessmen/women with 51 (31.7%) respondents, followed by those employed in the private sector, 61 (37.9%). Civil servants accounted for 18 (11.2%), and a smaller fraction were artisans 5 (3.1%), job seekers 7 (4.3%), petty traders 3 (1.9%), and students/apprentices 15 (9.3%). One participant was a housewife (0.6%). These figures indicate that the sample is diverse across different occupational backgrounds.

4.3 Objective one: Consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market

This segment presents the composite results of the consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market.

Table 4.1: Consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
I often choose to buy FMCGs from retail stores over other shopping channels.	161	1	5	3.76	1.104
Retail stores generally offer better promotions and deals on FMCGs than other outlets.	161	1	5	3.58	1.213
I trust the product quality at retail stores more than at informal markets.	161	1	5	3.80	1.161
I find shopping for FMCGs at retail stores more time-efficient than other methods.	161	1	5	3.78	1.140
The loyalty schemes offered by retail stores influenced my decision to shop there.	161	1	5	3.76	1.196
CPR (overall)	161	1.00	5.00	3.740	0.91200

Source: Field Data (2024)

Table 4.1 provides insights into consumers' level of patronage of retail stores within the supply chain management system for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs). The table indicates that respondents often choose to buy FMCGs from retail stores over other shopping channels, with a mean score of 3.76 and a standard deviation of 1.104. This suggests a moderately high preference for retail stores as the preferred shopping channel among participants.

Regarding promotions and deals, retail stores are perceived to generally offer better incentives than other outlets, with a mean score of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 1.213. Although this is above the neutral midpoint of the scale, the higher standard deviation suggests there is more variability in respondents' opinions on this matter.

The trust in product quality at retail stores, as compared to informal markets, is slightly higher, with a mean score of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 1.161, indicating a moderately high level of trust among consumers for retail stores.

In terms of time efficiency, shopping for FMCGs at retail stores is rated with a mean of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 1.140, showing that consumers find retail stores to be relatively time-efficient for their shopping needs.

The influence of loyalty schemes offered by retail stores has a mean score of 3.76 and a standard deviation of 1.196, which points to these schemes being a moderately influential factor in consumers' decisions to shop at retail stores.

The overall Consumer Patronage Rating (CPR), which seems to be an aggregate measure of the aforementioned factors, stands at a mean of 3.74 with a lower standard deviation of 0.912. This indicates a generally positive attitude towards patronising retail stores for FMCGs among the survey participants, with less variability compared to individual factors.

4.4 Objective two: Factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market

In the pursuit of Objective Two, which seeks to identify the factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the FMCG supply chain in Nigeria, the study employed a series of analytical steps, starting with reliability tests for key variables, followed by descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and ultimately regression analysis.

4.4.1 Reliability test for variables

This segment provides the reliability test for variables including customer service quality, product availability, pricing strategy and store location and layout.

Table 4.2: Results of Cronbach Alpha test

s/n		Coefficient	Number of items
1	Factors		
1a.	Customer Service Quality (CSQ)	0.848	4
1b.	Product Availability (PAV)	0.875	4
1c.	Pricing Strategy (PST)	0.856	4
1d.	Store Location and Layout (SLL)	0.853	4
2	Effectiveness of retail stores (ERS)	0.891	5

Source: Field Data (2024)

As shown in Table 4.2, a reliability test, employing the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, was conducted to measure the internal consistency of items related to customer service quality, product availability, pricing strategy, and store location and layout. The results indicated that all variables had coefficients above the accepted threshold of 0.7, confirming that the survey items reliably captured the constructs they were intended to measure. Specifically, the Cronbach Alpha coefficients for customer service quality (CSQ), product availability (PAV), pricing strategy (PST), and store location and layout (SLL) were 0.848, 0.875, 0.856, and 0.853, respectively, with the effectiveness of retail stores (ERS) achieving a coefficient of 0.891.

4.4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.3: Customer Service Quality

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
The staff at the retail store are always courteous and helpful.	161	1	5	3.89	1.04
I am usually satisfied with the speed of service at retail stores.	161	1	5	3.83	0.99
The retail store staff are well-informed about the products they sell.	161	1	5	3.86	1.11
Complaints and issues are resolved quickly at the retail store.	161	1	5	3.76	1.16
CSQ	161	1	5	3.83	0.89

Source: Field Data (2024)

As shown in Table 4.3, the descriptive statistics for Customer Service Quality (CSQ) indicate that respondents feel positively about the service quality in retail stores. With the mean scores for all service-related questions ranging from 3.76 to 3.89, it shows a generally favourable perception. The store staff are perceived as courteous and helpful, with a mean of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 1.04, which is the highest among the CSQ items, indicating a strong agreement on staff behaviour. The resolution of complaints and speed of service also scored positively but with a bit more variation as shown by the standard deviations.

