EFFECT OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY OF QUOTED DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN ABUJA METROPOLIS

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Abstract
Globally, businesses strive to have a stable customer base that doesn't only guarantee future revenue with high lifetime value but they also try to create loyal customers through various loyalty programe. The activities of the quoted deposit money banks (DMBs) in Abuja Metropolis have affected the banks customers in different ways. Over the years, series of effort has been made by some of the DMBs in Nigeria, such as digital banking, electronic banking and business online banking in order to be among the top banks in Nigeria (deposit money banks data base, 2019). Also, efforts have been made by those banks in order to satisfy their various potential customers' needs and wants. Despite these effort, DMBs customers are still not loyal to the banks. The study investigates the effect of relationship marketing on customer loyalty of quoted deposit money banks (DMBs) in Abuja metropolis the population of the study is made up of the customers of the selected branches of DMBs in Abuja metropolis. Data were collected through primary data source from questionnaire responses. 400 copies of Questionnaire were distributed to all customers in Abuja Metropolis. The questionnaire was a structured closed ended 5-point likert scale one. The data collected were analyzed using Smart Partial Least Square (PLS) and Structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings from the analysis show that trust and commitment have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. The study concludes based on the research findings that relationship marketing has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. This study recommended that the management of (DMBs) in Abuja metropolis should give more attention to trust and commitment since they both have positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.
Keywords: *Trust, Commitment and Customer Loyalty*

INTRODUCTION

In the highly competitive banking landscape, customer loyalty has emerged as a critical determinant of success for deposit money banks (DMBs). Customer loyalty refers to a customer's unwavering commitment to continued patronage of a particular bank, resist switching to competitors, and actively recommending the bank to others (Kaur & Khanam, 2023). Loyal customers contribute significantly to a bank's profitability by generating consistent revenue streams, reducing acquisition costs, and promoting positive word-of-mouth (Kaur & Khanam, 2023). Consequently, understanding the factors that influence customer loyalty has become a strategic imperative for DMBs operating in the Abuja Metropolis.

The customer is one who is the user of the products or services produced by the company and judge those products' quality. They are the sources of generating profit that always spend a greater share. So every company must produce the quality products or services with affordable price to attract more customers and make more sales. It is costlier for businesses to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing customer. Therefore, the businesses should be aware of their products as well as their customer's type such as loyal customers, discount customers, impulse customers, need-based customers and wandering customers to treat them well (Management Study Guide 2018). Customer loyalty is view as when a person transacts with a brand (or purchases a specific product) on an ongoing basis (Carter, 2020).

Customer loyalty is related to a service provider's ability to maintain its customer's interest and persuade them to recommend its services to potential customers (Zeithaml, 2023). Customer loyalty is a result of customer's retention programmes that always gives encouragement to remain active, choosing their brand as exclusive brand. Customer loyalty is a strategy that creates mutual rewards to benefit firms and customers (Reichhed & Detrick, 2023). The most important consideration to attain high customer loyalty is for firms to deliver high customer value (Kotler, 2014). Customer loyalty is seen as one of the major drivers of success. Customer's loyalty deeply held commitment to rebuy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior (Haryanto, et al, 2023).

Relationship Marketing (RM) is a relationship-type strategy that focused on creating a favorable relationship between the company and customers that results in continuous patronage of customers in the organization that leads to satisfying and favorable experiences to other people which can create a positive effect on the organization (Mariella, et al, 2023). Basically Relationship Marketing (RM) has evolved not only as a marketing strategy but has been the foundation on which the companies build their core value and ethics. Relationship Marketing outline the framework for company to reach out as well as and orient themselves to the outside markets, to the end customer as well as to the business partners, the suppliers and vendors too. Relationship Marketing is not limited to customers and supplier alone but has been extended in scope to cover its employees as well as an effective way of reaching out to attracting best talent too, (Prachi, 2015). Trust is a fundamental element in building and maintaining customer relationships, particularly in the banking sector where customers entrust their financial resources to institutions (Ennew & Sekhon, 2022). Trust is defined as the customer's confidence in the bank's reliability, integrity, and competence (Morgan & Hunt, 2019). When customers trust a bank, they are more likely to develop a strong emotional bond and remain loyal. Trust is an important factor in relationship marketing as it is the foundation upon which long-term relationships are built. Trust is the belief that the other party will act in a way that is consistent with the expectations of the relationship. Trust: When customers trust an organization, they are more likely to remain loyal over time. Trust can be built by providing consistent, high-quality service, and by communicating honestly and transparently with customers.

