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Highlights

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Challenges of Distribution Services

Discovering Thoughts, Inventing Future

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The Impact of Social Influence, Self-Efficacy, Perceived Enjoyment, and Individual Mobility on Attitude toward use and Intention to use Mobile Payment of OVO

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Abstract- This study aims to determine the effect of social influence, self-efficacy, perceived enjoyment, and individual mobility on attitude toward the use, as well as the effect of perceived enjoyment and individual mobility on the intention to use, and the effect of attitude toward use on the intention to use. This type of research uses quantitative research. Data were collected from 125 OVO application users in Indonesia who met the criteria determined by the researcher. Data were collected by a questionnaire distributed online and Analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Amos software. The Results Showed that attitude toward OVO was influenced by self-efficacy and individual mobility but not influenced by social influences and perceived enjoyment. Furthermore, the intention of OVO users is influenced by perceived enjoyment, individual mobility, and attitude.

Keywords: social influence; self-efficacy; perceived enjoyment; individual mobility; attitude toward use; and intention to use.

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The Impact of Social Influence, Self-Efficacy, Perceived Enjoyment, and Individual Mobility on Attitude toward use and Intention to use Mobile Payment of OVO

Zelly Alfany [α], Akhmad Saufi [σ] & Lalu Edy Herman Mulyono [ρ]

Abstract- This study aims to determine the effect of social influence, self-efficacy, perceived enjoyment, and individual mobility on attitude toward the use, as well as the effect of perceived enjoyment and individual mobility on the intention to use, and the effect of attitude toward use on the intention to use. This type of research uses quantitative research. Data were collected from 125 OVO application users in Indonesia who met the criteria determined by the researcher. Data were collected by a questionnaire distributed online and Analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Amos software. The Results Showed that attitude toward OVO was influenced by self-efficacy and individual mobility but not influenced by social influences and perceived enjoyment. Furthermore, the intention of OVO users is influenced by perceived enjoyment, individual mobility, and attitude. Reviews These findings suggest that future research is expected to increase the number of respondents or narrow the area used as an object of research so that the results Obtained are expected to be better.

Keywords: social influence; self-efficacy; perceived enjoyment; individual mobility; attitude toward use; and intention to use.

I. Background

The emergence of mobile payment trends (MP) would have an impact on the lifestyle patterns of today's society. Lifestyle changes are clearly visible, especially on those who make transactions. Before any MP, any people still do activities or outlet shopping in the store with cash, but at the moment the transaction is done faster and easier. The speed and ease of transaction are supported by an electronic device such as a smartphone and can be done anywhere and anytime.

The early growth of MP in Indonesia began in 2007. Starting with the banking sector which launched its products in the form of MP. And then developed at several providers in Indonesia created their own MP-based servers. MP includes such TCash Telkomsel, Indosat with Dompetku, then XL Axiata XL Cash released. Not until there are some companies create MP applications such as the one that enliven OVO cashless payment in Indonesia.

OVO is one type of MP produced by the Lippo Group in 2016. OVO as financial applications provides ease of transactions and payments are also focusing on the collection of loyalty points or rewards. Every user that the transaction will earn points, these points can be used as a means of payment throughout the OVO merchant partners. Currently, the belle MP OVO latest offers various facilities with various merchant partners that exist in various shopping centers. Occurrences OVO amid rampant MP products more competitive in the world add digital payment (Eka, 2016),

MP allows users to make payment transactions anytime, anywhere with the help of the network and the mobile terminal(Yu, Cao, Liu, Gong, and Adeel, 2018), OVO product as one of the MP that attracts attention amid rampant MP other similar applications among the community. Using OVO provides convenience in a variety of payment transactions. For example, some big malls in Jakarta vehicle parking payment can be done through OVO. This payment system helps save lead time payments given the high mobility of urban vehicle movements such as Jakarta.

Consumers will use technology if they find it useful (Matemba & Li, 2018), In addition to the benefits there are several factors that encourage consumers to use MP systems to cover some of them such as usefulness, simplicity, security, and trust of the payment system. When a person has a high perception of security in MP MP then tend to trust the(Fan, Shao Li, and Xuemei, 2018), Furthermore, MP system allows users to take advantage of promotional offers are available for example discounts and coupons(Dinh, Nguyen, and Nguyen, 2018),

Occurrences MP with various forms into areas of research interest for researchers. MP makes their payment transactions or purchases is easier to do without the need to physically transfer money in the bank with all forms of the requirements in the process that tends to dull. This resulted in consumers becoming MP considers alternative services easier and faster than traditional payment modes (Yadav, 2016),

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Based on the description above, the writer behind to test whether there is an influence of social influence, self-efficacy, perceived enjoyment, and individual mobility in attitude, and examine the effect of perceived enjoyment and individual mobility on user intent.

II. Literature Review

a) *Mobile Payment*

Mobile payment also called mobile money, mobile money transfer, and mobile wallet or in Indonesian called mobile payment/mobile payment. Based on Wikipedia, MP is the payment of goods or services performed using mobile devices such as mobile phones. Another notion MP is payment for goods or services using a mobile device that has the ability of Near Field Communication. Mobile phone/smartphone utilizing wireless technologies such as NFC (Near Field Communication) or the currently connected to the Internet or the nearest to facilitate access WIFi MP (McKitterick & Dowling, 2003).

MP is a strategic opportunity for the bank to convert cash into electronic transactions. This payment service is run by the network operator in cooperation with banks such as Bank of BRI and Trash. Then fintech company collaborated with the bank as well as the cooperation by Bank Mandiri and OVO(SWIFT, 2012),

b) *Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)*

Technology Acceptance Model(TAM) is the initial model used to predict the use and acceptance of information technology developed by Davis in 1986. TAM describes the proportion of about 40% in the intentions and behavior of users who prove that TAM is better than the alternative models such as the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). The TAM model offers a foundation for studying and understanding the behavior of users to receive and use the technology. The expansion of the concept of TAM help predicts the necessary basic information about the factors that drive attitudes and intentions of individuals.

Social influence

Social influence is a group of people or organizations that can affect a person's behavior (Setiadi, 2013). Social influence is perceived by consumer's encouragement from the people around him to use something new like an electronic payment system in the transaction. What is meant by the people around are people who have a relationship with the consumer and being around him like family, friends, couples, and organizations(Junadi & Sfenrianto, 2015).

c) *Self-Efficacy*

Bandura (1986) self-efficacy, the belief a person's ability to succeed in doing, and produce something. Self-efficacy is associated with self-confidence has the ability to perform the desired action. In Shin (2009) self-efficacy is an individual assessment of his ability to perform the desired behavior in certain situations. In a situation, the cashless payment system is considered as a complex technology where users vote on their ability to affect the acceptability of their use of the payment system (Ozturk, 2016).

d) *Perceived Enjoyment*

Perceived enjoyment namely the extent to which the activity using a computer is considered fun/exciting personally regardless of the consequences will be the performance of the computer system. Perceived enjoyment as a form of intrinsic motivation technology (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992). Perceived enjoyment refers to the extent of activity, interaction, process or experience of using innovative technology is considered a delight in itself (Koenig-Lewis, Marquet, Palmer, & Zhao, 2015), Vankatesh (2000) suggested that the effect of perceived enjoyment will be stronger because of many unpleasant experiences gained from system users at a time.

e) *Individual Mobility*

The main thing is the existence of MP which can be accessed anytime and anywhere. Existence into a solution of traditional payments and can be used virtually (Dahlberg et al, 2003). It is very helpful for consumers with a high level of mobility. The level of individual mobility may influence consumers to use application MP (Kurniawati, 2017). Individual mobility is the extent to which individuals seek mobile lifestyles using the MP to meet their needs that can be used anytime and anywhere (Schierz et al, 2010).

f) *Attitude Toward Use*

Attitude is defined as the evaluation, user evaluation of the desire to use a particular system (Kurniawati, 2017). Suprapti (2010) defines attitude as an expression of one's feelings would be an object that reflects the fondness or dislike of the object. Positive and negative feelings that arise from the evaluation of a system of payment is determined by their confidence in using the system (Shin, 2009), Evaluation can be derived from the experience, knowledge, and consumer opinions formed during the interaction with the payment system.

g) *Intention to Use*

A tendency intention of the user to use a given technology, the level of use of a person's computer technology can be predicted from the attitude of his attention to the technology as the desire to add peripherals support, motivation to continue to use as well as a desire to motivate other users (Davis, 1989). According to Anggraeni (2015) is the tendency of behavior intention to use technology. Intention to use generally increases when there are perceptions and a positive attitude toward the product.

h) Research Model and Hypotheses

The social influence shows that individual behavior is influenced by how to trust others as a result of the use of services MP (Gosal & Linawati, 2018). So people believed to be an incentive for them to comply with the options or suggestions offered. Social influence is used as considerations regarding the use of a technology (Koenig-Lewis et al, 2015). Therefore: H1: social influence affects the attitudes of the users.

Users with high self-efficacy allow for easy use of cashless payment systems (Ozturk, 2016), Users who are familiar with the payment system does not find any difficulty in using mobile payments. Thus, the higher self-efficacy a person has, the more likely to achieve the desired results. Therefore, in this study links between self-efficacy with user attitude. H2: self-efficacy, the effect on the attitudes of the users.

In a study conducted by (Al-Gahtani & King, 1999) found that perceived enjoyment is not found to be significant on attitudes. Inversely proportional to the results of research (Praveena & Thomas, 2014) which found that perceived enjoyment has a positive influence on the attitude to the intention of use have different results related to perceived enjoyment that is found to be insignificant. Therefore: H3: Perceived enjoyment effect on the attitudes of the users. H4: Perceived enjoyment effect on user intent.

In this time period, MP becomes a mobile lifestyle is suitable, such services provide the means to buy and pay for goods or services in almost every situation. The findings in previous research show that there is a significant relationship between individual mobility with the perceived attitude and intention to use (Schierz et al, 2010). Therefore: H4: The effect on the attitude of individual mobility of users. H5: individual mobility effect on user intent.

The evaluation results in the form of likes/dislikes, good/bad, or feeling the positive/negative determining attitudes toward sustainability intention. From the findings of previous studies have confirmed the relationship attitudes and intentions (Shin, 2009; Schierz 2010; Diani, 2017). H7: user attitudes affect the intent of the user.

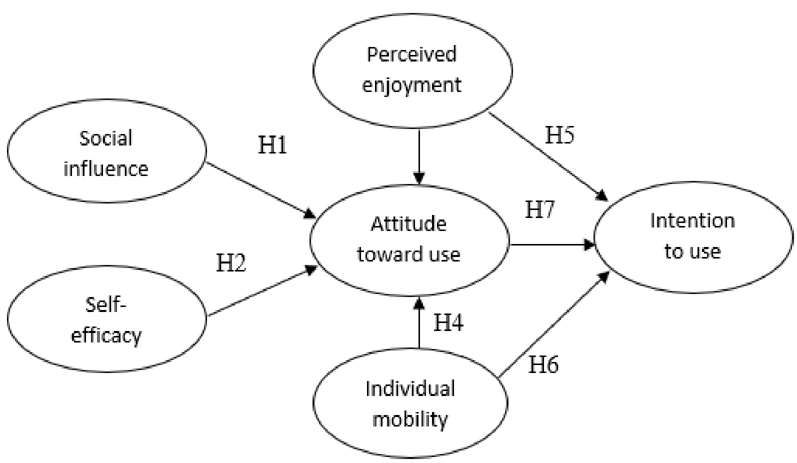

Figure 1: Model Research

III. Research Methods

This study classified quantitative research with a survey method using an online questionnaire and score predetermined criteria to test the research model and hypothesis (Ferdinand, 2014). The population in this study are all consumers using OVO applications in Indonesia. Then from the population will be taken partly or represented to be sampled. The sample was selected according to the criteria set by the researchers.

Given the number of population unknown, then the technique of determining the number of samples according to (Ferdinand, 2014) that is greater than 30 and less than 500 respondents, this number has to be said adequate or sufficient. The number of samples used in this study was 125 respondents. The amount is selected to be able to do the testing SEM sample of the minimum number is 100 or more (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Sampling technique using Non-Probability Sampling with this type of sampling purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is used to identify the respondent based on the criteria that have been determined by researchers. Those criteria are: OVO users aged 18-34, and actively using the OVO during the last six months.

The data analysis technique used in this research is descriptive analysis and measurement and structural models. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling(SEM) that is processed with statistical applications AMOS 24. To assess the overall research model, assuming Goodness of fit is used.

IV. Results and Discussion

Analysis of the respondents in this study to determine the characteristics and profile of respondents. Identification is based on several criteria: gender, age, education, and employment. Then as a statement that the respondent active filtering using OVO applications during the last six months.

From the overall results, it can be stated that there were 125 completed questionnaires and qualify the test. The descriptive analysis in Table 3.1 shows that 76 male respondents (61 percent) and 49 female respondents (39 percent). There are respondents aged between 18-23 years were 40 people (32 percent) and respondents aged 24-34 years amounted to 85 (68%). Of the 125 respondents, 31 respondents (25 percent) status as a student, 42 respondents (34 percent) as private employees, 8 respondents (6 percent) as Servant, 21 respondents (17 percent) as the self-employed, and 23 respondents (18 percent) have other professions.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	76	61%
	woman	49	39%
Age	18-23 years	40	32%
	24-34 years	85	68%
Education	High School	21	17%
	S1	83	66%
	S2	17	14%
	S3	4	3%
Occupation	College student	31	25%
	Private employees	42	34%
	Government employees	8	6%
	entrepreneur	21	17%
	more	23	18%

Based on descriptive analysis, the majority of MP OVO users are males between the ages of 24 to 34 years with the job's status as private employees, the average has been used in the last six months. The feasibility research model is seen from the structural model suitability index. Value of goodness of fit our model as follows:

Table 2: Suitability Index Structural Model

Criteria	GOF Value	Information
CMIN / DF	1.166	Well
Chi-square	199.461 Prob. = 0,067	Well
GFI	0.856	marginal
AGFI	0,806	marginal
RMSEA	0,039	Well
CFI	.978	Well
TLI	.973	Well

The goodness of Fit used to evaluate the structural model fit, 3:15 According to the table, it appears that most of the indices showed good results and meet the suitability index value models. GOF of the seven criteria, five of which shows that the research model has to meet the assumptions goodness of fit. Therefore, the research may be continued in the subsequent analysis.

After knowing the results of the suitability of the model, the next is to interpret the results by track analysis. A causal relationship between the structure seen from the probability and critical value ratios to determine the level of significance of any structural relationship.

Table 3: Causality Inter-Variable Testing Results

Variables	Estimate	CR	Probability	Information
AU <--- SI	0,100	.716	0.474	Not significant
AU <--- SE	.870	7.484	0,000	Significant
AU <--- PE	.590	1,914	0.056	Not significant
AU <--- IM	.720	1,988	0,047	Significant
IU <--- PE	0,641	2,160	0,031	Significant
IU <--- IM	.690	2,364	0,018	Significant
IU <--- AU	.930	4.710	0,000	Significant

Results of structural testing of hypotheses proposed in table 3.16 are two hypotheses of which showed no significant results and five other hypothesis showed significant gains. The results of the study support the proposed model. The results showed that self-efficacy (cr = 7.484) and individual mobility (cr = 1.988) in the attitudes of users supported by the data, as shown critical value resulting ratio is greater than the value of the requirement is 1.96, H2 and H4 accepted. Neither the individual mobility and user attitude, H4 accepted. Besides, it was found that social influence (cr = 0.716) and perceived enjoyment (cr = 1.914) on the attitude is not supported by the data, H1 and H3 rejected. Next on the intentions of the user affected by the perceived enjoyment (cr = 2,160) and individual mobility (cr = 2.364), H5 and H6 accepted. Furthermore, the relationship attitudes and intentions showed a significant effect (cr = 4.710), H7 accepted.

Overall structural relationship and the path coefficients on the research model can be seen in the image below:

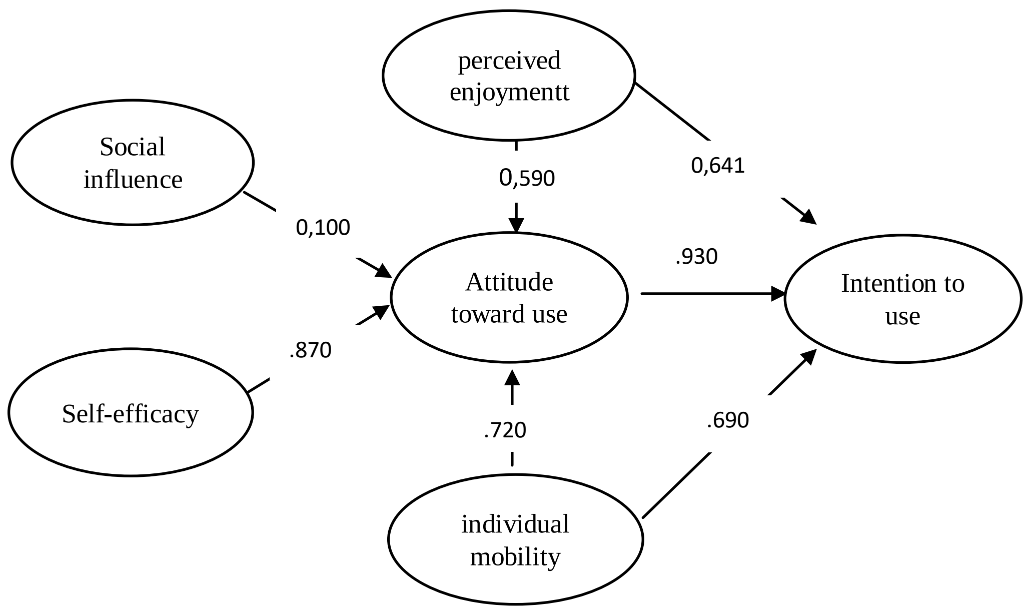

Figure 2: Structural Model and Coefficient Line

In the coefficient lane, social influences and perceived enjoyment found to have a significant impact on the attitude of the users. This is interesting because previous studies show that social influence has an influence on attitudes in terms of MP (Kulviwat et al, 2009; Schierz et al, 2010). However, the results of this study support previous studies that social influence has no influence on the attitudes of users (Aydin & Burnaz, 2016; Muk & Chung, 2014; Hadikusuma & Joalis, 2019). This may be due to the advice of those around him had no influence on their decision to use OVO or maybe those around the consumer does not use a mobile application payment of OVO. Later findings regarding perceived enjoyment and attitude contradict the (Al-Gahtani & King, 1999) found that attitudes have an influence on the perceived enjoyment. Perceived enjoyment of this result is not a determining factor in the attitude of the user in using MP OVO.

The study found that self-efficacy has an influence on the attitude of the users. When consumers feel they have high ability, they can change their attitude (Mohammadi, 2015). When a user with a level of self-efficacy tend to feel satisfied with the behavior they felt able to do. As in MP OVO afford users with easy to use and less likely to feel satisfied that can lead to a positive attitude.

In individual mobility as expected in this study found that the results are consistent with findings Schierz et al (2010), that individual mobility has a significant influence on the attitude of the users. Individual mobility is decisive for measuring the degree to which the user receives and feels the benefits received in the context of the time, space, and access to services (Liu et al, 2016). Availability MP OVO provides a good effect for the user with a high level of mobility.

The study's findings indirectly support previous research related to perceived enjoyment that affects the intentions of the user (Heenrik et al, 2008; Park et al, 2014; Alalwan, 2018). Vankatesh (2000) suggests that the effect of perceived enjoyment by the user will be stronger because users gain more experience with the system from time to time. The more often users use a system, in this case, the MP OVO perceived experience will enjoy becoming a stronger system that determines user intent.

Findings on individual mobility and the intentions of the user which can be found that has a significant effect. These findings are consistent with other research findings that found the same thing (Schierz 2010; Surachman, 2013; Luna, Montoro-Ríos, Liébana-Cabanillas, & Luna, 2017). MP Service was spot on and match the mobile lifestyle, the average MP provides payment products and services in a variety of situations (Liu, 2016). In this study, it was found that OVO users save time and energy without much effort to do a traditional transaction. Therefore, amid solid activity using only the OVO applications they can conduct payments and purchases.

These findings support previous findings of the attitudes and intentions of the user. The present study found a significant influence on attitudes toward intention (Kulviwat, 2009; Shin, 2009; Schierz et al, 2010, Mohammadi, 2014; Muk, 2014; Mohammadi, 2015; Liebana et al, 2017, Hadikusuma, 2019). This study found a positive feeling that is reflected from the user OVO transaction process both purchase and payment is very easy, the choice of features that are extremely helpful and beneficial contained in the application OVO. These things make the user has an interest and a desire to continue using the mobile payment application OVO onwards.

V. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study concluded that social influence and perceived enjoyment has no significant influence on the attitude of OVO. People nearby OVO users have no influence on their decision to use the mobile payment application OVO. Perceived enjoyment in this study can not be found as the determinants of users using MP OVO. Self-efficacy and individual mobility have a significant influence on the attitude of OVO. Users with high self-efficacy tend to directly use the MP to easily and quickly because their confidence level in the high ability does not see MP OVO as difficult to use. The high mobility makes users assisted in activities that bring positive feelings as a determinant of attitudes towards mobile payment OVO. Perceived enjoyment and individual mobility have a significant influence on OVO user intent. Perceived enjoyment for users the experience of using a trigger payment OVO OVO user intentions for the future. OVO presence helps the user with a high mobility rate trigger the intentions of the user to continue using the mobile payment OVO. User attitudes have a significant influence on OVO user intent. The attitude reflected positive feelings OVO users with an interest and a desire to continue using the mobile payment OVO. Perceived enjoyment and individual mobility have a significant influence on OVO user intent. Perceived enjoyment for users the experience of using a trigger payment OVO OVO user intentions for the future. OVO presence helps the user with a high mobility rate trigger the intentions of the user to continue using the mobile payment OVO. User attitudes have a significant influence on OVO user intent. The attitude reflected positive feelings OVO users with an interest and a desire to continue using the mobile payment OVO. Perceived enjoyment and individual mobility have a significant influence on OVO user intent. Perceived enjoyment for users the experience of using a trigger payment OVO OVO user intentions for the future. OVO presence helps the user with a high mobility rate trigger the intentions of the user to continue using the mobile payment OVO. User attitudes have a significant influence on OVO user intent. The attitude reflected positive feelings OVO users with an interest and a desire to continue using the mobile payment OVO. User attitudes have a significant influence on OVO user intent. The attitude reflected positive feelings OVO users with an interest and a desire to continue using the mobile payment OVO. User attitudes have a significant influence on OVO user intent. The attitude reflected positive feelings OVO users with an interest and a desire to continue using the mobile payment OVO.

VI. Implications

The results of this study contain implications for researchers in terms of mobile payment. That attitude toward use is influenced by self-efficacy and individual mobility, but it is not influenced by social influence and perceived enjoyment. In the individual intentions of users affected by mobility and perceived enjoyment.

Existing managerial impact in this research is that consumers can use social media as a means of where to obtain more information about OVO applications. The use of OVO is fairly easy to use can increase the confidence of consumers able to use the application MP. OVO company can add features that are more fun to add to the fun/pleasure users in the transaction that is considered appropriate to current developments. Companies can make an influencer such as an artist, telegram, or YouTuber as ambassador to promote mobile payment application OVO future. Companies can bring content such as event prizes that can attract consumers to use OVO.

VII. Limitations and Suggestions

The limitations of this study lies in the number of respondents and the coverage area of research. However, further research is needed to obtain more comprehensive results using different research methods. Suggestions for future research are: first, to increase the number of respondents or can narrow the area that serves as the object of study so that the results expected better. Second, use a different mode with this research is a qualitative method so that the reasons which affect several significant variables are not known.

Third, social influence does not have an influence on the attitude of the users. Advice from important people around respondents may not be the reason for respondents to determine their attitude to use mobile payment OVO and maybe people around him did not use OVO.

The discussion of this study did not assess the social impact of whether users' OVO affects a person's decision to use OVO. It is therefore recommended next study examines the link between the influence of the OVO users with the decisions of others to use OVO. Fourth, the results of testing the structural model show that perceived enjoyment has no influence on the attitude of the users. This shows that the entertainment aspect in OVO less influence user attitude. Related respondents on these variables on each indicator represent the average value is included in the high category, in the sense that the respondents perceived enjoyment in using OVO somewhat higher in other words, respondents feel happy using OVO. But not found an influence on respondents' attitude determination, therefore further research can perform backtests related to it and add other variables.

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Impact of Self Service Technology on Customer Behavioral Intention: Case of Intercity Railway Service in Sri Lanka

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Keywords: *railway ticketing, smart self-service ticketing, process improvement, smart technologies, digital transformation.*

GJMBR-E Classification: *JEL Code: M37*

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Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

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Perera. K.N.S [α], Packeer. T.A [σ], Shilpa.Y [ρ], Rupasinghe. U.M [Ѡ] & Kahandawaarachchi. C[¥]

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Keywords: railway ticketing, smart self-service ticketing, process improvement, smart technologies, digital transformation.

I. Introduction

The British empire introduced railways to Sri Lanka in the year 1864 and, the purpose of it is to transport coffee from hill country plantations, which are situated in Kandy to the port city of Colombo. Since then, the whole railway services under Sri Lankan administration (context) can be identified as nothing up to the standards with efficient and effective measures to date. Still, most procedures are followed with the same old methodologies with a manual system of working.

Since 1864, the Sri Lanka railway has been following the same traditional way of issuing tickets. According to that process, passengers need to visit the counters in railway stations, pay the cash for their tickets and get the tickets. The tickets that are currently issued by the Sri Lanka Railways are valid only from the date of issue and to the given destination only. Also, the current ticket reservation process of Sri Lanka Railways can be identified as a primary level system. Because of this process, customers have to visit the railway station every time that they need to reserve a ticket. Passengers have to visit stations before 30 days of their trip to reserve the tickets. Also, limitations like five tickets per person decrease the value of the ticket reservation process. In this modern era, most countries have replaced their outdated and obsolete systems with innovative and outstanding systems using new technology. But still Sri Lanka Railways didn't consider this radical and dramatic change.

Current processes run with traditional methods contain a lot of non-value adding activities and waste tasks. Those old and obsolete processes consume more money, resources and especially valuable time of everyone. It causes to create employee dissatisfaction and also less customer engagement with the process. By using business process re-engineering methods and techniques, the Sri Lanka Railway can solve not just the issues mentioned above, but the whole current system can be made more productive and timely as well.

The train ride is popular among both local and foreign visitors. For some people, it gives a unique experience. Sri Lankan train ride is the most epic and scenic train ride in the world. Above statement is yes for some reasons, because the train ride is popular among both local and foreign visitors. The reason is it provides a unique travel experience. The picture-perfect eye-catching environment gives an incredible travel experience to those who travel by train. But because of some reasons, the standardization of Sri Lanka Railways goes down. When it comes to the seat reservation process, train schedules, ticket issuing, payment options and some other areas. Sri Lanka Railway has 396 trains, 340 railway stations and 16 intercity trains that covering the long-distance cities around the island, but only 6 railway stations have the facility to reserve tickets and poor payment options led fail the railway ticketing and reservation process by making it tired and dissatisfied service to everyone involved in the process.

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To travel long distance most people, prefer intercity trains because it reduces the travel time. When it comes to the profit earning, lack of customer engagement put Sri Lanka Railways under continuous losses. According to the current process, passengers have to visit the railway station before thirty days to their journey and contact the superintendent or station master to do the paperwork. Also, reservations can have done through telephone which again it should perform 30 days before the journey. This process is very unconvincing for both customers and staff who are involved in the process. Huge paperwork process, customers have to visit one of the six stations several times to do their reservations means time-consuming, people from rural area don't like to travel very long distance to reserve their tickets because additional costs are attached, due to the lack of space sometimes passengers have to cancel their reservations or change their schedules which make passengers and staff tired of the process. Seat reservation via telephone is not very popular and it's limited service. One person can reserve only five tickets and after the reservation through telephone customers have to visit one of the six stations to collect the tickets. Another problem is duplicate seat reservation and ticket issuing. Most of the developed countries previously suffered from this issue and they mitigate it by adopting technology for their process. They use ticket kiosk machines, online payment and reservations and mobile devices-based solutions as the methods and provide passengers with an effective, efficient and completely satisfied service to railway travelers. In Sri Lanka, most of the people who are living in rural areas have difficulties with technological affordability, most people don't have credit cards to make online payments. But with the disruptive technological changes change the world time to time, Sri Lanka railway is the only service provider that remain unchanged with the very old techniques and processers. What we think is, reducing non-value adding activities and reengineer the business process can provide a dramatic improvement to the ongoing system. And it will take Sri Lanka railway into a very attractive and efficient place. Also, BPR can provide equal quality service to people with different levels of income. Because the breadth of Sri Lankan railway system being too big and having a limited time frame to conduct whole research, this was narrowed down to one specific service. The target service is Intercity Railways, which is a large number of passengers travel and having several issues in the ticket reservation system and schedules and customer services. Therefore, this study is focused on the above-mentioned issues and try to provide solutions to overcome above-mentioned issues using modern technological features like self-ticketing kiosk and online payment options attached to the self-ticketing kiosk.