Table 4.4: Product Availability

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
The retail store consistently has the products I want in stock.	161	1	5	3.70	1.08
There is a wide variety of products available at the retail store.	161	1	5	3.96	1.07
I can always find new and different products at the retail store.	161	1	5	3.98	1.11
The retail store frequently restocks products that are sold out.	161	1	5	3.96	1.07
PAV	161	1	5	3.90	0.92

Source: Field Data (2024)

Product Availability (PAV) also received favourable ratings, with mean scores between 3.70 and 3.98, suggesting that customers are generally satisfied with the stock levels and product range available in the stores. The availability of new and different products and frequent restocking activities scored the highest (mean of 3.98), reflecting that customers value variety and consistent supply in retail stores. The standard deviations, close to 1, indicate some variability in responses, but the overall trend is positive.

Table 4.5: Pricing Strategy

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
The prices at the retail store are competitive compared to other stores.	161	1	5	3.77	1.10
I find the promotions and discounts at the retail store to be valuable.	161	1	5	3.76	1.12
The pricing at the retail store reflects good value for money.	161	1	5	3.63	1.12
The retail store has a clear and consistent pricing strategy that I understand.	161	1	5	3.71	1.06
PST	161	1	5	3.72	0.92

Source: Field Data (2024)

The Pricing Strategy (PST) received slightly lower mean scores (3.63 to 3.77), suggesting that while customers find pricing somewhat competitive, there may be some concerns about value for money and the clarity of pricing strategies. The finding that the item "The pricing at the retail store reflects good value for money" has the lowest mean (3.63) indicates a potential area for improvement for retail stores.

Table 4.6: Store Location and Layout

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
The location of the retail store is convenient for my regular shopping needs.	161	1	5	3.94	1.05
The retail store is easily accessible by public or private transportation.	161	1	5	4.08	0.94
The layout of the retail store makes it easy to find what I am looking for.	161	1	5	4.06	1.02
The retail store is well-organised and products are displayed attractively.	161	1	5	4.18	0.97
SLL	161	1	5	4.07	0.83

Source: Field Data (2024)

The Store Location and Layout (SLL) variables were rated highly, with mean scores from 3.94 to 4.18. This shows that customers find the stores well-organised, attractively laid out, and conveniently located. The high mean score for the accessibility of the retail store (mean of 4.08) underscores the importance of location and ease of access in the customer's retail experience.

Table 4.7: Effectiveness of retail stores

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
I am generally satisfied with my shopping experiences at this retail store.	161	1	5	4.02	1.01
This retail store meets my expectations in providing high-quality FMCGs.	161	1	5	3.88	1.05
I feel that shopping at this retail store gives me value for my money.	161	1	5	3.77	1.07

Source: Field Data (2024)

The descriptive statistics for the Effectiveness of Retail Stores indicate a positive customer perception towards their shopping experiences in these establishments. With mean scores ranging from 3.77 to 4.02, it shows that customers find retail stores effective in delivering a satisfying shopping experience, meeting expectations for high-quality FMCGs, and providing value for money.

The highest mean score was observed for general satisfaction with shopping experiences at retail stores (mean of 4.02), highlighting that overall, customers are pleased with their visits. This is a crucial indicator of retail store effectiveness, as it encompasses various aspects of the shopping experience, from product selection to customer service. The retail store's ability to meet expectations in providing high-quality FMCGs received a mean score of 3.88, suggesting that customers are largely confident in the quality of products available. This reflects the importance of product quality in the overall effectiveness of retail stores. The perception of value for money offered by retail stores was rated with a mean score of 3.77. While still positive, it is slightly lower than other aspects of retail store effectiveness, indicating an area where there might be room for improvement. Ensuring customers feel they are getting good value could enhance perceptions of effectiveness even further.

4.4.3 Correlations

Table 4.8: Correlation of variables

	CSQ	PAV	PST	SLL	ERS
CSQ	1				
PAV	.692**	1			
PST	.656**	.724**	1		
SLL	.650**	.741**	.593**	1	
ERS	.696**	.751**	.744**	.762**	1

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

Source: Field Data (2024)

Table 4.8 presents the correlation matrix for the variables: Customer Service Quality (CSQ), Product Availability (PAV), Pricing Strategy (PST), Store Location and Layout (SLL), and Effectiveness of Retail Stores (ERS) in the context of retail stores within the FMCG supply chain management system. The correlation coefficients between these variables are all positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), suggesting strong relationships between each pair of factors. Specifically, the correlations range from 0.593 to 0.762, indicating moderate to strong relationships among the variables.

