International Journal of
Strategic Research in Education, Technology and Humanities
p-ISSN: 2465-731X | e-ISSN: 2467-818X

IJSRETH

April, 2025

Vol. 13, No. 1

Strategic Quality Management Practices and Customers' Patronage of Selected Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) Manufacturing Companies in Lagos State, Nigeria

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Article DOI:
10.48028/iiprds/ijsreth.v13.i1.17

Keywords:
Continuous improvement, Customer focus, Customers' patronage, Strategic quality management practices

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Abstract

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies are crucial to economies, supplying daily necessities such as food, drinks, and personal care items, while also generating jobs and boosting GDP, especially in places like Nigeria. To strengthen customer patronage, these companies have adopted approaches like improvement initiatives in quality, service and driving customers patronage in a crowded market. Yet, these strategies have not always succeeded, as seen in dropping patronage rates, possibly due to weak strategic quality management that fails to maintain consistent product standards and customer satisfaction. This highlights the importance of exploring how strategic quality management practices affect customers' patronage in selected FMCG firms in Lagos State, Nigeria, to understand how robust quality management can customers' patronage and business outcomes in a fast-changing market. The study employed a survey approach, focusing on a population of 10,375 managers from selected FMCG manufacturing firms in Lagos State, Nigeria. Using the Research Advisor's sampling table, a sample size of 419 was determined. The samples were allocated proportionally across the selected FMCG companies, and participants were chosen via simple random sampling. A structured, validated questionnaire was used to gather data, with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the constructs ranging between 0.72 and 0.91. The response rate achieved was 94.5%. Data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The findings revealed that strategic quality management practices had a positive significant effect on customers' patronage ($Adj.R^2 = 0.156$, $F(5, 390) = 16.510$, $p < 0.05$) of selected FMCG manufacturing companies in Lagos State. Nigeria. The study concluded that strategic quality management practices significantly influence customers' patronage among selected Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) manufacturing companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. This finding underscores the importance of implementing robust quality management strategies to enhance customer trust and retention in a highly competitive market. Based on these findings, it is recommended that FMCG companies in Lagos State prioritize the adoption and continuous improvement of strategic quality management practices to improve customers' patronage.

Background to the Study

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies play a vital role in economies by providing essential, everyday products like food, beverages, and toiletries, driving significant employment and contributing to GDP, particularly in markets like Nigeria. To enhance customer patronage, these firms have employed strategies such as continuous improvement initiatives, market orientation, and innovative product developments, aiming to build trust and retain customers in a highly competitive landscape. However, these efforts have not always yielded the desired results, as evidenced by declining customers' patronage, which may stem from poor strategic quality management practices that fail to ensure consistent product quality and customer satisfaction. This underscores the need to examine the relationship between strategic quality management practices and customers' patronage in selected FMCG manufacturing companies in Lagos State, Nigeria, to identify how effective quality management can bolster patronage and overall performance in a dynamic market environment.

In Europe, the European FMCG grew by 4.2% in the third quarter 2022 and decline by 1.4% in the forth quarter 2022 showing that European FMCG is affected by market fluctuations. FMCG firms in United Kingdom have encountered a series of complex challenges that have profoundly affected critical business outcomes, including customer patronage, competitive advantage and firm innovativeness (Gungor et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted significant vulnerabilities within global supply chains, resulting in widespread disruptions and escalating costs (De Monts-Petit, 2021). Compounding these issues, rising protectionism and geopolitical instability further exacerbated supply chain challenges, making it increasingly difficult for firms to ensure consistent product availability (European Union, 2019). The growing emphasis on sustainability and ethical business practices has introduced additional pressures, as firms struggle to navigate the tension between fulfilling environmental responsibilities and maintaining profitability (Zoed, 2022). Currently, rapid technological advancements and the emergence of new market entrants have forced traditional FMCG firms to innovate at an accelerated pace to remain competitive (Raj et al., 2022; Shinall et al., 2024). These dynamics have collectively weakened customer patronage, as consumers increasingly gravitate towards brands that align with their values and provide innovative offerings (Butt, 2021; Edmonds-Camara et al., 2023). Consequently, these challenges have eroded competitive advantage, profitability and economic challenges arising from economic uncertainty, inflation and currency fluctuations within the sector (Kroll, 2019). Overall, the European FMCG manufacturing companies has experienced growth in value sales, but declines in unit sales, primarily as a result of inflation which directly and indirectly has side effect on profitability and customer patronage.