According to Blois (2017) commitment involves a willingness to establish and undertake activities that will ensure the continued maintenance of a business relationship. Commitment can be influenced by a variety of factors, including the perceived benefits and costs associated with the relationship marketing, the level of trust and mutual understanding between the parties, the availability of alternatives, and the individual's personal values and goals. In the context of organizations, for instance, employee commitment may be shaped by factors such as job satisfaction, organizational culture, and the perceived fairness of the employer's policies and practices. Commitment has been linked to a range of positive outcomes, including increased performance, reduced turnover, and enhanced organizational citizenship behaviors, making it a crucial consideration in both personal and professional realms.

The activities of the quoted deposit money banks (DMBs) in Abuja Metropolis have affected the banks customers in different ways. Some of the following commercial banks in Nigeria, such as Eco Bank PLC, Unity Bank PLC, Heritage Bank PLC, Citibank Nigeria Limited, Sterling Bank PLC, Wema Bank PLC, Stanbic IBTC Bank PLC, and Union Bank of Nigeria PLC have been in existence for some years with competences in investment, corporate and retail banking. Over the years, series of effort has been made by the banks, such as digital banking, electronic banking and business online banking in order to be among the top banks in Nigeria (deposit money banks data base, 2019). Also, efforts have been made by those banks in order to meet up with their customers' needs and wants. It has been noticed from CBN annual report (2018) that there is an increased rate of customers switching from one bank to another in search of the bank that rendered a better service to their various potential customers. This study seeks to examine the effect of customer relationship marketing on how it can solve the issues of customer disloyalty of the quoted deposit money banks (DMBs) in Abuja Metropolis. The objectives of the study is to examine the effect of trust and commitment on customer loyalty of quoted deposit money banks in (DMBs) Abuja metropolis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty has been considered as an important factor which leads to gain competitive advantage over other firms under a highly competitive and dynamic environment. It is a multi-dimensional construct that is built on two components, attitude and behaviour. Oliver (2019) defined customer loyalty as a promise of buyers to purchase particular products, services and brands of an organization over a consistent period of time, irrespective of competitor's new products and innovations and these customers are not compelled to switch. Loyal customers positively view the organization, endorse the organization to others, and would engage in repurchase (Dimitriades, 2016).

Similarly, Lam, et al, (2014) defined customer loyalty as evidence of the repeated patronage of a service provider and the recommendations of a service provider to other customers. Further, it is considered as the intention of the buyers to make the purchases again and again to build a continuous relationship with the organization (Dick & Basu, 2014; Fornell, 2012). Customer loyalty is often related to as the willingness of customers to repeatedly purchase a good or service that is accompanied by psychological bond and hold favorable attitudes toward a good or toward the organization supplying the goods or services (Deng, et al. 2010, Gede, et al., 2013, Prakash, 2011; Yeo, et al. 2015). Heskett, et al, (2014) suggested that customer loyalty motivates customers for repeat purchases and persuade them to refer those products or services to others.

This same statement by Griffin (2015) customer loyalty focused on the long-term choice probability for a brand, for example, repeat purchase probability. Attitudinal loyalty focuses on brand recommendations, resistance to superior products, repurchase intention etc. Dick and Basu (2014) suggested an attitudinal theoretical framework that also envisages the loyalty construct as relative attitude and patronage behavior. A further aspect of loyalty is cognitive loyalty. Gremler and Brown (2016) extended the concept of loyalty to intangible products and their definition of incorporates the three specific components of loyalty considered: the purchase, attitude and cognition. However, few studies have looked at customer loyalty of services. Customer loyalty can be classified into proactive loyalty and situational loyalty (Oliver, 2017).

