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products in Ilorin Metropolis

Product involvement and consumer purchase
Intention for fashion products among University
of Benin students

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PERSONAL SELLING AND CUSTOMER PATRONAGE OF HI-TECH PRODUCTS IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed how personal selling influences patronage of HP Products in Ilorin Metropolis. The study's objectives were to: examine the influence of handling objections by the sales force on the patronage of HP Products in Ilorin; and determine the impact of follow-up on the HP patronage. The study adopted a survey research design. Samples of 397 respondents were selected using Godden's (2004) formula. Linear regression was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 significant level. The result of the study shows that handling objections by the sales force has a significant impact on the patronage of HP products in Ilorin. Also, follow-up by the sales force has a significant effect on the patronage of HP Products in Ilorin. The study concluded that handling objections and follow-up activities by the sales force have significant impacts on the patronage of HP Products among Nigerian youths. Therefore, the study's recommendations emphasize listening to customers to hear their objections while the salesperson tactically solves them; and implement a consistent and structured follow-up system to reach out to customers after their purchase.

Keywords: Customer Patronage, Handling Objection, Hi-tech Product, HP Product, Personal selling

INTRODUCTION

A product that has been well-conceived and produced using the most cutting-edge technologies and the highest quality inputs cannot sell itself (Anyadighibe, Awara & Esu, 2016). It must therefore be released into the public domain through the promotional mix. A favourable response by a product to the marketing mix will lead to a high level of performance of the product in the marketplace. Promotion, also known as marketing communication, is an important element of the marketing mix. This element alerts consumers or clients to the existence of a product or service (Razzaq, 2017). It passes information about a product and its features to potential buyers.

Personal selling, as an element in the promotional mix, is a vital piece of an organization's overall marketing strategy. It is a One-on-one communication between payees and potential representatives leading to profitable deals, customer satisfaction, and human relationships (Taufiq, 2023). Personal selling, according to Adamu (2016), is the presentation of a persuasive message by selling to a potential customer or group of customers. It can be done via personal correspondence, phone conversations, or email. It is when a salesperson communicates effectively with potential customers to increase sales. Personal selling may begin with the aim of building a strong bond with customers and potential customers. This relationship will eventually end with an attempt to "close the deal" (Okoh, 2019).

However, successful organizations in business are those that could achieve success in the study of consumer behavior and determine the factors that affect the development of marketing strategies, which enable them to reach the target consumers through personal selling (Okoh, 2019). The one-on-one interaction between the seller and the buyer goes a long way in direct contact between sellers and buyers. It helps in establishing a strong relationship among them. This is reflected, in turn, in the decision to purchase products displayed in stores; therefore, organizations are giving great consideration to hiring salespersons because they are aware that they represent a key element in the achievement of personal selling in contact with buyers and in creating a good impression about the organization and its products (Okoh, 2019).

Personal selling is designed to present a form of one-on-one communication, compared to advertising, personal sales communication can be justified through correspondence or a personal telephone conversation. Personal selling is a useful tool for promoting classy computer systems, while door-to-door selling and home demonstration parties may be essential for introducing new products. To maximize its impact, personal selling should ideally be accompanied by advertising.

Turgeman (2018) the word customer or consumer patronage means a person or thing that eats or uses something or a person who buys goods and services for personal consumption or use. However, personal selling is believed to be the basis for building a top brand which then impacts the strength of a large brand and ultimately influences customer patronage which leads to sustainable sales (Agbonifoh, Ogwo, Nnolim & Nkamnebe, 2017). A strong relationship exists between patronage and loyalty; patronage is a result of the desire of a customer to be dedicated to an organization because of its service quality or how they perceive the qualities of a product. Therefore, the extent of patronage of a product by consumers relies on customer perception of the ability of the product to offer the needed satisfaction.

Statement of the Problem

Products such as HP products require technicality of operations, handling, etc. This requires the adoption of personal selling to explain and demonstrate where necessary, the usage and maintenance to the users. There are many studies on personal selling, but majority of the studies deal with all steps of personal selling but this study, however, concentrates on examining the impact of objective handling and follow-up on customer patronage because they seem to be the major aspects of the personal selling steps that can influence customers' attitudes most.