In Scotland, FMCG is driven by the country's reputation for quality but the uncertainty surrounding some FMCG companies in terms of trade agreements, supply chain management, economic uncertainty, inflation and currency fluctuations has posed a complex array of challenges that have substantially affected critical business outcomes in the country, such as brand loyalty and customer patronage (Koncar et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in supply chains, resulting in fluctuating demand and heightened operational expenses, thereby exerting considerable pressure on FMCG firms (Qodenext, 2023). However, the increasing environmental concerns and stringent regulatory requirements for sustainable practices further constrained resources, exacerbating operational challenges (European Union, 2019; Morkunas & Grismanauskaite, 2023). These interrelated factors contributed to a decline in customer patronage, as consumers became more price-sensitive and exhibited reduced their purchasing decisions (MSC, 2023; Shakur et al., 2024). Furthermore, the intense competitive dynamics within the sector, coupled with the imperative for continuous innovation to remain relevant in a rapidly changing market, created substantial barriers for firms attempting to preserve profitability and competitive advantage (Bedford, 2024; Niros et al., 2022). Consequently, this underscores the necessity for strategic agility and organisational resilience as essential components for successfully navigating these ongoing industry challenges.

In India, the fast-moving consumer goods is expected to continue growing hence driven by factors driven by rising disposable income, and innovation distribution channels, though the challenges such as rising inflation, new packaging regulations, higher fuel cost affecting profitability and logistics management have affected the growth of manufacturing companies (Nkeiruka et al., 2024) However, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) firms has been encountering a significant challenges that have adversely affected key business outcomes such as customer patronage and profitability (Biswas et al., 2022). The rapid evolution of consumer preferences, coupled with the proliferation of digital channels, has compelled traditional FMCG firms to push for innovation at an accelerated pace (Nafde, 2024). This swift adaptation has often resulted in elevated costs and inefficiencies at profitability (Kelly et al., 2019). Additionally, the widespread issue of counterfeit goods has further eroded consumer trust, as customers face difficulties distinguishing between authentic and counterfeit products (PWC, 2021). According to Price (2024), the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these challenges by disrupting supply chains, leading to delays and shortages that frustrated consumers and weakened customer patronage. The intense competition from both local and international players has further pressured firms to continually invest in advanced technologies and marketing strategies, thereby straining their profitability (Karthik & Prasad, 2020; Lacy et al., 2020). Moreover, the growing emphasis on sustainability and regulatory compliance has introduced additional complexities, necessitating substantial investments that do not yield immediate financial returns (Anupama et al., 2022; Minhas, 2024). Collectively, these challenges impede the ability of FMCG firms to sustain a competitive edge and achieve consistent profitability in a rapidly evolving and increasingly demanding market environment.

The African continent is also affected as it is observed that Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) firms in Kenya have encountered a range of complex challenges that have significantly affected key business outcomes such as brand loyalty, customer patronage, firm innovativeness, competitive advantage, and profitability. Prominent firms like Unilever Kenya and Bidco Africa have been particularly affected. Unilever Kenya has struggled with persistent supply chain disruptions and inflationary pressures, which have compromised product availability and pricing, leading to diminished brand loyalty and reduced customer patronage (Calleo, 2024). Despite a slight decrease in Kenya's overall inflation rate to 6.6% in December 2023, FMCG price inflation remained high, with consumers paying 7.7% more for food compared to the previous year (Washington, 2023).

This economic strain resulted in a 6% year-on-year decline in the frequency of shopping trips and a 1% reduction in basket size, while total FMCG volume in the country fell by 5%, despite a 2% increase in consumer spending (Allemieux, 2024). The food sector was hardest hit, experiencing a 10% decline, followed by a 6% decrease in non-alcoholic beverages, with shopping frequency and volume per trip also dropping significantly in these categories (Richard, 2023; Washington, 2024). Bidco Africa faced similar challenges, grappling with rising operational costs and regulatory changes that eroded their profitability and competitive edge (Deshmukh & Ghosh, 2024). Local firms like Kenafric Industries and Brookside Dairy also struggled to manage fluctuating raw material costs and shifting consumer preferences, further complicating their market strategies (Deshmukh & Ghosh, 2024). These multifaceted challenges have collectively strained brand loyalty, customer patronage, and overall profitability within Kenya's FMCG sector, highlighting the need for strategic adaptation in an increasingly volatile market environment.