The correlation between CSQ and PAV is 0.692, indicating a strong positive relationship, suggesting that improvements in customer service quality are associated with better perceptions of product availability. Similarly, a strong relationship exists between PAV and PST (0.724), PAV and SLL (0.741), and particularly between PAV and ERS (0.751), highlighting the critical role of product availability in influencing pricing strategy, store location and layout, and overall retail store effectiveness. Pricing Strategy (PST) also shows significant positive correlations with CSQ (0.656), indicating that perceptions of pricing are linked with service quality. The correlation between PST and ERS (0.744) underscores the importance of pricing strategy in determining the overall effectiveness of retail stores. Store Location and Layout (SLL) is positively correlated with CSQ (0.650) and has the strongest correlation with ERS (0.762), suggesting that the convenience and appeal of the store's location and layout are crucial for enhancing the overall effectiveness of retail stores in the eyes of consumers.

Notably, the correlation values do not indicate multicollinearity, as they are not excessively high (i.e., not above 0.8). Multicollinearity would be a concern if the correlation coefficients were very high, indicating that the variables measure the same concept and thus, could not be independently used to predict the outcome variable. In this case, the variables are distinct yet related factors that together influence the effectiveness of retail stores, each contributing unique information to the model.

4.4.4 Regression Analysis

Table 4.9: Regression results

Coefficients					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.182	0.186		0.976	0.331
CSQ	0.134	0.060	0.141	2.248	0.026
PAV	0.130	0.069	0.141	1.882	0.062
PST	0.307	0.059	0.331	5.227	0.000
SLL	0.379	0.066	0.370	5.733	0.000
Model	1				
R	.855 ^a				
R Square	0.731				

Adjusted R Square	0.725				
Std. Error of the Estimate	0.44613				
F	106.247 (0.000)				

Source: Field Data (2024)

a. Dependent Variable: ERS

b. Predictors: (Constant), SLL, PST, CSQ, PAV

The results of the regression analysis in Table 4.11 aimed to assess the impact of Customer Service Quality (CSQ), Product Availability (PAV), Pricing Strategy (PST), and Store Location and Layout (SLL) on the Effectiveness of Retail Stores (ERS). The coefficient for CSQ ($\beta = 0.134$, $p = 0.026$) suggests that for every one-unit increase in Customer Service Quality, there is an associated increase of 0.134 units in the Effectiveness of Retail Stores, holding other variables constant. This relationship is statistically significant, indicating that improvements in customer service quality can positively impact retail store effectiveness.

Similarly, the coefficient for PAV ($\beta = 0.130$, $p = 0.062$) implies that enhancing product availability by one unit leads to a 0.130 unit increase in ERS, although this result approaches significance, suggesting a positive trend that may require further investigation. Pricing Strategy (PST) shows a more substantial impact ($\beta = 0.307$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that for every one-unit increase in PST, there is a corresponding increase of 0.307 units in ERS. This significant relationship highlights the critical role of pricing strategy in influencing retail store effectiveness. Store Location and Layout (SLL) presents the strongest influence ($\beta = 0.379$, $p < 0.001$), showing that a one-unit improvement in SLL is associated with a 0.379 unit increase in ERS. This underscores the importance of the physical aspects of the retail environment in enhancing store effectiveness.

The model's overall fit is indicated by an R-squared value of 0.731, suggesting that approximately 73.1% of the variance in the Effectiveness of Retail Stores can be explained by the variables in the model. The Adjusted R-squared of 0.725 adjusts for the number of predictors and confirms the model's robustness. The standard error of the estimate (0.44613) reflects the average distance that the observed values fall from the regression line, providing an estimate of the typical prediction error.

