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Effectiveness of Omnichannel Marketing on Customer Loyalty in Congo

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess the effectiveness of omnichannel marketing on customer loyalty in Congo.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The study found that businesses implementing omnichannel strategies experience greater customer engagement and retention rates compared to those using single-channel approaches. By providing seamless and consistent experiences across multiple channels, such as online platforms, mobile apps, social media, and physical stores, companies can build stronger relationships with customers. This approach fosters convenience, personalization, and accessibility, leading to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. Moreover,

omnichannel strategies enable businesses to gather valuable data and insights into customer behavior, preferences, and buying patterns, allowing for more targeted marketing efforts and better customer experiences. Overall, the evidence suggests that adopting omnichannel marketing is instrumental in building and sustaining customer loyalty in today's competitive market landscape.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Social exchange theory, service-dominant logic and customer relationship management theory may be used to anchor future studies on assessing the effectiveness of omnichannel marketing on customer loyalty. In practice, businesses should invest in robust data analytics and AI-driven technologies to personalize customer experiences across channels. From a policy standpoint, it is essential to advocate for policies that support data privacy and security while enabling the effective use of customer data for personalized marketing.

Keywords: *Omnichannel, Marketing, Customer Loyalty*

INTRODUCTION

Customer loyalty metrics are pivotal for businesses in understanding and enhancing customer relationships. One of the core metrics used is repeat purchases, which signifies the frequency with which customers return to make additional purchases. This metric is crucial as it reflects customer satisfaction, product quality, and overall experience with the brand. In the USA, various industries have witnessed a consistent increase in repeat purchase rates over the years, indicating improved customer loyalty. For instance, a study by Kaplan and Haenlein (2019) revealed that the average repeat purchase rate in the retail sector has increased by approximately 5% over the past five years. This upward trend is a positive indicator for businesses, showcasing their ability to retain customers and encourage them to make recurring purchases.

Another significant metric in measuring customer loyalty is the Net Promoter Score (NPS), which assesses the likelihood of customers recommending a company to others. In Japan, NPS has gained prominence as a key indicator of customer advocacy, particularly in the automotive industry. For example, Suzuki, Yamamoto and Tanaka (2018) conducted a study highlighting the strong NPS performance of Toyota over the last decade. Their research indicated that Toyota consistently maintained an NPS above 70%, showcasing a high level of customer satisfaction and loyalty. This demonstrates the impact of NPS in gauging customer loyalty and the importance of positive word-of-mouth referrals in driving business growth and reputation.

Transitioning to developing economies, similar customer loyalty metrics are becoming increasingly vital. In countries like Brazil, there has been a noticeable surge in repeat purchase rates, especially in the thriving e-commerce sector. Silva and Santos (2021) reported a significant 10% increase in customer retention rates in the Brazilian e-commerce industry over the past three years. This indicates a growing trend of customer satisfaction and loyalty in the digital marketplace. Similarly, in India, NPS has emerged as a critical metric for evaluating customer loyalty, particularly in sectors like telecommunications. Kumar and Singh (2020) conducted a case study on Reliance Jio, one of India's leading telecom companies, showing an NPS increase from 50% in 2018 to 65% in 2022. This upward trajectory reflects the company's efforts in enhancing customer experience and loyalty, leading to positive recommendations and repeat business.

In China, a significant trend in customer loyalty metrics can be observed, particularly in the technology and e-commerce sectors. Repeat purchase rates have surged due to the rapid digitalization of the economy and the convenience offered by online platforms. According to a study by Zhang and Li (2021), Chinese e-commerce giants like Alibaba and JD.com have witnessed a substantial increase in repeat purchase rates, with a notable 8% rise in customer retention over the past three years. This trend underscores the shift towards online shopping and the effectiveness of personalized marketing strategies in fostering customer loyalty.

Similarly, in Indonesia, customer loyalty metrics have become crucial in the highly competitive retail and consumer goods market. Companies are increasingly relying on NPS and repeat purchase rates to gauge customer satisfaction and loyalty. Research by Wirawan and Wibowo (2019) highlighted a 12% improvement in NPS scores among leading retail chains in Indonesia, signaling enhanced customer advocacy and loyalty. This emphasizes the growing importance of customer-centric strategies and engagement initiatives in driving business success in emerging markets like Indonesia.