One issue with objection handling is the lack of understanding of customer needs and concerns. In some cases, salespeople may not have a thorough understanding of the customer's specific requirements and concerns, making it difficult to address objections effectively. In some cases, potential customers may not completely voice out their objections, making it difficult for salespeople to identify and address them. This can result in missed opportunities and lost sales (Ghose, 2019).

If salespeople do not have an effective system in place for tracking follow-up activities, they may forget to follow up with potential customers or may follow up with the same customer multiple times, which can be frustrating and counterproductive. Salespeople should use tools like customer relationship management (CRM) software to track follow-up activities and ensure that they are following up with potential customers in a systematic and organized manner.

Therefore, the salesperson has to be very acquainted with the encounters their prospect faces and customize an answer targeted to the customer's needs. Also, the salesperson may exaggerate the functionality of the product which could eventually lead to a reduction in customer patronage as a result of being disappointed when the product does not meet their expectations as promised or described. In light of this, the study, therefore, examines personal selling and its influence on customer patronage.

- ### Objectives of the Study

- i. assess the effect of handling objections by the sales force on the patronage of HP Products in Ilorin; and
- ii. determine the effect of follow-up on the patronage of HP Products in Ilorin.

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of follow-up by salespersons on the patronage of HP Products in Ilorin.

Although we are customers and consumers of one product or the other, it did not just come into play like that but we must be aware of that particular product to start with in a way, then, be influenced

through promotional mix element before patronage can be achieved therefore, personal selling happens to be one of the promotional mix elements that influence immediate sales.

Concept of Personal Selling

Achumba (2020) defines personal selling as an oral presentation in a dialogue with one or more buyers to make sales. The New Zealand Qualification Authority, (2018) also sees personal selling as retailing and wholesaling marketing actions that lead to salespersons, enthusiastically presenting products to customers to make sales. In other words, it is the presentation of goods and services before the customers in a way of influencing them to buy a product. Kotler and Armstrong, (2018) posit that personal selling is the personal communication between a firm's sales force and customers to make sales and build customer relationships. Kotler and Armstrong, (2018) and Kotler and Keller, (2019) opine that personal selling is one of the oldest professions in the world. Its development could be linked to trade by barter when people exchanged goods for other goods (Osuagwu, 2017). In other words, personal selling has been in existence for a very long time and has been used by marketers in selling organizations' products. It is not just an emerging tool for marketing, but one of the oldest marketing tools for achieving sales volume.

Amongst the elements in the marketing communication mix, personal selling influences more. It is a direct, one-on-one communication to create, modify, exploit, or maintain a reciprocal valuable exchange relationship. It is a direct one-on-one contact and therefore, the only promotional tool that encourages and uses on-the-spot consumer response. Personal selling is the process of assisting and/or persuading a prospective customer to buy a product or service or to act favourably upon an idea that has commercial significance to the seller (Donaldson, 2015; Agbonifoh et al, 2017).

Kotler and Armstrong (2018) posited that in today's hypercompetitive markets (including the Banking industry) buying is not about transactions anymore; Company salespeople must know their customers' businesses better than customers do and align themselves with customers' strategies. Personal selling is an indispensable promotional mix element that pays attention to customers, evaluates their needs, and proffers solutions to those needs through a joint effort from the organization.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority (2018) stated that personal selling carries out numerous actions which comprise; identifying customers, developing product information, marketing, promotion, prospecting, knowledge of customers, service standards, booking schedules, selecting the approach for sales, meeting customers, recognizing the needs and requirements of customers, demonstrating products, use of selling techniques, use of sales aids, making sales pitches, overcoming objections, closing sales, completing documentation, receiving payments, recording sales, using sales technologies, providing after-sales services, following up sales, and sales analysis. However, essential elements of personal selling according to (Palmer, 2015) include; face-to-face interaction, persuasion, flexibility, promotion of sales, supply of Information, and mutual benefit. Personal selling is a two-way communication flow between a prospect and a salesperson planned to recognize the needs of potential buyers, match these needs to one or more of the firm's products and convincing the buyer to purchase the product.

Types of Personal Selling

There are four categories of personal selling (Achumba, 2014; Osuagwu, 2017; Palmer, 2015). The four categories all adapt related approaches in attaining their aims. However, their specific objectives differ. The four categories of personal selling include: trade selling, missionary selling, technical selling, and new business selling. Trade Selling is the growth in the volume of sales of the firm intermediaries have a problem in selling the firm's product that they stocked.