4.5 Objective three: Challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market

Table 4.10: Challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG)

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
I am discouraged from shopping at retail stores due to frequent product unavailability.	161	1	5	2.53	1.215
Poor in-store navigation and signage often make shopping at retail stores challenging.	161	1	5	2.61	1.189
I am hesitant to buy perishable FMCGs at retail stores due to concerns over freshness.	161	1	5	3.63	1.229
The absence of price transparency at retail stores affects my shopping frequency there.	161	1	5	3.86	1.112
Retail stores' limited operating hours sometimes prevent me from shopping there.	161	1	5	3.81	1.014

Source: Field Data (2024)

Table 4.10 presents the challenges consumers face when patronising retail stores for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs). The responses reveal that frequent product unavailability is a minimal challenge for shopping at retail stores, with a mean score of 2.53 and a standard deviation of 1.215. This suggests a general disagreement that this is a significant deterrent, but with some variability in responses, indicating that it might be a concern for a certain subset of customers. In-store navigation and signage issues appear to pose a minimal challenge, with a mean score of 2.61 and a standard deviation of 1.189. This indicates that while poor in-store navigation and signage can be challenging, it is not perceived as a major problem by the majority of consumers.

Hesitancy to purchase perishable FMCGs at retail stores due to freshness concerns registers a mean score of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 1.229, which leans towards the agreement, suggesting that consumers are moderately concerned about the freshness of perishable goods. Price transparency issues at retail stores appear to be a more significant challenge, with a mean score of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 1.112. This indicates that consumers are inclined to agree that the lack of clear pricing affects their shopping frequency, pointing towards a need for greater price transparency in retail stores.

Finally, limited operating hours at retail stores are a challenge for some consumers, as reflected in a mean score of 3.81 and a standard deviation of 1.014. This shows a tendency towards agreement that retail store hours can sometimes be a barrier to shopping, highlighting the importance of convenient store hours for consumers. Overall, the responses suggest that the major challenges associated with patronising retail stores include concerns over product freshness, retail stores' limited operating hours and price transparency.

4.6 Objective four: Consumers preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market

Table 4.11: Consumers preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
I feel more secure about the authenticity of FMCGs when purchasing from physical retail stores	161	1	5	3.94	1.094
I find the customer reviews on online retail stores helpful for making purchase decisions.	161	1	5	3.71	1.076
The ability to see and touch FMCGs in physical stores greatly influences my preference.	161	1	5	3.99	0.894
I am more likely to buy FMCGs on impulse when shopping at physical retail stores.	161	1	5	3.73	1.055
The immediate availability of products at physical retail stores is a decisive factor for me.	161	1	5	4.16	0.884
CPP (Overall)	161	1.2	5	3.86	0.762

Source: Field Data (2024)

Table 4.11 explores consumers' preferences regarding purchasing from online versus physical retail stores within the supply chain management system for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs). The findings indicate that consumers feel more secure about the authenticity of FMCGs when purchasing from physical retail stores, with a mean score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 1.094. This suggests a strong preference for physical stores in terms of perceived product authenticity. Customer reviews on online retail stores are considered somewhat helpful for making purchase decisions, with a mean score of 3.71 and a standard deviation of 1.076.

This indicates a positive but more moderate reliance on online reviews when shopping. The sensory experience of being able to see and touch FMCGs in physical stores has a significant influence on consumer preference, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.99 and a standard deviation of 0.894. This is one of the higher mean scores, suggesting that the tangible aspect of shopping in physical stores is highly valued.

Impulse buying seems to be more likely in physical retail stores, with a mean score of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 1.055, pointing to a moderate tendency among consumers to make spontaneous purchases in this setting.

The immediate availability of products in physical retail stores is considered a critical factor by consumers, as shown by the highest mean score of 4.16 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.884. This underscores the importance of product availability in influencing consumers' shopping preferences. The overall Consumer Preference of Purchase (CPP) score, which is a composite measure of the factors, has a mean of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 0.762. This overall score reflects a generally positive consumer preference for physical retail stores over online stores, with lower variability indicating more consensus among respondents on this preference.

4.7 Discussions

This section discusses the findings obtained from the study on effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) with reference to the research objectives.

4.7.1 Objective one: Consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market

As shown in the findings, there are insights into the preferences of consumers and their perceptions regarding retail stores as their main source for purchasing goods. The findings show that consumers prefer retail stores for their purchase of fast-moving consumer goods, as demonstrated by moderately high mean score of 3.74 along with the standard deviation of 0.912.

In other words, the level of patronage of retail stores is neither excessive nor low, which are due to factors, such as promotion and deals, trust in product quality at retail stores, time efficiency and loyalty schemes.