Customer loyalty, in my view, represents a deep-seated commitment that a customer has toward a particular brand or financial institution. It goes beyond mere repeat purchases; it embodies a relationship built on trust, satisfaction, and emotional connection. A loyal customer is not only likely to return for future transactions but also serves as a brand advocate, promoting the institution through word-of-mouth and positive reviews.

Relationship Marketing

Relationship marketing refers to an arrangement where both the buyer and seller have an interest in a more satisfying exchange. This approach aims to transcend the post-purchase-exchange process with a customer in order to make richer contact by providing a more personalized purchase, using the experience to create stronger ties. A main focus on a long-term relationship with customers differentiates relationship marketing from other marketing techniques (Ojo, 2020).

Gummesson (2013) defined the term as a strategy in which the management of interactions, relationships and networks is a fundamental issue. According to Gro¨nroos (2020) the aims of relationship marketing is to establish, maintain, and enhance relationships with customers and other partners, at a profit, so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. Rapp and Collins (2019) suggested similarly that its goals are to create and maintain lasting relationships between the firm and its customers that are rewarding for both sides. This is achieved by a mutual symbiosis and fulfilment of promises. In other words, a key objective is to foster customer loyalty.

Berry (2013) and Jackson (2015), argued in a conference about the field of service marketing that relationship marketing is a marketing activity for enterprises to obtain, maintain and promote effective relationships with customers. After a long-term study on the marketing process of the service industry, it was concluded that the ultimate goal of enterprise marketing is not only to develop new customers but also to focus on maintaining existing customers. Ultimately, the goal is to improve the long-term interests of both parties through cooperative relationships. The study also argues that the cost of maintaining an old customer is far lower than the cost of developing a new customer and that maintaining a relationship with old consumers is more economical than developing new customers. The current study view Relationship Marketing as the process of forming a long term relationship with customers, rather than trying to encourage a onetime sale, relationship tries to foster loyalty by providing exemplary product and service.

Trust

Trust has been defined as a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in which one has confidence (Moorman, et al, 2013). A betrayal of this trust by the supplier or service provider could lead to defection. Schurr and Ozanne (2015) defined the term as the belief that a partner's word or promise is reliable and a party will fulfil his/her obligations in the relationship. Other authors have defined trust in terms of opportunistic behaviour (Dwyer, et al, 2017). Shared values (Morgan & Hunt, 2014). Mutual goals (Wilson, 2019). Uncertainty (Crosby, et al, 2019). Actions with positive outcomes (Anderson & Narus, 2018). And making and keeping promises (Bitner, 2015).

Kuusik, et al, (2009) indicated that trust is one of the major factors that affect loyalty. A successful and lasting relationship with customers is built on trust. Trust is defined as thoughts, feelings, emotions, or behaviors manifested when customers feel that a provider can be relied upon to act in their best interest when they give up direct control (Patrick, 2012). Trust is conceptualized in literature as "the willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence" (Kwon & Suh, 2015). Trust is built when a service provider is interested in satisfying the needs of the customer, and provides products and services that create customer value. Effective customer retention helps firms grow in size and popularity, thereby increasing profitability. Trust involves a rational assessment of the trustworthiness of the other party, based on factors such as their competence, integrity, and reliability. Emotionally, trust is characterized by a sense of security, comfort, and a willingness to be vulnerable, as individuals place their faith in the goodwill and intentions of the trusted party. Trust manifests through a readiness to rely on and cooperate with the other party, even in the face of uncertainty or potential risk. Trust has been linked to a range of positive outcomes, such as enhanced cooperation, increased job satisfaction, and improved organizational performance, making it a crucial consideration in both personal and professional contexts.

Commitment

Several authors identify commitment as an important component of successful market relationships because it gives rise to co-operative behaviours (Dwyer, et al, 2017; Morgan & Hunt, 2014; Garbarino & Johnson, 2019). A relationship that is characterized by co-operation between two parties is more likely to be long-term, participative and focused on achieving service quality than one that is not. In business-to-business relationships, such as those between a service provider and a client, commitment is evident by investment decisions that seek to establish and maintain long term, mutually beneficial relationships (Beaton, 2015).