The main target of introducing Smart Self-Service Ticketing is to minimize the queues in the public areas, to provide better service experience and also provide quick service to the passengers as they wish. This solution mainly focusing on the intercity railway in Sri Lanka. Currently, the railway department has six railway stations from total to reserve tickets for intercity train route. But this current process requires passengers to visit one of the railway stations from above six railway stations from thirty days before their journey and contact superintendent or station master to do the paperwork (Sri Lanka Railways, 2019), alternatives ways are also available like reservation arrangements via telephone and again it also performed thirty days prior to travel.

Rail travel is service used through humans unfold the majority demographic and content groupings. per the analysis further than five hundreds of rail journeys were for business travel, a demand for distinctive point in time, a demand to journey as shortly as doable, etc. per an equivalent supply the opposite makes use of are like leisure travel, Special get entry to demand, a demand to travel as cheaply as viable etc.

II. Literature Review

According to the study "Modernization of Passenger Reservation System" conducted in the Republic of India, they are aware of the issues concerning the railway price tag reservation and to resolve that problem they conduct this analysis. They have targeted on 03 main objectives to conduct this analysis. Their main objective was providing service to the public. That objective is divided into 04 main areas to achieve: scale back time and price concerned in ticketing, give fast service to passengers and availability of knowledge and that they taking into account the availability of trains and accommodation. Their second objective was - "better operating atmosphere for staff". Through reducing time, price and redundant work it's straightforward to form higher operating atmosphere for workers as a result of it reduce employee isolation with their day-after-day tasks. Their third objective was "reduction in scope for unethical practices in reserving accommodation" to gather information on issues they used interviews, discussions, information printed by Ministry of Railways, Ministry of IT and Ministry of finance. (Shirish C Srivastava, 2007) Through that application, they supply the following facilities to customers:

- Quick reservation facilities from any station to station through IR.
- Reduce the length of queues as a result of the availability of PRS counters around the globe.
- Mistakes are reduced as a result of all the data embrace in price tag are often checked by the purchasers before printing it.

- Information is offered everywhere in the globe through bit screens, web and phone.
- Unethical practices are mostly eliminated.

Similarly, "Automatic ticketing on London Underground" conducted in London researchers focused on issuing travel card (which permits travel on all the vehicle administrators with the one regular ticket) to be issued and checked consequently by any of the gatherings to their prerequisites. The London Underground coding field is refreshed at whatever point a ticket is handled at a door. Through that, reducing deceitful travel and expanding security in ticket workplaces. As for methodology, they use secondary data analysis. For that, they use an LUL customer database. (David Wanless, 1989).

Furthermore, according to the study "Itinerary choice and advance ticket booking for high-speed-railway network services" conducted in the United Kingdom, researchers mainly focused on analyzes the traveller stream task (agenda decision) issue in rapid railroad frameworks with different class clients and various class seats, given the train timetables and time-changing travel request. Researchers used a direct way to deal with model development booking cost with an unequivocal cost work, we consider booking cost endogenously, which is resolved as a piece of the traveller decision harmony. We demonstrate that this balance issue can be figured as a linear programming (LP) model dependent on a three measurement arrange portrayal of a time, space, and seat class. (Guangming Xua, 2018).

According to the study "Factors influencing online flight ticket purchasing." conducted in Korea researchers mainly focused to recognize the elements that affect the decision of buying aircraft tickets on the web. Furthermore, to distinguish if there is a connection among comfort and the eagerness to buy carrier tickets on the Internet, to investigate if there is a connection among trust and the ability to buy aircraft tickets on the Internet, and to analyze whether fulfilment with the previous buy of an aircraft ticket on the Internet is related with rehash buys. Non-probability sampling was utilized to target current Internet clients in Korea. The investigation utilized network locales, for example, the 'Daum Café' and 'MSN Community' to get to Internet clients. (TAE-HONG AHN, 2011).

Similarly, to the study "Smart Computing Applications in Railway Systems - A case study in Indian Railways Passenger Reservation System" conducted in India researchers focused to investigate various issues of executing keen processing in railroad frameworks relating to reservation models. As the researchers found out utilizing this UID-based innovation, it is conceivable to decentralize the errand of reservation from booking agents (in railroad reservation counters) to programmed ticket candy machines (ATVM) too. Since the open tickets are now issued through ATVMs, the booking highlight can likewise be executed in the ATVMs. This should effortlessly be possible by connecting the saved convenience of trains in the machines and by issuing biometrically confirmed/PIN secured Smart Travel Cards. On the other hand, the biometric data can be enrolled at Smart Card counters, while issuing the savvy cards. This can without much of a stretch expel some heap from the current PRS counters. (Parag Chatterjee, 2014).

Furthermore, according to the study "Towards the Internet of Smart Trains: A Review on Industrial IoT-Connected Railways" conducted in Spain authors tried to increase efficiency and aggressiveness: railroads face brutal challenges from different modes (for instance, the street area gives appealing, practical, solid, flexible, and helpful way to-entryway transport of cargo and travellers crosswise over outskirts). In Europe, the test is additionally expanded by a divided rail advertise, with various national frameworks for rail flagging and speed control. Subsequently, interoperability speaks to a key test for the freeflow of rail traffic. Furthermore, to reduce rail commotion and vibration, especially in urban zones. Also to Reduce ozone-depleting substance emanations. (Paula Fraga-Lamas, 2017).

Moreover, according to the study "Integrated urban e-ticketing schemes – conflicting objectives of corresponding stakeholders" conducted in European Union researchers tried to survey the various interests and boundaries of private on-screen characters, governments and clients and features clashes of goals concerning e-ticketing plans. Methodologically, this paper tries to comprehend the above-shown focuses through an exhaustive writing audit of auxiliary sources, for example, logical reports and concentrates just as official statements, logical papers and introductions on coordinated ticketing when all is said and done and partner jobs specifically. The financial point of view on the e-ticketing condition demonstrates that e-ticketing is given by a system of heterogeneous on-screen characters and that solitary their collaboration and association lead to helpful outcomes. It is the heterogeneity of the on-screen characters' objectives inside various financial, social, political and land settings that shape the careful conditions and result of the plans. The paper demonstrates that every one of the depicted entertainers is required as a full accomplice, however, that they go into the association for different reasons: Public transport administrators are attempting to build their offer in modular part by giving superior support of their clients. Accordingly, settling convoluted duty structures is one significant objective, the travel industry division targets offering guests an incorporated bundle of vacation destinations to expand their vacation involvement; open vehicle frequently just assumes a minor job in their procedures, intermediaries, in particular, money related specialist co-ops and media transmission administrators are searching for territories to extend their portable instalment administrations. (Puhe, 2014).

According to the study "E-Ticketing as a New Way of Buying Tickets: Malaysian Perceptions" conducted in Malaysia authors focused to distinguish e-ticketing patterns among urban networks, especially in Kuala Lumpur, to researches the use patterns and examples of e-ticketing. Likewise, the investigation additionally centered around the clients' viewpoints towards e-ticketing as far as its helpfulness, dependability, security, accommodation and effectiveness. And furthermore to look at the effect of statistic factors on e-ticketing reception towards e-ticketing. They used questionnaires to gather information. Their discoveries on inspirations and boundaries of e-ticketing demonstrate that comfort and convenience fill in as solid factors that rouse buyers to buy tickets on the web. Security and protection concern was observed to be the greatest boundaries of e-ticketing. Finally, we found discoveries from this examination that age, level of instruction, and callings have a critical effect on the clients' discernments towards e-ticketing. (Ainin Sulaiman, 2008).

As identified through the study "Self-consciousness profiles in the acceptance of airline e-ticketing services" conducted in Spain authors focused to concentrated on extending the learning of hesitance in the zone of buyer conduct and especially in the field of relaxation travel web-based booking. Questionnaires were used to gather data. The consequences of the investigations performed must be considered with extraordinary alert. In these cases, the size and kind of the examples utilized may assume an applicable job in the develops operational capacity. (Jesús Manuel López-Bonilla, 2015).

According to the study "Consequences of Forcing shoppers to Use Technology-Based Self-Service" conducted in Netherland, they know the issues that arise once customers are forced to use technology primarily based self- services. The main purpose of their study is to fill the gap by investigation whether or not customers are forced to use of TBSS and attitudes, activity responses to the case. aside from that the second purpose of this study was associate degree whether or not providing interaction with a worker as a fallback possibility may facilitate to offset the negative consequences of forced use of TBSS and therefore the final purpose of their study was to extend the literature by exploring the role that consumers' previous expertise plays within the forced use of TBSS. They used questionnaires to assemble information and sample size was 4000 customers. That analysis shows solely promising results with relevancy the implications of forced use of TBSS. However, that result presents inceptive to research the case. conjointly this analysis enclosed differing kinds of TBSS choices and completely different service choices. This study targeted on conveyance service in one country. (Machiel J. Reinders, 2008).

As identified through the study "Development of a Mobile Airline Reservation System" conducted in Nigeria researchers meant to recognize developing mobile airline ticket reservation system for Nigerian airlines. The main objective of this paper is to develop a mobile airline seat reservation system that may assist the general public in gaining a better and quicker approach for the seat reservation and providing them with additional choices to book a price tag for travelling on real-time. (Oyelade 0. J., 2009).

According to the study "Improvement of urban passenger transport ticketing systems by deploying intelligent transport systems" conducted in Lithuania aims at encouraging consistent vehicle of individuals and merchandise. Furthermore, improving ticketing tasks require high speculations and exhaustive investigation. As a result, another period of present-day innovations calls notwithstanding for increasingly viable arrangements – in particular, virtual-ticketing frameworks that may be accomplished through the presentation of versatile advancements. (Jakubauskas, 2006).

According to the study "Flight ticket booking app on mobile devices: Examining the determinants of individual intention to use" conducted in Malaysia researchers are looking at individual aim to utilize flight ticket booking applications on cell phones. Authors used questionnaires to gather data. The strategy of the examination including estimation, information accumulation, and information investigative system. It is one of the items most often bought by customers in Spain. Students were a very applicable populace for this examination. (Norazah Mohd Suki, 2017).

According to the study "Exploring design principles for self-service technologies: The case of a ticket vendor machine" conducted in United States main goal was to research self-administration advances utilized in open spaces, and how they can be improved. Observations were used as data gathering methods. The main target was to investigate strategies for leading examination on self-administration innovation and to find structure rules that can improve the convenience of this kind of innovation. (Marius Semi, 2014).

According to the study "Challenges in Implementation of TVM (Ticket Vending Machine) in Developing Countries for Mass Transport System: A Study of Human Behavior while Interacting with Ticket Vending Machine-TVM" conducted in Pakistan authors focused the key test of this examination is to explore the reasons of low consideration in utilizing TVM as open office in correlation of customary strategy for obtaining tokens from ticket office by MBS voyagers. (Abbas, 2014). Furthermore, to research the contrasts among elderly and youthful age in connection to ease in utilizing present day advancements. As well as possibilities of upgrading the TVM for uneducated and untrained explorers. The two-fold strategy was received in the examination. The methodology of examining TVM utilization depends on on-field review; that holds primarily talking of MBS travellers, moreover, the perception was likewise assumed imperative job in get-together significant discoveries. In the perception part, genuine client experience has been recorded to distinguish the constant issues in TVM presently being utilized in Lahore MBS. Research has been practiced keeping in view the presence of common holes. As study checks mid-90s research that a significant pointer of shared holes exists fit as a fiddle of education societal position, ethnicity pay and sexual orientation. Meetings have been taken of 180 travellers including the two sexual orientations of people from 14-55 years of age. Perception of 60 travellers has likewise been recorded with a group of 12 Surveyors. Two individuals from each group went through around 4 hours autonomously on indicated areas. Following suppositions were contemplated in the segment of the survey to know the fundamental factor of TVM carelessness.

- Absence of suitable preparing among TVM clients.
- Dithering while at the same time utilizing TVM because of the absence of education.
- Threatening TVM interface and structure.
- The high dismissal cash proportion.
- Inadequate characterization for returning cash fit as a fiddle of coins.

Furthermore, clients are happy with the effectiveness of MBS yet requested increasingly token corners to keep away from time and vitality misfortune in getting tickets.

Moreover, according to the research "Automatic Vending Machine Prototype Model" conducted in India, the goal is to build up a candy machine model for distributing the things by credit or exchange. The accessibility of the things is likewise checked. It discovers its application by chiefly understudies and basic residents in open spots. Moreover, the point is to develop a programmed candy machine model, which can be introduced in schools, universities, medical clinics and other open spots. Past literature used as secondary data to gather information. The proposed framework is the structure of the model for a programmed candy machine. The model was intended for the usage of the mechanical structure of a candy machine which at long last outcomes in distributing a thing upon the inclusion of the coin. (M. Jasmin, 2016).

III. Objectives

Based on the above research questions the authors developed the following research objectives. Research objectives imply what is the end product of the research.

Main objective: The overall objective of this study is to prove that the current ticket reservation system should replace with the self-service ticketing technique.

Sub objectives:

- To explore the nature of the existing ticket reservation process.
- To explore the rail passenger issues related to the current process.

Through this research, authors try to justify the adoption of self-service ticketing approach to the Sri Lanka Railway Department by replacing existing inefficient proses. It will increase customer satisfaction, encourage usage of ticket machines and reduce the need for sales persons, customers can book their tickets at any time both up and down tickets, introduce self-serviced ticketing for public transport and eliminate the queue, save the time and money. Also reduce the cost of paper materials, empower and force customers with benefits of modern technology. Customers will be more secure with the verification of payment and booking via email and SMS confirmations. Also, Sri Lanka Railway has a similar goal as a plan to introduce electronic payment and seat reservation for special trains.

IV. Material and Methods

The research following both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and focus of the study is to gain an insight of Sri Lanka's existing railway ticket reservation system, identify its issues and to redesign the current process by minimizing current issues. An inductive approach is using in the study as it starts with observations and theories whereas the framework is proposing towards the end of the research process.

An exploratory design is following as there were no earlier studies done on the re-engineering of Sri Lanka's intercity railway reservation process. Besides, the main focus of the research is to familiarize and gain an insight into Sri Lanka's intercity ticket reservation process for later investigation and improvement.

Purposive sampling is following in selecting participants for the questionnaire and the passenger interviews to select the most productive sample to answer the research questions. For the questionnaire, 100 participants are deliberately choosing based on the fact that they are living within the boundaries of the Colombo district and are employed in Colombo and 100 participants select from railway department because they are daily engaged with the process.

From the interviews and observation, we conducted we've analyzed the most important content into a word cloud.

Also, authors focusing on different data gathering methods according to the objective:

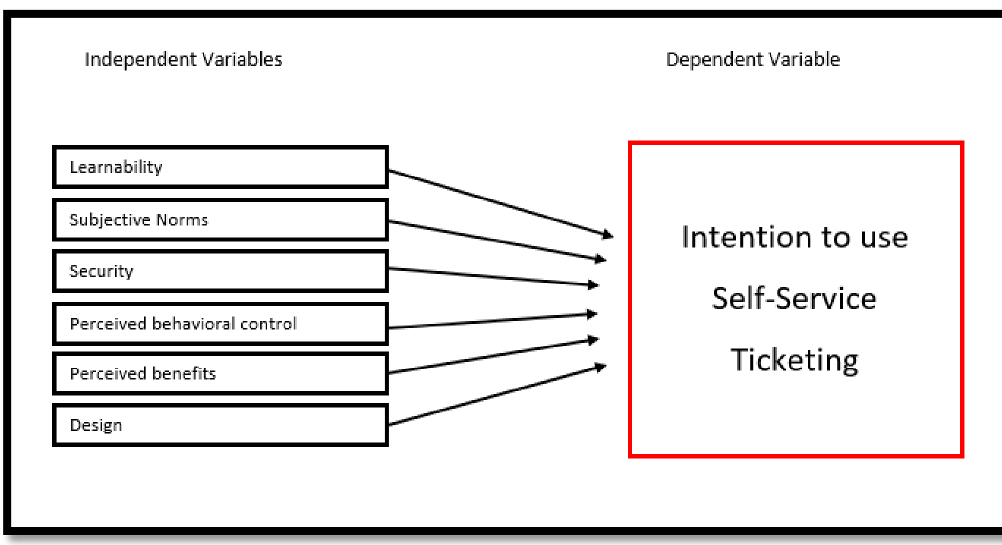
- To explore the nature of existing ticket reservation process – A face- to – face interviews conducted with Mr Champika S. Nanayakkara – Station Master Colombo Fort and Suburban and Mainline area and with Mr Asanka Samarasinghe – District Traffic Control. Also interviews through telephone calls conducted with Mr Bandara – Station Master Anuradhapura and with Mr Premarathne – Forman Demodara. Through observing and interviews authors find out following information about the current process:

- A briefing of the existing intercity railway reservation system.
- The main governing bodies and the services provided by them.
- Existing operational models.
- Current facilities, technologies used.
- Current and future trends of Sri Lanka's Railway Department.

- To explore the rail passenger issues related to the current process – For that online survey and questionnaire was used. Through the questionnaire, the most significant issues were identified and there purposive sampling was used. Interviews also conducted with people who are engaged with the current system. To analyze the findings which are collected through interviews, "WordItOut" online tool was used. we interviewed both employees and passengers who are engaged with the current ticketing process. Interviews were conducted in Sinhala which lasted for about 3- 5 minutes through that identified following factors:

- Current issues faced.
- Based on their thinking most significant issue.
- Corresponding expectations of customers.
- Limited payment options.
- Self-service channels that they most prefer.
- Their perception of using self-service channels to do their reservations.

V. Conceptual Framework



VI. Results and Discussion

- To explore the nature of existing ticket reservation process

Train transportation is one of the country's main public transportation network plays an increasingly important role in human navigation. Being the country's one of the main transport method, its policy formulation and implementation is entirely governed by parliamentary acts such as the National Transport Commission Act and Sri Lanka Transport Board Act etc.

The Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation is considered to be the main regulatory institution governing railway department while several other institutions such as Road Passenger Transport Authority(RPTA), Sri Lanka Transport Board(SLTB) and Tourist Board are also involved in administration. The rains are governed by Sri Lanka Transport Board.

- Service classification and delivery

Sri Lanka's railway transport system can be classified as a state-owned service. The trains are operated and regulated by both the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation and Sri Lanka Railway Department. Sri Lanka Railway Department introduced a mechanism where the customers could reserve seats via Mobitel or Dialog's official websites. Also, citizens who are working in government institutions provide the facility to use season cards and passes. Season passes allow the user to pay train fare for the entire month at once. In the case of any inquiry or a complaint, passengers could directly dial Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation's hotline number 0773087534 or passengers can inform it via an e-mail by sending mail to the maintransport@sltnet.lk email address. According to the recent statistics on Sri Lanka, the Railway Department indicates that there are 177 main railway stations and 162 sub railway stations (Anon., 2018). Table 4.1 depicts the basic information about the Railway Department while table 4.2 demonstrate statistics about operations of the Sri Lanka Railway Department.

Table 4.1: Statistics of Basic information about Sri Lanka Railway Department

Year	2018
Total Length of the trace (Km)	1465
No.of Main Railway Stations	177
No.of Sub Railway Stations	162
Train Halts	71

Source: Authors compilation based on data from the website of Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation

Based on the statistics of table 4.1, among both main railway stations and sub railway stations, trains only stop in 71 stations. From that only six stations have ticket reservation facility. And around 20 stations have the reservation facility that provides by Mobitel and Dialog.

Table 4.2: Statistics of Operational Information about Sri Lanka Railway Department

Year	2018
Total trips operated (Both passenger and Goods trains)	117,189
Number of trains a day	375
Number of Passenger trains per day	352
Number of goods train per day	23
Number of passengers carried a day	367,000
Number of employees (permanent & casual)	16,433
Number of Goods carried a day MT	6,845

Source: Authors compilation based on data from the website of Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation

Process Identification

To identify the current processes face-to-face interviews and observations were conducted by authors. Through that authors were identified there were 04 types of processors called counter reservation process, mobile reservation process, mainline process and normal ticketing process. Each process has different steps to follow. Above mentioned processors were designed as process notation diagrams by using “Draw.io” software.

- Counter Reservation Process and Mobile Reservation Process

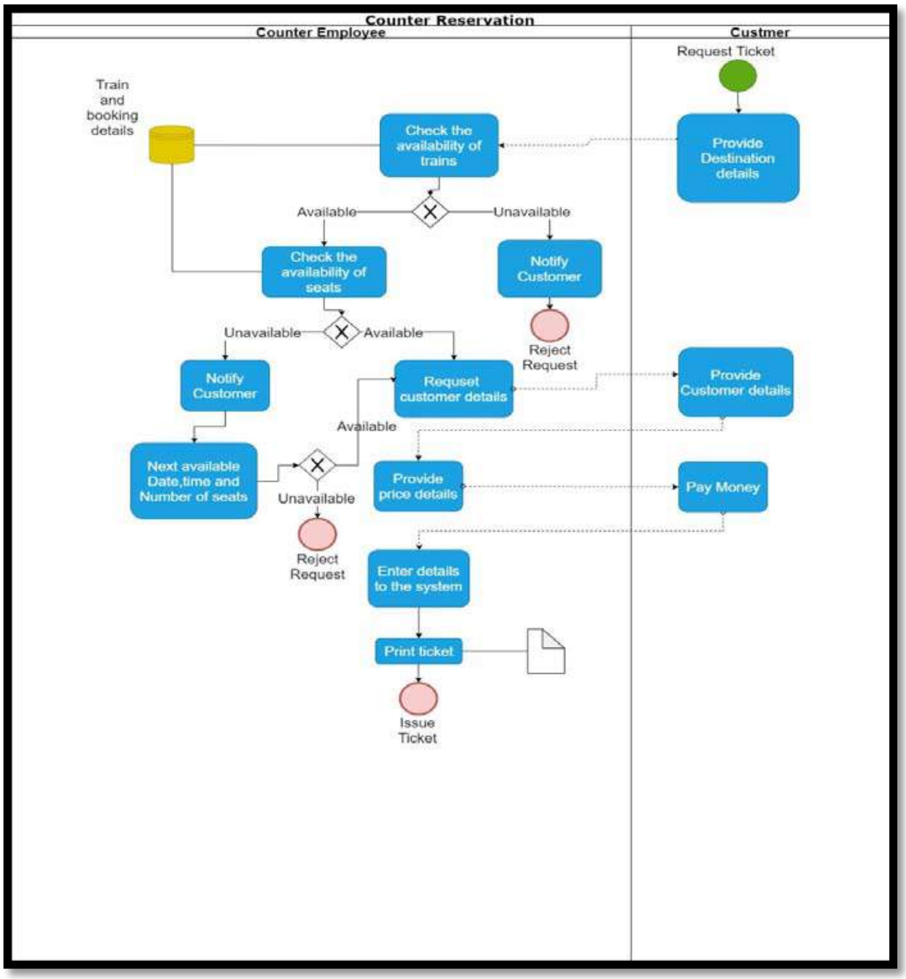


Figure 1: Counter reservation process

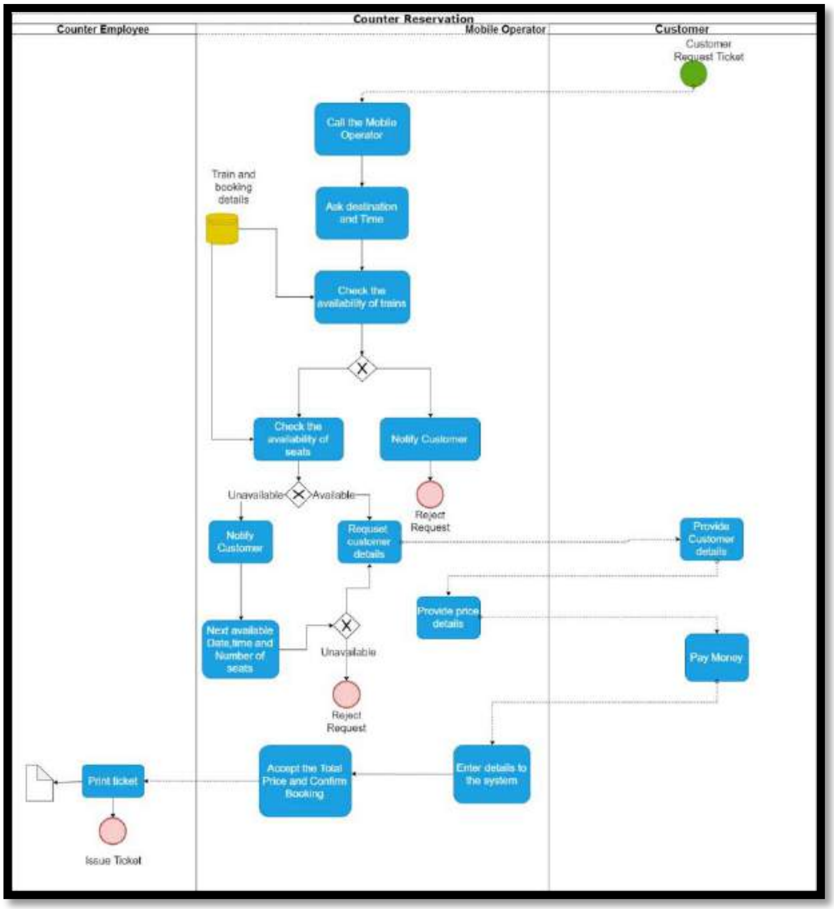


Figure 2: Mobile reservation process

Both counter reservation and mobile reservation processes are partially interconnected in such away. Mobile reservation process has an extra few steps when considering the existing process. Counter reservation process follows the following steps.

There are four train lines which have a seat reservation facility. Those are Badulla, Jaffna, Batticaloa and Beliatta. Badulla Intercity Train has 1st class AC (Ticket price Rs.1500), 2nd class (Rs.600), 3rd class seats, one train has a 1st observation room. Jaffna luxury train has more than 225 seats which passengers can reserve. This train has 1st class AC luxury (Rs.1700 per person ticket price), 1st class observation, 2nd and 3rd classes. Batticaloa, Trinco & Beliatta trains have sear reservation facility for 1st AC, 2nd and it has 3rd class which is without reservation.

Passengers have to do their all bookings 30 days in advance. Only accepted payment methods are by cash or government-provided Warrant. Tickets and reservation passes are issued only through counters at the railway station. Passengers can reserve their seats via phone calls from Dialog or Mobitel service providers, either way, they have to visit the station to collect the ticket. Dialogue or Mobitel does not provide the ticket. They only reserve the seat for a customer using customer details such as NIC, Name, and Mobile number. After the customer reserves their tickets via phone, the passenger will get a text message to his or her phone, then they have to visit the railway station counter to collect the ticket. Railway counter staff will check the identity number, collect the cash from the passenger and issue the ticket.

And those facilities are limited to selected stations. They are not providing reservation facilities to every station. Because of that person who is not having that facility in there nearby station have to visit a station in the distance area to make their reservation.

Or else Customer has to visit the railway station, waiting in the long queue, get the form and fill it or tell the required information to the staff member at the counter and reserve their ticket. Only accepted payment method at the counter is Sri Lankan Rupees. The customer has to pay the price to the counter and can collect the ticket.

One passenger can reserve 5 seats from his or her NIC, the same customer can repeat reserving a ticket for more than 5 seats waiting in the queue for several times. All five members NIC cards numbers are required but it's not compulsory in incidents such as children under 17 years of age. Railway counter staff member check the availability of the seats for the day that passenger requested, if seats are available, they confirm the booking and issue the tickets to the passenger. Seat availability is indicating on the screen of the system railway station has. It clearly shows the reserved and available seats.