Regarding promotion and deals, which are temporary campaigns that seek to increase interests or demands (Ardizzone and Mortara, 2014), the findings show that retail stores offer better incentives (promotions and deals) in that aspect compared to other stores or outlets. However, the standard deviation of 1.213 shows that there is a difference in the opinions of the consumers, indicating a need for retailers to adapt their strategies to address the needs and preferences of their consumers. The same is true for loyalty schemes, which can be one of these promotional strategies. In the findings, the mean score of 3.76 shows that the loyalty schemes, which are special incentives (discounts, offer rewards) offered by retailers to attract customers (Dorotic et al., 2012), are fairly influential. In the case of trust, the findings show that consumers demonstrate a high level of trust in the quality of products found in retail stores, as evidenced by the mean score of 3.80. This shows how important it is for retail stores to maintain high standards when it comes to their products, as it is one of the ways to maintain the trust of their consumers. Furthermore, the mean score of 3.78 shows that the time efficiency of retail stores is one of the reasons that influence patronage by consumers.

Overall, the findings show that the level of patronage of retail stores is within reasonable limits, which is comparable to the studies by Latheera and Rajangam (2020), and Almotairi (2021). In these studies (Latheera and Rajangam, 2020; Almotairi, 2021), they reveal that the patronage of fast-moving consumer goods in retail stores is high, showing the importance of retail stores, especially in terms of meeting the needs and preferences of consumers. Thus, there is a need for retailers to optimise various aspects of the operations to improve shopping experiences and ensure loyalty among consumers.

4.7.2 Objective two: Factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market

The current study delves into the crucial factors contributing to the effectiveness of retail stores in the FMCG supply chain within the Nigerian market. It employs a quantitative analysis to unravel the impact of Customer Service Quality (CSQ), Product Availability (PAV), Pricing Strategy (PST), and Store Location and Layout (SLL) on the Effectiveness of Retail Stores (ERS). The regression analysis highlights the significant influence of these factors, with Pricing Strategy and Store Location and Layout emerging as the most impactful elements.

Comparing these findings with insights from Neboh and Mbhele (2020), Wakasala (2020), there is a notable convergence on the significance of factors, such as technological advancement, strategic collaboration and a comprehensive understanding of customer needs and behaviours. The identified factors from the findings are in line with the broader literature, reinforcing the critical role of these elements in enhancing retail store effectiveness within the supply chain.

The Resource-Based View (RBV) and the Supply Chain Integration Theory provide a theoretical underpinning that enriches the interpretation of these findings. From the RBV perspective, the effectiveness of retail stores can be viewed as a direct outcome of leveraging unique resources—be it in terms of customer service, product assortment, pricing mechanisms, or the strategic location and design of the retail space. These resources, when effectively managed, constitute a formidable source of competitive advantage that can significantly elevate a retail store's position in the market.

Conversely, the Supply Chain Integration Theory sheds light on how the integration of these factors facilitates a more cohesive and responsive supply chain. The theory underscores the importance of a harmonised approach, where pricing strategies are consistent with customer expectations, product availability is managed efficiently, and the store's location and layout are optimised for customer convenience and satisfaction. The significant coefficients for PST ($\beta = 0.307$) and SLL ($\beta = 0.379$) in the regression analysis underscore the efficacy of strategic pricing and well-considered store layout in achieving higher levels of retail store effectiveness, reflecting the theory's emphasis on integration for optimal performance.

Furthermore, the insights from Qehaja and Pula (2016), along with Sarker and Rahman (2020), highlight that beyond the quantitative measures of store effectiveness, qualitative aspects such as customer service excellence, strategic supplier relationships, and agile supply chain practices play a pivotal role. These elements echo the broader findings of the current study, suggesting that effectiveness is not solely the product of operational strategies but also of the quality of interactions and relationships within the supply chain.

The comparison of the study's results with international findings indicates that, regardless of geographical location, the core principles governing retail store effectiveness in the FMCG sector remain consistent. This universality underscores the critical nature of understanding and implementing strategies that resonate with these foundational factors. In conclusion, this study underscores the multifaceted nature of retail store effectiveness in the FMCG supply chain, highlighting the paramount importance of customer service quality, product availability, pricing strategy, and store location and layout. By leveraging theoretical frameworks such as the RBV and Supply Chain Integration Theory, it provides a nuanced understanding of how these factors interplay to enhance retail effectiveness. The findings not only align with existing literature but also offer practical insights for retail managers aiming to optimize their operations within the Nigerian market and beyond. In essence, the effectiveness of retail stores in the FMCG supply chain is a complex construct that demands a holistic and integrated approach, blending operational excellence with strategic foresight and customer-centric practices.