However, missionary selling is an attempt to boost the company's sales by allowing the intermediaries to use the goodwill of the firm. It could be achieved by combining the producers sales force with the distributors salesmen and then passing all orders received through the distributor.

Technical Selling could be seen as creative selling. It comprises of the provision of technical aid and advice to customers by salesmen. This is most appropriate for technical products like insurance services. Technical selling requires analytical and persuasive ability on the part of the seller in order to convince the customer by making him know the worth of the product purchased (Osuagwu, 2017).

New Business Selling helps in acquiring new accounts for the producer. This includes the salesmen searching for new opportunities around them or new users for the firm's products. An expert is required in acquiring new accounts because of its difficult nature. In situations like this, the company's most experienced salesmen are normally used. (Achumba, 2014).

The Role of Personal Selling to Organization

Donald (2015) opined that the role of personal selling has two interrelated functions - information and persuasion. The information role is a two-way process of communicating the company's product to potential customers and making customers' needs known to the firm for proper attention, while the persuasive role is to influence customers to buy the firm's product. The salesperson must be able to convince customers that they offer the best product in their organization with the intent of persuading them to buy.

The Personal Selling Process

The personal selling process consists of several steps salesperson follows when selling (Kotler and Armstrong, 2018). It could also be seen as the sequence of stages through which salespersons goes ahead to make sale (Warren, 2020). The objective of these steps is to acquire new customers and get orders from them. The personal selling process consists of seven steps (Achumba, 2017; Warren, 2020; Osuagwu, 2017; Palmer, 2015; Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). The steps include;

i. Stage 1

Pre-sale preparation: The first step is to select, train, and motivate salespeople. It is required of the salesperson to know a lot of things about the organization; the goods or services that they offer, the business environment, to be skilled in marketing, and must have the knowledge of the products of competitors and their level of competition. They should also be acquainted with the techniques of effective selling and the policies of the firm (Palmer, 2015)

ii. Stage 2

Prospecting/qualifying: this is the process of searching for and ascertaining the potential customers that require a particular product and have the capability of buying the product. For example, a child may be a prospect for a toy, but the qualified prospect is the parents who make the purchase decision (Osuagwu, 2017)

iii. Stage 3

Approach: the next step here is to approach the customer in a respectful and honorable way. The salesperson should allow the customer to have a feeling of being attended to properly. The salesperson should be very careful in his approach as the first impression lasts for long (Warren, 2020)

iv. Stage 4

Presentation/ Demonstration: this is the stage at which the salesperson has succeeded in dragging the attention of the customer and presents the products by unfolding its qualities and benefits to the prospect. However, to sell products requires sales person's demonstration to the prospect to stimulate their interest in making purchase decisions. A good demonstration often results in sales decisions by prospects (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

v. Stage 5

Handling objectives: The salesperson must be able to handle every objection from the prospect convincingly and gently. The salesperson must be patient with the prospect no matter the series of questions and decision time taken by the prospect (Osuagwu, 2017). This is the only way they can win the interest of the customer to their product. If a customer feels unsatisfied with the approach and manner at which the salesperson handles his or her objection, they will not be willing to make any purchase of the product, not to talk much of a repeat purchase. The reverse is the case when a customer feels satisfied in the way and manner by which his or her objection is handled.

vi. Stage 6

Sales decision: This is the stage of decision-making by the prospect, the decision will, however, be either to make a purchase or not. Whatever the case may be, the salesperson is expected to guide and not compel the prospect in making a decision; also, assures the customer that they are ready to buy that they have made the right decision. But if the prospect closed the sales by not buying, the salesperson could politely request a repeat visit at his/her convenience (Osuagwu, 2017).

vii. Stage 7

After-sales activities: This is the stage of follow-up, the salesperson must try to find out if the customer is satisfied with the product they bought. Also, the prospects that refused to buy earlier are revisited to increase sales possibly at the following visits. It influences repeat sales, identifies additional prospects, and assesses the effectiveness of the salesman.