Currently, the Railway department has installed their reservation system in main 54 railway stations. Arrival and Departure tickets can book on the same day at one time.

Customer can reserve any seat according to the availability. Duplicate reservations are restricted by the current system. When in a situation like, when two stations trying to book the same seat in the same train at the same time, the first person to book the seat will get the opportunity. No duplications for the same seat.

In night mail trains, reservation system more focuses on gender where, female passengers are allocated to the nearest female seat, male passengers are allocated to the nearest male passenger. It's a strict rule that railway department follows in night mail train that not to put female passengers and male passengers together, they have rooms called berth rooms, which is only for husband and wife or husband and wife with children. Berth rooms are with beds in night mail train.

There is mandatory information should be mentioned on the ticket such as gender, starting point, endpoint, date, time, ID number, ticket issuer name(staff). In Peek, hours and vacation seasons railway reservation system faces a huge slow due to high usage around the island wide stations. Customers have to come to the stations and spend hours in the queue to reserve a ticket, sometimes customers have to go back and come on the next day again to reserve a ticket. Customers experience a huge time-wasting and dissatisfaction.

Account balances are automatically calculated and staff members have to balance the money in their locker and the system generated calculation at the end of every shift. This is the only rail line which has an automated bookkeeping system.

If a customer loses a ticket they have to take full responsibility. Railway department is not responsible for ticket losses or else they don't issue a new ticket. The customer has to follow the steps to reserve the ticket again and pay the price again and get the ticket.

Cancellation or refund process has to be done within 24 hours unless the customer has no option to get a refund or cancellation process. In a special occasion, customer can reserve a whole part of a train, therefore they have to visit the Railway department and follow the process.

- Normal Ticketing Process

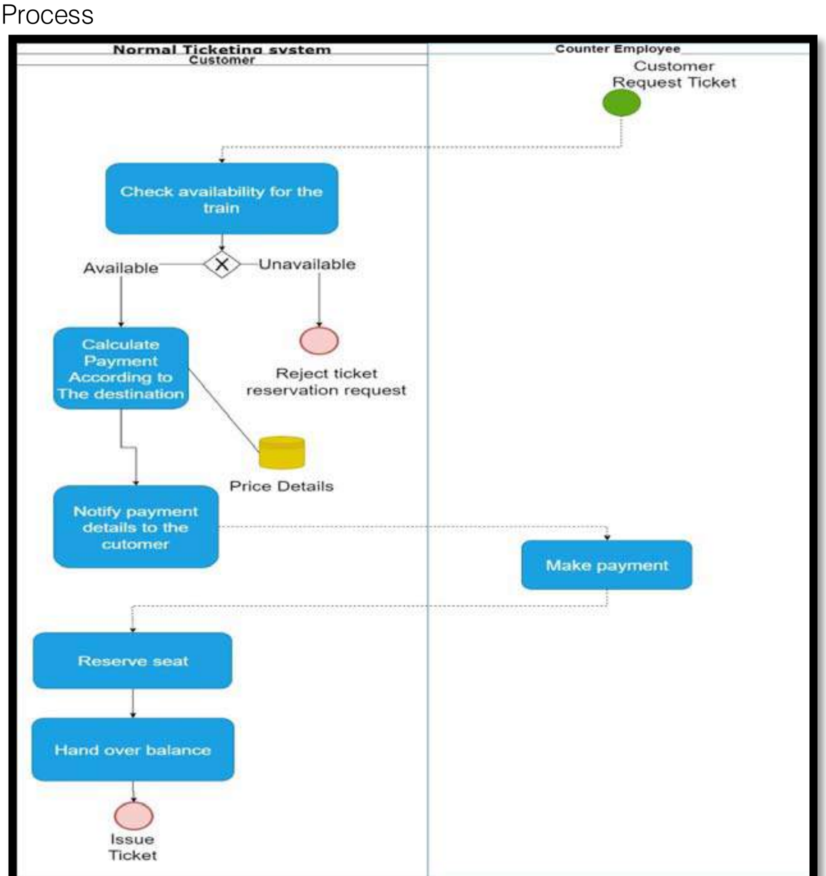


Figure 3: Normal ticketing process

Normal Ticketing Process has separate four ticket counters assign to this process too. Here in Colombo railway station, these counters have tickets for short-run railway areas. For example, Colombo to Rambukkana, Colombo to Galle. Ticket prices here starting from Rs.10 to Rs.200. This is the busiest and most passengers preferred rail line, which is most passengers used to travel daily and it generates a massive amount of revenues daily.

Here they provide tickets only over the counter and every station has tickets for any station trains travelling this rail line. There are huge queues most of the time inside and outside of the station. Customers have to give money to the counter staff and tell them the departure venue they want to go and counter staff issue the ticket. Only accepted payment method is cash. It takes around one minute to issue a ticket, sometimes maybe more time required when the counter staff has to give the balance of the money. Since it has a huge demand by customers every day, they maintain a massive amount of printed tickets in every station in wooden cupboards. According to counter staff, they face lots of trouble maintaining that cupboard due to ants and other small animal attacks. According to railway staff superiors, they are dissatisfied about the money the put into print the tickets and the return they get.

Like all other rail lines, every counter staff member has to update and balance of their cashier locker money amount and price of the tickets they sell. It's a manual process and they are completely dissatisfied about the maintaining manual books. They said sometimes they made errors in calculations and even more, duplications can happen and sometimes data may be a loss if they lose their book and they have no recovery option.

- Main Line Ticketing Process

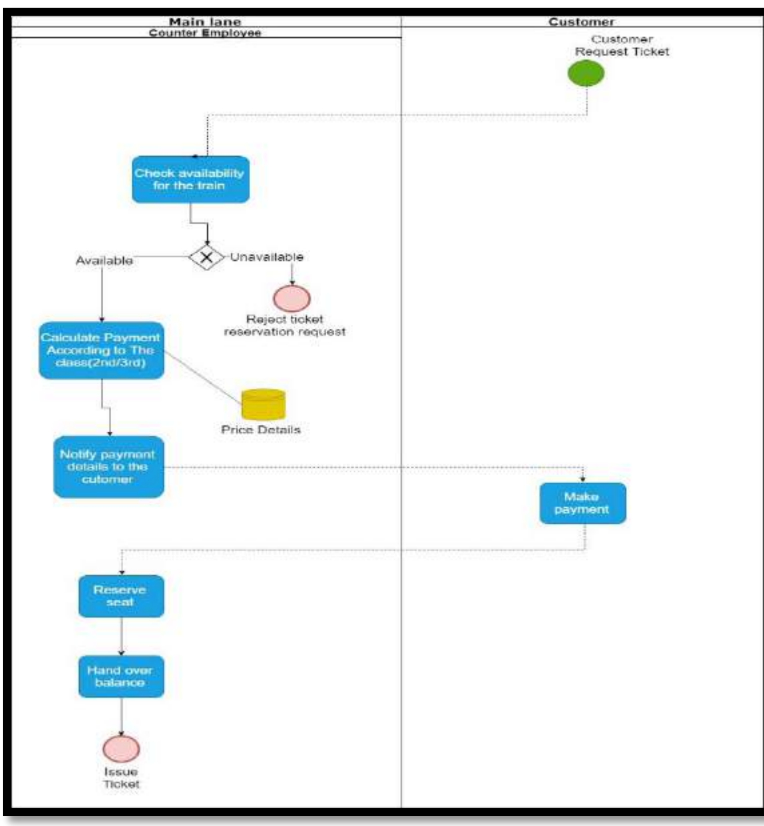


Figure 4: Main line process

Under this, they provide tickets for suburban areas and coastline (Colombo to Mathara and Beliaththa). Tickets they issue here are from staring from Rabmukkana, Awisswella line to Mathara line and Puththalama rather than that here they provide tickets for short-run train services.

They have four counters including two service counters: 1st line (Colombo fort- KKS(Kankasanthurai)- Thaleimannra), 2nd line (Colombo Fort to Badulla) from the other way Matale, 3rd line (Trincomalee- Battichlore) form that line they provide on reservation Intercity train ticket as well (Normal Intercity third class) tickets issue for number of sheets that they have. There are two intercity trains (Jaffna and Battichlore) and 4th line which issues 2nd class normal whole island but not reserve tickets. This mainline process used to issue second class tickets. They have another 8 and 9 Counters (Badulla cost line Kandy-Mathale which issues warrants)

Global Journal of Management and Business Research (E) Volume XIX Issue VII Version I Year 2019

and under 9 counter they provide warrants to KKS & Thaleimannar (2nd class, 1st class). Also, they provide tickets for normal tickets as usual.

Other than that they follow the same process on night mail reservations. To record information related to the reservations of sleeping berth they use a ledger called "Sleeping Berth Ledger". There are ledgers same as this ledger for other reservations as well.

- To explore the rail passenger issues related to the current process

To look at the modern-day problems of ticket reservation from a passenger's perspective, statistics was once accumulated from the pattern of one hundred people via an online survey. These persons signify the team of workers of us of a who each day tour Colombo for employment. The resolution of contributors to the online survey has once completed the use of purposive sampling. In the survey, it was once located out that 57% of the people are used intercity trains to attain Colombo whilst 43% the use of sluggish trains to reach Colombo. And face-to-face interviews conducted with 10 people who are purposively selected.

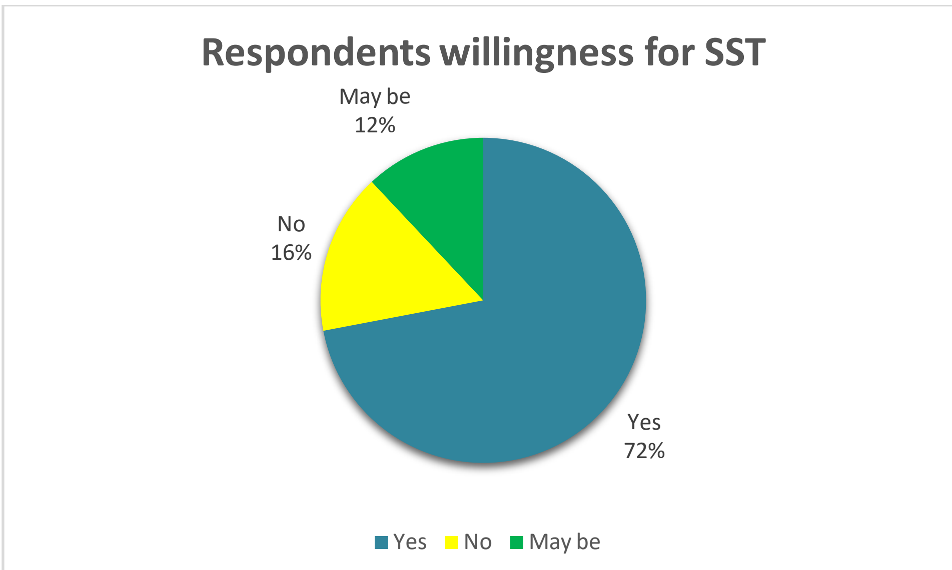


Figure 4.6: Respondents willingness for SST

According to figure 4.6, the willingness of the respondents for self-service ticketing was once illustrated. Most importantly, 72% of the respondents are agreed that they were inclined to use self-service ticketing even at a high cost. Hence, it is considered that if self-service ticketing is put into effect greater and extra passengers would use it alternatively that touring stations. It will enhance the effectivity and effectiveness of the manner as well.

Table 4.3 depicts the 09 issues recognized through lookup articles and present-day system observation. They are rated through respondents based on their order of importance. The Likert's scale with 3 tiers of significance was used for data collection with a score of 1 being much less important and a rating of three is exceptionally important. These facts were analyzed, and their cumulative frequencies were got through SPSS.

Table 4.3: Ticket reservation issues

Characteristics	Highly Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important
Customer waiting time	58%	38%	4%
Too complicated	37%	51%	12%
Limited number of stations to make reservations	28%	50%	18%
Require action on every request	38%	46%	16%
Poor refund policy	62%	26%	12%
Availability of seats	36%	49%	15%
No proof when loosing ticket	42%	51%	7%
Limited number of tickets per person	58%	35%	7%
Limited payment method	48%	46%	6%

Source: Authors compilation based on the gathered data from the survey conducted

The findings indicate that the attributes most essential to the client were client bad refund policy, consumer waiting time, a limited number of tickets per character while the too complicated, no proof when losing the ticket, limited variety of station to make reservations and availability of seats have been regarded to particularly important. Figure 4.7 compares the degree of significance of identified issues.

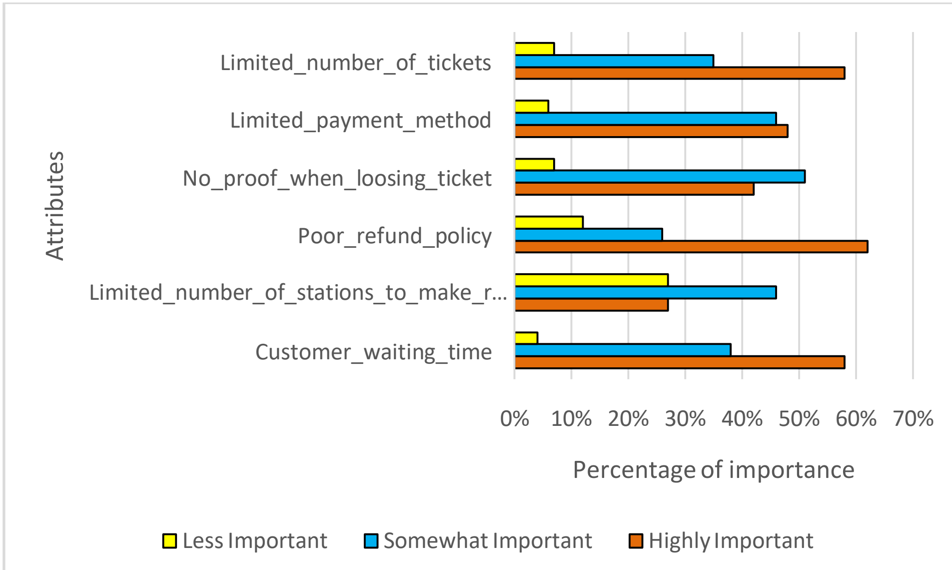


Figure 4.7: Identified issues Vs. percentage comparison

Meanwhile, the facts collected by the interviews with passengers indicated that the most frequent troubles they confronted when reserving ticket:

- The process is very slow
- Too customizable
- Create delays
- Ticket storing difficulties
- Manual accounts bookkeeping consume so much time
- Cause many errors and duplicates

The troubles had been also analyzed using a word cloud to identify the greatest issues. Thus, it used to be surely evident that the create delays used to be major trouble faced utilizing passenger whilst motive many errors and duplicates, too customizable and the system is very gradual were additionally significant.

VII. Conclusion

This research has targeted to explore the nature of the existing ticket reservation process and this study attempts to recognize the issues that customers face when using the current ticket reservation process. Finally, according to above-given results, we can justify that the Sri Lanka Railway Department need to adopt self-service ticketing facility to improve their efficiency in operations.

Acknowledgment

It's with great pleasure we pen the acknowledgement after a genuine effort of conducting a research survey which has fallen under a part of undergraduate education journey. Mrs. Chathurangika Kanahdawaarachchi, the supervisor, the veteran consultant and mentor is gratefully and sincerely thanked for her understanding, guidance, patience, motivation, enthusiasm and coaching which are the foundation pillars that made us determined and dedicated in conducting the research in an unbiased realistic situation.

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Appendix A

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Customer_waiting_ti	100	1	3	2.54	.576	.332	-.806	.241	-.330	.478
Limited_number_of_stations_to_make_reservations	100	1	3	2.00	.739	.545	.000	.241	-1.145	.478
Poor_refund_policy	100	1	3	2.50	.704	.495	-1.066	.241	-.191	.478
No_proof_when_loosing_ticket	100	1	3	2.35	.609	.371	-.359	.241	-.639	.478
Limited_payment_method	100	1	3	2.42	.606	.367	-.520	.241	-.606	.478
Limited_number_of_tickets	100	1	3	2.51	.628	.394	-.914	.241	-.180	.478
Availability_of_seats	100	1	3	2.20	.696	.485	-.293	.241	-.902	.478
Too_complicated	100	1	3	2.25	.657	.432	-.313	.241	-.722	.478
Require_action_on_every_request	100	1	3	2.22	.705	.497	-.339	.241	-.933	.478
Valid N (listwise)	100									

Customer_waiting_time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
	2	38	38.0	38.0	42.0
	3	58	58.0	58.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Limited_number_of_stations_to_make_reservations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	27	27.0	27.0	27.0
	2	46	46.0	46.0	73.0
	3	27	27.0	27.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Poor_refund_policy

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	12	12.0	12.0	12.0
	2	26	26.0	26.0	38.0
	3	62	62.0	62.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

No_proof_when_loosing_ticket

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
	2	51	51.0	51.0	58.0
	3	42	42.0	42.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Limited_payment_method

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	6.0	6.0	6.0
	2	46	46.0	46.0	52.0
	3	48	48.0	48.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Limited_number_of_tickets

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
	2	35	35.0	35.0	42.0
	3	58	58.0	58.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Availability_of_seats

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	16	16.0	16.0	16.0
	2	48	48.0	48.0	64.0
	3	36	36.0	36.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Too_complicated

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	12	12.0	12.0	12.0
	2	51	51.0	51.0	63.0
	3	37	37.0	37.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Require_action_on_every_request

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	16	16.0	16.0	16.0
	2	46	46.0	46.0	62.0
	3	38	38.0	38.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

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Pricing Strategies for Each Stage of Product Life Cycle (A Study of Nigeria Bottling Company, Owerri Imo State)

By Okwara C.C., Iwuoha B.C. & Onyeme Linus. N.

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Keywords: pricing, strategies, product life cycle.

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Section 1

I. Introduction

a) *Background of the Study*

Pricing is the process whereby a business sets the price at which it will sell its products and services, and may be part of the business's marketing plan. In setting prices, the business will take into account the price at which it could acquire the goods, the manufacturing cost, the market place, competition, market condition, brand, and quality of product.

It is a fundamental aspect of financial modeling and is one of the four Ps of the marketing mix, the other three aspects being product, promotion, and place. Price is the only revenue generating element amongst the four Ps, the rest being cost centers. However, the other Ps of marketing will contribute to decreasing price elasticity and so enable price increases to drive greater revenue and profits.

It can be a manual or automatic process of applying prices to purchase and sales orders, based on factors such as; fixed amount, quantity break, promotion or sales campaign, specific vendor quote, price prevailing on entry, shipment or invoice date, combination of multiple orders or lines, and many others. Automated pricing systems require more setup and maintenance but may prevent pricing errors. The needs of the consumer can be converted into demand only if the consumer has the willingness and capacity to buy the product. Thus, pricing is the most important concept in the field of marketing, it is used as a tactical decision in response to changing competitive, market and organizational situations.

Part of being a small business owner is strategizing pricing, creating and marketing products or services, and paying attention to industry trends. If you sell goods, you need to know about the product life cycle.

Product life cycle is a model that the majority of business owners recognize and follow. It helps small business owners to strategize and predict product success from the time they release it. What is the product life cycle? A product's life cycle is its progress from when it is created to when it is discontinued. There are four stages in the cycle, which are development, growth, maturity, and decline. The product life cycle helps business owners manage sales, determine prices, predict profitability, and compete with other businesses.

Product life cycle management, or PLM, is the process of observing a product throughout its life cycle. Track each product's activities and successes to keep profits high and avoid steep losses.

i. *Objectives of pricing*

The objectives of pricing should consider:

- The financial goals of the company (i.e. profitability)
- The fit with marketplace realities (will customers buy at that price?)
- The extent to which the price supports a product's market positioning and be consistent with the other variables in the marketing mix
- The consistency of prices across categories and products (consistency indicates reliability and supports customer confidence and customer satisfaction)
- To meet or prevent competition

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b) Statement of the Problem

Price is influenced by the type of distribution channel used, the type of promotions used, and the quality of the product. Where manufacturing is expensive, distribution is exclusive, and the product is supported by extensive advertising and promotional campaigns, then prices are likely to be higher. Price can act as a substitute for product quality, effective promotions, or an energetic selling effort by distributors in certain markets.

From the marketer's point of view, an efficient price is a price that is very close to the maximum that customers are prepared to pay. In economic terms, it is a price that shifts most of the consumer economic surplus to the producer. A good pricing strategy would be the one that could balance between the price floor (the price below which the organization ends up in losses) and the price ceiling (the price by which the organization experiences a no-demand situation). This is what the study set out to investigate on the pricing strategies for each stage of Product Life Cycle.

c) Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to investigate the pricing strategies for each stage of Plc., other sub-objectives include;

1. To examine the sensitivity and consumer psychology of pricing.
2. To investigate the methods of setting price at any stage of Plc.
3. To investigate the adoption of cost-based pricing strategy and direct positive impact on profit margin.
4. To investigate the pricing mistakes at any stage of Plc.

d) Research Questions

1. How are the sensitivity and consumer psychology of pricing?
2. What are the methods of setting price at any stage of Plc?
3. Does adopting cost-based pricing strategy has a direct positive impact on profit margin?
4. What are the pricing mistakes at any stage of Plc?

e) Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at a significant level of 0.05

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between sensitivity and consumer psychology and pricing.

H_{02}: There are no effective methods of setting price at any stage of Plc.

H_{03}: Adopting cost-based pricing strategy has no direct positive impact on profit margin.

f) Justification

1. This study will ascertain the pricing strategies for each stage of Plc which will aid public limited liability companies to know which pricing strategy is suitable at any stage of the business.
2. It will enable management to know the various effective methods of setting price at any stage of the company.
3. It will also be of help to Plc., as it will be an eye-opener for them to know the pricing mistakes at any stage of the business.
4. Finally, it will enable firms to ascertain the sensitivity and consumer psychology of pricing, that will aid them to know how to fix their product price to suit the need of the consumers.

Section 2

II. Literature Review

The related literature will be reviewed under conceptual framework, theoretical background and empirical studies.

a) Conceptual Framework

i. *Pricing*

Price is the value that is put to a product or service and is the result of a complex set of calculations, research and understanding and risk taking ability. A pricing strategy takes into account segments, ability to pay, market conditions, competitor actions, trade margins and input costs, amongst others. It is targeted at the defined customers and against competitors. There are several pricing strategies: *premium pricing, penetration pricing, economy pricing, skimming strategy etc.* Marketers develop an overall pricing strategy that is consistent with the organisation's mission and values. This pricing strategy typically becomes part of the company's overall long-term strategic plan. The strategy is designed to provide broad guidance for price-setters and ensures that the pricing strategy is consistent with other elements of the marketing plan. While the actual price of goods or services may vary in response to different conditions, the broad approach to pricing (i.e., the pricing strategy) remains a constant for the planning outlook period which is typically 3–5 years, but in some industries may be a longer period of 7–10 years. The pricing strategy established the overall, long-term goals of the pricing function, without specifying an actual price-point.

Broadly, there are six approaches to pricing strategy mentioned in the marketing literature:

Operations-oriented pricing: Where the objective is to optimise productive capacity, to achieve operational efficiencies or to match supply and demand through varying prices. In some cases, prices might be set to de-market.

Revenue-oriented pricing: (Also known as *profit-oriented pricing* or *cost-based pricing*) - where the marketer seeks to maximise the profits (i.e., the surplus income over costs) or simply to cover costs and break even. For example, dynamic pricing (also known as yield management) is a form of revenue oriented pricing.

Customer-oriented pricing: Where the objective is to maximize the number of customers; encourage cross-selling opportunities or to recognise different levels in the customer's ability to pay.

Value-based pricing: (Also known as *image-based pricing*) occurs where the company uses prices to signal market value or associates price with the desired value position in the mind of the buyer. The aim of value-based pricing is to reinforce the overall positioning strategy e.g. premium pricing posture to pursue or maintain a luxury image.

Relationship-oriented pricing: Where the marketer sets prices in order to build or maintain relationships with existing or potential customers.[5]

Socially-oriented pricing: Where the objective is to encourage or discourage specific social attitudes and behaviours. e.g. high tariffs on tobacco to discourage smoking.

Pricing Tactics/Strategies

When decision-makers have determined the broad approach to pricing (i.e., the pricing strategy), they turn their attention to pricing tactics. Tactical pricing decisions are shorter term prices, designed to accomplish specific short-term goals. The tactical approach to pricing may vary from time to time, depending on a range of internal considerations (e.g. such as the need to clear surplus inventory) or external factors (e.g. a response to competitive pricing tactics). Accordingly, a number of different pricing tactics may be employed in the course of a single planning period or across a single year. Typically line managers are given the latitude necessary to vary individual prices providing that they operate within the broad strategic approach. For example, some premium brands never offer discounts because the use of low prices may tarnish the brand image. Instead of discounting, premium brands are more likely to offer customer value through price-bundling or give-aways.

When setting individual prices, decision-makers require a solid understanding of pricing economics, notably break-even analysis, as well as an appreciation of the psychological aspects of consumer decision-making including reservation prices, ceiling prices and floor prices. The marketing literature identifies literally hundreds of pricing tactics. It is difficult to do justice to the variety of tactics in widespread use. Rao and Kartono carried out a cross-cultural study to identify the pricing strategies and tactics that are most widely used. The following listing is largely based on their work.

ARC/RRC pricing

A traditional tactic used in outsourcing that uses a fixed fee for a fixed volume of services, with variations on fees for volumes above or below target thresholds. Charges for additional resources (“ARC’s”) above the threshold are priced at rates to reflect the marginal cost of the additional production plus a reasonable profit. Credits (“RRC’s”) granted for reduction in resources consumed or provided offer the enterprise customer some comfort, but the savings on credits tend not to be equivalent to the increased costs when paying for incremental resources in excess of the threshold.

Complementary pricing

The purchase of a printer leads to a lifetime of purchases of replacement parts. In such cases, complementary pricing may be considered. Complementary pricing is an umbrella category of "captive-market" pricing tactics. It refers to a method in which one of two or more complementary products (a deskjet printer, for example) is priced to maximise sales volume, while the complementary product (printer ink cartridges) are priced at a much higher level in order to cover any shortfall sustained by the first product.

Contingency pricing

Contingency pricing is the process where a fee is only charged contingent on certain results. Contingency pricing is widely used in professional services such as legal services and consultancy services. In the United Kingdom, a contingency fee is known as a conditional fee.

Differential pricing

Differential pricing, also known as *flexible pricing*, *multiple pricing* or *price discrimination* , occurs where different prices are charged to different customers or market-segments, and may be dependent on the service provider's assessment of the customer's willingness or ability to pay. There are various forms of price difference including: the type of customer, the geographic area served, the quantity ordered, delivery time, payment terms, etc.

Discrete pricing

Discrete Pricing occurs when prices are set at a level that the price comes within the competence of the decision making unit (DMU). This method of pricing is often used in B2B contexts where the purchasing officer may be authorised to make purchases up to a predetermined level, beyond which decisions must go to a committee for authorization.

Discount pricing

A discount is any form of reduction in price. Discount pricing is where the marketer or retailer offers a reduced price. Discounts in a variety of forms - e.g. quantity rebates, loyalty rebates, seasonal discounts, periodic or random discounts etc.

Diversionary pricing

Diversionary Pricing is a variation of loss leading used extensively in services; a low price is charged on a basic service with the intention of recouping on the extras; can also refer to low prices on some parts of the service to develop an image of low price.

Everyday low price

"Everyday Low Prices" are widely used in supermarkets. Everyday low prices refers to the practice of maintaining a regular low price-low price - in which consumers are not forced to wait for discounting or specials. This method is used by supermarkets.

Exit fees

Exit Fees refer to a fee charged for customers who depart from the service process prior to natural completion. The objective of exit fees is to deter premature exit. Exit fees are often found in financial services, telecommunications services and aged care facilities. Regulatory authorities, around the globe, have often expressed their discontent with the practice of exit fees as it has the potential to be anti-competitive and restricts consumers' abilities to switch freely, but the practice has not been proscribed.

Experience curve pricing

Experience curve pricing occurs when a manufacturer prices a product or service at a low rate in order to obtain volume and with the expectation that the cost of production will decrease with the acquisition of manufacturing experience. This approach which is often used in the pricing of high technology products and services, is based on the insight that manufacturers learn to trim production costs over time in a phenomenon known as experience effects.