4.7.3 Objective three: To identify the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market

The investigation into the challenges faced by consumers when patronising retail stores for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market reveals significant insights that mirror broader concerns in the global retail landscape. The empirical data presented in Table 4.11 highlights key areas of consumer discontent, including concerns over product freshness, price transparency, and limited operating hours. These findings, juxtaposed with insights from international studies such as those by Ray and Pati (2016) and Akhil and Krishnanunni (2020), underscore a universal set of challenges that transcend geographical boundaries, albeit with local differences.

The concerns articulated by Nigerian consumers regarding product availability and in-store navigation resonate with global trends where retail environments are increasingly scrutinised for their ability to meet consumer demands for convenience and efficiency. Notably, the emphasis on price transparency and freshness of perishables aligns with the growing consumer preference for transparent, ethical, and sustainable shopping experiences. These findings underscore a critical reflection of the FMCG retail sector's adaptation to evolving consumer expectations, where the clarity of product information and assurance of quality are paramount.

The theoretical frameworks of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and the Supply Chain Integration Theory provide a nuanced lens through which to analyse these challenges. Through the RBV perspective, the issues identified can be seen as indicative of resource gaps within retail stores' operational and strategic frameworks. For instance, the challenge of ensuring product freshness and availability may point towards deficiencies in inventory management and supplier relations – key resources that are integral to a retail store's competitive advantage. Conversely, concerns over price transparency and limited operating hours may reflect inadequacies in customer relationship management and service delivery models, suggesting areas where strategic resource allocation could significantly enhance retail effectiveness.

From the Supply Chain Integration Theory viewpoint, the challenges highlighted by the study signal integration flaws within the broader FMCG supply chain. This theory underscores the importance of seamless coordination and information flow between various supply chain entities to optimise operational efficiency and responsiveness to consumer needs.

The identified issues, such as poor in-store navigation and the hesitance to purchase perishables due to freshness concerns, point towards a need for improved supply chain integration. Enhanced collaboration between retailers, suppliers, and logistics providers could mitigate these challenges, ensuring timely restocking, maintaining product quality, and ultimately, elevating the consumer shopping experience.

Drawing parallels with the international findings, it is evident that the challenges of retailing FMCGs are not unique to the Nigerian market. For instance, the struggle with counterfeit goods, as highlighted in studies from India and Kosovo, mirrors the underlying issue of trust and authenticity that Nigerian consumers face. This universal challenge underscores the critical need for robust supply chain management and transparency mechanisms to build consumer confidence across markets. In conclusion, this study sheds light on the multifaceted challenges consumers encounter when patronising retail stores for FMCGs in Nigeria, echoing concerns that are prevalent in the global retail sector. By leveraging the insights from the RBV and Supply Chain Integration Theory, retail managers and policymakers can address these challenges through strategic resource allocation and enhanced supply chain collaboration. The findings from both the Nigerian context and international studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the retail challenges in the FMCG sector, offering a blueprint for improving operational effectiveness and customer satisfaction.

The convergence of these challenges and potential strategies highlights the universal nature of retailing difficulties and the global pursuit of retail excellence in the FMCG sector.

4.7.4 Objective Four: Consumer Preference of Purchase Between Online Retail Stores or Physical Retail Stores in the FMCG Sector in Nigeria

The study's exploration into consumer preferences between online and physical retail stores within the Nigerian fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector unveils intriguing insights that illuminate the nuanced consumer behaviors in the digital age. The empirical data, revealing a pronounced preference for physical stores, underscores the enduring value of tangibility and immediate product access in the purchasing process of FMCGs. This inclination towards physical stores is evidenced by the high mean scores, particularly in aspects concerning the security about the authenticity of FMCGs (mean=3.94), the tactile experience of products (mean=3.99), and the immediacy of product availability (mean=4.16).

These findings resonate with the assertions of Vijaya et al. (2020) and Mofokeng and Tan (2021), who underscored factors like brand name, price consciousness, perceived security, and product variety as determinants of shopping medium preference. Interestingly, while these studies highlighted the drivers behind online shopping, the current study delineates a clear preference for physical stores among Nigerian consumers, spotlighting the cultural and market-specific nuances that influence shopping behaviors.

In bridging these findings with theoretical frameworks, the Resource-Based View (RBV) and the Supply Chain Integration Theory provide profound lenses through which to examine the observed consumer preferences. From an RBV perspective, physical retail stores appear to leverage their unique resources—tangible product access, immediate availability, and sensory experience—to cultivate a competitive edge. These resources are instrumental in building consumer trust and satisfaction, thereby enhancing the stores' market position.