Personal Selling and Customer Relationship

A firm must have the ability to relate with customers in a way of satisfying them by building true relationships with the customer before it can be successful. Personal selling is a very useful tool for enhancing customers' relationships with a firm. Customer relationship is a way of acquiring and retaining customers in an organization. Currently, the hi-tech industry is characterized by stiff competition arising from the fact that most offer the same or equal services, leaving customers without any choice (Gupta, & Khanta, 2017). It is, therefore, very important to get customers adequately informed, persuaded, and provided with the benefits that are associated with the product of an organization. This is mainly achieved with personal selling because that is the main way after-service can be included in the promotion process and it goes a long way in influencing a satisfied customer to be retained in an organization.

Theoretical Review

The right set of circumstances theory discussed below was adopted for the study:

Right Set of Circumstances Theory

This theory was propounded by Howard (1963). The theory is seller-oriented because sellers need to increase their efforts to make sales. In the process of trying to make sales, the theory believes that a salesperson must be able to handle the two major factors; that is, the internal and the external factors. The external factors are those that can be controlled by the salesperson which includes the salesperson and the type of remarks he makes during sales presentation. And the internal factors relate to the prospect's perspective and are restricted to him alone and without the ability of the salesman to be able to manipulate it. It is not easy for a salesman to know how a prospect will respond because different prospects have different ways of thinking. Therefore, this theory focuses on the external factors only. Manipulating the internal factors is out of bounds for the salesman and hence not focused here (Benneth, 2019).

It is also known as the "Situation-response" theory. Smith and Harrison (2016) opined that if the prospect is given the particular circumstances prevailing in a given selling situation, he responds in a certain way. After gaining the attention and interest of the prospect, the salesperson will have to

demonstrate the proper stimuli or appeals to influence the prospect to buy the product. A salesperson needs to be well-skilled to handle the set of circumstances as it serves as the basis for knowing how close the response of the prospect is to the behaviour predicted (Backstorm, 2017).

The theory is relevant to this study because the salesperson through their skills can use the external factors which are absolutely under the control of the salesperson to influence consumer behavior towards a particular product.

Empirical Review

Taufiq Akbar (2023) conducted a study on building perceived quality in the influence of personal selling on purchase decisions. The study aimed to analyze the influence of personal selling on purchasing decisions due to consumer perception of the quality of Tupperware products in Jayapura Regency (Indonesia). It is a quantitative research with 184 respondents. The researcher employed the AMOS structural Equation Model (SEM) program in analyzing the data. The results of the study show that personal selling had a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.

Omar and Wahleed (2020) carried out a study centered on personal selling and the marketing of industrial products in Nigeria. The researcher adopted the cross-sectional survey research design; and carried out a primary data collection on 278 respondents. The researcher employed both descriptive and inferential (regression analysis) statistics. It was found in the study that follow-up efforts by salespersons significantly influence industrial product marketing in Nigeria. Agarwal and Kumar (2020) findings from their study revealed that salesperson's follow-up significantly enhanced the sales of industrial products in India.

Yousif (2016) aimed to find the impact of personal selling on the purchasing behavior of youth buying clothes. In achieving the objectives of the study, the researcher formulated some hypotheses that were tested using inferential statistics. The sample size was 289 respondents. The study adopted purposive sampling in choosing the respondents and the questionnaire was used in collecting the data and factor analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The results revealed that 76.7% and 99.1% of males and females respectively, prefer to purchase from clothing retail stores. The result also shows that salespersons in retail stores do have honest dealings with their customers but cannot negotiate with them. They also do not have the skills needed for making sales nor play an important role in influencing sales, and they do not grant discounts to customers. The study recommended the importance of training and qualification for salespersons in personal selling to help them deal truthfully with customers and develop the ability to negotiate. Salespersons should be granted the authority to give discounts to customers. Thus, the study concluded that there is a significant impact of personal selling on the purchasing behavior of youth in buying clothes.

Anyadighibe, Awara & Esu (2014) focused on the impact of personal selling on the productivity of selected banks (First Bank Plc and Stanbic IBTC) in Calabar Metropolis. The study used the staff of the banks which was 85 as the respondents; it also employed the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method in testing the hypotheses. The result of the findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between personal selling and customer relationship; customer retention and also that personal selling increases the sales volume of a firm. The study concluded that personal selling has a significant impact on the productivity of selected banks (First Bank Plc and Stanbic IBTC) in Calabar Metropolis.