In the marketing literature, Moorman, et al, (2012) defined commitment as an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship. The researchers further added that without commitment, conflict may arise due to the lack of trust. This implies a higher level of obligation to make a relationship succeed and to make it mutually satisfying and beneficial (Gundlach, et al, 2015; Morgan & Hunt, 2014). Since, commitment is higher among individuals who believe that they receive more value from a relationship, highly committed customers should be willing to reciprocate effort on behalf of a firm due to past benefits received (Mowday, et al, 2012). And a highly committed firms will continue to enjoy the benefits of such reciprocity, Commitment is viewed by different scholars as a central construct in the relationship marketing literature and there are various views about the nature of the construct (Morgan & Hunt, 2014).

According to Blois (2017) commitment involves a willingness to establish and undertake activities that will ensure the continued maintenance of a business relationship. Further, Palmatier, et al, (2016) defined commitment as the need to maintain a relationship with an organization. Customers who are committed add value and benefits to service providers as well as ensure continuity of the business. As a result, commitment is a vital factor for the success of any long-term relationship (Zeithaml, et al., 2012). Additionally, Shukla, et al, (2016) postulated that commitment involves the readiness of partners to give up short-term benefits as well as experiences. This is to help them to reap the long-term benefits of the relationship. Commitment must, therefore, connote a "lasting or enduring" aim to form and sustain a deliberate constant relationship with an organization. On the other hand, Dann and Dann (2013) posited that there are two categories of commitment; affective commitment, which is based on fondness and some affection for a business partner; and calculative commitment, which is based on price and gain. In the current study, the term Commitment is an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship.

Empirical Review

Trust and Customer Loyalty

Muhammad, et al, (2012) examined the effect of customer trust on customer loyalty and customer retention a moderating role of cause related marketing. The study use questionnaire as a method of data collection. The study found that there is a significant association between customer trust and loyalty, and also portrays that there is a significant association with customer trust and customer retention in Pakistani context. Pakistani Cellular Service Operators have need to clearly define and reframe their policies regarding religious aspect, creating more ease to understand complex price structure and thoroughly understanding buying patterns of customers to retain them for a long life. This study was conducted on Cellular Service Operators, while the current study will be conducted on Banking Sector.

Tiolina (2019) examined the determinants of trust and customer Loyalty on customer to customer (c2c) e-marketplace in Indonesia. The design of this study uses an explanatory approach. The data analysis technique uses structural equation model (SEM) and sampling is limited to certain criteria (purposive sampling). This study used 200 respondents. The results of this study found that there is a partial influence of brand equity and value equity on constructs of trust and customer loyalty. Meanwhile, relationship equity has a direct effect on trust, but not on customer loyalty. Trust affects consumer loyalty. Companies must focus on rewarding systems through cash back reward programs, virtual loyalty cards, incentive programs, and virtual communities that have been proven to be able to increase customer loyalty. Though the study used structural equation model (SEM) it was carried out in a different environment and a time the study was done (2019) has rendered the findings obsolete. Therefore, we hypothesize the association between trust and customer loyalty as follows:

Ho_1: Trust has positive and significant effect on customer loyalty of quoted deposit money banks in (DMBs), in Abuja Metropolis.

Commitment and Customer Loyalty

Bricci, et al, (2016) examined the effects of trust, commitment and satisfaction on Customer loyalty in the distribution sector. With a sample of customers from the distribution sector in Portugal. Then the survey was carried out on the customers of a distributor of hygiene products and professional cleaning in Viseu - Portugal, not randomly, but with the convenience of viewing the customer as the routes of the sellers of the company, 100 valid questionnaires were obtained To measure each item of the surveys we used a Likert scale of 7 points since this type of scale has been used for studies of relationship marketing. The results showed that trust has a positive and direct effect on commitment, also trust has a positive and direct effect on satisfaction, commitment has a positive and direct effect on loyalty and satisfaction has a positive and direct effect on loyalty, thus it´s important for this companies the improvement of responsibility, development of team skills, empowering employees and the company in a sense to fulfil commitments and performing the co-creation of value. In this study regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variable, while in the current study Partial Least Square, Structural equation model (PLS-SEM) will be employed to determine if there is any relationship between the independent and dependent variable.