Conversely, the Supply Chain Integration Theory, which emphasizes the seamless coordination across the supply chain for optimized performance, suggests a rationale for the consumer preference for physical stores.

This theory posits that the integration of retail operations, including inventory management and customer service, contributes significantly to the effectiveness of physical stores. The immediate product availability and the ability to physically inspect goods before purchase, as preferred by the consumers, highlight the successful integration of retail operations that online platforms may not replicate to the same extent, particularly in the context of perishable and everyday consumer goods.

The preference for physical stores, despite the convenience and breadth of options offered online, also speaks to the challenges inherent in the online shopping experience. Issues of payment security, privacy concerns, and the impersonal nature of online transactions, as highlighted by Nagbadia (2021), might deter consumers from fully embracing online retail for FMCGs. This is further compounded by the high value placed on product authenticity and quality, which consumers feel more assured of in a physical retail environment. However, the moderate reliance on online customer reviews (mean=3.71) indicates an area where online retail stores could augment the physical shopping experience.

By fostering a digital ecosystem where consumers can access reliable product information and reviews, physical stores can blend the benefits of online shopping with the tangibility and immediacy of in-store purchases.

In conclusion, this study underscores the multifaceted dynamics influencing consumer preferences in the FMCG sector in Nigeria, revealing a pronounced inclination towards physical retail stores. This preference is anchored in the tangible, immediate, and secure nature of the shopping experience in physical outlets. Leveraging the RBV and Supply Chain Integration Theory, the findings suggest that physical stores' unique resources and integrated retail operations are crucial in attracting and retaining consumers. However, the insights gleaned also highlight an opportunity for physical stores to incorporate digital tools to enhance consumer engagement and satisfaction. As the retail landscape continues to evolve, the integration of physical and digital retail strategies will be paramount in catering to the complex preferences and demands of today's consumers.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary and conclusion of the findings based on the objectives of the study on effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) with reference to the research objectives. Further, this chapter presents the necessary recommendations based on the findings obtained.

5.2 Summary

Generally, the study examined the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market with reference to the research objectives. Specifically, to achieve this objective, the study ascertained consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs), the factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and the challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). Also, the study determined consumers' preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs).

Further, the study employed quantitative research methods for the collection and analysis of data based on the objectives. For data collection, the study employed a questionnaire to collect data from 161 respondents who patronised and purchased fast-moving consumer goods from the Ikeja Local Government Area of Lagos state. Thereafter, the study utilised descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, including correlation and regression for the analysis of data obtained from the respondents.

Following the analysis, the study arrived at these findings based on the objectives of the study:

Consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs)

The study revealed that consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) was moderately high.

Factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs)

The study revealed that despite other factors, such as customer service quality and product availability, the most significant factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) were pricing strategy, and store location and layout.

Challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG)

The study identified concerns over product freshness, price transparency, and limited operating hours as the main challenges associated with patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs).

Consumers' preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs)

Finally, the study revealed that consumers preferred physical stores for purchase of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs).

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods is neither excessive nor low. In other words, the patronage is high, but moderate.

Also, the study concludes that the factors responsible for this moderately high level of patronage and subsequent effectiveness of retail stores are pricing strategy, and store location and layout. However, there are several challenges that may disrupt this effectiveness. But in the context of this study, the main challenges are concerns over product freshness, price transparency, and limited operating hours.

Finally, the study concludes that consumers prefer physical retail stores, and the enduring value of tangibility and immediate product access in the purchasing process of FMCGs are the reasons for this preference or choice over online retail stores.

5.4 Recommendation

Based on the findings on effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market with reference to the research objectives, the study presents the following recommendations:

1. From the findings, pricing strategy is one of the significant factors that affect the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods. Thus, there is a need to enhance pricing strategy, and to do so, the study recommends regular cost analysis and market research to understand the behaviours of consumers, and adjust the prices of products accordingly.
2. Also, from the findings, there are concerns about the freshness of products. The study recommends that retailers focus on effective inventory management practices, such as implementing an effective stock rotation system to help monitor the expiration dates of the products. This helps to reduce waste and ensure the freshness of products.
3. In the findings, limited operating hours was also an issue associated with the patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods. Thus,

to address this problem, the study recommends an extension to operating hours to accommodate the different schedules of the customer base.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of the above-named institution currently researching the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market in partial fulfilment of an award of MSc in Logistics and Supply Chain Management. Your response to this questionnaire is strictly for academic purposes and as such will be treated with the utmost confidence and privacy it deserves.