Geographic pricing

Geographic pricing occurs when different prices are charged in different geographic markets for an identical product. For example, publishers often make text-books available at lower prices in Asian countries because average wages tend to be lower with implications for the customer's ability to pay. In other cases, geographic variations in prices may reflect the different costs of distribution and servicing certain markets.

Guaranteed pricing

Guaranteed pricing is a variant of contingency pricing. It refers to the practice of including an undertaking or promise that certain results or outcomes will be achieved. For instance, some business consultants undertake to improve productivity or profitability by 10%. In the event that the result is not achieved, the client does not pay for the service.

High-low pricing

High-low pricing refers to the practice of offering goods at a high price for a period of time, followed by offering the same goods at a low price for a predetermined time. This practice is widely used by chain stores selling homewares. The main disadvantage of the high-low tactic is that consumers tend to become aware of the price cycles and time their purchases to coincide with a low-price cycle.

Honeymoon pricing

Honeymoon Pricing refers to the practice of using a low introductory price with subsequent price increases once relationship is established. The objective of honeymoon pricing is to "lock" customers into a long-term association with the vendor. This approach is widely used in situations where customer switching costs are relatively high such as in home loans and financial investments. It is also common in categories where a subscription model is used, especially if this is coupled with automatic regular payments, such as in newspaper and magazine subscriptions, cable TV, broadband and cell phone subscriptions and in utilities and insurance.

Loss leader

A loss leader is a product that has a price set below the operating margin. Loss leading is widely used in supermarkets and budget-priced retail outlets where the store as a means of generating store traffic. The low price is widely promoted and the store is prepared to take a small loss on an individual item, with an expectation that it will recoup that loss when customers purchase other higher priced-higher margin items. In service industries, loss leading may refer to the practice of charging a reduced price on the first order as an inducement and with anticipation of charging higher prices on subsequent orders. Loss leading is often found in retail, where the loss leader is used to drive store traffic and generate sales of complementary items.

Offset pricing

Offset pricing (also known as *diversionary pricing*) is the service industry's equivalent of loss leading. A service may price one component of the offer at a very low price with an expectation that it can recoup any losses by cross-selling additional services. For example, a carpet steam cleaning service may charge a very low basic price for the first three rooms, but charges higher prices for additional rooms, furniture and curtain cleaning. The operator may also try to cross-sell the client on additional services such as spot-cleaning products, or stain-resistant treatments for fabrics and carpets.

Parity pricing

Parity pricing refers to the process of pricing a product at or near a rival's price in order to remain competitive.

Price bundling

Price bundling (also known as product bundling) occurs where two or more products or services are priced as a package with a single price. There are several types of bundles: *pure bundles* where the goods can only be purchased as package or *mixed bundles* where the goods can be purchased individually or as a package. The prices of the bundle is typically less than when the two items are purchased separately.

Peak and off-peak pricing: Peak and off-peak pricing is a form of price discrimination where the price variation is due to some type of seasonal factor. The objective of peak and off peak pricing is to use prices to even out peaks and troughs in demand. Peak and off-peak pricing is widely used in tourism, travel and also in utilities such as electricity providers. Peak pricing has caught the public's imagination since the ride-sharing service provider, Uber, commenced using *surge pricing* and has sought to patent the technologies that support this approach.

Price discrimination: Price discrimination is also known as variable pricing or *differential pricing*.

Price lining: Price lining is the use of a limited number of prices for all product offered by a business. Price lining is a tradition started in the old five and dime stores in which everything cost either 5 or 10 cents. In price lining, the price remains constant but quality or extent of product or service adjusted to reflect changes in cost. The underlying rationale of this tactic is that these amounts are seen as suitable price points for a whole range of products by prospective customers. It has the advantage of ease of administering, but the disadvantage of inflexibility, particularly in times of inflation or unstable prices. Price lining continues to be widely used in department stores where customers often note racks of garments or accessories priced at predetermined price points e.g. separate racks of men's ties, where each rack is priced at $10, $20 and $40.

Penetration pricing: Penetration pricing is an approach that can be considered at the time of market entry. In this approach, the price of a product is initially set low in an effort to penetrate the market quickly. Low prices and low margins also act as a deterrent, preventing potential rivals from entering the market since they would have to undercut the low margins to gain a foothold.

Prestige pricing: Prestige pricing is also known as *premium pricing* and occasionally *luxury pricing* or *high price maintenance* refers to the deliberate pursuit of a high price posture to create an image of quality.

Price signaling: Price signalling is where the price is used as an indicator of some other attribute. For example, some travel resorts promote that when two adults make a booking, the kids stay for free. This type of pricing is designed to signal that the resort is a family friendly operation.

Price skimming: Price skimming, also known as *skim-the-cream pricing* is a tactic that might be considered at market entry. The objective is to charge relatively high prices in order to recoup the cost of product development early in the life-cycle and before competitors enter the market.

Promotional pricing: Promotional pricing is a temporary measure that involves setting prices at levels lower than normally charged for a good or service. Promotional pricing is sometimes a reaction to unforeseen circumstances, as when a downturn in demand leaves a company with excess stocks; or when competitive activity is making inroads into market share or profits.

Two-part pricing

Two-part pricing is a variant of captive-market pricing used in service industries. Two part pricing breaks the actual price into two parts; a fixed service fee plus a variable consumption rate. Two- part pricing tactics are widely used by utility companies such as electricity, gas and water and services where there is a quasi- membership type relationship, credit cards where an annual fee is charged and theme parks where an entrance fee is charged for admission while the customer pays for rides and extras. One part of the price represents a membership fee or joining fee, while the second part represents the usage component.

Psychological pricing

Psychological pricing is a range of tactics designed to have a positive psychological impact. Price tags using the terminal digit "9", ($9.99, $19.99 or $199.99) can be used to signal price points and bring an item in at just under the consumer's reservation price. Psychological pricing is widely used in a variety of retail settings.

Premium pricing

Premium pricing (also called prestige pricing) is the strategy of consistently pricing at, or near, the high end of the possible price range to help attract status-conscious consumers. The high pricing of a premium product is used to enhance and reinforce a product's luxury image. Examples of companies which partake in premium pricing in the marketplace include Rolex and Bentley. As well as brand, product attributes such as eco-labelling and provenance (e.g. 'certified organic' and 'product of Australia') may add value for consumers and attract premium pricing. A component of such premiums may reflect the increased cost of production. People will buy a premium priced product because:

- They believe the high price is an indication of good quality
- They believe it to be a sign of self-worth - "They are worth it;" it authenticates the buyer's success and status; it is a signal to others that the owner is a member of an exclusive group
- They require flawless performance in this application - The cost of product malfunction is too high to buy anything but the best - for example, a heart pacemaker.

The old association of luxury only being for the kings and queens of the world is almost non-existent in today's world. People have generally become wealthier, therefore the mass marketing phenomenon of luxury has simply become a part of everyday life, and no longer reserved for the elite. Since consumers have a larger source of disposable income, they now have the power to purchase products that meet their aspirational needs. This phenomenon enables premium pricing opportunities for marketers in luxury markets. Luxurification in society can be seen when middle class members of society, are willing to pay premium prices for a service or product of the highest quality when compared with similar goods. Examples of this can be seen with items such as clothing and electronics. Charging a premium price for a product also makes it more inaccessible and helps it gain an exclusive appeal. Luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton and Gucci are more than just clothing and become more of a status symbol. (Yeoman, 2011).

Prestige goods are usually sold by companies that have a monopoly on the market and hold competitive advantage. Due to a firm having great market power they are able to charge at a premium for goods, and are able to spend a larger sum on promotion and advertising. According to Han, Nunes and Dreze (2015) figure on “signal preference and taxonomy based on wealth and need for status” two social groups known as “Parvenus” and “Poseurs” are individuals generally more self-conscious, and base purchases on a need to reach a higher status or gain a social prestige value. Further market research shows the role of possessions in consumer's lives and how people make assumptions about others solely based on their possessions. People associate high priced items with success. (Han et al., 2010). Marketers understand this concept, and price items at a premium to create the illusion of exclusivity and high quality. Consumers are likely to purchase a product at a higher price than a similar product as they crave the status, and feeling of superiority as being part of a minority that can in fact afford the said product. (Han et al., 2010).

A price premium can also be charged to consumers when purchasing eco-labelled products. Market based incentives are given in order to encourage people to practice their business in an eco-friendly way in regard to the environment. Associations such as the MSC's fishery certification programme and seafood ecolabel reward those who practice sustainable fishing. Pressure from environmental groups have caused the implementation of Associations such as these, rather than consumers demanding it. The value consumer's gain from purchasing environmentally conscious products may create a premium price over non eco-labelled products. This means that producers have some sort of incentive for supplying goods worthy of eco-labelling standard. Usually more costs are incurred when practicing sustainable business, and charging at a premium is a way businesses can recover extra costs.

Sensitivity and Consumer Psychology

In their book, *The Strategy and Tactics of Pricing*, Thomas Nagle and Reed Holden(2016) outline nine laws or factors that influence how a consumer perceives a given price and how price-sensitive s/he is likely to be with respect to different purchase decisions:

- Reference price effect: Buyer's price sensitivity for a given product increases the higher the product's price relative to perceived alternatives. Perceived alternatives can vary by buyer segment, by occasion, and other factors.
- Difficult comparison effect Buyers are less sensitive to the price of a known/more reputable product when they have difficulty comparing it to potential alternatives.
- Switching costs effect: The higher the product-specific investment a buyer must make to switch suppliers, the less price sensitive that buyer is when choosing between alternatives.
- Price-quality effect: Buyers are less sensitive to price the more that higher prices signal higher quality. Products for which this effect is particularly relevant include: image products, exclusive products, and products with minimal cues for quality.
- Expenditure effect: Buyers are more price sensitive when the expense accounts for a large percentage of buyers’ available income or budget.
- End-benefit effect: The effect refers to the relationship a given purchase has to a larger overall benefit, and is divided into two parts:
- Derived demand: The more sensitive buyers are to the price of the end benefit, the more sensitive they will be to the prices of those products that contribute to that benefit.
- Price proportion cost: The price proportion cost refers to the percent of the total cost of the end benefit accounted for by a given component that helps to produce the end benefit (e.g., think CPU and PCs). The smaller the given components share of the total cost of the end benefit, the less sensitive buyers will be to the component's price.
- Shared-cost effect: The smaller the portion of the purchase price buyers must pay for themselves, the less price sensitive they will be.
- Fairness effect: Buyers are more sensitive to the price of a product when the price is outside the range they perceive as “fair” or “reasonable” given the purchase context.
- Framing effect: Buyers are more price sensitive when they perceive the price as a loss rather than a forgone gain, and they have greater price sensitivity when the price is paid separately rather than as part of a bundle.

Approaches to Pricing

Pricing is the most effective profit lever. Pricing can be approached at three levels: the industry, market, and transaction level.

- Pricing at the industry level focuses on the overall economics of the industry, including supplier price changes and customer demand changes.
- Pricing at the market level focuses on the competitive position of the price in comparison to the value differential of the product to that of comparative competing products.
- Pricing at the transaction level focuses on managing the implementation of discounts away from the reference, or list price, which occur both on and off the invoice or receipt.

A "price waterfall" analysis helps businesses and sales personnel to understand the differences which arise between the reference or list price, the invoiced sale price and the actual price paid by a customer taking account of contract, sales and payment discounts.

Pricing Mistakes

Many companies make common pricing mistakes. Jerry Bernstein's article *Use Suppliers' Pricing Mistakes* outlines several sales errors, which include:

- Weak controls on discounting (price override)
- Inadequate systems for tracking competitors' selling prices and market share (Competitive intelligence)
- Cost-plus pricing
- Price increases poorly executed
- Worldwide price inconsistencies
- Paying sales representatives on sales volume vs. addition of revenue measures

Methods of Setting Prices

Demand-based pricing

Demand-based pricing, also known as dynamic pricing, is a pricing method that uses consumer demand - based on perceived value - as the central element. These include price skimming, price discrimination and yield management, price points, psychological pricing, bundle pricing, penetration pricing, price lining, value-based pricing, geo and premium pricing.

Pricing factors are manufacturing cost, market place, competition, market condition, quality of product.

Price modeling using econometric techniques can help measure price elasticity, and computer based modeling tools will often facilitate simulations of different prices and the outcome on sales and profit. More sophisticated tools help determine price at the SKU level across a portfolio of products. Retailers will optimize the price of their private label SKUs with those of National Brands.

Uber's pricing policy is an example of demand-based dynamic pricing. It uses an automated algorithm to increase prices to "surge price" levels, responding rapidly to changes of supply and demand in the market. By responding in real time, an equilibrium between demand and supply of drivers can be approached. Customers receive notice when making an Uber reservation that prices have increased. The company applied for a U.S. patent on surge pricing in 2013, though airlines are known to have been using similar techniques in seat pricing for years.

The practice has often caused passengers to become upset and invited criticism when it happens as a result of holidays, inclement weather, natural disasters or other factors. During New Year's Eve 2011, Uber prices were as high as seven times normal rates, causing outrage. During the 2014 Sydney hostage crisis, Uber implemented surge pricing, resulting in fares of up to four times normal charges; while it defended the surge pricing at first, it later apologized and refunded the surcharges. Uber CEO Travis Kalanick has responded to criticism by saying: "...because this is so new, it's going to take some time for folks to accept it. There's 70 years of conditioning around the fixed price of taxis."

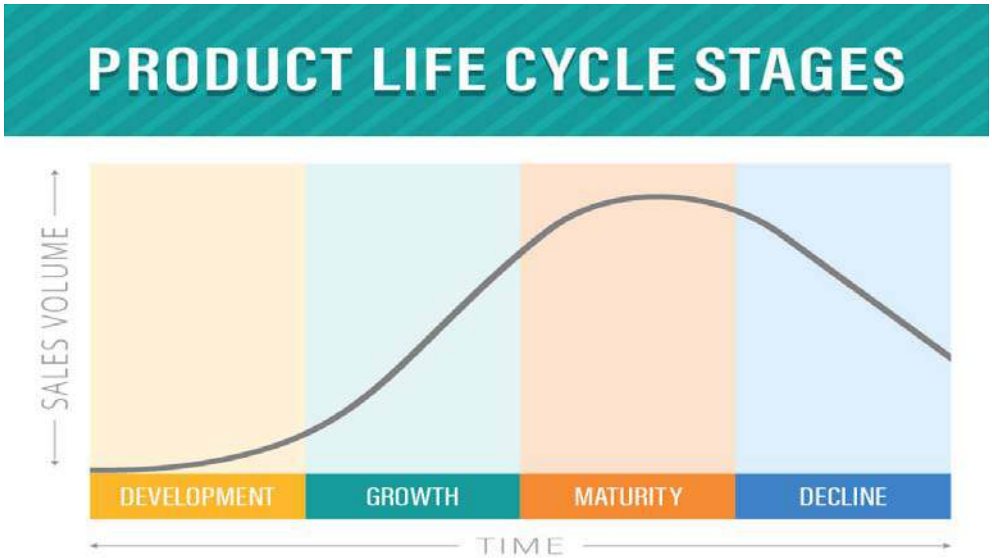
Multidimensional pricing

Multidimensional pricing is the pricing of a product or service using multiple numbers. In this practice, price no longer consists of a single monetary amount (e.g., sticker price of a car), but rather consists of various dimensions (e.g., monthly payments, number of payments, and a downpayment). Research has shown that this practice can significantly influence consumers' ability to understand and process price information.

Micromarketing: Micromarketing is the practice of tailoring products, brands (microbrands), and promotions to meet the needs and wants of microsegments within a market. It is a type of market customization that deals with pricing of customer/product combinations at the store or individual level.

Pricing Strategies for Each Stage of PLC.

Every product progresses through different stages between its beginning and end on the market. To better manage the product's life cycle, you need to know these four stages.



Understanding how to deal with each new product is important. And, the different stages of the product life cycle helps a firm with strategic pricing. Strategic pricing is when a business decides how to price products or services based on what will attract buyers.

Development

The initial stage of a product's life cycle, development, is when the product is first introduced to the market. Typically, sales are slow during this stage because consumers are unfamiliar with the new product.

Sales are especially slow when the product is unique because consumers might not have an instant demand for it. But, there is generally low competition.

During this stage, you might choose to increase your marketing efforts to raise awareness about the new product. You can promote the product on a budget through outlets like social media channels and your business website. You will need to explain the product in your marketing materials.

Developing a product is expensive, so you might be desperate to make sales. Therefore, you will need to come up with a pricing strategy that fits your business.

Pricing strategy in this stage: Many businesses either price their products low or high, depending on their industry and financial projections.

Pricing products low (market penetration) helps a business penetrate the market and gain consumer attention. Once the business has a loyal customer base, it typically increases prices.

Businesses might choose to introduce products with high prices. You might price products high (price skimming) to try to turn a quick profit and make up for the costs of developing. Pricing products high is especially good if there is a demand for a product and lack of competition.

Growth

During the growth stage of the life cycle of a product, there is high demand for the product and a lot of sales. Though this is a really great stage for the product, there are some drawbacks.

When you sell a product in its growth stage, your competition might begin to duplicate it. Competitors might release the same product you sell at a lower price, or they might work on making the product better.

You might need to work on getting your customers to choose your product over the competition. This could require more marketing and lowering your prices. You might try to market to new customers.

Pricing strategy in this stage: Because of the competition, you might need to lower your prices and adopt a competitive pricing strategy.

Maturity

In the maturity stage, there isn't as much sales growth. When the product is mature, most of your target customers already have the product, so there is not as much demand.

Your sales volume will not be climbing like during the growth stage. Some businesses continue making additions to their products during this stage.

Typically, the maturity stage has the most competition. Once products are developed, they are more unique from competitor to competitor. Many businesses work on marketing their product and emphasizing its uniqueness as well as any discounts.

Pricing strategy in this stage: Many businesses continue using the competitive pricing strategy in the maturity stage. In fact, competition is usually more fierce than in the growth stage. Consider cutting your prices to keep customers, but don't go below your break-even point. You could also use a discount pricing strategy so that consumers will prefer your product. With a discount pricing strategy, you need to mark down the price.

Decline

The final stage in a product's life cycle is decline. There is less demand for the product, and businesses must decide if they want to discontinue the product or keep producing and selling it.

Some businesses that don't pull the product add features to make it stand out more and give it fresh life.

There are a few different reasons for the decline of a product:

- Competitors' products are getting more attention than yours.
- Consumers are no longer interested in the product.
- You aren't profiting off the product anymore.

Pricing strategy in this stage: During a product's decline, many businesses choose to lower its price. In fact, there are a few different pricing strategies you can try in this stage.

You can try a discount pricing strategy to increase customer traffic. This will help free up space at your business for new products.

Another pricing strategy option is bundling. With bundling, you could include the declining product in a deal with other products. This can help get rid of the declining product and increase sales.

Be aware that some businesses choose to do nothing during the decline stage, especially if they are unsure if the product is declining for good or just going through a temporary dip in sales.

Preparing for the product life cycle

There is no definite way you can prepare for the product life cycle. You can't predict the exact amount of time the product will be in each stage. But, understanding the product life cycle will help you know how to handle pricing strategies, competition, and marketing. Strategic *pricing* is when a business decides how to *price* products or services based on what will attract buyers.

PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE

STAGE	SALES	COMPETITION	MARKETING PURPOSE	PRICING STRATEGY
DEVELOPMENT	Slow	Low	To explain your product	Market Penetration or Price Skimming
GROWTH	Heavy	Some	To reach out to more people	Competitve
MATURITY	Levelled-out	Fierce	To show how your product is unique	Competitve or Discount
DECLINE	Low	Low – Medium	To get rid of outdated products	Discount or Bundling

b) Theoretical Framework

Price/Quality Relationship Theory

Propounded by Vigneron & Johnson, 1999

The price/quality relationship theory centers on consumers' perceptions of value. High prices are often taken as a sign of quality, especially when the product or service lacks search qualities that can be inspected prior to purchase. In relation to the study, understanding consumers' perceptions of the price/quality relationship is most important in the case of complex products that are hard to test, and experiential products that cannot be tested until used (such as most services in MTN). The greater the uncertainty surrounding a product, the more consumers depend on the price/quality signal and the greater premium they may be prepared to pay.

Consumers can have different perceptions on premium pricing, and this factor makes it important for the marketer to understand consumer behaviour.

According to Vigneron and Johnson's figure on "Prestige-Seeking Consumer Behaviours", Consumers can be categorized into four groups. These groups being; Hedonist & Perfectionist, snob, bandwagon and veblenian. These categories rank from level of self-consciousness, to importance of price as an indicator of prestige. The Veblen Effect explains how this group of consumers makes purchase decisions based on conspicuous value, as they tend to purchase publicly consumed luxury products. This shows they are likely to make the purchase to show power, status and wealth. Consumers that fall under the "Snob Effect" can be described as individuals that search for perceived unique value, and will purchase exclusive products in order to be the first or very few who has it. They will also avoid purchasing products consumed by a general mass of people, as it is perceived that items in limited supply hold a higher value than items that do not. (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). The bandwagon effect explains that consumers that fit into this category make purchasing decisions to fit into a social group, and gain a perceived social value out of purchasing popular products within said social group at premium prices. Research shows that people will often conform to what the majority of the group they are a member of thinks when it comes to the attitude of a product. Paying a premium price for a product can act as a way of gaining acceptance, due to the pressure placed on them by their peers. The Hedonic effect can be described as a certain group of people whose purchasing decisions are not affected by the status and exclusivity gained by purchasing a product at a premium, nor susceptible to the fear of being left out and peer pressure. Consumers who fit into this category base their purchasing decisions on a perceived emotional value, and gain intangible benefits such as sensory pleasure, aesthetic beauty and excitement. Consumers of this type have a higher interest on their own wellbeing. (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). The last category on Vigneron and Johnson's figure of “Prestige-Seeking Consumer Behaviours” is the perfectionism effect. Prestige brands are expected to show high quality, and it's this reassurance of the highest quality that can actually enhance the value of the product. According to this effect, those that fit into this group value the prestige's brands to have a superior quality and higher performance than other similar brands. Research has indicated that consumer's perceive quality of a product to be relational to its price. Consumers often believe a high price of a product indicates a higher level of quality.

Even though it is suggested that high prices seem to make certain products more desirable, consumers that fall in this category have their own perception of quality and make decisions based upon their own judgment. They may also use the premium price as an indicator of the product's level of quality.

c) *Empirical Studies*

i. *Investigation on Impact of Pricing Strategies and Levels on Corporate*

According to Monroe (2003), to investigate on pricing strategies and levels on corporate, price decisions are one of the most important decisions of management because it affects profitability and the companies’ return along with their market competitiveness. Thus, the task of developing and defining prices is complex and challenging, because the managers involved in this process must understand how their customers perceive the prices, how to develop the perceived value, what are the intrinsic and relevant costs to comply with this necessity, as well as consider the pricing objectives of the company and their competitive position in the market (De Toni and Mazzon, 2013a, De Toni and Mazzon, 2013b, Hinterhuber and Liozu, 2014, Monroe, 2003).

In this way, Nagle and Hogan (2007) also argue that companies which do not manage their prices lose control over them, impairing their profitability and cost effectiveness mainly due to the customers will on paying a determinate price, which not only does it depend on the perceived value, but also depends on the prices set by the leading competitors. Consequently, mistaken or inexistent pricing policies could lead buyers to increase the volume of information while allowing them to augment their bargaining power thus forcing price reductions and discounts. The difference between conventional price setting and strategic pricing consists on setting prices by reacting to the market conditions or managing them proactively, being their sole purpose to exert the most profitable pricing by generating more value for customers without the obligation of increasing the business’ sales volume (Nagle & Holden, 2003)

Logically, there is not a unique way for defining prices. Before setting a price, the company must decide what is going to be the strategy for the product in addition to what will be the proposed objectives, since the clearer these decisions, the easier it will be to establish prices (Hinterhuber & Liozu, 2013).

According to Hinterhuber (2008), prices have a high impact on companies’ profitability, and pricing strategies vary considerably between sectors and market situations. Nonetheless, researchers mostly agree that pricing strategies can be categorized in three big groups: cost-based pricing, competition-based pricing and customer value-based pricing (Nagle & Holden, 2003).

Nagle and Holden (2003) argue that there must be a balanced consideration of information, perception and intrinsic behavior of the 3C's of this process (Cost, Competition and Customers) as a way to reach the optimal price. The management of such information is a crucial factor for the success of the pricing definition strategy and the price settlement. In some cases, these practices have also been designated as pricing methods (Avlonitis, Indounas, & Gounaris, 2005).

ii. *Assessing the Impact of Customer value-based pricing strategy on Corporate*

Value establishment can be defined as the offer of benefits of equal or superior value to the sacrifices incurred by the purchaser for a product and/or service. Within the possible sacrifices, there is the financial sacrifice, which is translated by the price to be charged or actually paid by the buyer (Juran and De Feo, 2010, Porter, 1986, Zeithaml, 1988). Besides, the process of value settlement includes the transformation of the results from the organizational strategy on programs aimed to extract and deliver value to the company's customers. In addition, it identifies the benefits and costs (or sacrifices) of products and experiences resulting from the relationship between the customers and the organization. The superior value proposal represents an offer for the customers which increases the value or solves a problem in a better way than those offered by similar competitors (Payne & Frow, 2014).

Perceived value-based pricing is a pricing practice in which the managers take decisions based on the perception of benefits from the item being offered to the customer and how these benefits are perceived and weighted by the customers in relationship to the price they pay (Ingenbleek, Frambach, & Verhallen, 2010). Therefore, as a cultural orientation of businesses, value-based pricing is derived from a set of routine philosophies and organizational strategies that a specific company could use in order to focus on customer satisfaction and, as a result, increases their profitability (Cressman, 2012). Because of this, Liozu (2013) highlights that using prices based on customer's perception of value is a more modern pricing approach, although sometimes it incites a profound organizational change on the established organizational structure, the current corporate structure or the pre-existing processes and systems.

In this sense, Ingenbleek, Debruyne, Frambach, and Verhallen (2003) affirm that perceived value-based pricing, along with pricing practices that refer to the use of information about costs and competitors' prices, are intimately related to the product's performance, the service and the business as a whole. These authors demonstrated that the usage of value-based pricing is a key pricing practice for obtaining larger returns and for creating some kind of comparative advantage for the companies offers. This was demonstrated in a study conducted by Füreder, Maier, and Yaramova (2014), on medium-sized companies in Austria which used with higher frequency the perceived value-based pricing strategy. These authors identified that these companies had larger contribution margins, between 11–30%, against 0–10% of those companies that did not use this same strategy. Thus, the approach of a value-based pricing strategy is considered superior to other approaches in relationship to the results obtained by other companies (Hinterhuber, 2004, Ingenbleek et al., 2003, Liozu and Hinterhuber, 2013). Therefore, we propose that adopting a value-based pricing strategy has a direct and positive impact on profit margin.

The constant changes in the market, influenced by technological advances and by increasing change in the customers' expectations, are leading organizations to constantly search for new products in order to continue being profitable and competitive (Boehe et al., 2009, Cooper, 2000).

The innovation and development of new products are ways of adding value to the products or services while differentiating them from their competitors, thus providing better results. Therefore, in order for a business to maintain itself as competitive and profitable in the market, the development of new products (DNP), and the innovation of their products and processes are fundamental factors for an organization's performance (Cooper & Kleinschmdt, 1987). Thus, a new product that grants value to the customer, due to its quality, cost reduction or innovation constitutes a competitive advantage contributing to a better performance of the organization.

In a study developed by Milan, De Toni, Larentis, and Gava (2013) about pricing and expenditure strategies, the authors identified that the factor that mostly influences an organization's performance is related to the achievement of their objectives by the development of new products. In other words, businesses that achieved their sales, market participation and profit margins objectives exhibited a better organizational performance. Therefore, it is identified that the success of many organizations is linked to the development of new products (DNP) that add customer value (Cooper, 2000). It is observed that a company which adopts a constant innovative strategy, mainly on the products released on the market, can add more value to the customer and, consequently, obtain better profitability (Boehe et al., 2009, De Toni et al., 2011). Considering this, we coclude that level of development of new products (DNP) moderates the relationship between customer value-based pricing strategy and profit margin, and such relationship is stronger in those companies which launch more products into the market.

iii. *Studies on Competition-based pricing strategy*

Competition-based pricing uses as key information the competitors' price levels, as well as behavior expectations, observed in real competitors and/or potential primary sources to determine adequate pricing levels to be practiced by the company (Liozu & Hinterhuber, 2012). The main advantage of this approach is considering the actual pricing situation of the competitors, and its main disadvantage is that the demand related aspects are not considered. Furthermore, a strong competitive focus among the competitors can increase the risk of starting a price war among competitors in the market (Heil & Helsen, 2001). Liozu, Boland, Hinterhuber, and Perelli (2011) conducted a research mapping the pricing processes of companies which based their prices on competitors and they found that managers use their knowledge and experiences to define prices, as well as models of costs, contribution margin goals, and well-structured profit goals. In addition, these companies were strongly considering the prices of their main competitors while adding a price reward by always sharing the decision based on the manager's intuition, which is not a scientific method to define prices.