Vuuren, et al, (2012) examined the of customer satisfaction, trust and commitment as predictors of customer loyalty within an optometric practice environment, the purpose of their study was to develop an understanding of the influence of the independent variables of customer satisfaction, trust and commitment on customer loyalty within an optometric practice, the methodological approach followed was exploratory and quantitative in nature. The sample consisted of 357 patients who had visited the practice twice or more within the past six years, a structured questionnaire, with a five-point Likert scale, was used, a descriptive and multiple regression analysis approach was used to analyses the results, the main conclusion is that customer satisfaction had the highest correlation with customer loyalty, but the other independent variables also significantly influence customer loyalty within an optometric practice environment, the implication is that optometric practices need to focus on customer satisfaction, trust and commitment in order to improve customer loyalty. The study make used of secondary data, while the current study will be making use of primary data. Therefore, based on the empirical findings, hypothesis 2 is proposed as below:

Ho_2: Commitment has positive and significant effect on customer loyalty of quoted deposit money banks (DMBs), in Abuja Metropolis.

Commitment-Trust Theory

This study was underpinned by Commitment-Trust Theory by Morgan and Hunt (1994) trust is defined as the confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity, while commitment refers to the enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship. The commitment-trust theory posits that when both parties in a relationship trust each other and are committed to the relationship, they will work to preserve investment in the relationship, exhibit cooperation, and resist taking alternative actions that might jeopardize the relationship. In the context of customer-bank relationships, trust and commitment are critical components that foster customer loyalty (Ennew & Sekhon, 2022). When customers trust a bank, they are more likely to develop a strong emotional bond and remain loyal, as they believe in the bank's reliability, integrity, and competence. Similarly, committed customers are more likely to continue their relationship with the bank, resist switching to competitors, and exhibit loyalty behaviors, such as repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Fullerton, 2020). Furthermore, the commitment-trust theory highlights the importance of effective communication and conflict handling in maintaining and strengthening relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Effective communication promotes understanding, trust, and commitment between exchange partners, while proper conflict handling helps resolve disputes and maintain the integrity of the relationship. This study also draws upon the concept of customer satisfaction, which has been established as a key predictor of customer loyalty in the banking industry (Kaur & Khanam Sathish, 2023). Customer satisfaction refers to the customer's overall evaluation of the bank's performance in meeting their expectations (Ennew & Sekhon, 2022). Satisfied customers are more likely to continue their relationship with the bank, recommend it to others, and exhibit loyalty behaviors. By examining the effects of trust, commitment, communication, conflict handling, and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty, this study aims to provide empirical evidence and insights within the context of the commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between these components and their influence on customer loyalty in the banking sector, specifically within the Abuja Metropolis.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study consist of all the customers of the selected branches of quoted deposit money banks (DMBs) in Abuja metropolis. These banks have a significant market presence and customer base in the Abuja Metropolis, making them relevant for a study focused on customer loyalty and relationship marketing in the region. The total populations are 48,395 customers drawn from the branches. In order to determine the sample size for this study, Taro Yamane (1967) formula (for calculating sample size of finite population) was adopted. The reason for adopting this formula was that, it is simple, less complicated and could provide accurate results for the necessary sample size. Respondents for this study were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The study distributed a total of 440 copies of questionnaires which was a 10% increase in the sample size so as to account for unreturned questionnaire which may affect the minimal sample size and as indicated from the table 404(90%) questionnaires distributed were completely filled and returned, 36(10%) were not properly filled but returned. Subsequent analyses were conducted using the 404 instruments returned given a reasonable return rate of 90%. Primary data was collected using 5-point Likert scale structured questionnaire for the study. The study employed the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to model the regression analysis. The PLS path modeling method was developed by Wold (1982). The PLS algorithm is a sequence of regressions in terms of weight vectors. The weight vectors obtained at convergence satisfy fixed point equations. PLS-SEM is a non-parametric method that does not require that the data meet certain distributional assumptions. However, the parametric significance tests (e.g., as used in regression analyses) cannot be applied to test whether coefficients such as outer weights, outer loadings and path coefficients are significant. Instead, PLS-SEM relies on a nonparametric bootstrap procedure to test the significance of various results such as path coefficients, Cronbach's alpha, HTMT, and R^2 values. (Efron & Tibshirani, 1986; Davison & Hinkley, 1997). The model for the path analysis is specified thus:

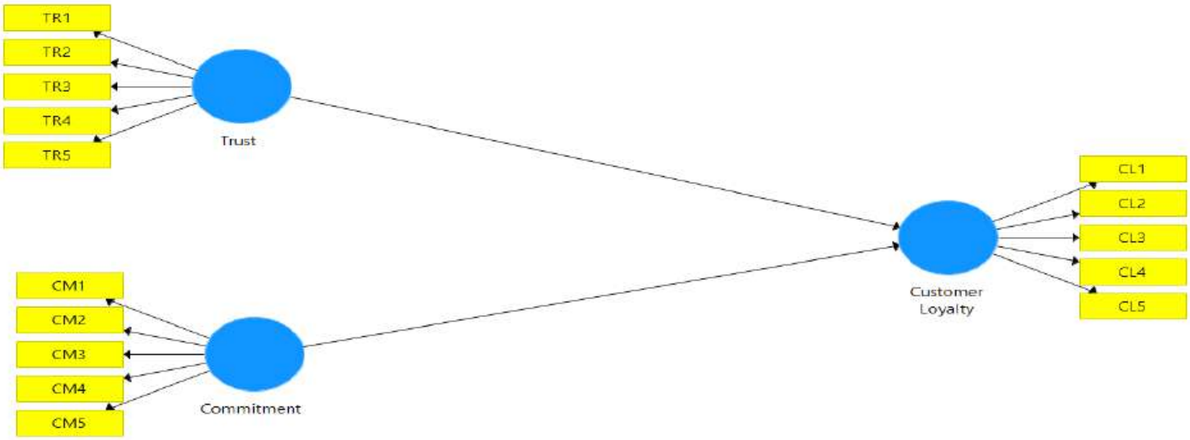

Fig 1: Structural Model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Descriptive Statistic

	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Standard Deviation	Excess Kurtosis	Skewness
TR	2.52	2.88	3	5	0.65	1.25	-1.31
CM	4.31	4.33	3	5	0.67	-0.29	-0.59
CL	3.65	4.00	1	5	0.91	0.56	-0.93

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2024

Table 1 above provided statistical description of the variables as expressed in the data collected in terms of the mean, minimum, maximum, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis values. Trust (TR) had a minimum and maximum values of 3 and 5 respectively. The average value stood at 2.52 while skewness and kurtosis values stood within the normality range. Commitment (CM) also, had minimum and maximum values of 3 and 5 respectively however, it showed an average of 4.31 along with a standard deviation of 0.67. Customer Loyalty (CL) had a minimum and maximum values of 1 and 5 respectively with an average value of 3.65 and a standard deviation value of 0.91.

Assessment of Measurement Model

In assessing the measurement model, the researcher began by assessing the item outer loadings. As a rule, loadings above 0.708 are recommended, as they indicate that the construct explains more than 50 percent of the indicator's variance, thus providing acceptable item reliability (Hair, et al., 2019). However, Hair, et al., (2019) posited that low but significant indicator loading of 0.50 can be included hence justifying why indicators with loadings less than 0.708 and above 0.50 were not deleted from the model as seen in figure 2 below.