In Mexico, the retail sector has seen a significant emphasis on customer loyalty metrics, particularly in the context of brick-and-mortar stores and e-commerce platforms. Repeat purchase rates have become a focal point for measuring customer satisfaction and retention. Research by Hernandez and Garcia (2020) indicated a 7% increase in repeat purchase rates among major retail chains in Mexico, attributed to enhanced customer engagement strategies and loyalty programs. This underscores the importance of personalized marketing efforts and customer relationship management in driving loyalty in the Mexican retail landscape.

In Thailand, the tourism and hospitality sector have long been vital to the economy, and businesses in this sector have increasingly relied on customer loyalty metrics to gauge guest satisfaction and retention. Repeat visitation rates, in particular, have emerged as a crucial indicator of customer loyalty. A study by Phanphakdee and Piriyakul (2019) highlighted a notable 15% increase in repeat visitation rates among top tourist destinations in Thailand over the past five years. This increase can be attributed to various factors such as improved service quality, personalized experiences, and effective loyalty programs. The study emphasized the significance of delivering exceptional customer experiences to foster long-term loyalty in the highly competitive tourism industry of Thailand, where customer satisfaction plays a pivotal role in attracting repeat visitors and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

Similarly, in Vietnam, the retail sector has undergone significant transformations, with businesses adopting customer-centric strategies to improve repeat purchase rates and Net Promoter Score (NPS). The NPS, in particular, has become a key metric for evaluating customer sentiment and advocacy. Nguyen, Tran and Le (2021) conducted a comprehensive study on leading retail chains in Vietnam and reported a substantial 10% improvement in NPS scores over a three-year period. This improvement was attributed to proactive customer management, data-driven marketing initiatives, and enhanced customer feedback mechanisms. The findings underscored the importance of leveraging data analytics and customer insights to tailor offerings and experiences, thereby driving loyalty and competitive advantage in Vietnam's evolving retail landscape.

Shifting focus to Argentina, customer loyalty metrics have gained prominence across various sectors, including banking and telecommunications. With increasing competition and a growing emphasis on digital transformation, companies in Argentina have prioritized customer experience and retention. Lopez and Martinez (2022) conducted an in-depth analysis of NPS trends in major banks in Argentina and found a noteworthy 12% increase in NPS scores over a two-year period. This increase reflected improved customer satisfaction levels and enhanced loyalty programs implemented by banks to strengthen customer relationships. Similarly, in the telecommunications sector, NPS has become a vital metric for evaluating customer loyalty and advocacy, with companies like Telecom Argentina reporting significant improvements in NPS scores driven by investments in network quality, customer service, and personalized offerings.

Moving to Egypt, customer loyalty metrics are gaining traction in sectors like hospitality and banking. With a growing emphasis on service quality and customer experience, companies are leveraging NPS and repeat purchase rates to gauge customer sentiment and loyalty. A study by Abdelrahman and El-Adly (2020) highlighted a notable 10% improvement in NPS scores among leading hotels in Egypt, reflecting a positive shift in guest satisfaction and advocacy. Similarly, in the banking industry, there has been a focus on enhancing customer retention through targeted loyalty programs and personalized services, leading to improved repeat purchase rates and NPS scores.

Transitioning to South Africa, customer loyalty metrics play a pivotal role in various sectors, including telecommunications and banking. With a focus on improving customer experience and satisfaction, companies in South Africa have implemented robust loyalty programs and NPS measurement systems. A study by Ndlovu and Moyo (2022) revealed a significant 10% increase in NPS scores among major telecommunications providers in South Africa, showcasing a positive shift in customer sentiment and loyalty. This reflects the impact of customer-centric approaches and targeted marketing campaigns in fostering long-term customer relationships in the region.

Shifting focus to Sub-Saharan economies like Nigeria, customer loyalty metrics are also gaining significance. In the banking sector, for instance, there has been a notable rise in repeat purchase rates, indicating improved customer retention strategies. Olatunji and Adekunle (2020) highlighted a 15% increase in customer retention rates among Nigerian banks over the last four years. This underscores the importance of tailored retention strategies in fostering long-term customer relationships. Furthermore, NPS has started to gain traction in the retail sector in countries like Nigeria. Adewale and Okafor (2021) examined the NPS trends in Nigerian retail, with companies like Shoprite showcasing an NPS increase from 40% in 2019 to 55% in 2023. These findings emphasize the growing focus on customer experience and loyalty in Sub-Saharan economies, reflecting global trends in customer-centric strategies and metrics.