In this sense, competition-based pricing strategies are very dangerous because the company does not effectively have clear cost or profit information from its competitor who, in some instances, may be working with very low margins (Nagle & Holden, 2003). In some situations, the competitor developed a more efficient production process, thus the costs would not be equivalent, even because of the scale gains. Therefore, by following this strategy, the company is at risk of operating with minimal margins or even having negative profits. Pricing reduction strategies based on competition, in which companies may seek to increase the volume of sales, can also encourage the competitors to lower their prices while contributing to a predatory competition and a price war, resulting in reduced profit margins and smaller companies' profitability (Diamantopoulos, 2005).

Besides, in highly competitive markets, the price information from competitors becomes obsolete very quickly (Ingenbleek et al., 2010). In this case, it is necessary to manage the capacity that competitors have to react to the pricing strategy defined by the company, while noting that in competitive markets this can increase the risk of starting a price war and decreasing profit margins (Simon et al., 2008). Therefore, we recommend that adopting a competition-based pricing strategy has a direct and negative impact on profit margin.

iv. *Studies on Cost-based pricing strategy*

Cost-based pricing is the most simple and popular method for setting prices. Historically, it is the most common pricing strategy because it carries a sense of financial prudence (Simon et al., 2008). This involves adding a profit margin on costs, such as adding a standard percentage contribution margin to the products and services. First, the sales level (revenue) is determined, and then the unit and total costs are calculated, followed by checking the company's profit objectives and finally establishing the prices. Thus, for the professionals involved in this process, it is necessary to show to customers enough value on products and commercialized services in order to justify the prices charged by the company (Urdan, 2005).

According to a study by Guilding, Drury, and Tayles (2005) in 187 companies in the United Kingdom and in 90 companies in Australia, three factors that can interfere with a cost-based strategy were identified:

i. *Intensity of competition:* In a highly competitive market, the intensity of competition may result in a loss of contribution and profit margins due to the pressure to equal their prices to the competition, which turns costs in a highly relevant element since it provides the limits of prices to be charged;
ii. *Company size:* larger companies have a greater capacity of influencing prices, because they have the propensity to act as a guide for the price ranges prevailing in the market, even because they frequently have scale gains; and
iii. *Type of industries:* Manufacturing industries have higher expenses due to their high investments on physical facilities and on resources used in manufacturing processes, which makes it difficult to accurately define the individual costs of products and potentially force an increase on the total cost.

Similarly, a study of 84 companies performed by Milan et al. (2013) showed that in these companies there is a greater focus on price setting based on costs. Thus, this strategy encourages companies to use better expenditure techniques.

In addition, Liozu et al. (2011) conducted a study on fifteen small and medium-size American companies by interviewing forty-four of their managers. In such study, they addressed the three main pricing strategies: customer value-based pricing (in four companies), cost-based pricing (in six companies) and competition-based pricing (in five companies). They identified that the majority of the companies basing their prices on costs developed advanced cost models, all of which used contribution and profit margin goals in order to set their prices. In this matter, recommendation is made that adopting a cost-based pricing strategy has a direct and positive impact on profit margin.

Based on the innovation economy, it can be inferred that a higher level of competition in the market encourages companies to innovate; therefore, they do their best to increase their performance. Companies that interact more with the foreign market either by importing or exporting have a stronger concern with the company's cost than those that do not have foreign activities (Milan et al., 2013). Starting from this premise, it is assumed that companies that look for a cost-based pricing strategy are always searching for alternatives for cost reduction. Among these alternatives, the import of raw materials and supplies has emerged as a strategy for cost reduction and, consequently, for the improvement of the profit margins (Boehe et al., 2009). Hence, it is assumed that the relationship between the cost-based pricing strategy and the profit margin could be stronger at the companies that operate with imported raw materials and supplies. Considering this, the import of raw materials and supplies moderates the relationship between cost-based pricing strategy and profit margin, and this relationship would be stronger for companies that import.

v. *Studies on Price Levels*

According to Hinterhuber (2004), the impact of price levels on profitability is high, which means that even the impact of small increases of price on profits and corporate profitability by far exceeds the impact of other leverages in managing best results. In his study, it was possible to detected that a 5% increase in average sales prices may increase the earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) by 22%, on average, compared to a 12% increase on the sales volume and a 10% cost reduction of sold goods, respectively. In other words, of all the elements available to managers, the price is what has the larger impact on corporate results, reflecting on representative gains (Kohlia & Surib, 2011). Evidence of this nature suggests that managers should abandon the rationale of having a greater market share and an increased business volume (sales, revenues) in favor of a vision more focused to profits (Simon et al., 2008). The results indicate that companies that practice a higher price against the price of their competitors obtain greater profits, which probably is related to superior customer value. This justifies the charge of higher prices and, as a result, enhances the business performance.

As reported in a study developed by Milan et al. (2013), market penetration-based pricing strategies, meaning the practice of lower or smaller prices, presented a significant and negative relationship with the business performance of the companies investigated. Such fact could be explained by its relationships to offering lower prices than the competition. Therefore, low prices are more strongly associated with lower profits and vice versa (Simon et al., 2008). Thus, we propose that adopting high or price levels has a direct and positive impact on profit margin.

Section 3

III. Research Method

a) Design of the Study

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. The study was designed to provide answers to the research questions as well as generate data to explain the basic variables of the study.

b) Study Area

The area of study is Nigeria Bottling Company Plc. located along Onitsha Owerri Road Imo State. Owerri (Igbo: *Owèrrè*) is the capital of Imo State in Nigeria, set in the heart of Igboland. It is also the state's largest city, followed by Orlu and Okigwe as second and third respectively. Owerri consists of three Local Government Areas including Owerri Municipal, Owerri North and Owerri West, it has an estimated population of about 1,401,873 as of 2016 and is approximately 100 square kilometres (40 sq mi) in area.

Furthermore, NBC is the largest bottling company in Nigeria today that bottles varieties of drinks like coca-cola, fanta, sprite, Schweppes and five alive. It operates under the franchise of Coca-Cola International that has its head office in Nigeria since the year 1993 (Source: coca-cola year preview, vo. 17, 198).

The choice of the company is because of its application of the undifferentiated marketing strategies and promoting images aim at benefiting the buyers that seeks the products. Hence, they serve as true representative sample of the entire population companies Target Population, Sample Size, Sampling Technique.

The target population, for study purposes, NBC, represented approximately 2598consumers from the three different depots of company totaling around 866 thousand users divided among the three telecommunication service companies.

The sample size for this study comprised of 156, multi task procedure was used to arrive at this. Stage 1 involved clustering the respondents into male and female. Stage 2 involved purposive sampling of three sets of the three group of companies picked. Stage 3 was simple random selection of fifty two (52) respondents from each of the three (3) selected sets to arrive at one hundred and fifty six (156) as the sample size. Out of the 156 questionnaire, one hundred and thirty five (135) was well filled and returned. This stand as the basis for analysis.

c) Data Collection

The data collection process occurred by a structured survey which was validated through a pre-test (Malhotra, Birks, & Wills, 2012). The questionnaires were electronically sent to THE companies. With the objective to formalize the request to participate in the research, we sent along an explanatory text which requested that the questionnaire would be directed to the person responsible of defining the prices of the company or to someone who acted directly in the pricing process. With this approach, we sought to direct the research instrument to a responsible person in the company who had greater control and relative experience in the analyzed context.

The data collection was performed between June and August of 2019. In order to increase the return of respondents, we sent follow-up messages via e-mail in order to raise awareness of the potential respondents. As for the larger companies on the list, we made telephone calls reinforcing the research relevance and the importance of obtaining the manager's perception. At the end of the process, 156 questionnaires were obtained (valid cases), having a 21.5% return.

d) Data Analysis Process

The Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric analysis of variance was used to examine differences in responses. The Kruskal-Wallis is estimated using the following formula.

$$H = \frac{12}{n(n+1)} \sum \frac{Rj2}{nj} - 3(n+1)$$

Where

Nj= Number of measurements in sample j

Rj= Rank sum for sample j, where the rank of each measurement is computer according to its relative magnitude in the totality of data for the ρ samples.

n=Total sample size = $n_1 + n_2 + \ldots + n_p$

The chi-square test of independence was used as an approximate to Kruskal-Wallis test for difference in response involving categorical dependent variables for the between subject analysis. This was done at the 5% level of significance.

The decision rule is that, with (p-1) degrees of freedom If H $>^{x2}_{\alpha}$

We reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative. Otherwise we accept the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis One

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between sensitivity and consumer psychology and pricing.

Table 1: Relationship Between Sensitivity and Consumer Psychology (Ranks)

	N	Mean Rank
Reference price effect	37	59.93
Difficult comparison effect	96	69.72
	133	
Switching costs effect	37	62.18
Price-quality effect	104	74.14
	141	
Expenditure effect	37	64.35
Shared-cost effect	102	72.05
	139	

Source: Field Study, 2019

Table 1 presents the mean ranks of the various respondents under the sensitivity of consumer psychology on pricing.

Table 1.1: Statistics [a,b]

	Reference price effect Difficult comparison effect	Switching costs effect Price-quality effect	Expenditure effect Shared-cost effect
Chi-Square	3.887	4.990	4.148
Df	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.089	.084	.143

Source: Field Study, 2019

a. Krusakal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping variable: Please indicate your profession

Source: Field Study, 2019-Author's Computation Using SPSS 17.0

Table 1.1 presents the result of the Kruskal-Wallis test and its corresponding Chi-square value: how many degrees of freedom (df) are associated with it: and the significance level for a degree of freedom. It shows that for a df =1 at 5% level of significance, the values of x^2 calculated are 3.887, 4.990 and 4.148 for *Reference price effect, Difficult comparison effect, Switching costs effect Price-quality effect, Expenditure effect, Shared-cost effect t* respectively. These are all equal than the value of x^2 tabulated of 3.841. Therefore, we accept the alternative hypothesis which states that there is significant relationship between sensitivity and consumer psychology and pricing.

Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: There are no effective methods of setting price at any stage of Plc.

Table 2: Respondents Perception on Effective Methods of Setting Price

Competition-based	Demand base-pricing	Cost-based pricing
66.2%	55.4%	76.5%
6.1%	25.7%	4.1%
11.5%	6.8%	5.4%
6.1%	7.4%	8.1%
89.9%	95.3%	93.9%

Source: Field Study, 2019-Author's Computation Using SPSS 17.0

From the table above, the firm shows the effective methods of setting price.

Hypothesis 3

H_{03}: Adopting a cost-based pricing strategy has a direct and positive impact on profit margin.

Table 3: Percentage of the consumer Perception on Pricing Strategy.

Cost-based pricing strategy	Demand base pricing	Multidimensional pricing	Micromarketing	Competition based pricing	Market-penetration strategy
S	S	S	S	S	S
83.8%	69.8%	73.0%	52.9%	89.2%	78.4%
2.7%	8.3%	10.8%	32.7%	5.4%	3.9%
13.5%	12.5%	10.8%	5.8%	0.0%	7.8%
0.0%	6.8%	5.4%	8.6%	5.4%	9.8%
100%	97.4%	100%	100%	100%	99.9%

Source: Field Study, 2019-Author's Computation Using SPSS 17.0

The table was further broken down to report the individual opinions of the Consumers. In Table 3, the perception of consumers varies. Majority of the consumers (97.4%) expect cost-based pricing. Again, (99.9%) consumers against said market-penetration strategy (100%) felt it answered multidimensional, cost based and micro marketing respectively . we conclude that adopting a cost base pricing strategy among others has a direct and positive impact on profit margin.

e) Discussion of Findings

From table 1 above, it shows that *reference price effect, difficult comparison effect, switching costs effect price-quality effect, expenditure effect, shared-cost effect* respectively shows that there exist a significant relationship between sensitivity and consumer psychology and pricing. This is in agreement with the view of Thomas Nagle and Reed Holden(2016).

From the table2 above, the firm shows the effective methods of setting price, thus, signifying that there are effective methods of setting price to sooth the needs of consumers. In agreement to this, Rao and Kartono (2016) When setting individual prices, decision-makers require a solid understanding of pricing economics, notably break-even analysis, as well as an appreciation of the psychological aspects of consumer decision-making including reservation prices, ceiling prices and floor prices.

In Table 3, the perception of consumers varies. The variation in their opinions shows the significant impact of various pricing strategy on profit margin. But in all, stresses further that among others cost based pricing strategy has a direct and positive impact. This is in consonance with Kohlia & Surib, 2011) and (Simon et al., 2008), who asserts that"Evidence of this nature suggests that managers should abandon the rationale of having a greater market share and an increased business volume (sales, revenues) in favor of a vision more focused to profits . The results indicate that companies that practice a higher price against the price of their competitors obtain greater profits, which probably is related to superior customer value. This justifies the charge of higher prices and, as a result, enhances the business performance.

f) Conclusion and Recommendation

Regarding the business performance, an analysis based on the profit margin reported by the companies was implemented. This variable was also used in the study developed by Milan et al. (2013), which was built based on the scales proposed by Ingenbleek et al. (2003). The results indicate that the surveyed companies' average net profit is between 5% and 10%, and that 25 companies (16.4% of the sample) showed a profitability above 15%.

In order to have a better performance than their competitors, companies should establish a set of superior resources, such as, abilities, skills and knowledge, because the role of the price fixing capacity as a way of effectively improving the company's performance is vital (Dutta et al., 2003, Liozu and Hinterhuber, 2013). Therefore, a more strategic approach to the companies' pricing process excels as a relevant element for the companies' better performance and for the construction of a possible source of competitive advantage (Hinterhuber & Liozu, 2014).

The profitability and cost effectiveness of the companies are highly attached to a pricing strategy that visualizes their internal capacities, skills and corporate advantages against their competitors while also considering their customer's needs or how much they are willing to pay. Setting lower prices could sacrifice profits because a greater sales volume may not compensate for a lower profit margin. Higher prices could also sacrifice profits because greater margins per unit may not compensate for a smaller sales volume (Simon et al., 2008).

Therefore, the results of our study indicate that companies which search for a customer value-based pricing strategy and which set high prices, logically within the market context in which they operate, tend to yield a greater profit margin than their competitors who may adopt a competition-based pricing strategy and set lower prices. Another important fact is that the most innovative companies, or those who launch a higher quantity of new products, and operate with imported raw materials and supplies also show a higher profit margin. This indicates that the higher the usage of value-based pricing strategies (in which the company adds more innovation launching new products), the greater are the possibilities of increasing the company's profit margin.

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Effect of Experiential Marketing on Word of Mouth with Satisfaction as Intervening Variable (Study at GO-JEK Customer in Mataram)

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Abstract- This research is examining the effect of experiential marketing and word of mouth with satisfaction as an intervening variable on GO-JEK customers in Mataram. The type of research conducted is an associative casualty. The sample design uses non-probability sampling and the accidental sampling technique is used to determine to sample with an unknown population. The sample taken was GO-JEK customers in Mataram, which amounted to 100 samples. Data analysis uses path analysis with the smart PLS program. The Results Showed that experiential marketing had a positive and not a significant effect on word of mouth, experiential marketing had a positive and significant effect on satisfaction, and satisfaction had a positive and not a significant effect on word of mouth GO-JEK customers in Mataram. Then word of mouth is influenced by experiential marketing with satisfaction mediation. In general Go- JEK still needs to introduce its products to the community in Mataram City.

Keywords: *experiential marketing, satisfaction, word of mouth.*

GJMBR-E Classification: *JEL Code: M30*

EFFECTOFEXPERIENTIALMARKETINGONWORDOFMOUTHWITHSATISFACTIONASINTERVENINGVARIABLESTUDYATGOJEKCUSTOMERINMATARAM

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

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Made Aristiawan S. A [α], Dwi Putra Buana S. [σ] & Handry Sudiartha A. [ρ]

Abstract- This research is examining the effect of experiential marketing and word of mouth with satisfaction as an intervening variable on GO-JEK customers in Mataram. The type of research conducted is an associative casualty. The sample design uses non-probability sampling and the accidental sampling technique is used to determine to sample with an unknown population. The sample taken was GO-JEK customers in Mataram, which amounted to 100 samples. Data analysis uses path analysis with the smart PLS program. The Results Showed that experiential marketing had a positive and not a significant effect on word of mouth, experiential marketing had a positive and significant effect on satisfaction, and satisfaction had a positive and not a significant effect on word of mouth GO-JEK customers in Mataram. Then word of mouth is influenced by experiential marketing with satisfaction mediation. In general Go- JEK still needs to introduce its products to the community in Mataram City. By creating more localized advertisements, participating in local events, and improving driver services for customers in Mataram.

Keywords: experiential marketing, satisfaction, word of mouth.

I. Background

Diverse human activities require transportation support to do so. This requirement then responded by transportation business by improving service, ease of ordering, fleet comfort, punctuality and so forth. Currently in Indonesia found many motorcycles serve as a common vehicle to transport people or goods and establish an agreed fee. The mode of transportation of this type is known as a motorcycle taxi.

Seprocession with the development of today's technology there are applications which introduces a motorcycle taxi booking services using technology and adopt the standards of service. Before the application is growing, motorcycle riders generally use an area-based system. Motorcycle riders from other regions can not be arbitrary to operate in an area without the permission of a motorcycle rider in the region. But this time the public is increasingly facilitated in ordering a motorcycle through a motorcycle online application. The presence of this online motorcycle will provide a new experience for the community and from the company's online motorcycles-had to think about the concepts of new marketing-based experience or experiential marketing.

Experiential marketing is a marketing concept that not only provides information and opportunities to consumers but also to gain experience that can evoke emotions and feelings (Bigham, 2007). The concept of experiential marketing is not only oriented to the features and benefits for the company but prefer the emotions of customers by providing facilities or experiences that can satisfy consumers in order to achieve memorable experience in every consumption(Naif et al., 2015),

Referring to this approach, the company provides products or services to the consumer senses such as touch, touch the hearts and minds of consumers stimulate. Companies must be able to establish emotional relationships through strategic experience modules consisting of sense, feel, think, act and relate as the basis of experiential marketing. With experiential marketing, customers will be able to differentiate their products and services with one another because they are able to gain a memorable experience when they consume a product or service. The memorable experience can increase the satisfaction of customers (Pine and Gilmore, 1998).

Kotler (2000: 36) defines satisfaction as feeling happy or disappointed with someone who emerged after comparing the perception or impression of the performance (or result) of a product and expectations. Furthermore, Kotler (2000: 36) states that if the performance below expectations, consumers will feel dissatisfied. If performance meets expectations, consumers will be satisfied. If performance exceeds expectations, consumers will be very satisfied or happy. Consumers are the main focus of all marketing efforts, where keconsumer satisfaction is the ultimate goal of every company in conducting business activities (Supranto and Limakrisna, 2007), In this case it can be concluded that satisfaction is a feeling or emotional appraisal from consumers for the use of a product or service, where expectations and their needs are met.

According to Mano and Oliver (2007) factors that may affect satisfaction is an emotional experience. This is due to the positive experience will positively affect overall satisfaction, the opposite attitude or a negative experience would affect negatively the satisfaction of all, a good attitude and positive and

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negative experiences affect the activity of purchase and word of mouth.

Word Of Mouthpada essentially is the message about a product or service in the form of comments on product performance, friendliness, honesty, speed of service and other things that are perceived and experienced by someone who passed on to others. The message conveyed to form messages that are positive or negative, depending on what is perceived by the grantor of the message on the product or service he consumes (Erida, 2009). According to Silverman (2011), word of mouth is important because it can inspire confidence that is independent because it acquired from third parties. Besides word of mouth can convey experience and this information can help reduce risk in consuming a product. The level of customer satisfaction which is divided into several levels have different effects on the behavior of consumer word of mouth. Satisfaction is a factor that will encourage communication with positive word of mouth. Word of mouth delivered by people who are satisfied it can be recommended to other potential customers (Solomon, in Dwi Suhartanto, 2001).

Anderson (1998) concluded that consumers were very satisfied with the services they consume will make a positive word of mouth is higher than those who are less satisfied. Instead, consumers are not satisfied with the conduct of negative word of mouth even higher. Babin, Barry J; L. Yong-Kie; Kim, Eun-Fu; and Griffin, Mitch (2005) in her research at measuring word of mouth with indicators willingness of consumers to talk about positive things about the quality of service to others, recommend the service to others and give a boost to a friend or relative to make purchases of these services.

PT. Application Nations Children work or the public familiar with the Go-Jek a motorcycle online application company that has the responsibility for conduction connect with consumers through the application driver. As a company, in addition to targeting the social impact to raise standards of living, especially in the informal sector, GO-JEK also a company that aims to benefit. GO-JEK has partnered with more than 1 million motorcycle riders who are experienced and trusted in Indonesia, to provide various services, including transport and messaging between meals.

Therefore, Saat The GO-JEK has officially operated in 167 cities and districts in Indonesia, including the city of Mataram. Customer GO-JEK in Mataram shows that customers who use GO-JEK increased from 2016 to 2018. However, the experience acquired customer GO-JEK in Mataram is still considered very poor, both in terms of the features and applications of driving comfort with the driver side. Based on an initial interview with the customer GO-JEK in Mataram, stating that there are many features in the GO-JEK applications that can not be felt by the customer GO-JEK in Mataram and could only feel the benefits in major cities only. In addition, they often found the driver does not use the full attributes such as not using the official jacket of GO-JEK, do not use shoes and even did not use helmets. The purpose of this research is as follows:

1) To determine the influence of experiential marketing to customer satisfaction GO-JEK in Mataram.
2) To determine the influence of experiential marketing to customer word of mouth GO-JEK in Mataram.
3) To determine the effect of satisfaction on customer word of mouth GO-JEK in Mataram.

II. Theoretical Framework

a) *Experiential Marketing*

Experience by (Robinette and Brand in Kustini, 2007: 46), defined as personal events that occur in response to some kind of stimulus, as given by the marketing efforts before and after purchase. The concept of experiential marketing is where a company or service online motorcycle is trying to create a positive perception in the minds of consumers about the product, which can also be used to influence the consumer's emotional side (Schmitt, 1999). Experiential marketing is a marketing concept that involves the emotions and feelings of customers by creating positive experiences and not to be forgotten so that customers are satisfied and loyal to a particular product.

Sense is aspects of tangible and can be felt from a product that can be captured by the five human senses (Schmitt, 1999: 109-111). Kahn (2007: 3) in research also mentions that there were five human senses that can be connected to a product (brand), namely sight, sounds, smells, taste, and touch. But Kahn argues that the dimension of sight has a strong influence on customer emotions.

Hulten, Broweus, and Van Dijk (2009: 89-134) found a fifth dimension of sensory marketing can affect the experience that can satisfy the customer. In other words, the logic of allowing consumers to experience the emotional and rational elements combine in the brain to help him in forming a sensory experience to a brand (Alkilani et.al, 2013). Sense marketing gives a real sense of the value of goods or services with the help of a sensory experience that is visual, acoustic, touch, taste, and smell.

b) *Customer Satisfaction*

Customer satisfaction is one measure of the performance of non-financial organizations that have contributed significantly to the success of the business organization's objectives. There are various definitions of conceptual customer satisfaction researchers used previously. Wilkie in Tjiptono (2008: 24) defines customer satisfaction as an emotional response to an evaluation of the experience of the consumption of a product or service.

According to Oliver in Supranto J. (2006) revealed that satisfaction is the level of one's feelings after comparing the performance or results you felt with expectations. In the concept of customer satisfaction, there are two elements that affect, ie the performance and expectations. Performance is consumer perceptions of what is received after consuming the product. Hope is the minds of consumers about what he received when he consumes the product. From these explanations, it can be concluded that customer satisfaction is the level of consumers' assessment of the results of the evaluation of what was expected to what is acceptable.

According to Kotler and Keller (2009:138), satisfaction is feeling happy or disappointed with someone arising from comparing the perceived performance of the product (or results) against expectations or hopes. If performance is below expectations, the customer is not satisfied. If performance meets expectations, the customer is satisfied. If performance exceeds expectations, the customer is highly satisfied or delighted.

According to Giese and Cote (2000) in his research has identified various conceptual definitions from the literature and from previous researchers about customer satisfaction. Based on some of the conceptual definition, concludes the three main components in the definition of customer satisfaction is the first consumer satisfaction is a cognitive and emotional responses; The second response is more focused on expectations, products, consumption, and experience; The third response occurs after ingestion, after the elections and based on accumulated experience.

c) *Word of Mouth*

Sawas a marketing communication strategy since the first used before the development of technology, that word of mouth (WOM). Some experts in trying to define WOM marketing communications from a variety of perspectives. In this study, WOM is the result of the application of experiential marketing strategy that is perceived by consumers. Here, consumers have felt the experience itself will do word of mouth.

Word of mouth is a form of promotion in the form of recommendations and is spread by word of mouth about the benefits of a product (Lupiyoadi, 2006). WOM occurs when consumers talk about their opinions about a product or service to others. Consumers who disseminate information about the goodness of the product are referred to as positive WOM, but if consumers disseminate information about the product ugliness is referred to as negative WOM (Brown et al 2005).

The definition of WOM fuller proposed by Silverman, where we get a more complete understanding of the WOM, in terms of both the perpetrators and the media, which according to Silverman (2011) in his book The Secrets of Word of Mouth Marketing says that "WOM is communication about products and services between people who are perceived to be independent of the company providing the products and services, in a medium perceived to be independent of the company. "Word of mouth is communication about products and services between people who are considered independent of the company that provides products and services, in the media is considered independent of the company.

Another reason why WOM a very important role in the marketing of a product is due to WOM able to increase the speed of product purchasing decisions. WOM makes the process faster, because of what was discussed at WOM based on the experience of the products or services that consumers are likely to believe it.

d) *Conceptual framework*

Experiential marketing not just providing information and opportunities to consumers but also to gain experience that can evoke emotions and feelings (Andreani, 2007). With experiential marketing, customers will be able to differentiate their products and services with one another because they are able to gain a memorable experience when they consume a product or service.

Research conducted by Thomas (2004), mentions experiential marketing is one tool for creating word of mouth. Through several elements (feel, sense, act, think and relate), it can increase consumer expectations on the real experience acquired and to be acquired. Here, consumers have felt the experience itself will do word of mouth.

Kotler and Keller (2009) state that satisfaction is the feeling of someone who is happy or disappointment resulting from comparing the performance of a product perceived or results in the hope that is created prior to consumption. Customer satisfaction can provide several benefits, including the relationship between the company and its customers, become harmonious, provide a good foundation for the purchase and creation of customer loyalty, as well as forming a recommendation by word of mouth (word of mouth) are favorable for the company.

In his research, Kailani & Ciobotar (2015) say positive things about the consumer experience gained during and after use or consumption, would make the consumer is willing to offer recommendations and even persuade others to have or use a service in the same place.

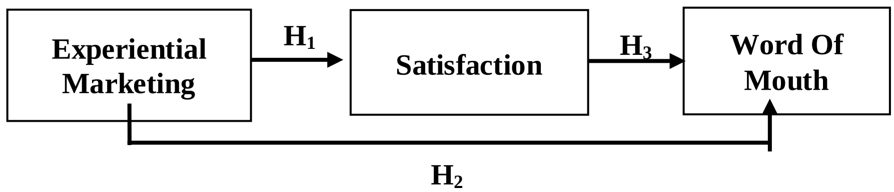

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Research

III. Metode Research

The type of this research is associative research causality. According Sugiyono (2008), associative research is research that aims to determine the relationship between two or more variables. In this research, the analysis of causality, which states are affecting the relationship between two or more variables in which this study aims to determine the effect of experiential marketing to the word of mouth through satisfied customers as an intervening variable in GO-JEK in Mataram. Sample used in this study was 100 samples considering the limited time that researchers have.