Thank you.

SECTION A: Demography

1. Gender:

a. Male () b. Female () c. Prefer not to say ()

2. Age:

a. 18-29 years () b. 30 – 39 years () c. 40 – 49 years () d. 50-59 years () e. 60 years and above ()

3. Marital Status:

a. Single () b. Married () c. others (please specify).....

4. Occupation:

a. Civil servant () b. Employed in the private sector () c. Businessman/woman () d. Artisan () e. Petty trader () f. Housewife () g. Student/Apprentice () h. Job seeker ()

SECTION B: Consumers' level of patronage of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market

For each statement (CPR1 to CPR5), please indicate your level of agreement using the provided scale. The scale ranges from 1 to 5, where: 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Code	Consumers level of patronage of retail stores	1	2	3	4	5
CPR1	I often choose to buy FMCGs from retail stores over other shopping channels.					
CPR2	Retail stores generally offer better promotions and deals on FMCGs than other outlets.					
CPR3	I trust the product quality at retail stores more than at informal markets.					
CPR4	I find shopping for FMCGs at retail stores more time-efficient than other methods.					
CPR5	The loyalty schemes offered by retail stores influenced my decision to shop there.					

Section C: The factors responsible for the effectiveness of retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market

For each statement, please indicate your level of agreement using the provided scale. The scale ranges from 1 to 5, where: 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Code	Effectiveness of Retail Stores Factors	1	2	3	4	5
	Customer Service Quality					
CSQ1	The staff at the retail store are always courteous and helpful.					
CSQ2	I am usually satisfied with the speed of service at retail stores.					
CSQ3	The retail store staff are well-informed about the products they sell.					
CSQ4	Complaints and issues are resolved quickly at the retail store.					
	Product Availability:	1	2	3	4	5
PAV1	The retail store consistently has the products I want in stock.					
PAV2	There is a wide variety of products available at the retail store.					
PAV3	I can always find new and different products at the retail store.					
PAV4	The retail store frequently restocks products that are sold out.					
	Pricing Strategy:	1	2	3	4	5
PST1	The prices at the retail store are competitive compared to other stores.					
PST2	I find the promotions and discounts at the retail store to be valuable.					
PST3	The pricing at the retail store reflects good value for money.					
PST4	The retail store has a clear and consistent pricing strategy that I understand.					
	Store Location and Layout:	1	2	3	4	5
SLL1	The location of the retail store is convenient for my regular shopping needs.					
SLL2	The retail store is easily accessible by public or private transportation.					
SLL3	The layout of the retail store makes it easy to find what I am looking for.					
SLL4	The retail store is well-organised and products are displayed attractively.					

For each statement, please indicate your level of agreement using the provided scale. The scale ranges from 1 to 5, where: Scale: 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

code	Effectiveness of retail stores	1	2	3	4	5
ERS1	I am generally satisfied with my shopping experiences at this retail store.					
ERS2	This retail store meets my expectations in providing high-quality FMCGs.					
ERS3	I feel that shopping at this retail store gives me value for my money.					
ERS4	I would recommend this retail store to friends and family due to its effectiveness.					
ERS5	The overall shopping environment at this retail store is superior to others I have visited.					

Section D: The challenges of patronising retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in the Nigerian market

For each statement, please indicate your level of agreement using the provided scale. The scale ranges from 1 to 5, where: 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

code		1	2	3	4	5
CHA L1	I am discouraged from shopping at retail stores due to frequent product unavailability.					
CHA L2	Poor in-store navigation and signage often make shopping at retail stores challenging.					
CHA L3	I am hesitant to buy perishable FMCGs at retail stores due to concerns over freshness.					
CHA L4	The absence of price transparency at retail stores affects my shopping frequency there.					

CHA L5	Retail stores' limited operating hours sometimes prevent me from shopping there.					
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Section E: Consumers' preference of purchase between online retail stores or physical retail stores in the supply chain management system of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) in the Nigerian market

For each statement, please indicate your level of agreement using the provided scale. The scale ranges from 1 to 5, where: 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

code		1	2	3	4	5
CPP1	I feel more secure about the authenticity of FMCGs when purchasing from physical retail stores.					
CPP2	I find the customer reviews on online retail stores helpful for making purchase decisions.					
CPP3	The ability to see and touch FMCGs in physical stores greatly influences my preference.					
CPP4	I am more likely to buy FMCGs on impulse when shopping at physical retail stores.					
CPP5	The immediate availability of products at physical retail stores is a decisive factor for me.					