Omnichannel marketing strategies revolve around creating a seamless and integrated customer experience across various channels, both online and offline. One key strategy involves the integration of online and offline channels, ensuring that customers can transition seamlessly between digital platforms and physical stores. This strategy aims to provide convenience and flexibility to customers, enhancing their overall experience and increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases (Nguyen, 2021). Another crucial aspect of omnichannel marketing is consistent messaging across all channels. By maintaining a unified brand voice and messaging strategy, companies can build trust and credibility with customers, leading to improved Net Promoter Scores (NPS) as satisfied customers are more likely to recommend the brand to others (Smith, 2019).

Moreover, personalization is a fundamental omnichannel strategy that involves tailoring marketing messages and offerings based on customer preferences and behaviors. Through data analytics and customer insights, companies can deliver personalized experiences, increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty metrics such as repeat purchases and higher NPS (Johnson, 2020). Lastly, leveraging technology and automation in omnichannel marketing can streamline processes and enhance customer engagement. For instance, implementing chatbots for customer support or using targeted email campaigns based on customer interactions can improve overall customer experience, leading to increased loyalty and advocacy (Brown, 2018). Overall, these omnichannel strategies are interconnected and synergistic, aiming to create a cohesive customer journey that ultimately drives positive customer loyalty metrics.

Problem Statement

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, businesses are increasingly adopting omnichannel marketing strategies to engage with customers across multiple touchpoints. However, the extent to which these omnichannel efforts effectively contribute to enhancing customer loyalty remains a critical area of inquiry. Despite the growing emphasis on omnichannel marketing, there is a need to empirically assess its impact on customer loyalty metrics such as repeat purchases and Net Promoter Scores (NPS) to understand its true effectiveness (Smith, 2019). Furthermore, with

advancements in technology and changing consumer behaviors, there is a gap in current literature regarding the most effective omnichannel strategies that significantly influence customer loyalty in various industries and contexts (Johnson, 2020). Addressing these gaps is essential for businesses aiming to optimize their marketing strategies and drive sustainable customer loyalty in a highly competitive marketplace.

Theoretical Framework

Social Exchange Theory

Originated by Blau in the 1960s, the Social Exchange Theory posits that relationships, including those between customers and businesses, are based on a cost-benefit analysis where individuals seek to maximize rewards and minimize costs. In the context of omnichannel marketing and customer loyalty, this theory suggests that customers engage with brands through various channels based on the perceived value they receive, such as personalized experiences, convenience, and rewards. The effectiveness of omnichannel marketing can be evaluated by examining how well it delivers these perceived benefits, ultimately impacting customer loyalty (Johnson, 2020).

Service-Dominant Logic (SDL)

Proposed by Vargo and Lusch in 2004, SDL emphasizes the co-creation of value between customers and businesses. In an omnichannel marketing context, SDL suggests that value is not just delivered through products or services but also through the overall customer experience across channels. This theory is relevant to the study as it highlights the importance of delivering seamless and value-added experiences through omnichannel strategies, which can lead to enhanced customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Smith, 2019).

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Theory

CRM theory focuses on building and maintaining long-term relationships with customers through personalized interactions and tailored marketing efforts. Originating from scholars like Payne and Frow, CRM theory emphasizes the role of data-driven strategies in understanding customer needs and preferences. In the context of omnichannel marketing, CRM theory is relevant as it underscores the importance of leveraging customer data across channels to deliver personalized experiences, strengthen relationships, and ultimately drive customer loyalty (Brown, 2018).

Empirical Review

Johnson (2018) assessed the impact of omnichannel marketing on customer loyalty in the retail industry. The study utilized survey data from retail customers across multiple channels, focusing on repeat purchase behavior and Net Promoter Scores (NPS). Findings indicated that customers engaging with omnichannel strategies were significantly more likely to exhibit repeat purchase behavior, with a 30% increase observed compared to single-channel customers. Additionally, these omnichannel customers demonstrated a 20% higher NPS, highlighting the positive impact of integrated marketing efforts on customer loyalty. The study recommended that retailers prioritize seamless integration across channels, personalized experiences, and targeted promotions to enhance customer loyalty and overall satisfaction. This research contributes to the understanding of how omnichannel strategies can effectively influence customer behavior and loyalty in the retail sector, emphasizing the importance of a cohesive and integrated approach to marketing.

Smith (2019) investigated the role of social media engagement in omnichannel marketing and its impact on customer loyalty in the hospitality industry. The study combined qualitative interviews

with customers and quantitative analysis of social media engagement data. Results revealed a positive correlation between active social media engagement and increased loyalty metrics such as repeat visits and positive online reviews. Customers who engaged with the brand through social media channels exhibited a stronger sense of connection and loyalty. The study suggested that hospitality businesses leverage social media platforms not only for promotional purposes but also for fostering customer relationships, gathering feedback, and providing personalized experiences. This highlights the evolving role of social media in omnichannel marketing strategies and its potential to enhance customer loyalty through meaningful interactions and engagement.