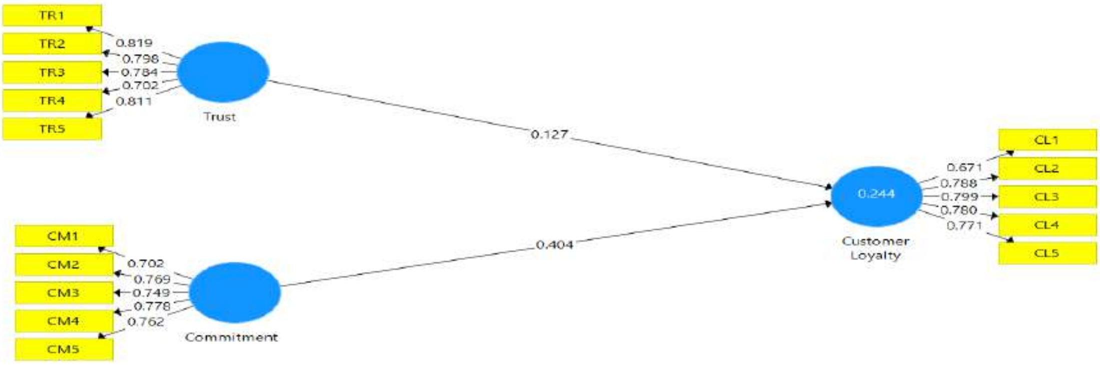

Fig 2: Indicator Loadings

Construct Reliability

To establish internal consistency of the study constructs, the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were examined. According to Hair et al, (2019) the minimum threshold for measuring composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha is 0.7.

Convergent Validity

This explains the extent to which constructs converges to explain the variance of its items. It is assessed by evaluating the average variance extracted (AVE). The minimum value of the AVE should be higher than 0.50. All the constructs satisfied this requirement as shown in the table below and as such are valid for the study.

Table 2: Construct Reliability and Validity of the Indicators

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Trust	0.843	0.854	0.841	0.615
Commitment	0.809	0.813	0.867	0.566
Customer Loyalty	0.819	0.823	0.715	0.582

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2024

Collinearity Test

Collinearity test was conducted to ensure the absence of multicollinearity which could lead to bias in the results. This was assessed through the variance inflation factors (VIF). As a rule, VIF values shouldn't exceed 5 to indicate absence of multicollinearity (Hair et al, 2019). From table 4.6 below, all the constructs satisfied this assumption and as such there was absence of multicollinearity among the predictor constructs.

Table 3: Inner VIF Values of the Structural Model

Source:

Variables	Customer Loyalty
Trust	1.696
Commitment	1.696
Customer Loyalty	

SMART-PLS Output, 2024

Assessing the Structural Model

Having satisfied the measurement model assessment, the next step in evaluating PLS-SEM results is to assess the structural model. Standard assessment criteria, which was considered include the path coefficient, t-values, p-values and coefficient of determination (R^2). The bootstrapping procedure was conducted using a resample of 5000.

The R-square value stood at 24% indicating that Relationship marketing practices proxied by trust and commitment are responsible for 24% variation in customer loyalty. The remaining 76% variation could be explained by other factors not included in the study. Based on Hair, et al., (2019), the R-square is considered substantial. The result of the path analysis is presented in the table 4 below:

Table 4: Path Coefficients

Variables	Beta	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
Commitment -> Customer Loyalty	0.404	6.384	0.000	Rejected
Trust -> Customer Loyalty	0.127	1.969	0.049	Rejected

Source: SMART-PLS Output, 2024

The first finding revealed that trust has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty, with a beta value of 0.404, T statistic of 6.384 and P-value of 0.000, which implies that the application of trust has resulted to increase in customer loyalty as the organization tend to focus more on developing new customers as well as maintaining the existing customer level which results in relationship marketing. Contra to this finding is the work of Firend and Masoumeh (2014) the study found that there is positive relationship between service quality and trust, service quality and perceived value, trust and customer loyalty and perceived value and customer loyalty. Consequently, based on the founding's, service quality, trust and perceived value are considered to be antecedents of customer loyalty.

On the other hand, the findings of this study reveal that commitment plays a positive and significant role in fostering customer loyalty, with a beta value of 0.127, T statistic 1.969 and P-value of 0.049. This indicates that when consumers feel a strong commitment to a brand or a firm, they are more likely to remain loyal over time. The data suggests that a firm's efforts to build and maintain commitment through consistent quality, strong customer relationships, and effective communication directly enhance customer retention and satisfaction. As customers perceive a deeper emotional and rational connection with the brand, their loyalty strengthens, resulting in repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth. Thus, investing in strategies that cultivate commitment is essential for firms aiming to enhance customer loyalty and achieve long-term success.

Coefficient of Determination, Effect Size and Predictive Relevance

The explanatory power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R-square). The R^2 value stood at 0.244 (see Table 5) implying that 24.4% of variation in relationship marketing is explained by relationship marketing peroxide by trust, and commitment. The remaining percentage of variation could be explained by other factors not included in the study.