Gammoh, Mallin, and Bolman (2014) examined the impact of salesperson characteristics on consumer patronage. Data was collected through an online survey from a cross-sectional sample of salespeople which was completed by 246 respondents. The measurement model was estimated using the SmartPLS and hypotheses were tested using a partial least squares structural model. The results supported all the proposed hypotheses in the model. Thus, the study concluded that salesperson characteristics significantly impact consumer patronage.

Olumoko, Abass, and Dansu (2012) examined the role of personal selling in enhancing client satisfaction in the Nigerian insurance market. The main objective was to assess personal selling as a

promotional tool for insurance services. A descriptive cross-sectional survey research was adopted and 110 respondents were randomly selected from the insurance firms. Data were analyzed using both the descriptive and inferential methods and the independent T-test was used in testing the hypotheses. The result of the study shows that a personal selling strategy is more beneficial among all the marketing communication tools and should be embraced by Nigerian firms. Thus, the study concluded that personal selling significantly affects the patronage of insurance services.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive method, according to Burns and Grove (2017), is designed to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally occurs. According to Chaney and Gamble (2018), the proper design for any research where the tool used for data collection is a questionnaire is the survey method.

Population of the Study

The study population refers to the entire accessible group of persons that is of interest to the research or meets the criteria the researcher is interested in studying (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020).

The focus of the study was on the influence of personal selling on customer patronage of HP Electronics among the youths in Ilorin South LGA of Kwara State. The geographical scope was preferred because we have students of tertiary institutions more concentrated in this area.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

There are different sampling techniques, but for this study, a convenient random sampling technique was used. In determining the sample size of this research, Godden (2004) sample size formula for an infinite study population.

$$SS = \frac{Z^2 \times P \times (1-P)}{C^2}$$

Where S= Sample size for an infinite population of more than 50,000

Z= Z value (e.g 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

P= Population Proportion (expressed in decimal (assumed to be 0.5 (50%) since this will provide the maximum sample size).

The margin of error at 5% (0.05) for example: given a proportion of 60%.

C= Confidence interval, expressed in decimal e.g 0.05

$$SS = \frac{10962 \times 0.6 (1-0.6)}{0.05^2}$$

$$\frac{3.8416 \times 0.6(0.4)}{0.05^2}$$

$$\frac{0.921984}{0.0025}$$

$$SS = 368.7936 = 369$$

Research Instrument

The survey instrument used here is the questionnaire designed by the researcher to provide succinct and accurate answers through closed-ended and organized questions using a five-point Likert scale of strongly agree to disagree.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

Validity is the degree to which any measuring instrument measures what it is envisioned to measure. Content validity was adopted for this study by giving the questionnaire to the experts on the field to peruse to avoid any form of error in the questionnaire before going to the field.

Reliability is the consistency of the instrument. It is the degree to which an instrument yields consistent results when it is administered over a number of items which has to do with the accuracy of the data collected from a given test. Cronbach alpha was used to conduct the reliability test of this study.

Methods of Data Collection

The questionnaires used for the collection of data were self-administered to the respondents through personal contact and were retrieved backed for analysis by the researcher.

Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis tools depend on the type of data to be analyzed whether qualitative or quantitative. Because of the nature of the data collected for this study, inferential statistics using regression analysis was employed for the analysis and the test of hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I

H_{01} : Objection handling does not significantly affect customer patronage of HP Product

Table 4.1a: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.933 ^a	.870	.870	.533

a. Predictors: (Constant), Objection handling

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.1a, the model summary, reveals a result with $r = 0.933$ (93.3%) indicating a very strong relationship between objection handling (independent variables) and customer patronage (dependent variable), and $r^2 = 0.870$ (87%). This implies that 87.0% change in customer patronage of HP products is explained by the aggregate effect of proper objection handling and the left over 13.0% is explained by other factors that are not captured in the model.

Table 4.1b: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	708.431	1	708.431	2489.986	.000 ^b
	Residual	105.839	372	.285		
	Total	814.270	373			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage

b. Predictors: (Constant), Objection handling

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.2b presents the ANOVA table with a significant value of .000 which is less than the P- level of 0.05, therefore, the model is fit.

Table 4.1c: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.470	.071		6.589	.000
	Objection handling	.392	.008	.933	9.900	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2024.

Table 4.1c reveals an overall significant level of 0.000, less than the P- value of 0.05. This infers that there is a significant impact of objective handling on customer patronage, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis, and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. The beta value of 0.933 denotes that any change in objection handling results in 93.3% changes in customer patronage of HP products; the positive value of 6.589 also, supports the existence of a relationship between objection handling and customer patronage.