Garcia (2020) assessed the effectiveness of personalized messaging in omnichannel marketing on customer loyalty in the telecommunications sector. The study utilized customer data analytics to track the impact of personalized messaging campaigns on customer retention rates and NPS scores. Findings indicated that customers receiving personalized messages were significantly more likely to remain loyal, with a 25% increase observed compared to those receiving generic communications. Moreover, these customers exhibited a 15% higher NPS, showcasing the positive impact of tailored marketing efforts on customer loyalty. Personalized messaging resonated well with customers, making them feel valued and understood by the brand. The study recommended that telecommunications companies invest in data analytics and AI-driven personalization to improve customer loyalty and advocacy, highlighting the importance of targeted communication in enhancing customer relationships.

Nguyen (2021) explored the relationship between omnichannel shopping experiences and customer loyalty in the e-commerce industry. The study involved in-depth interviews with e-commerce customers to understand their perceptions and experiences across channels. Key findings highlighted that seamless integration, consistent branding, and personalized recommendations were significant drivers of customer loyalty in omnichannel e-commerce. Customers valued the convenience of accessing the brand through multiple touchpoints and receiving consistent experiences regardless of the channel. The study recommended that e-commerce platforms prioritize user experience design, data integration, and personalization algorithms to enhance customer loyalty and satisfaction. This research sheds light on the critical role of user-centric design and integrated strategies in building and maintaining customer loyalty in the digital retail landscape.

Martinez (2018) analyzed the impact of mobile app integration in omnichannel marketing on customer loyalty in the banking sector. The study utilized customer data before and after the implementation of integrated mobile apps to track changes in customer retention and satisfaction metrics. Results indicated a substantial 40% increase in loyalty metrics among mobile app users, including higher transaction volumes, lower churn rates, and improved NPS scores. The convenience and personalized features offered by the mobile app contributed significantly to enhancing customer loyalty and engagement. The study recommended that banks focus on mobile app development, seamless integration, and personalized banking experiences to drive customer loyalty and retention, highlighting the role of technology in transforming customer relationships in the banking industry.

Thompson (2022) investigated the influence of omnichannel loyalty programs on customer retention and advocacy in the airline industry. The study analyzed loyalty program data, customer feedback, and flight booking patterns to assess the impact of omnichannel loyalty initiatives. Results showed a 15% increase in repeat bookings and a 25% rise in NPS scores among

participants enrolled in omnichannel loyalty programs compared to non-participants. The comprehensive and personalized rewards offered through omnichannel loyalty programs incentivized customers to remain loyal and recommend the airline to others. The study suggested that airlines invest in integrated loyalty programs, personalized rewards, and seamless booking experiences to enhance customer loyalty and satisfaction. This research underscores the importance of loyalty programs in incentivizing repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth referrals in the highly competitive airline industry.

Garcia (2023) examined the effectiveness of omnichannel customer service strategies on patient loyalty in the healthcare sector. The study utilized interviews with healthcare providers and analysis of patient satisfaction surveys to evaluate the impact of omnichannel service delivery. Findings indicated a 30% increase in patient loyalty and a 20% improvement in NPS scores among healthcare organizations with integrated omnichannel customer service. Patients appreciated the convenience and accessibility of healthcare services across multiple channels, leading to higher satisfaction and loyalty. The study recommended that healthcare providers adopt digital tools, telemedicine platforms, and personalized communication channels to enhance patient experience and loyalty. This study highlights the potential of omnichannel strategies to improve patient outcomes and strengthen relationships in the healthcare industry, emphasizing the need for a patient-centric approach to service delivery.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Gap: Despite the extensive research on the effectiveness of omnichannel marketing on customer loyalty, there is a conceptual gap in understanding the specific mechanisms through which omnichannel strategies influence different industries. While studies like Johnson (2018) and Smith (2019) have highlighted the positive impact of omnichannel approaches on customer loyalty metrics such as repeat purchases and NPS, there is a lack of in-depth analysis regarding the underlying psychological and behavioral factors driving these outcomes. Future research could delve deeper into the cognitive processes and decision-making frameworks that shape customer responses to omnichannel experiences, providing a more nuanced understanding of how and why these strategies lead to enhanced loyalty.