The f^2 examines the effect caused on the endogenous construct's R^2 value as a result of removal of a certain predictor construct. Cohen (1998) guideline was used to measure the effect size which revealed that all relationships were either small or medium effect.

The Q^2 was employed to assess the predictive relevance of the model. The Q^2 value was obtained through the blindfolding procedure and the cross-validated redundancy method. Q^2 value as a matter of guideline should be greater than zero for specific endogenous constructs to exhibit predictive accuracy of the structural model for that construct. The Q^2 values in table 5 indicate acceptable predictive relevance.

Table 5: R^2 and Predictive Relevance of the model

	R Square	Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)	P-value
Customer Loyalty	0.244	0.241	0.000

Source: SMART-PLS Output, 2024

Model Goodness of Fit (GoF)

Sequel to the need to validate the PLS model, there is a need to assess the goodness of fit of the model as Hair et al, (2017) suggested. This study used the standardised root mean square residual's (SRMR). The choice of this index was based on the fact that the SRMR provides the absolute fit measure where a value of zero indicates a perfect fit. The study adopted Hui and Bentler (1982) suggestion that a value of less than 0.08 represents a good fit while applying SRMR for model goodness of fit. The study result indicates an SRMR value of 0.067. This indicates the model fits. Aside the chi-square, the other measure indicates a goodness of fit on the model of the study.

Table 6: Model of Goodness of fit Summary

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.067	0.067
d_ULS	0.545	0.545
d_G	0.148	0.148
Chi-Square	375.043	375.043
NFI	0.861	0.861

Source: SMART-PLS Output, 2024

The study examined the effect of relationship marketing on customer loyalty of quoted deposit money banks (DMBs), in Abuja Metropolis. The findings from the analysis above indicate that the model is adequately fit to measure the relationship between customer relationship marketing and customer loyalty. Based on the foregoing, the study tested the above two hypotheses and evidenced were provided by the study results that relationship marketing affects customer loyalty moderately as indicated by the coefficient of determination (R^2).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that customer relationship marketing strategies, specifically trust and commitment, have a positive and significant impact on customer loyalty within the context of quoted deposit money banks (DMBs) in Abuja Metropolis. The findings indicate that when banks actively foster trust through transparent communication and reliable services, customers are more likely to develop a sense of loyalty towards them. Additionally, the study highlights that commitment, cultivated through consistent engagement and personalized experiences, further strengthens this loyalty. These results underscore the importance of implementing effective customer relationship marketing practices, as they not only enhance customer satisfaction but also contribute to long-term loyalty. Consequently, deposit money banks are encouraged to prioritize trust-building and commitment strategies to maintain a competitive edge in the increasingly dynamic banking sector.

Based on the findings of this research study, Banks in Abuja Metropolis must make trust-building a top priority in their relationship marketing strategies. To reap the benefits of Customer Loyalty, quoted deposit money banks (DMBs) in Abuja Metropolis must prioritize a relationship-driven approach. Building trust and commitment should be at the forefront of their strategy. To start, DMBs should install transparency in all interactions, ensuring that customers are well-informed about services, fees, and policies. This openness will foster a deep-seated trust, allowing customers to feel confident in their banking relationships. Furthermore, banks should invest in robust security measures to safeguard customer data, thereby reinforcing trust and reliability. In addition, banks must tailor their services to meet individual customer needs, creating a sense of belonging and commitment. This personalization can be achieved through data-driven insights, targeted offers, and regular check-ins. By doing so, banks will demonstrate their commitment to understanding and serving their customers, leading to a profound sense of loyalty. To further solidify customer loyalty, DMBs should establish systematic channels for collecting and analyzing customer feedback. By acting on this feedback, banks will demonstrate their responsiveness and dedication to continuous improvement, ultimately enhancing customer satisfaction. Moreover, banks should prioritize employee training, empowering frontline staff to engage authentically with customers, resolve issues effectively, and provide exceptional service. This will elevate the overall customer experience, fostering an environment of trust and commitment. Lastly, DMBs should develop and promote loyalty programs that reward long-term customers for their patronage. These programs should offer a range of incentives, including financial rewards and exclusive benefits, to create a sense of belonging and appreciation among customers.

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