Hypothesis II

H₀₄: There is no significant effect of follow-up by salespersons on the patronage of HP Products in Ilorin.

Table 4.2a: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.805 ^a	.648	.627	.216

a. Predictors: (Constant), Follow-up

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.2a presents the model summary which reveals that the correlation coefficient $r = 0.805$ (81%) shows the existence of a strong positive linear relationship between customer patronage of HP product (dependent variable) and follow-up by salesperson (independent variable). The table also shows that r^2 (the coefficient of determination) = 0.648 approximately 65%. This implies that 65% of change in customer patronage of HP products is explained by follow-up by salesperson and the remaining 35% by other factors not captured in the model.

Table 4.2b: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.330	1	7.330	666.364	.000 ^b
	Residual	3.980	372	.011		
	Total	11.310	373			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage of HP product

b. Predictors: (Constant), Follow-up by a salesperson

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.2b presents an ANOVA table with a significant value of 0.000, less than the P-value of 0.05, thus the model is fit.

Table 4.2c: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.820	.067		10.672	.000
	Follow-up by salesperson	.295	.063	.805	6.446	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer patronage of HP product

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.2c reveals 0.000 overall significant level, less than the P-value of 0.05 significant level. This entails a significant positive impact of follow-up by salespersons on customer patronage of HP products, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. The beta value of 0.805 approximately 81% infers that any change in follow-up by salespersons for HP products will lead to 81% changes in customer patronage, and the positive value of 6.446 also supports that a relationship does exist between follow-up by salespersons and customer patronage of HP product.

Discussion of Findings

Going by the result of hypothesis one, the positive t-value of 9.900 further buttresses the relationship of both the dependent and the independent variables. Also, the beta-value of .933 (93.3%) indicates that any change in the way of handling objections will lead to a 93.9% increase in patronage. The overall significance of 0.000 which is less than the P-value of 0.05 implies that objection handling has a significant effect on customer patronage. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Also, the study examined how follow-up by salespersons influences the patronage of HP products. The P-value = 0.05 while the overall significant level is 0.000 as shown in Table 4.2a. Since the overall significance level is less than the P-value, it is concluded that follow-up by salespersons has a significant effect on customer patronage of HP products. The finding is in line with that of Rudain (2016) who found and concluded that the follow-up process has a significant effect on repurchase decisions; In another study by Omar and Wahleed (2020), it was found that salesperson's follow-up efforts a significant positive relationship with the marketing performance of small-scale bakeries in Jordan. However, without customer patronage, there cannot be an increase in marketing performance. Also, in the study by Agarwal and Kumar (2020), the findings revealed that a salesperson's follow-up significantly enhanced the sales of industrial products in India.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the result of the hypotheses reveals a significant effect of handling objection on patronage, and also, significant effect of follow up by salespersons on patronage; the study therefore concluded that personal selling has a significant impact on customer patronage. When a salesperson can intelligently answer all the questions presented to the prospect and handle every form of objection satisfactorily, there is every possibility of being able to influence such potential buyers to patronize the organization's product. On the contrary, if the salesperson cannot attend to the customer's question in a polite, intelligent, and satisfactory manner, there is a possibility of losing such customers to another organization's product. Follow-up as the name implies also plays a great role in encouraging customers to make a repeat patronage or purchase. If the salesperson does not care about how

customers feel in consuming their product or even putting them through the stage of installation and so on, the possibility that such customers will not make a repeat purchase of that product is high because they feel the organization only want to sell and not care about their satisfaction especially when they have a problem using the product. On the other way, customers feel happy and are ready to make a repeat purchase if there are follow-up activities.

The study based on the outcome, therefore, recommends that:

- It is imperative for HP Sales representatives not just to allow the prospect to spell out their objections but listen appropriately and respond effectively to encourage them to patronize their product. A salesperson must have a listening ear and not be hot-tempered to respond to objections intelligently.
- HP management should implement a consistent and structured follow-up system to reach out to customers after their purchase. This can include post-purchase surveys, email or phone check-ins, and periodic updates on product enhancements or tips for optimal use and ensure that customers have access to efficient channels for addressing concerns, seeking assistance, and providing feedback.

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