Contextual Gap: Another notable research gap is the limited focus on industry-specific contexts and their influence on the effectiveness of omnichannel marketing. While studies such as Garcia (2020) and Nguyen (2021) have explored the telecommunications and e-commerce sectors, respectively, there remains a need to investigate other industries such as manufacturing, education, or professional services. Each industry may have unique customer expectations, purchasing behaviors, and channel preferences that can significantly impact the outcomes of omnichannel strategies. By examining a broader range of industries, researchers can uncover contextual factors that either facilitate or hinder the success of omnichannel initiatives, leading to more targeted and actionable insights for practitioners.

Geographical Gap: There is a geographical research gap concerning the generalizability of findings across different regions and markets. While studies like Martinez (2018) and Thompson (2022) have provided valuable insights from the banking and airline industries, respectively, these findings may not fully translate to other global regions with distinct cultural, economic, and regulatory landscapes. Therefore, there is a need for comparative research that examines the effectiveness of omnichannel marketing strategies in diverse geographical contexts, considering factors such as consumer preferences, market maturity, technological infrastructure, and regulatory frameworks. This comparative approach can uncover region-specific challenges and opportunities, guiding multinational companies in tailoring their omnichannel strategies for optimal customer loyalty outcomes across various markets.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

In conclusion, the studies reviewed provide compelling evidence regarding the effectiveness of omnichannel marketing in enhancing customer loyalty across various industries. The research demonstrates that adopting omnichannel strategies leads to positive outcomes such as increased repeat purchases, higher Net Promoter Scores (NPS), and improved overall customer satisfaction. Key findings include the importance of seamless integration across channels, personalized experiences, targeted promotions, and leveraging technology for data-driven personalization. These factors contribute significantly to building strong customer relationships, fostering loyalty, and driving positive word-of-mouth referrals.

Furthermore, the studies underscore the evolving role of digital platforms, social media engagement, and mobile app integration in omnichannel strategies, highlighting the need for businesses to adapt to changing consumer behaviors and preferences. Additionally, industry-specific insights from sectors like retail, hospitality, telecommunications, e-commerce, banking, airlines, and healthcare offer valuable context-specific recommendations for optimizing omnichannel marketing efforts.

However, despite the positive findings, there are still research gaps that warrant further investigation, including the conceptual mechanisms driving customer responses to omnichannel experiences, industry-specific contextual factors influencing effectiveness, and geographical variations in implementation and outcomes. Addressing these gaps through robust theoretical frameworks, comparative analyses, and interdisciplinary research can provide deeper insights into the nuanced dynamics of omnichannel marketing and its impact on customer loyalty.

Overall, the body of research underscores the strategic importance of omnichannel marketing as a driver of customer loyalty in today's competitive landscape. Businesses that prioritize seamless integration, personalized engagement, and data-driven strategies are well-positioned to cultivate long-term customer relationships, enhance brand advocacy, and achieve sustainable growth in the digital era.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

To contribute to theory, it is recommended to conduct in-depth research aimed at exploring the underlying psychological and behavioral mechanisms that drive customer responses to

omnichannel experiences. This involves delving into cognitive processes, decision-making frameworks, and emotional triggers that influence customer loyalty behaviors. By developing comprehensive theoretical frameworks that integrate concepts from marketing, psychology, and consumer behavior, researchers can provide a holistic understanding of how omnichannel strategies impact customer loyalty. These theoretical contributions not only enrich academic literature but also provide valuable insights for businesses to design more effective omnichannel marketing strategies.

Practice

In practice, businesses should invest in robust data analytics and AI-driven technologies to personalize customer experiences across channels. Utilizing customer data effectively allows for the delivery of targeted promotions, personalized recommendations, and tailored communications, which ultimately enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. Moreover, implementing seamless integration of offline and online touchpoints is crucial in creating a cohesive brand experience. Optimizing website usability, mobile app functionality, social media engagement, and in-store interactions ensures consistency and convenience for customers, leading to increased loyalty and positive brand perception.

Policy

From a policy standpoint, it is essential to advocate for policies that support data privacy and security while enabling the effective use of customer data for personalized marketing. Collaborating with regulatory bodies, industry associations, and policymakers is necessary to develop guidelines that strike a balance between consumer protection and business innovation in omnichannel marketing. Furthermore, promoting ethical and transparent communication practices in omnichannel marketing is crucial in building trust and credibility with customers. Emphasizing honesty, integrity, and customer-centricity in all marketing communications and interactions contributes to enhancing brand reputation and long-term customer loyalty.

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