The technique used is the technique of accidental sampling. Accidental sampling is a sampling technique based on chance, that anyone who accidentally met with investigators can be used as a sample. Where samples are taken is the GO-JEK customer who happened to be found by the researchers by taking 100 samples.

Suits their hypothesis that has been formulated, in this study the inferential statistical analysis of data measured using the Smart PLS software ranging from measurement models (outer model), the model structure (inner model) and hypothesis testing (Ghozali, 2014: 32). PLS by Hartono and Abdillah (2009: 14), is an alternative approach that shifts the approach of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based covariance be based variants. Covariance-based SEM generally examines causality or theory while PLS is more predictive models. PLS is a powerful analytical method, not necessarily meet the requirements of the assumptions of normality of data and sample size should not be large.

IV. Result

Results of testing the relationship between the variables can be seen from the path coefficients and critical point (t-statistic) were significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. When the results of testing the hypothesis on its outer significant models, suggesting that the indicator is seen to be used as a measuring instrument latent variables, whereas when the results of testing on the inner significant models means there is a significant influence between the latent variables, as shown in Table 4.1. the following:

Table 1: Relationship between Variables

No.	Han association Between Variables	Koefisien	T-statistical	Conclusion
1	*Experiential Marketing(X) With Word of Mouth (Y)*	*0,064*	*0.310*	*Not significant*
2	*Experiential Marketing(X) Satisfaction (Z)*	*0.756*	*17.668*	*Significant*
3	*Kepuasan (Z) with Word of Mouth (Y)*	*0.250*	*1,433*	*Not significant*

Table 1. above shows that of the three relationships among variables proposed, only one significant relationship between other variables. The test results of the parameter coefficient between experiential marketing to show their satisfaction with the positive influence coefficient 0.756 and the value of the t-statistic of 17.879 showed a significant effect. The value of t-statistic is above the critical value of 1.680, thereby Ha accepted. This shows that experiential marketing positive and significant impact on satisfaction.

The test results of the parameter coefficient between experiential marketing to the word of mouth indicate a positive influence with the coefficient of 0.064 with a t-statistic of 0.312 indicates a significant effect, the value of the t-statistic is below the critical value of 1.680, thus Ha rejected. This shows that experiential marketing and no significant positive effect on word of mouth. The test results of the parameter coefficient between satisfaction with the word of mouth indicate a positive influence with coefficient 0.250 and the value of t-statistic of 1.491 showed no significant effect. The t-statistic value is below the critical value of 1.680, thus Ha rejected. This suggests that satisfaction and no significant positive effect on word of mouth.

V. Interpretation

a) *Effect of Experiential Marketing on Satisfaction*

Berdasarkan results of the study, it was found that experiential marketing has a positive effect on satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.756 with a t-statistic value of 17.668. So that the second hypothesis which states "experiential marketing significant positive effect on customer satisfaction" received. This means that the customer GO-JEK that use GO-JEK in Mataram was satisfied with the experiences gained while using the GO-JEK. Changes in people's lifestyles greatly affect the whole fabric of social life. today's consumer does not just focus on the core of the products and services offered, but a unique and exciting experience is sought in the current era.

The concept of experiential marketing is the modern marketing concept that emphasizes customer satisfaction (Lululangi, 2014). Experiential marketing is itself a way that can be done by anyone to improve customer satisfaction and bind consumers with memorable experiences when enjoying the products and services offered. Experiential marketing is very important, not only as a strategic differentiator from other industries but also can make customers get an interesting memorable with experiences that have never felt so as to give satisfaction to the customer (Kustini, 2012).

The results also showed that experiential marketing is applied by GO-JEK able to provide satisfaction to its customers with a wide range of experiences provided. Various features of the application, GO-JEK driver-friendly and courteous in accordance with what they expect and they imagine.

Expectancy disconfirmation theory states that the model between expectation and obtained by the consumer would greatly affect the satisfaction of consumers. Each consumer will definitely have expectations or hopes for something better in products issued by the company or on a variety of features found in the application GO-JEK. Consumer expectations will not be anything for them when the consumer has not felt the direct experience of a product or experience is felt directly by consumers of application GO-JEK. GO-JEK application is one form of intangible goods in which consumers will make their experience as a factor for evaluating expectations or hopes.

The results are consistent with research by Lee Hsiao & Yang, The Study of the Relationships among Experiential Marketing, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty with an objects Shopping mall located in Tainan. Where this research shows that experiential marketing has a significant effect on customer satisfaction. This study is also in line with Oeyono and Dharmayanti (2013) which state that experiential marketing gives effect to customer satisfaction through some aspect of the aspect of sense, feel, think, and relate, while aspects of the act did not experience a significant influence on consumer satisfaction.

The research of Indrawati and Shafira (2016), The Effect of Experiential Marketing Towards Customer Satisfaction on Online Fashion Store in Indonesia also stated that experiential marketing simultaneously significant effect on customer satisfaction, although not all aspects of the experiential marketing can influence such satisfaction , From these studies it was found that when the fashion consumers who have earned their online shopping experience online and the fit between the expectations and hopes it will increase the satisfaction of the consumer online fashion. This is in accordance with Giese and Cote (2000) which states that there are three major components in the definition of customer satisfaction, which is the first consumer satisfaction is a cognitive, and emotional responses; The second response is more focused on expectations, products, consumption, and experience; The third response occurs after ingestion, after the elections and based on accumulated experience.

b) *Effect of Experiential Marketing on Word of Mouth*

Berdasarkan results of the study, it was found that experiential marketing has a positive influence on word of mouth with coefficient of 0.064 with a t-statistic of 0.310, which means that the customer GO-JEK in Mataram would do word of mouth after they get experiential marketing although not significant , The results of this study are not consistent with the research of Lin (2012) which states that experiential marketing has a positive effect and exhibited significantly on word of mouth given by the consumer where the studies proved the more consumers get a sense experience, act experience and relate experience was good, the higher the level of consumer willingness to do word of mouth.

This research finds different things that experiential marketing all aspects of your application seta GO-JEK not necessarily make a direct customer would do word of mouth. If seen the result of the distribution of respondents on the variables included in the category of experiential marketing to gain experience, while in the variable word of mouth proceeds from the distribution of respondents only quite intense. This is an indication that the customer does not necessarily GO-JEK in Mataram after using GO-JEK application will perform word of mouth due to the fact that the customer will only be found intense enough to do word of mouth.

It is also seen from quite a small number of the items I was interested in the ad's statement GO-JEK, just being in the category enough gain experience. This indicates that the GO-JEK ad has not been able to stimulate customer in Mataram to be more interested in using GO-JEK so that the customer has not made an application GO-JEK as a major thing in their lives. My statement items interested in advertising GO-JEK included in the indicator variable of thinking in experiential marketing. Thus, the customer GO-JEK in Mataram not thought carefully that the advertisements were carried GO-JEK now has not become a major, and the first thing that comes to mind in the mind of the customer.

Another else, from this study it was found that the category of word of mouth just intense enough, so the customer is not necessarily GO-JEK in Mataram city will proclaim or invite others to use Go-JEK application in Mataram. Another fact found that most respondents in this study are dominated by respondents aged 21-30 years spanned by 61%, 21-30 years of age is the age that generated millennial, which is a very dynamic millennial generation, adhesion technology in daily life - day and very informative (CBS, 2018). Thus, delivery of the message will greatly affect their lives, if the delivery of the message can be embedded in their minds proficiency level then this generation does not hesitate to recount his experiences both in the real world or the virtual world. The millennial generation is the generation that is very close to the technology and the technology involved in every activity of daily life. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (2018) lineal generation is the generation visualization and quite straightforward, so when they see something interesting then quickly they will proclaim to all corners of the world through social media platforms and so on.

The results of this study indicate that the ad made by GO-JEK has not been able to make people remember the GO-JEK applications, it is evident from the response or responses community just enough to get the experience, as well as by word of mouth only to the category of pretty intense. Thus, this indicates that the customer GO-JEK in Mataram will only be intense enough to tell GO-JEK application to another person, family or their relatives. The results of this study differ from Hendrayana research, et.al (2015), about the influence of Experiential Marketing and image of the Open University of the Word of Mouth Students. Where the influence of experiential marketing to the word of mouth is greater than the effect of the image to word of mouth.

c) Effect of Satisfaction on Word of Mouth

Based on these results, satisfaction has a positive influence and not a significant word of mouth with a coefficient of 0.250 with a t-statistic of 1.433. So the third hypothesis which states "satisfaction significant positive effect on word of mouth" is rejected. This means that the customer GO-JEK in Mataram was satisfied with the experience they can however insignificant, so their desire to share and recommend apps GO-JEK to others only in the category of pretty intense. The results of this study differ with Jan et, .al (2013) which revealed that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on customer word of mouth.

This research found that the fourth of item on the statement of satisfaction variables that are used only in the category are satisfied and the word of mouth only variable in the category of pretty intense. This shows that customer satisfaction felt by the GO-JEK in Mataram not enough to give the effect of word of mouth will be done by the customer GO-JEK. The results of this study differ from Thurau et al (2003) which states that the satisfaction of the customer received within a period long enough, will produce a positive value to the word of mouth that they have a good impression on a product. The satisfaction of consumers may affect performance results, including loyalty and word of mouth communications or refer interests.

According to Bigham (2007), word of mouth communication is informal communication about the product or service that is different from formal communication because in this communication the sender does not speak in a professional capacity or commercial communication. Word of mouth itself is a form of conversation about a product from one person to another person on a message that is sometimes not recognized by the sender or recipient of the communication itself. Word of mouth making the information more quickly to be accepted by others to be a product and services. This is consistent with that put forward by Herr (1991) in the Bigham (2007), that the word of mouth has a greater level of impact than the written information.

Moreover, at the present time, with the presence of social media, making information, both positive and negative about a product and services will spread faster. Digital word of mouth through social media is one of the latest forms of word of mouth. So when consumers were satisfied with the products and services, the very high propensity of consumers would share the experience they get through social media. However, the application GO-JEK still relatively new in Mataram, GO-JEK entrance to the city of Mataram in 2017 and has never made a more localized marketing effort of the residents in the city of Mataram. The public only knows the GO-JEK of conventional media is centralized in Jakarta alone.

The study provides an overview according to the attribution theory, which in theory states that a person will behave when it has sufficient information to have confidence and strong reasons. After having those three things a person will act when they have reasons strong to do something, as well as with consumers who would do word of mouth or convey information after they feel and believe and are sure to be something that will be informed by feeling directly and this will encourage consumers to share the experience satisfied or dissatisfied with others (Kelley and Michela, 1980).

So until GO-JEK needs to create something more impactful and powerful in Mataram Mataram so that people get closer back to the GO-JEK application. The results of this study different from the results of research conducted by Saifuddin (2016), who found that satisfaction significantly influences word of mouth, where if the customer is satisfied will be the online product bought then these customers will tell it directly through social media twitter or social media kind. This is because many people are not aware that the application GO-JEK able to help their daily lives. In essence, the company should be able to make the customer feel the satisfaction of the products is sold to tell about these products to others.

VI. Conclusion

1) Experiential marketing and no significant positive effect on word of mouth. This shows that the better the impression of experiential marketing which is accepted by the customer will improve word of mouth customers using GO-JEK in Mataram but the effect is not significant. In other words, customers will tell or retell to others about the GO-JEK in Mataram after taste or use.
2) Experiential marketing is a positive and significant impact on satisfaction. It gives the sense that the better the impression of experiential marketing is perceived by the customer can increase customer satisfaction using GO-JEK in Mataram.
3) Satisfaction and no significant positive effect on word of mouth. This illustrates that the higher the satisfaction felt by the customer, it will increase the intensity of the customer to tell or not to tell his experiences to others after using GO-JEK in Mataram.

VII. Recommendation

This research only focuses on customer willingness GO-JEK in doing positive word of mouth without measure the strength of the effect of each variable and the indicator on the word of mouth that will be delivered by the customer itself. Whereas in fact the strength of experience and satisfaction derived by the customer, it could generate negative word of mouth. In addition, this study did not specifically examine how the spread of word of mouth is done by the customer GO-JEK. So the results are still not up to describe the activities of word of mouth customer experiences and the satisfaction derived.

So good for future studies, the researchers were able to examine the strength of the effects produced by the dependent variable and the mediating variable in influencing word of mouth will be delivered consumer and selection by spreading the word of mouth of consumers through social media, such as application WhatsApp, Facebook or Instagram or researcher can then add variable E-WOM.

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Challenges of Distribution Services through Electronic Channels (A Study of MTN Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria)

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Abstract- The study aim at investigating distribution by electronic channels specifically in Nigeria, Owerri, Imo state to be precise. To give direction to the study, two objectives with corresponding research questions and two hypotheses were formulated. Integrating customer value-based pricing strategies, competition-based pricing strategies and cost-based pricing strategies with price levels (high and low) and performance with respect to profitability. The results indicate that the profitability of the surveyed companies is positively affected by value-based pricing strategy and high price levels while it is negatively affected by low price levels. Such findings indicate that pricing policies influence the profitability of organizations and therefore, a more strategic look at the pricing process may constitute one aspect that cannot be overlooked by managers.

Keywords: distribution, electronics channels, challenges.

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CHALLENGESOFDISTRIBUTIONSERVICESTHROUGHELECTRONICCHANNELSASTUDYOFMTNOWERRIMOSTATENIGERIA

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

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Okwara C.C. [α], Emmanuel Nlemchukwu C. [σ] & Onyeme Linus. N. [ρ]

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Section 1

I. Introduction

a) Background of the Study

Distribution (or place) is one of the four elements of the marketing mix. It is the process of making a product or service available for the consumer or business user who needs it. This can be done directly by the producer or service provider, or using indirect channels with distributors or intermediaries.

Decisions about distribution need to be taken in line with a company's overall strategic vision and mission. Developing a coherent distribution plan is a central component of strategic planning. At the strategic level, there are three broad approaches to distribution, namely mass, selective or exclusive distribution. The number and type of intermediaries selected mainly depend on the strategic approach. The overall distribution channel should add value to the consumer.

Furthermore, it is fundamentally concerned with ensuring that products reach target customers in the most direct and cost-efficient manner. In the case of services, distribution is principally concerned with access. Although distribution, as a concept, is relatively simple, in practice distribution management may involve a diverse range of activities and disciplines including: detailed logistics, transportation, warehousing, storage, inventory management as well as channel management including selection of channel members and rewarding distributors.

Electronic distribution is a type of distribution that uses purely electronic media. It is often interpreted as the buying or selling of services or goods over a public network without the physical media; this is usually done by downloading from the Internet to the consumer's electronic device.

E-distribution is an important component of e-commerce. There are many benefits for businesses in adopting e-distribution, the biggest benefit of which is the direct nature of the transaction (business to consumer or B2C). Consumers are assured that they are dealing with real and genuine producers or manufacturers. Another advantage is the market reach capability, which is extensive. There is less need for manpower as the seller has direct communication with the buyer. All orders can be immediately acted upon, and considerable overhead can be greatly reduced. The seller has more control in e-distribution, allowing a customer order to be delivered on time. Moreover, e-distribution can reduce or eliminate lead times and possible shortages. With the reduction in overhead, businesses can realize big profits; the payment system in e-distribution is also largely efficient and secure.

However, there are some disadvantages associated to e-distribution. For consumers, the distribution cost is often directly passed on to them. Targeted promotions could get more sales, which, at times, not help with the real needs of the consumer. Also, with the decreased interpersonal and social contacts, there is much decision making involved on the consumer side. Furthermore, not all consumers can be reached by e-distribution.

Before to designing a distribution system, the planner needs to determine what the distribution channel is to achieve in broad terms. The overall approach to distributing products or services depends on several factors including the type of product, especially perish ability, the market served, the geographic scope of operations and the firm's overall mission and vision. The process of setting out a broad

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statement of the aims and objectives of a distribution channel is a strategic level decision.

Strategically, there are three approaches to distribution:

- Mass distribution (also known as *intensive distribution*): When products are destined for a mass market, the marketer will seek out intermediaries that appeal to a broad market base. For example, snack foods and drinks are sold via a wide variety of outlets including supermarkets, convenience stores, vending machines, cafeterias and others. The choice of distribution outlet is skewed towards those than can deliver mass markets in a cost efficient manner.
- Selective distribution*:* A manufacturer may choose to restrict the number of outlets handling a product. For example, a manufacturer of premium electrical goods may choose to deal with department stores and independent outlets that can provide added value service level required to support the product. Dr Scholl orthopedic sandals, for example, only sell their product through pharmacies because this type of intermediary supports the desired *therapeutic* positioning of the product. Some of the prestige brands of cosmetics and skincare, such as Estee Lauder, Jurlique and Clinique, insist that sales staff are trained to use the product range. The manufacturer will only allow trained clinicians to sell their products.
- Exclusive distribution*:* In an exclusive distribution approach, a manufacturer chooses to deal with one intermediary or one type of intermediary. The advantage of an exclusive approach is that the manufacturer retains greater control over the distribution process. In exclusive arrangements, the distributor is expected to work closely with the manufacturer and add value to the product through service level, after sales care or client support services. Another definition of exclusive arrangement is an agreement between a supplier and a retailer granting the retailer exclusive rights within a specific geographic area to carry the supplier's product.

Summary of strategic approaches to distribution

Approach	Definition
Intensive distribution	The producer's products are stocked in the majority of outlets.This strategy is common for mass-produced products such as basic supplies, snack foods, magazines and soft drink beverages.
Selective distribution	The producer relies on a few intermediaries to carry their product. This strategy is commonly observed for more specialised goods that are carried through specialist dealers, for example, brands of craft tools, or large appliances.
Exclusive distribution	The producer selects only very few intermediaries. Exclusive distribution occurs where the seller agrees to allow a single retailer the right to sell the manufacturer's products. This strategy is typical of luxury goods retailers such as Gucci.

Push vs.Pull strategy

In consumer markets, another key strategic level decision is whether to use a push or pull strategy. In a push strategy, the marketer uses intensive advertising and incentives aimed at distributors, especially retailers and wholesalers, with the expectation that they will stock the product or brand, and that consumers will purchase it when they see it in stores. In contrast, in a *pull strategy*, the marketer promotes the product directly to consumers hoping that they will pressure retailers to stock the product or brand, thereby pulling it through the distribution channel. The choice of a push or pull strategy has important implications for advertising and promotion. In a push strategy the promotional mix would consist of trade advertising and sales calls while the advertising media would normally be weighted towards trade magazines, exhibitions and trade shows while a pull strategy would make more extensive use consumer advertising and sales promotions while the media mix would be weighted towards mass-market media such as newspapers, magazines, television, social media and radio.

The realization process of a marketing strategy of a company lies not only in achieving specific production goals and a proper communication with recipients during realization of the promotion phase. Its constant and very important factor is to provide finished products to customers. A basic condition for achieving goals setout in the trade is that the finished product meets the needs of the consumer, in particular it has a suitable form and it is delivered at the right time and place. To be compliment with this requirement means to take action and implement the elements included in the marketing-mix, which is the distribution of goods — one of the processes of market support, containing within itself all the decisions and actions related to the manufacturer's communication with end customers. Intermediaries create marketing distribution channel.

Distribution channels can also be defined as marketing channels or market channels. A distribution channel is a group of depended on each other organization units, which are taking part in process of flow of products or services from producers to buyers.

The functional aspect of the distribution channel is seen as a way to connecting and ordering of agencies and intermediaries through which one or more streams are flowing

Most important streams in distribution channels are:

1. Physical movement of completed products or services;
2. Actual transfer of ownership laws among participants of the channel;
3. Information about potential buyers, competition and demand;
4. Promotion;
5. Payments of invoices;
6. Negotiations;
7. Realization of orders;
8. risk
9. Shipping, transportation and storage of goods.

Some of these streams (the ownership rights, promotion, negotiation, risk, product) flow to buyers, other (market information, payments, negotiations and contracts) to the producers. All of these flows are inevitable and the responsibility for each of them lies upon at least one organizational unit.

b) Statement of the Problem

Distribution of products takes place by means of a marketing channel, also known as a distribution channel. A marketing channel is the people, organizations, and activities necessary to transfer the ownership of goods from the point of production to the point of consumption. It is the way products get to the end-user, the consumer. This is mostly accomplished through merchant retailers or wholesalers or, in the international context, by importers. In certain specialist markets, agents or brokers may become involved in the marketing channel. At E-distribution, involvement of these intermediaries are totally eliminated (disintermediation), it's business to consumer (B2C), thus this method or strategy of distribution comes with it various benefits but at the same time pose serious challenges, this, the study tries to investigate.

c) Objective of the Study

The core purpose of the study is to investigate on the challenges of distribution by electronic channels, other sub-objectives entails;

1. To assess the *relationship between psychological identification with online communities and values.*
2. To find the *relationship between conveniences and value.*

d) Research Questions

1. What are the benefits of e-distribution channels to producers?
2. To what extent does e-distribution affects producer to consumer relationship?

e) Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at a significant level of 0.05

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between psychological identification with online communities and values.

f) Justification

This study will be of great impact to companies as it will stand as a reference material on the benefits and challenges facing the use of electronic channels in distribution of products.

Section 2

II. Literature Review

a) Conceptual Frame Work

Business distribution channels are the avenues a business uses to sell or deliver its product or service. Distribution channels for sellers of products include brick-and-mortar stores, online stores, direct mail solicitations, catalogs, sales reps, wholesalers, distributors and direct response advertising. Distributing services is delivering core and supplementary service elements through selected physical and electronics channels. It involves decisions about where, when and how.

Electronic communication is defined as any type of communication using technology - like computer, phone or fax. There are basically 4 types of marketing channels: direct selling; selling through intermediaries; dual distribution; and reverse channels. While a distribution channel may seem endless at times, there are three main types of channels, all of which include the combination of a producer, wholesaler, retailer, and end consumer plan created by the management of a manufacturing business that specifies how the firm intends to transfer its products to intermediaries, retailers and end consumers.

i. *Classification of Distribution Channels*

Company decisions regarding the type of distribution channel are considered in two structural systems:

- Vertical and
- Horizontal.

In the vertical structure there are a number of dependencies between companies.

Several decisions about the quantities of different levels of a flow streams are made here. The horizontal structure determines the number and type of intermediaries on specific levels.

In distribution channel a number of intermediaries are important who participate in the transfer of goods and property rights to it from the producer to the final client.

Each of these participants becomes another level in the distribution channel and their number determines the length of the channel.

The vertical structure of distribution channels and its length is defined for example by following determinants:

1. Expectations of final customer;
2. Features of a product;
3. The financial capacity of an enterpirse that is making the decision;
4. Organizational and legal conditions for distribution. [6, p.35].

An enterprise, which is cooperating of intermediaries, faces a choice of one of the three systems with different levels of surveillance powers to the channel by the company:

1. Corporate,
2. Contract,
3. Conventional.

A corporate system is being used by organizational units during phases of creation and development. In this case the producer is an owner of the channel system, which relies only on him. It is a vertically-oriented system in which the producer is obliged to provide financial and human capital.

A contract system is a quite new concept in Nigeria. Its most popular form is called franchises, which is one of the fastest growing sectors of distribution. It can be divided into:

1. Product trade-name franchising;
2. Business format franchising. [1, p.159]

The first approach is mostly focused on distribution of a product where a given company is given rights to sale goods or services in a particular segment of a market using trade name (eg. car dealers).

The second type of franchising is based on the right to offer products under contract on a particular market with proper commercial forms, including sales, service and quality control. In this system all the time franchiser has control over the entire distribution channel.

The last option is the most popular in Nigeria - conventional system which is based on the foundation of working with independent intermediaries (wholesalers, retailers, agents, brokers). The most important advantage, that determines the choice of this system, is specialization of producers and dealers in specific sectors of a market chain. In this system important becomes the development of a third contractor (third party operations), which are companies that are specialized in a distribution, while offering a range of services and trade support for other participants in the channel. However in this case a company must be prepared for losing control over distribution channel.

Among vertically integrated channels administrated channel can be also distinguished. In this solution all organizational units that create the channel remain independent in their operation, however one specific company is keeping regulatory function for all units.

Channels can be also divided according to deals where people are assigned in accordance to their responsibility of buy-sell deals and product channels that are formed by members involved in the movement of products from producers to end users.

Other channels that needs to be mentioned are the negotiation channel, the flow of property rights channel, the channel of physical movement of goods and the cash flow channel. [2, p.27]

Channel width is the number of intermediaries and institutions located in different levels of the channel as a result of a decision on coverage of market with products and services. Channel width depends on the intensity strategy chosen by the company. As a result of this decision marketing channels can be divided into narrow, with a small number of intermediaries or wide in which the products or services are offered by the largest possible number of agents at each level.

A width of a channel dependent on many factors. The biggest attention is paid to the characteristics of products, customers behavior associated with relationship and loyalty to the brand. An oversight over chosen channel and marketing strategy is also relevant.

Indirect Channels

The direct channel consists of two levels: a producer and final customers. The producer contacts the buyers through their own employees, commercial services or media without intermediaries. These type of channel is applicable to the commodity market, capital goods, consumer goods, media use and the distribution of services.[5, p.26] . Manufacturers that are using this kind of channel retain full control over a disposal of products, the level of prices and services.

It provides a fast flow of information about the expectations of customers, which automatically adjusts the offer. As a consequence, producers are charged of any distribution costs and the risk of selling at a fairly low penetration capabilities.

In direct distribution, there are no intermediary. Any exchange of information between a producer and a customer is via mail, catalogs, radio, television, press, phone or computer. Orders are made via mail or telephone. The execution of orders is done by mail or order is delivered directly to the client.

Any introduction to the distribution channel of an intermediate cell, regardless of the number of levels, change a direct channel into an indirect channel. Those intermediaries can be a natural or legal persons who take over ownership rights to the product or service from the producer and give them to a final customer.

According to their participation in the transfer of ownership rights intermediaries can be divided into dealers and agents. The first of them are wholesalers, retailers and other organizational units that assume ownership of the products. Agents consist of agents and brokers who do not buy products and have no ownership rights to them. They are involved in shifting ownership from the producer to the final purchaser, conducting sale and purchase transactions.

An intermediary in the distribution channel may be responsible for transactional functions (negotiating contracts, dealing in sale and purchase, transfer of ownership, takeover risk) [2, p.36], logistics functions (procurement, supply, storage, selection, and transportation) and support functions (gathering information about a particular market segment, demand analysis, financing transactions).

This type of channel is primarily use in the consumer elective goods market (narrow and short channels) as well as everyday purchases and services market (short channels). It is being used relatively rarely on the market of industrial goods, in particular with investment products, raw materials and a range of supply goods.

Door-to-door delivery: There are no intermediaries. Any exchange of information between a producer and a customer is via mail, catalogs, radio, television, press, phone or computer. Orders are made via mail or telephone. The execution of orders is done by mail or order is delivered directly to the client.

Any introduction to the distribution channel of an intermediate cell, regardless of the number of levels, change a direct channel into an indirect channel. Those intermediaries can be a natural or legal persons who take over ownership rights to the product or service from the producer and give them to a final customer.

According to their participation in the transfer of ownership rights intermediaries can be divided into dealers and agents. The first of them are wholesalers, retailers and other organizational units that assume ownership of the products. Agents consist of agents and brokers who do not buy products and have no ownership rights to them. They are involved in shifting ownership from the producer to the final purchaser, conducting sale and purchase transactions.

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This type of channel is primarily use in the consumer elective goods market (narrow and short channels) as well as everyday purchases and services market (short channels). It is being used relatively rarely on the market of industrial goods, in particular with investment products, raw materials and a range of supply goods.

The intermediate distribution must also include network sales (network marketing, network). [2, p.40] This form of selling is being used in Nigeria by foreign companies selling their products to distributors who recruit more distributors and receive from them appropriate amount of their sales commission.

Placing an intermediary in the distribution channel brings to the manufacturer both benefits and losses. For manufacturers the most important factor is a chance for a greater market penetration, acquisition of new markets and reduction of the distribution costs. It is also important for the manufacturer that he is released from the product adaptation to the expectations of end users (bottling, packing) and from building its own sales network. However there are several disadvantages for this solution like there is a possibility of losing direct control over the channel, not fulfilling responsibilities by the intermediary, extension in the period of payment for products and the danger of all kinds of conflicts in the channel. The relationship between producer and final customer in the intermediate distribution.

The choice of distribution channel depends on macroeconomic conditions (the economic situation, the purchasing power and the ability to exchange currency, the number, demography and culture of the population, the population density, the maximum size of the market) [4, p.217], technological trends and law regulations (rules and standards, obligations and prohibitions).

ii. *Electronic Distribution Channels*

With the growth of B2C (business-to-consumer) model a new type of intermediary has become available: an electronic distribution channel - the Internet. In electronic distribution channels the flow of streams is being realized in two dimensions: electronic and physical. A split of streams between these two dimensions depends on the type of products sold, channel participants and their technological capabilities and resources. [5, p.218]

In the electronic sales following forms of sales can be distinguished:

1. The B2C (business-to-consumer)— It is a relationship between the company and the final customer; it includes: preparation of offers, preparation and confirmation of orders, payments, realization of the transaction;
2. The B2B (business-to-business)— It is a relationship between companies and it includes: preparation of offers, preparation and confirmation of orders, payments, realization of the transaction;

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3. The B2A (business-to-administration) — It is a relationship between businesses and public (government);
4. The C2C (consumer-to-consumer) — Transactions between consumers.

The growth of an electronic distribution is strengthen by its global reach, reduction of m

- Consistent delivery for standardized services.
- Low cost.
- Customer convenience.
- Wide distribution.
- Customer choice.
- Quick customer feedback.

iii. *E-Distribution Challenges*

Main disadvantages of this type of distribution are increased costs of transportation of ordered goods and a delayed date of payment.

The service principals face the following problems in distributing services through electronic channels:

- Customers are active and they must be enticed.
- Insufficient control of e-environment.
- Inability to customize with highly standardized electronic services.
- Inconsistency due to customer involvement.
- Changes needed in consumer behavior.
- Security concerns.
- Competition from widening geographies.

Customers are active not passive and must be enticed

Traditional advertising media such as magazines consider the customer a passive receiver of their messages. A customer reading an article is most likely to see the advertisement. But the user of the web is different. The aim of advertising should be to educate, entertain and entice the customer. By reading the marketer's information, customer must know the benefits of services clearly. So, "permission-based marketing" is a new method used to attract customers to websites. The services firm designs games, offers prizes, creates contests and sends customers to websites. This helps the advertisers build relationships with customers.

Lack of control of the electronic equipment

Electronic equipment are used in an unregulated medium. Care should be taken to separate the irrelevant, unwanted material from the useful content. For example, advertising for banking services should be separated from the numerous advertisements for '*balding concealment devices*' and '*quick weight loss programmes*'. In print media, the advertiser can request for right positioning. Such requests are not possible on the internet.

Price competition

It is difficult to compare features and price of services. But the internet makes it simple for customers to compare prices for a wide variety of services. For example, priceline.com allows customers to name their prices for a service such an airline ticket. So, customers at present, have the ability to bid on prices for services. Online services enable customers to download hundreds of service offerings along with particulars. So, the service providers encounter challenges in the form of price competition.

Inability to customize with highly standardized electronic devices

It is very difficult to customize the services by using highly standardized electronic services. When electronic media is present, customers cannot directly deal with the service provider and raise points for clarification. The reaction of the audience to the message presented by an electronic vehicle may not always be effective. People may talk among themselves, laugh and criticize. Only two-way video can control the behavior of receivers.

Inconsistency due to customer involvement

Electronic channels minimize the inconsistency from employees or providers of services. The customer produces the service himself using the technology. While doing so, if the technology is not user friendly, it may lead to errors or frustration. Using a website for example is not easy as it calls for familiarity with that technology. Moreover, the difficulty encountered by online services is that most customers do not have computers.

Changes are required in consumer behavior

When a consumer enters a retail store, he can be motivated easily to buy the service. It is because the behavior of customer can be studied and the customer interaction can be modified to instill confidence in him. But for a customer purchasing a service through electronic channels, the method of interaction is different.

While using electronic channel, considerable changes are required in some aspects – the willingness to search for information, the willingness to perform some aspect of the services themselves, the acceptance of different levels of service, etc. But effecting a behavioral change is not easy. So, service marketers should motivate customers by bringing about changes in the long established pattern of behavior.

Security concerns

Security of information is a key issue while using electronic channels. This is the major issue confronting the marketers who use electronic channels. Many customers are reluctant to give credit card numbers on the web and internet. Recently, Adam Cohen has outlined reasons for customer reluctance to use the internet.

Global Journal of Management and Business Research (E) Volume XIX Issue VII Version I Year 2019

They are:

- Someone might steal your identity
- You may reveal information about yourself in cyber-space
- Personal information that we give to a website might be exploited
- You may enter your credit card number on a fake website
- A stranger may use your computer to spy on you
- You may have a cyber-stalker.

Global Competition

With the advent of electronic channels, services can be purchased from service firms located anywhere in the world. The fact that services could not be transported is no longer valid because of electronic channels. Virtually, all financial services can be bought from institutions in any area. Since customers have unlimited choice among the providers, services are not protected from competition.

b) *Theoretical framework*

The theory of distribution channels states that each company in the channel must charge enough to pay expenses and leave a profit. Knowing where you are in the channel helps you understand your costs and your mark-up needs. If you are near the end of the channel, you will pay the most for a product, because it has been marked up on its way to you. If you're near the beginning, you may be expected to charge what are commonly called wholesale prices, because your buyers understand you incur less expense at the start of a channel.

There are no set prices along the distribution channel. Each company may charge what the market will bear. If prices are too high in the middle of a channel, buyers may disappear, because they know they can't mark up the product or materials enough to make a profit when they sell them. At any stage, a company may offer a discount to attract buyers. If a company in the middle of the channel offers a discount directly to consumers, the rest of the channel is cut out because it cannot compete.

Relationship Commitment Theory: Propounded by Sharma and Patterson (1999)

This is a model showing the determinants of relationship commitment. The model consists of three factors such as communication effectiveness, technical quality and functional quality, all affected by trust in the relationship which in turns affect relationship commitment.

Trust: Trust is defined by the authors as the belief that the organization can be relied on to believe in such a way that the long-term interests of the buyer will be served (Sharma and Patterson, 1999). They further states that trust implies reliance on, or confidence in, the process or person. Hence, the greater is the level of trust, the stronger is the relationship commitment. The factor of trust was also looked at by Morgan and Hunt (1994) who argues that trust has a positive relation to the extent through which the firms share similar values. It further showed that a trust booster for firms was customers' satisfaction with past exchange with the firms.

Service Quality: According to Sharma and Petterson (1990) is divided into two main components, technical and functional quality. Technical quality is related to the actual outcomes or the core service as perceived by the customers is achieving the best return on investment for their customer at acceptable levels of risks is viewed. Functional quality on the other hand is rather than concerned with, what is delivered, deals with how he service or product is delivered. It is concerned with the interaction between the product is delivered. It is concerned with the interaction between the organization supplier) and the customer (receiver), and is assessed in a highly subjective manner. The authors further argue that trust had a great impact on how quality is delivered, both in terms of functional and technical quality.

Consequently, in relation to the study the greater the perceived technical quality, the stronger is the trust in the relationship, and the greater the perceived quality of the organization, the stronger is the level of trust in the relationship, also, the greater the quality is perceived, the stronger is the relationship commitment..

Communication Effectiveness: Is referred to the formal as well as the informal sharing of meaningful and timely information between an organization and a customer in an empathetic manner. The purpose of such is to educate and keep customers informed about their investments in a language that they can understand. In relation to the study, however, strong communication skills. New updates on current products are required to ensure that customers understand and thus become more confident in their ability to asses financial risks and outcomes. Effective communications also helps customers through the unavoidable ups and downs of business, thus, the greater is the communication effectiveness, and the stronger is the relationship to buy ideas from the firm.

c) *Empirical review*

Studies on the relationship between psychological identification with online communities and values

The rise of the Internet has led to the formation of network-based *virtual* communities. Some members have a strong psychological identification with online communities, and from which they may gain a sense of belonging and satisfaction. Jones, Hesterly, and Borgatti [1997] found that the social mechanism of the Internet is often superior to other forms of management, including controlled access, overall culture, collective punishments, and *credibility.* Further, the notion that psychological identification is intensified by website communities is the same as the concept of overall culture in the social mechanisms of network management as indicated by Jones et al. (1989)The stronger the centripetal force of website communities, the greater the website value for customers. Underwood, Bond, and Baer [2000], in their studies on the sport industry, described that customers' social identification with their teams might be strengthened by group experiences, history or traditions, physical equipment, and rituals. Hence, if customers have stronger psychological identifications with the website communities, the website will have greater value for the customers. Therefore, the following conclusion was inferred: Stronger customers' psychological identification with the website community will increase the customers' perceived value of the website.

Studies on the relationship between convenience and value

How e-commerce can attract consumers depends on its ability to save time and costs for consumers and allow consumers to view, compare, search, and ask questions. Pallab P (1996) .In addition, there are convenient and rapid functions, such as hyperlinks, that provide customers with higher added value without geographical or time limits. Hence, the more convenient services the website offers, the greater value it will have for customers. Therefore, we conclude that the greater convenience of services provided by a website will increase the customers' perceived value of the website.

Studies on the relationship between novelty and value

Amit and Zott [2001] described that the competition on the Internet emphasizes not only convenience and speed, but also novelty in contents, as crucial to competitive advantage and important for the Internet to create *customer value.* Hence, when there is a higher degree of novelty in the content offered by a website, there will be greater value for customers. Therefore, we conclude that a higher degree of novelty in the content provided by a website will increase the customers' perceived value of the website.

Section 3

III. Methodology

In this chapter, we discussed the following areas; research design, population of the study, sample size, sampling techniques, research instrument, validity and reliability of sampling instruments and method of data analysis.

a) *Research Design*

The research design adopted in this study was the survey. A survey involves gathering information from a sample through the use of a questionnaire. This method was chosen due to the structure of the study problem and its objectives. This design offers a quick, accurate and efficient way of securing information from a segment of people.

Moreover, a survey is generally perceived as authoritative among scholars and comparatively easy to understand and explain. Also, data collected through this method is standardized and allows for easy comparison.

b) *Study Area*

The area of study is MTN located at Claret Academy St, New Owerri, Owerri, Imo state of Nigeria. The choice of the company is because of its application of the undifferentiated marketing strategies and promoting images aim at benefiting the users that seeks the packages. Hence, they serve as true representative sample of the entire population companies.

c) *Target Population, Sample Size, Sampling technique*

The study's population consisted of customers of MTN in Owerri, Imo State. The study primarily focused on customers of MTN as the highest networking company in Nigeria. The study population is deemed to be inestimable because MTN is not ready to disclose its customers base on reasons best known to them. Hence, the number cannot be exactly defined.

Being an unknown population, the sample size will be obtained using the formula proposed by Walpole (1974) as follows;

$$n = \frac{z^{2a2}/2}{4e^2}$$

Where, n represents the sample size, $z^{2a2}/2$ is the value obtained from the standard normal distribution at 5% level of significance, $z^{2a2}/2 = 1.69$, e= 0.05

$$n = \frac{(1.69)^2}{4(0.0025)} = \frac{(1.69)^2}{0.01} = \frac{2.8561}{0.01} = 286$$

From the above computation, two hundred and eighty six (286) customers of MTN were served copies of the questionnaire. Seventy two (72) customers each using different MTN packages in Owerri Imo State of Nigeria will be involved in the study. The decision to allocate equal number of customers to each designed package by MTN was based on the equality of ratings as highest used package.

The sampling technique adopted in this work is Walpole 1974 sampling technique, with cluster being preferred option and respondents seen with different packages of MTN will be administered with questionnaire. Moreover, for the purpose of this study, the Wetheral based MTN in Owerri, Imo state will be divided into five (5) clusters .

d) Data Collection

The main instrument that will be employed in collecting data for this work is the questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into three (3) sections. Section one (1) has six items on personal data of the respondents. Section two (2) comprised 10 items, five each on the benefits of e-distribution channels and on the extent e-distribution channels affect producer to consumer relations. All statements in sections two and three were measured on a modified four (4) point rating scale of strongly disagree (SD), agree(A), disagree (D) and strongly agree (SA).

e) Data Analysis Process

Personal data of respondents will be analyzed using frequency count and simple percentages. A simple linear regression analysis will be employed to test the first, third and fourth hypotheses and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) will be adopted to test the second hypotheses. All hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

f) Test of Hypothesis

The test of hypotheses will be done hypothesis by hypothesis; in order to test the hypothesis, the variables were identified as follows;

Research dimensions	Measured variables in dimensions
Psychological identification with online communities	• You frequently visit or browse this website when surfing the Web. • You have a pleasant experience shopping on this website. • As a member of the website, you feel greatly satisfied. • You take delight in sharing your experience and joy from this website with others. • At the mention of an e-commerce website, this is the website that first comes to your mind.
Convenience	• This website provides customers with the most timely shopping-related information. • This website has the most convenient steps and procedures for shopping. • This website offers the most convenient and secure payment methods. • Customers can rapidly and simply complete online transactions on this website. • This website provides customers with effective communication channels (e.g., • telephone or email) or indexing functions to enable them to troubleshoot problems quickly.
Novelty	• The products, services, or transaction mechanisms offered by this website are unique. • The products, services, or transaction mechanisms offered by this website are difficult for other websites to imitate. • This website often changes or innovates its products, services, or transaction mechanisms.
Transaction security	• The personal data and transaction-related information on this website will not be leaked. • You trust the security mechanism of this website. • You are assured about the payment methods on this website. • This website is not easily invaded by computer hackers. • The transaction security of this website is guaranteed. • Others are unable to know your personal-related data from this website. • This website keeps the personal data of its customers in strict confidence.
Relationship stability	• When surfing the Internet, you visit this website first. • You feel that the reputation of this website is trustworthy. • As long as this website maintains its existing services, you will not switch to other websites. • You will recommend this website to your relatives and friends.
Value	• You believe that the products or services offered on this website are good quality. • The products or services offered by this website meet your expectations • The products/services offered by this website are your best choices • The value brought to you by this website is higher than other e-commerce websites. • Shopping on this website is a pleasant experience.

Trust	• You believe that this website is fairly reliable. • You believe that this website is trustworthy over the long-term. • You believe that this website is honest and tells no lies. • You believe that this website considers the interests of its customers. • You believe that this website enjoys a good reputation and credibility.
Loyalty	• Your time spent on this website accounts for a greater proportion of your total time online. • On this website, you enjoy visiting other websites of similar types. • Unless recommended by friends, you would not consider taking the initiative to visit or browse other similar websites. • You visit this website first when shopping online.

IV. Data Presentation, analysis and Findings

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between psychological identification with online com munities and values.

Table 2: Result of PPMC correlation between psychological identification with online communities and values

	Psychological Identification with Online Communities	Values
Psychological Identification with Online Communities Correlation	1	.424**
Sig. (2 - tailed)		.000
N	264	264
Values	.424**	1
Sig. (2 - tailed)	.000	
N	264	264

** *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 -tailed)*

Table 2 shows a correlation (r) value of 0.424 which means that the independent variable is positively correlated with values. Because of the positive value of r, direction is the same. With a p-value of .000 which is less than the level of significance of 0.05 (2-tailed, the null hypothesis is rejected. The result indicates that there is a significant relationship between psychological identification with online communities and values.

Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between conveniences and value.

Table 4: Result of PPMC correlation between MTN and consumer relationship

	Convenience	Value
Convenience- Pearson Correlation	1	.523**
Sig. (2 - tailed)		.000
N	264	264
Value	.523**	1
Sig. (2 - tailed)	.000	
N	264	264

** *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 -tailed)*

The correlation (r) value of 0.523 was obtained as shown in table 4. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the level of significance of 0.05, we therefore reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is a positive significant relationship between Convenience and value.

a) *Discussion of findings*

Table 1 indicates that there is a significant relationship between psychological identification with online communities and values. This is in agreement with Jones, Hesterly, and Borgatti [1997] who found that the social mechanism of the Internet is often superior to other forms of management, including controlled access, overall culture, collective punishments, and *credibility.* Further, the notion that psychological identification is intensified by website communities is the same as the concept of overall culture in the social mechanisms of network management as indicated by Jones et al. (1989).

Also in table 2, a positive significant relationship exist between Convenience and value. Pallab (1996) asserts that in addition, there are convenient and rapid functions, such as hyperlinks, that provide customers with higher added value without geographical or time limits. Hence, the more convenient services the website offers, the greater value it will have for customers. Therefore, we conclude that the greater convenience of services provided by a website will increase the customers' perceived value of the website.

b) Conclusion and Recommendation

The best management of distribution channels is one of the factors providing the success of products sold by the company in the market. Also, a company should not forget about the appropriate upgrading of a product over time to meet the expectations of customers and to be desired by them. Noteworthy and not to be underestimated is an offered potential by the growth of networks and electronic commerce. It seems that the electronic channel of distribution will soon be one of the most popular forms of distribution channel in Nigeria, because it reduces expenses associated with the costs of distribution and sales, and if you look from the client perspective it shortens the time of a purchase of a specific product.

Electronic distribution channels also provide the company with a high level of computerization in the field of development, which is nowadays of great importance for the position and credibility in the market.

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FELLOW OF ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH SOCIETY IN BUSINESS (FARSB)

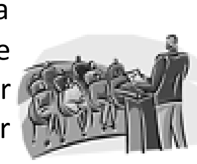
Global Journals Incorporate (USA) is accredited by Open Association of Research Society (OARS), U.S.A and in turn, awards "FARSBA" title to individuals. The 'FARSBA' title is accorded to a selected professional after the approval of the Editor-in-Chief/Editorial Board Members/Dean.

- The "FARSB" is a dignified title which is accorded to a person's name viz. Dr. John E. Hall, Ph.D., FARSBA or William Walldroff, M.S., FARSBA.

FARSBA accrediting is an honor. It authenticates your research activities. After recognition as FARSBA, you can add 'FARSBA' title with your name as you use this recognition as additional suffix to your status. This will definitely enhance and add more value and repute to your name. You may use it on your professional Counseling Materials such as CV, Resume, and Visiting Card etc.

The following benefits can be availed by you only for next three years from the date of certification:

FARSBA designated members are entitled to avail a 40% discount while publishing their research papers (of a single author) with Global Journals Incorporation (USA), if the same is accepted by Editorial Board/Peer Reviewers. If you are a main author or co-author in case of multiple authors, you will be entitled to avail discount of 10%.



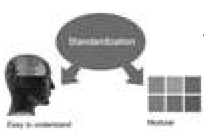
Once FARSBA title is accorded, the Fellow is authorized to organize a symposium/seminar/conference on behalf of Global Journal Incorporation (USA).The Fellow can also participate in conference/seminar/symposium organized by another institution as representative of Global Journal. In both the cases, it is mandatory for him to discuss with us and obtain our consent.

You may join as member of the Editorial Board of Global Journals Incorporation (USA) after successful completion of three years as Fellow and as Peer Reviewer. In addition, it is also desirable that you should organize seminar/symposium/conference at least once.

We shall provide you intimation regarding launching of e-version of journal of your stream time to time.This may be utilized in your library for the enrichment of knowledge of your students as well as it can also be helpful for the concerned faculty members.

The FARSBA can go through standards of OARS. You can also play vital role if you have any suggestions so that proper amendment can take place to improve the same for the benefit of entire research community.

As FARSBA, you will be given a renowned, secure and free professional email address with 100 GB of space e.g. johnhall@globaljournals.org. This will include Webmail, Spam Assassin, Email Forwarders,Auto-Responders, Email Delivery Route tracing, etc.



The FARSBA will be eligible for a free application of standardization of their researches. Standardization of research will be subject to acceptability within stipulated norms as the next step after publishing in a journal. We shall depute a team of specialized research professionals who will render their services for elevating your researches to next higher level, which is worldwide open standardization.

The FARSBA member can apply for grading and certification of standards of their educational and Institutional Degrees to Open Association of Research, Society U.S.A. Once you are designated as FARSBA, you may send us a scanned copy of all of your credentials. OARS will verify, grade and certify them. This will be based on your academic records, quality of research papers published by you, and some more criteria. After certification of all your credentials by OARS, they will be published on your Fellow Profile link on website https://associationofresearch.org which will be helpful to upgrade the dignity.

The FARSBA members can avail the benefits of free research podcasting in Global Research Radio with their research documents. After publishing the work, (including published elsewhere worldwide with proper authorization) you can upload your research paper with your recorded voice or you can utilize chargeable services of our professional RJs to record your paper in their voice on request.

The FARSBA member also entitled to get the benefits of free research podcasting of their research documents through video clips. We can also streamline your conference videos and display your slides/ online slides and online research video clips at reasonable charges, on request.

The FARSBA is eligible to earn from sales proceeds of his/her researches/reference/review Books or literature, while publishing with Global Journals. The FARSBA can decide whether he/she would like to publish his/her research in a closed manner. In this case, whenever readers purchase that individual research paper for reading, maximum 60% of its profit earned as royalty by Global Journals, will be credited to his/her bank account. The entire entitled amount will be credited to his/her bank account exceeding limit of minimum fixed balance. There is no minimum time limit for collection. The FARSC member can decide its price and we can help in making the right decision.

The FARSBA member is eligible to join as a paid peer reviewer at Global Journals Incorporation (USA) and can get remuneration of 15% of author fees, taken from the author of a respective paper. After reviewing 5 or more papers you can request to transfer the amount to your bank account.

MEMBER OF ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH SOCIETY IN BUSINESS (MARSBA)

The ' MARSBA ' title is accorded to a selected professional after the approval of the Editor-in-Chief / Editorial Board Members/Dean.

The “MARSBA” is a dignified ornament which is accorded to a person’s name viz. Dr. John E. Hall, Ph.D., MARSBA or William Walldroff, M.S., MARSBA.

MARSB accrediting is an honor. It authenticates your research activities. After becoming MARSBA, you can add 'MARSBA' title with your name as you use this recognition as additional suffix to your status. This will definitely enhance and add more value and repute to your name. You may use it on your professional Counseling Materials such as CV, Resume, Visiting Card and Name Plate etc.

The following benefitscan be availed by you only for next three years from the date of certification.

MARSBA designated members are entitled to avail a 25% discount while publishing their research papers (of a single author) in Global Journals Inc., if the same is accepted by our Editorial Board and Peer Reviewers. If you are a main author or co-author of a group of authors, you will get discount of 10%.

As MARSBA, you will be given a renowned, secure and free professional email address with 30 GB of space e.g. johnhall@globaljournals.org. This will include Webmail, Spam Assassin, Email Forwarders,Auto-Responders, Email Delivery Route tracing, etc.

We shall provide you intimation regarding launching of e-version of journal of your stream time to time.This may be utilized in your library for the enrichment of knowledge of your students as well as it can also be helpful for the concerned faculty members.

The MARSBA member can apply for approval, grading and certification of standards of their educational and Institutional Degrees to Open Association of Research, Society U.S.A.

Once you are designated as MARSBA, you may send us a scanned copy of all of your credentials. OARS will verify, grade and certify them. This will be based on your academic records, quality of research papers published by you, and some more criteria.

It is mandatory to read all terms and conditions carefully.

Auxiliary Memberships

Institutional Fellow of Open Association of Research Society (USA)-OARS (USA)

Global Journals Incorporation (USA) is accredited by Open Association of Research Society, U.S.A (OARS) and in turn, affiliates research institutions as “Institutional Fellow of Open Association of Research Society” (IFOARS).

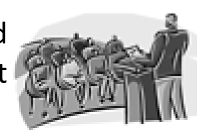
The “FARSC” is a dignified title which is accorded to a person’s name viz. Dr. John E. Hall, Ph.D., FARSC or William Walldroff, M.S., FARSC.

The IFOARS institution is entitled to form a Board comprised of one Chairperson and three to five board members preferably from different streams. The Board will be recognized as “Institutional Board of Open Association of Research Society”-(IBOARS).

The Institute will be entitled to following benefits:

The IBOARS can initially review research papers of their institute and recommend them to publish with respective journal of Global Journals. It can also review the papers of other institutions after obtaining our consent. The second review will be done by peer reviewer of Global Journals Incorporation (USA) The Board is at liberty to appoint a peer reviewer with the approval of chairperson after consulting us.

The author fees of such paper may be waived off up to 40%.



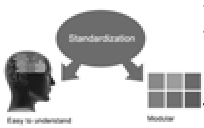
The Global Journals Incorporation (USA) at its discretion can also refer double blind peer reviewed paper at their end to the board for the verification and to get recommendation for final stage of acceptance of publication.

The IBOARS can organize symposium/seminar/conference in their country on behalf of Global Journals Incorporation (USA)-OARS (USA). The terms and conditions can be discussed separately.

The Board can also play vital role by exploring and giving valuable suggestions regarding the Standards of “Open Association of Research Society, U.S.A (OARS)” so that proper amendment can take place for the benefit of entire research community. We shall provide details of particular standard only on receipt of request from the Board.

The board members can also join us as Individual Fellow with 40% discount on total fees applicable to Individual Fellow. They will be entitled to avail all the benefits as declared. Please visit Individual Fellow-sub menu of GlobalJournals.org to have more relevant details.

We shall provide you intimation regarding launching of e-version of journal of your stream time to time. This may be utilized in your library for the enrichment of knowledge of your students as well as it can also be helpful for the concerned faculty members.



After nomination of your institution as "Institutional Fellow" and constantly functioning successfully for one year, we can consider giving recognition to your institute to function as Regional/Zonal office on our behalf.
The board can also take up the additional allied activities for betterment after our consultation.

The following entitlements are applicable to individual Fellows:

Open Association of Research Society, U.S.A (OARS) By-laws states that an individual Fellow may use the designations as applicable, or the corresponding initials. The Credentials of individual Fellow and Associate designations signify that the individual has gained knowledge of the fundamental concepts. One is magnanimous and proficient in an expertise course covering the professional code of conduct, and follows recognized standards of practice.

Open Association of Research Society (US)/ Global Journals Incorporation (USA), as described in Corporate Statements, are educational, research publishing and professional membership organizations. Achieving our individual Fellow or Associate status is based mainly on meeting stated educational research requirements.

Disbursement of 40% Royalty earned through Global Journals : Researcher = 50%, Peer Reviewer = 37.50%, Institution = 12.50% E.g. Out of 40%, the 20% benefit should be passed on to researcher, 15 % benefit towards remuneration should be given to a reviewer and remaining 5% is to be retained by the institution.

We shall provide print version of 12 issues of any three journals [as per your requirement] out of our 38 journals worth $ 2376 USD.

Other:

The individual Fellow and Associate designations accredited by Open Association of Research Society (US) credentials signify guarantees following achievements:

- The professional accredited with Fellow honor, is entitled to various benefits viz. name, fame, honor, regular flow of income, secured bright future, social status etc.

- In addition to above, if one is single author, then entitled to 40% discount on publishing research paper and can get 10%discount if one is co-author or main author among group of authors.
- The Fellow can organize symposium/seminar/conference on behalf of Global Journals Incorporation (USA) and he/she can also attend the same organized by other institutes on behalf of Global Journals.
- The Fellow can become member of Editorial Board Member after completing 3yrs.
- The Fellow can earn 60% of sales proceeds from the sale of reference/review books/literature/publishing of research paper.
- Fellow can also join as paid peer reviewer and earn 15% remuneration of author charges and can also get an opportunity to join as member of the Editorial Board of Global Journals Incorporation (USA)
- • This individual has learned the basic methods of applying those concepts and techniques to common challenging situations. This individual has further demonstrated an in–depth understanding of the application of suitable techniques to a particular area of research practice.

Note :

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- In future, if the board feels the necessity to change any board member, the same can be done with the consent of the chairperson along with anyone board member without our approval.
- In case, the chairperson needs to be replaced then consent of 2/3rd board members are required and they are also required to jointly pass the resolution copy of which should be sent to us. In such case, it will be compulsory to obtain our approval before replacement.
- In case of "Difference of Opinion [if any]" among the Board members, our decision will be final and binding to everyone. "

Preferred Author Guidelines

We accept the manuscript submissions in any standard (generic) format.

We typeset manuscripts using advanced typesetting tools like Adobe In Design, CorelDraw, TeXnicCenter, and TeXStudio. We usually recommend authors submit their research using any standard format they are comfortable with, and let Global Journals do the rest.

Alternatively, you can download our basic template from https://globaljournals.org/Template.zip

Authors should submit their complete paper/article, including text illustrations, graphics, conclusions, artwork, and tables. Authors who are not able to submit manuscript using the form above can email the manuscript department at submit@globaljournals.org or get in touch with chiefeditor@globaljournals.org if they wish to send the abstract before submission.

Before and during Submission

Authors must ensure the information provided during the submission of a paper is authentic. Please go through the following checklist before submitting:

1. Authors must go through the complete author guideline and understand and *agree to Global Journals' ethics and code of conduct,* along with author responsibilities.
2. Authors must accept the privacy policy, terms, and conditions of Global Journals.
3. Ensure corresponding author's email address and postal address are accurate and reachable.
4. Manuscript to be submitted must include keywords, an abstract, a paper title, co-author(s') names and details (email address, name, phone number, and institution), figures and illustrations in vector format including appropriate captions, tables, including titles and footnotes, a conclusion, results, acknowledgments and references.
5. Authors should submit paper in a ZIP archive if any supplementary files are required along with the paper.
6. Proper permissions must be acquired for the use of any copyrighted material.
7. Manuscript submitted *must not have been submitted or published elsewhere* and all authors must be aware of the submission.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

It is required for authors to declare all financial, institutional, and personal relationships with other individuals and organizations that could influence (bias) their research.

Policy on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not acceptable in Global Journals submissions at all.

Plagiarized content will not be considered for publication. We reserve the right to inform authors' institutions about plagiarism detected either before or after publication. If plagiarism is identified, we will follow COPE guidelines:

Authors are solely responsible for all the plagiarism that is found. The author must not fabricate, falsify or plagiarize existing research data. The following, if copied, will be considered plagiarism:

- Words (language)
- Ideas
- Findings
- Writings
- Diagrams
- Graphs
- Illustrations
- Lectures

- Printed material
- Graphic representations
- Computer programs
- Electronic material
- Any other original work

Authorship Policies

Global Journals follows the definition of authorship set up by the Open Association of Research Society, USA. According to its guidelines, authorship criteria must be based on:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception and acquisition of data, analysis, and interpretation of findings.
2. Drafting the paper and revising it critically regarding important academic content.
3. Final approval of the version of the paper to be published.

Changes in Authorship

The corresponding author should mention the name and complete details of all co-authors during submission and in manuscript. We support addition, rearrangement, manipulation, and deletions in authors list till the early view publication of the journal. We expect that corresponding author will notify all co-authors of submission. We follow COPE guidelines for changes in authorship.

Copyright

During submission of the manuscript, the author is confirming an exclusive license agreement with Global Journals which gives Global Journals the authority to reproduce, reuse, and republish authors' research. We also believe in flexible copyright terms where copyright may remain with authors/employers/institutions as well. Contact your editor after acceptance to choose your copyright policy. You may follow this form for copyright transfers.

Appealing Decisions

Unless specified in the notification, the Editorial Board's decision on publication of the paper is final and cannot be appealed before making the major change in the manuscript.

Acknowledgments

Contributors to the research other than authors credited should be mentioned in Acknowledgments. The source of funding for the research can be included. Suppliers of resources may be mentioned along with their addresses.

Declaration of funding sources

Global Journals is in partnership with various universities, laboratories, and other institutions worldwide in the research domain. Authors are requested to disclose their source of funding during every stage of their research, such as making analysis, performing laboratory operations, computing data, and using institutional resources, from writing an article to its submission. This will also help authors to get reimbursements by requesting an open access publication letter from Global Journals and submitting to the respective funding source.

Preparing your Manuscript

Authors can submit papers and articles in an acceptable file format: MS Word (doc, docx), LaTeX (.tex, .zip or .rar including all of your files), Adobe PDF (.pdf), rich text format (.rtf), simple text document (.txt), Open Document Text (.odt), and Apple Pages (.pages). Our professional layout editors will format the entire paper according to our official guidelines. This is one of the highlights of publishing with Global Journals—authors should not be concerned about the formatting of their paper. Global Journals accepts articles and manuscripts in every major language, be it Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Greek, or any other national language, but the title, subtitle, and abstract should be in English. This will facilitate indexing and the pre-peer review process.

The following is the official style and template developed for publication of a research paper. Authors are not required to follow this style during the submission of the paper. It is just for reference purposes.

Manuscript Style Instruction (Optional)

- Microsoft Word Document Setting Instructions.
- Font type of all text should be Swis721 Lt BT.
- Page size: 8.27" x 11'", left margin: 0.65, right margin: 0.65, bottom margin: 0.75.
- Paper title should be in one column of font size 24.
- Author name in font size of 11 in one column.
- Abstract: font size 9 with the word "Abstract" in bold italics.
- Main text: font size 10 with two justified columns.
- Two columns with equal column width of 3.38 and spacing of 0.2.
- First character must be three lines drop-capped.
- The paragraph before spacing of 1 pt and after of 0 pt.
- Line spacing of 1 pt.
- Large images must be in one column.
- The names of first main headings (Heading 1) must be in Roman font, capital letters, and font size of 10.
- The names of second main headings (Heading 2) must not include numbers and must be in italics with a font size of 10.

Structure and Format of Manuscript

The recommended size of an original research paper is under 15,000 words and review papers under 7,000 words. Research articles should be less than 10,000 words. Research papers are usually longer than review papers. Review papers are reports of significant research (typically less than 7,000 words, including tables, figures, and references)

A research paper must include:

a) A title which should be relevant to the theme of the paper.
b) A summary, known as an abstract (less than 150 words), containing the major results and conclusions.
c) Up to 10 keywords that precisely identify the paper's subject, purpose, and focus.
d) An introduction, giving fundamental background objectives.
e) Resources and techniques with sufficient complete experimental details (wherever possible by reference) to permit repetition, sources of information must be given, and numerical methods must be specified by reference.
f) Results which should be presented concisely by well-designed tables and figures.
g) Suitable statistical data should also be given.
h) All data must have been gathered with attention to numerical detail in the planning stage.

Design has been recognized to be essential to experiments for a considerable time, and the editor has decided that any paper that appears not to have adequate numerical treatments of the data will be returned unrefereed.

i) Discussion should cover implications and consequences and not just recapitulate the results; conclusions should also be summarized.
j) There should be brief acknowledgments.
k) There ought to be references in the conventional format. Global Journals recommends APA format.

Authors should carefully consider the preparation of papers to ensure that they communicate effectively. Papers are much more likely to be accepted if they are carefully designed and laid out, contain few or no errors, are summarizing, and follow instructions. They will also be published with much fewer delays than those that require much technical and editorial correction.

The Editorial Board reserves the right to make literary corrections and suggestions to improve brevity.

Format Structure

It is necessary that authors take care in submitting a manuscript that is written in simple language and adheres to published guidelines.

All manuscripts submitted to Global Journals should include:

Title

The title page must carry an informative title that reflects the content, a running title (less than 45 characters together with spaces), names of the authors and co-authors, and the place(s) where the work was carried out.

Author details

The full postal address of any related author(s) must be specified.

Abstract

The abstract is the foundation of the research paper. It should be clear and concise and must contain the objective of the paper and inferences drawn. It is advised to not include big mathematical equations or complicated jargon.

Many researchers searching for information online will use search engines such as Google, Yahoo or others. By optimizing your paper for search engines, you will amplify the chance of someone finding it. In turn, this will make it more likely to be viewed and cited in further works. Global Journals has compiled these guidelines to facilitate you to maximize the web-friendliness of the most public part of your paper.

Keywords

A major lynchpin of research work for the writing of research papers is the keyword search, which one will employ to find both library and internet resources. Up to eleven keywords or very brief phrases have to be given to help data retrieval, mining, and indexing.

One must be persistent and creative in using keywords. An effective keyword search requires a strategy: planning of a list of possible keywords and phrases to try.

Choice of the main keywords is the first tool of writing a research paper. Research paper writing is an art. Keyword search should be as strategic as possible.

One should start brainstorming lists of potential keywords before even beginning searching. Think about the most important concepts related to research work. Ask, "What words would a source have to include to be truly valuable in a research paper?" Then consider synonyms for the important words.

It may take the discovery of only one important paper to steer in the right keyword direction because, in most databases, the keywords under which a research paper is abstracted are listed with the paper.

Numerical Methods

Numerical methods used should be transparent and, where appropriate, supported by references.

Abbreviations

Authors must list all the abbreviations used in the paper at the end of the paper or in a separate table before using them.

Formulas and equations

Authors are advised to submit any mathematical equation using either MathJax, KaTeX, or LaTeX, or in a very high-quality image.

Tables, Figures, and Figure Legends

Tables: Tables should be cautiously designed, uncrowned, and include only essential data. Each must have an Arabic number, e.g., Table 4, a self-explanatory caption, and be on a separate sheet. Authors must submit tables in an editable format and not as images. References to these tables (if any) must be mentioned accurately.

Figures

Figures are supposed to be submitted as separate files. Always include a citation in the text for each figure using Arabic numbers, e.g., Fig. 4. Artwork must be submitted online in vector electronic form or by emailing it.

Preparation of Eletronic Figures for Publication

Although low-quality images are sufficient for review purposes, print publication requires high-quality images to prevent the final product being blurred or fuzzy. Submit (possibly by e-mail) EPS (line art) or TIFF (halftone/ photographs) files only. MS PowerPoint and Word Graphics are unsuitable for printed pictures. Avoid using pixel-oriented software. Scans (TIFF only) should have a resolution of at least 350 dpi (halftone) or 700 to 1100 dpi (line drawings). Please give the data for figures in black and white or submit a Color Work Agreement form. EPS files must be saved with fonts embedded (and with a TIFF preview, if possible).

For scanned images, the scanning resolution at final image size ought to be as follows to ensure good reproduction: line art: >650 dpi; halftones (including gel photographs): >350 dpi; figures containing both halftone and line images: >650 dpi.

Color charges: Authors are advised to pay the full cost for the reproduction of their color artwork. Hence, please note that if there is color artwork in your manuscript when it is accepted for publication, we would require you to complete and return a Color Work Agreement form before your paper can be published. Also, you can email your editor to remove the color fee after acceptance of the paper.

Tips for writing a good quality Management Research Paper

Techniques for writing a good quality management and business research paper:

1. Choosing the topic: In most cases, the topic is selected by the interests of the author, but it can also be suggested by the guides. You can have several topics, and then judge which you are most comfortable with. This may be done by asking several questions of yourself, like "Will I be able to carry out a search in this area? Will I find all necessary resources to accomplish the search? Will I be able to find all information in this field area?" If the answer to this type of question is "yes," then you ought to choose that topic. In most cases, you may have to conduct surveys and visit several places. Also, you might have to do a lot of work to find all the rises and falls of the various data on that subject. Sometimes, detailed information plays a vital role, instead of short information. Evaluators are human: The first thing to remember is that evaluators are also human beings. They are not only meant for rejecting a paper. They are here to evaluate your paper. So present your best aspect.

2. Think like evaluators: If you are in confusion or getting demotivated because your paper may not be accepted by the evaluators, then think, and try to evaluate your paper like an evaluator. Try to understand what an evaluator wants in your research paper, and you will automatically have your answer. Make blueprints of paper: The outline is the plan or framework that will help you to arrange your thoughts. It will make your paper logical. But remember that all points of your outline must be related to the topic you have chosen.

3. Ask your guides: If you are having any difficulty with your research, then do not hesitate to share your difficulty with your guide (if you have one). They will surely help you out and resolve your doubts. If you can't clarify what exactly you require for your work, then ask your supervisor to help you with an alternative. He or she might also provide you with a list of essential readings.

4. Use of computer is recommended: As you are doing research in the field of management and business then this point is quite obvious. Use right software: Always use good quality software packages. If you are not capable of judging good software, then you can lose the quality of your paper unknowingly. There are various programs available to help you which you can get through the internet.

5. Use the internet for help: An excellent start for your paper is using Google. It is a wondrous search engine, where you can have your doubts resolved. You may also read some answers for the frequent question of how to write your research paper or find a model research paper. You can download books from the internet. If you have all the required books, place importance on reading, selecting, and analyzing the specified information. Then sketch out your research paper. Use big pictures: You may use encyclopedias like Wikipedia to get pictures with the best resolution. At Global Journals, you should strictly follow here.

6. Bookmarks are useful: When you read any book or magazine, you generally use bookmarks, right? It is a good habit which helps to not lose your continuity. You should always use bookmarks while searching on the internet also, which will make your search easier.

7. Revise what you wrote: When you write anything, always read it, summarize it, and then finalize it.

8. Make every effort: Make every effort to mention what you are going to write in your paper. That means always have a good start. Try to mention everything in the introduction—what is the need for a particular research paper. Polish your work with good writing skills and always give an evaluator what he wants. Make backups: When you are going to do any important thing like making a research paper, you should always have backup copies of it either on your computer or on paper. This protects you from losing any portion of your important data.

9. Produce good diagrams of your own: Always try to include good charts or diagrams in your paper to improve quality. Using several unnecessary diagrams will degrade the quality of your paper by creating a hodgepodge. So always try to include diagrams which were made by you to improve the readability of your paper. Use of direct quotes: When you do research relevant to literature, history, or current affairs, then use of quotes becomes essential, but if the study is relevant to science, use of quotes is not preferable.

10. Use proper verb tense: Use proper verb tenses in your paper. Use past tense to present those events that have happened. Use present tense to indicate events that are going on. Use future tense to indicate events that will happen in the future. Use of wrong tenses will confuse the evaluator. Avoid sentences that are incomplete.

11. Pick a good study spot: Always try to pick a spot for your research which is quiet. Not every spot is good for studying.

12. Know what you know: Always try to know what you know by making objectives, otherwise you will be confused and unable to achieve your target.

13. Use good grammar: Always use good grammar and words that will have a positive impact on the evaluator; use of good vocabulary does not mean using tough words which the evaluator has to find in a dictionary. Do not fragment sentences. Eliminate one-word sentences. Do not ever use a big word when a smaller one would suffice.
Verbs have to be in agreement with their subjects. In a research paper, do not start sentences with conjunctions or finish them with prepositions. When writing formally, it is advisable to never split an infinitive because someone will (wrongly) complain. Avoid clichés like a disease. Always shun irritating alliteration. Use language which is simple and straightforward. Put together a neat summary.

14. Arrangement of information: Each section of the main body should start with an opening sentence, and there should be a changeover at the end of the section. Give only valid and powerful arguments for your topic. You may also maintain your arguments with records.

15. Never start at the last minute: Always allow enough time for research work. Leaving everything to the last minute will degrade your paper and spoil your work.

16. Multitasking in research is not good: Doing several things at the same time is a bad habit in the case of research activity. Research is an area where everything has a particular time slot. Divide your research work into parts, and do a particular part in a particular time slot.

17. Never copy others' work: Never copy others' work and give it your name because if the evaluator has seen it anywhere, you will be in trouble. Take proper rest and food: No matter how many hours you spend on your research activity, if you are not taking care of your health, then all your efforts will have been in vain. For quality research, take proper rest and food.

18. Go to seminars: Attend seminars if the topic is relevant to your research area. Utilize all your resources.

19. Refresh your mind after intervals: Try to give your mind a rest by listening to soft music or sleeping in intervals. This will also improve your memory. Acquire colleagues: Always try to acquire colleagues. No matter how sharp you are, if you acquire colleagues, they can give you ideas which will be helpful to your research.

20. Think technically: Always think technically. If anything happens, search for its reasons, benefits, and demerits. Think and then print: When you go to print your paper, check that tables are not split, headings are not detached from their descriptions, and page sequence is maintained.

21. Adding unnecessary information: Do not add unnecessary information like "I have used MS Excel to draw graphs." Irrelevant and inappropriate material is superfluous. Foreign terminology and phrases are not apropos. One should never take a broad view. Analogy is like feathers on a snake. Use words properly, regardless of how others use them. Remove quotations. Puns are for kids, not grunt readers. Never oversimplify: When adding material to your research paper, never go for oversimplification; this will definitely irritate the evaluator. Be specific. Never use rhythmic redundancies. Contractions shouldn't be used in a research paper. Comparisons are as terrible as clichés. Give up ampersands, abbreviations, and so on. Remove commas that are not necessary. Parenthetical words should be between brackets or commas. Understatement is always the best way to put forward earth-shaking thoughts. Give a detailed literary review.

22. Report concluded results: Use concluded results. From raw data, filter the results, and then conclude your studies based on measurements and observations taken. An appropriate number of decimal places should be used. Parenthetical remarks are prohibited here. Proofread carefully at the final stage. At the end, give an outline to your arguments. Spot perspectives of further study of the subject. Justify your conclusion at the bottom sufficiently, which will probably include examples.

23. Upon conclusion: Once you have concluded your research, the next most important step is to present your findings. Presentation is extremely important as it is the definite medium though which your research is going to be in print for the rest of the crowd. Care should be taken to categorize your thoughts well and present them in a logical and neat manner. A good quality research paper format is essential because it serves to highlight your research paper and bring to light all necessary aspects of your research.

Informal Guidelines of Research Paper Writing

Key points to remember:

- Submit all work in its final form.
- Write your paper in the form which is presented in the guidelines using the template.
- Please note the criteria peer reviewers will use for grading the final paper.

Final points:

One purpose of organizing a research paper is to let people interpret your efforts selectively. The journal requires the following sections, submitted in the order listed, with each section starting on a new page:

The introduction: This will be compiled from reference matter and reflect the design processes or outline of basis that directed you to make a study. As you carry out the process of study, the method and process section will be constructed like that. The results segment will show related statistics in nearly sequential order and direct reviewers to similar intellectual paths throughout the data that you gathered to carry out your study.

The discussion section:

This will provide understanding of the data and projections as to the implications of the results. The use of good quality references throughout the paper will give the effort trustworthiness by representing an alertness to prior workings.

Writing a research paper is not an easy job, no matter how trouble-free the actual research or concept. Practice, excellent preparation, and controlled record-keeping are the only means to make straightforward progression.

General style:

Specific editorial column necessities for compliance of a manuscript will always take over from directions in these general guidelines.

To make a paper clear: Adhere to recommended page limits.

Mistakes to avoid:

- Insertion of a title at the foot of a page with subsequent text on the next page.
- Separating a table, chart, or figure—confine each to a single page.
- Submitting a manuscript with pages out of sequence.
- In every section of your document, use standard writing style, including articles ("a" and "the").
- Keep paying attention to the topic of the paper.

- Use paragraphs to split each significant point (excluding the abstract).
- Align the primary line of each section.
- Present your points in sound order.
- Use present tense to report well-accepted matters.
- Use past tense to describe specific results.
- Do not use familiar wording; don't address the reviewer directly. Don't use slang or superlatives.
- Avoid use of extra pictures—include only those figures essential to presenting results.

Title page:

Choose a revealing title. It should be short and include the name(s) and address(es) of all authors. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations or exceed two printed lines.

Abstract: This summary should be two hundred words or less. It should clearly and briefly explain the key findings reported in the manuscript and must have precise statistics. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations. It should be logical in itself. Do not cite references at this point.

An abstract is a brief, distinct paragraph summary of finished work or work in development. In a minute or less, a reviewer can be taught the foundation behind the study, common approaches to the problem, relevant results, and significant conclusions or new questions.

Write your summary when your paper is completed because how can you write the summary of anything which is not yet written? Wealth of terminology is very essential in abstract. Use comprehensive sentences, and do not sacrifice readability for brevity; you can maintain it succinctly by phrasing sentences so that they provide more than a lone rationale. The author can at this moment go straight to shortening the outcome. Sum up the study with the subsequent elements in any summary. Try to limit the initial two items to no more than one line each.

Reason for writing the article—theory, overall issue, purpose.

- Fundamental goal.
- To-the-point depiction of the research.
- Consequences, including definite statistics—if the consequences are quantitative in nature, account for this; results of any numerical analysis should be reported. Significant conclusions or questions that emerge from the research.

Approach:

- o Single section and succinct.
- o An outline of the job done is always written in past tense.
- o Concentrate on shortening results—limit background information to a verdict or two.
- o Exact spelling, clarity of sentences and phrases, and appropriate reporting of quantities (proper units, important statistics) are just as significant in an abstract as they are anywhere else.

Introduction:

The introduction should "introduce" the manuscript. The reviewer should be presented with sufficient background information to be capable of comprehending and calculating the purpose of your study without having to refer to other works. The basis for the study should be offered. Give the most important references, but avoid making a comprehensive appraisal of the topic. Describe the problem visibly. If the problem is not acknowledged in a logical, reasonable way, the reviewer will give no attention to your results. Speak in common terms about techniques used to explain the problem, if needed, but do not present any particulars about the protocols here.

The following approach can create a valuable beginning:

- o Explain the value (significance) of the study.
- o Defend the model—why did you employ this particular system or method? What is its compensation? Remark upon its appropriateness from an abstract point of view as well as pointing out sensible reasons for using it.
- o Present a justification. State your particular theory(-ies) or aim(s), and describe the logic that led you to choose them.
- o Briefly explain the study's tentative purpose and how it meets the declared objectives.

Approach:

Use past tense except for when referring to recognized facts. After all, the manuscript will be submitted after the entire job is done. Sort out your thoughts; manufacture one key point for every section. If you make the four points listed above, you will need at least four paragraphs. Present surrounding information only when it is necessary to support a situation. The reviewer does not desire to read everything you know about a topic. Shape the theory specifically—do not take a broad view.

As always, give awareness to spelling, simplicity, and correctness of sentences and phrases.

Procedures (methods and materials):

This part is supposed to be the easiest to carve if you have good skills. A soundly written procedures segment allows a capable scientist to replicate your results. Present precise information about your supplies. The suppliers and clarity of reagents can be helpful bits of information. Present methods in sequential order, but linked methodologies can be grouped as a segment. Be concise when relating the protocols. Attempt to give the least amount of information that would permit another capable scientist to replicate your outcome, but be cautious that vital information is integrated. The use of subheadings is suggested and ought to be synchronized with the results section.

When a technique is used that has been well-described in another section, mention the specific item describing the way, but draw the basic principle while stating the situation. The purpose is to show all particular resources and broad procedures so that another person may use some or all of the methods in one more study or referee the scientific value of your work. It is not to be a step-by-step report of the whole thing you did, nor is a methods section a set of orders.

Materials:

Materials may be reported in part of a section or else they may be recognized along with your measures.

Methods:

- Report the method and not the particulars of each process that engaged the same methodology.
- Describe the method entirely.
- To be succinct, present methods under headings dedicated to specific dealings or groups of measures.
- Simplify—detail how procedures were completed, not how they were performed on a particular day.
- If well-known procedures were used, account for the procedure by name, possibly with a reference, and that's all.

Approach:

It is embarrassing to use vigorous voice when documenting methods without using first person, which would focus the reviewer's interest on the researcher rather than the job. As a result, when writing up the methods, most authors use third person passive voice.

Use standard style in this and every other part of the paper—avoid familiar lists, and use full sentences.

What to keep away from:

- Resources and methods are not a set of information.
- Skip all descriptive information and surroundings—save it for the argument.
- Leave out information that is immaterial to a third party.

Results:

The principle of a results segment is to present and demonstrate your conclusion. Create this part as entirely objective details of the outcome, and save all understanding for the discussion.

The page length of this segment is set by the sum and types of data to be reported. Use statistics and tables, if suitable, to present consequences most efficiently.

You must clearly differentiate material which would usually be incorporated in a study editorial from any unprocessed data or additional appendix matter that would not be available. In fact, such matters should not be submitted at all except if requested by the instructor.

Content:

- Sum up your conclusions in text and demonstrate them, if suitable, with figures and tables.
- In the manuscript, explain each of your consequences, and point the reader to remarks that are most appropriate.
- Present a background, such as by describing the question that was addressed by creation of an exacting study.
- Explain results of control experiments and give remarks that are not accessible in a prescribed figure or table, if appropriate.
- Examine your data, then prepare the analyzed (transformed) data in the form of a figure (graph), table, or manuscript.

What to stay away from:

- Do not discuss or infer your outcome, report surrounding information, or try to explain anything.
- Do not include raw data or intermediate calculations in a research manuscript.
- Do not present similar data more than once.
- A manuscript should complement any figures or tables, not duplicate information.
- Never confuse figures with tables—there is a difference.

Approach:

As always, use past tense when you submit your results, and put the whole thing in a reasonable order.

Put figures and tables, appropriately numbered, in order at the end of the report.

If you desire, you may place your figures and tables properly within the text of your results section.

Figures and tables:

If you put figures and tables at the end of some details, make certain that they are visibly distinguished from any attached appendix materials, such as raw facts. Whatever the position, each table must be titled, numbered one after the other, and include a heading. All figures and tables must be divided from the text.

Discussion:

The discussion is expected to be the trickiest segment to write. A lot of papers submitted to the journal are discarded based on problems with the discussion. There is no rule for how long an argument should be.

Position your understanding of the outcome visibly to lead the reviewer through your conclusions, and then finish the paper with a summing up of the implications of the study. The purpose here is to offer an understanding of your results and support all of your conclusions, using facts from your research and generally accepted information, if suitable. The implication of results should be fully described.

Infer your data in the conversation in suitable depth. This means that when you clarify an observable fact, you must explain mechanisms that may account for the observation. If your results vary from your prospect, make clear why that may have happened. If your results agree, then explain the theory that the proof supported. It is never suitable to just state that the data approved the prospect, and let it drop at that. Make a decision as to whether each premise is supported or discarded or if you cannot make a conclusion with assurance. Do not just dismiss a study or part of a study as "uncertain."

Research papers are not acknowledged if the work is imperfect. Draw what conclusions you can based upon the results that you have, and take care of the study as a finished work.

- You may propose future guidelines, such as how an experiment might be personalized to accomplish a new idea.
- Give details of all of your remarks as much as possible, focusing on mechanisms.
- Make a decision as to whether the tentative design sufficiently addressed the theory and whether or not it was correctly restricted. Try to present substitute explanations if they are sensible alternatives.
- One piece of research will not counter an overall question, so maintain the large picture in mind. Where do you go next? The best studies unlock new avenues of study. What questions remain?
- Recommendations for detailed papers will offer supplementary suggestions.

Approach:

When you refer to information, differentiate data generated by your own studies from other available information. Present work done by specific persons (including you) in past tense.

Describe generally acknowledged facts and main beliefs in present tense.

The Administration Rules

Administration Rules to Be Strictly Followed before Submitting Your Research Paper to Global Journals Inc.

Please read the following rules and regulations carefully before submitting your research paper to Global Journals Inc. to avoid rejection.

Segment draft and final research paper: You have to strictly follow the template of a research paper, failing which your paper may get rejected. You are expected to write each part of the paper wholly on your own. The peer reviewers need to identify your own perspective of the concepts in your own terms. Please do not extract straight from any other source, and do not rephrase someone else's analysis. Do not allow anyone else to proofread your manuscript.

Written material: You may discuss this with your guides and key sources. Do not copy anyone else's paper, even if this is only imitation, otherwise it will be rejected on the grounds of plagiarism, which is illegal. Various methods to avoid plagiarism are strictly applied by us to every paper, and, if found guilty, you may be blacklisted, which could affect your career adversely. To guard yourself and others from possible illegal use, please do not permit anyone to use or even read your paper and file.

Criterion for Grading a Research Paper (Compilation) by Global Journals

Please note that following table is only a Grading of "Paper Compilation" and not on "Performed/Stated Research" whose grading solely depends on Individual Assigned Peer Reviewer and Editorial Board Member. These can be available only on request and after decision of Paper. This report will be the property of Global Journals.

Topics	Grades		
	A-B	**C-D**	**E-F**
Abstract	Clear and concise with appropriate content, Correct format. 200 words or below	Unclear summary and no specific data, Incorrect form Above 200 words	No specific data with ambiguous information Above 250 words
Introduction	Containing all background details with clear goal and appropriate details, flow specification, no grammar and spelling mistake, well organized sentence and paragraph, reference cited	Unclear and confusing data, appropriate format, grammar and spelling errors with unorganized matter	Out of place depth and content, hazy format
Methods and Procedures	Clear and to the point with well arranged paragraph, precision and accuracy of facts and figures, well organized subheads	Difficult to comprehend with embarrassed text, too much explanation but completed	Incorrect and unorganized structure with hazy meaning
Result	Well organized, Clear and specific, Correct units with precision, correct data, well structuring of paragraph, no grammar and spelling mistake	Complete and embarrassed text, difficult to comprehend	Irregular format with wrong facts and figures
Discussion	Well organized, meaningful specification, sound conclusion, logical and concise explanation, highly structured paragraph reference cited	Wordy, unclear conclusion, spurious	Conclusion is not cited, unorganized, difficult to comprehend
References	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring

INDEX

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