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) firms in South Africa have faced a multitude of challenges that have significantly affected key business outcomes such as brand loyalty, customer patronage, firm innovativeness, competitive advantage, and profitability. Leading companies have struggled with logistics barriers and constraints, disrupting production and elevating costs, while illicit trade has further eroded market share and profitability (Research & Markets, 2023). Similarly, most African companies faced economic volatility and shifting consumer preferences towards sustainability and health-conscious products, complicating its market positioning (Research & Markets, 2023). While other major player, has been challenged by logistics barriers and power constraints, effect supply chain efficiency amid regulatory and economic pressures (Businesswire, 2023).

Some scholars (Kumar et al. 2017; Rajagopal, 2018; Sahoo et al. 2020; Sharma et al. 2019; Tiwari et al. 2020) identified in inconsistencies and research gaps in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry. Other scholars in Nigeria (Adeyeye et al. 2020; Akinbode et al. 2019; Awoyemi et al 2018; Babatunde et al 2020; Ogbonna et al. 2019) identified inconsistencies in the application of digital marketing strategies, research gap in the area of supply chain management, measurement of customer satisfaction, sustainability practices, and application of branding strategies respectively within Nigeria's fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, where the cumulative effects of strategic quality management practices on brand loyalty remain insufficiently explored (Sunday & Olasoji, 2023). Despite the recognized importance of these practices, many FMCG firms in Nigeria have been grappling with declining customer patronage, and this deterioration can largely be attributed to inadequate commitment from top management towards quality initiatives, poorly aligned business processes, and an insufficient focus on continuous improvement efforts (Ogunlela & Lekhanya, 2016). These challenges create a complex environment where the potential benefits of strategic quality management are not fully realized, leading to operational inefficiencies and weakened customer relationships. Furthermore, inadequate strategic quality planning and a lack of customer-centric strategies have further exacerbated these issues, undermining customer satisfaction and ultimately diminishing brand loyalty (Zego & Husny, 2023). Consequently, addressing these underlying problems is imperative for Nigerian FMCG firms, as a failure to do so may hinder their ability to remain competitive and sustain long-term success in a rapidly evolving marketplace.

Hypothesis Development

Research consistently demonstrates the significant positive effect of strategic quality management practices on customer patronage. These practices, encompassing strategic quality planning, top management commitment, continuous improvement, and customer focus, directly enhance customer loyalty and satisfaction. Torre et al. (2024) confirm that soft total quality management (TQM) practices significantly boost customer satisfaction in the ferry sector, with the adoption of these practices lead to improved service quality and increased customer patronage. Similarly, Gichure and Gitonga (2024) establish that total quality management (TQM) practices enhance performance of African Breweries, which contributed to higher levels of customer patronage. Rallang and Gutierrez (2024) provide evidence from real estate companies showing that quality management practices based on experiential knowledge consistently improve customer experiences and increase patronage. Additionally, Khan and Naimi (2024) show that combining quality management practices with the political skills of construction managers ensures inter-organisational project success, which strengthens customer retention and loyalty.

Top management commitment has a critical determinant of customer patronage. Kitsis and Chen (2021) demonstrate that stakeholder pressures on green supply chain practices drive improved environmental performance through top management commitment, directly enhancing customer loyalty. Latif and Vang (2021) showed that top management commitment fosters lean team members' prosocial behavior, improving customer service quality and patronage. Yong et al. (2022) established that top management commitment effectively leverages green human resource management practices, leading to improved organisational performance and increased customer loyalty. Memon et al. (2022) further confirm that top management commitment to environmental and green training initiatives directly enhances organisational performance and customer patronage.

Continuous improvement initiatives also drive customer patronage. Arredondo-Méndez et al. (2021) confirmed that adopting industrial 4.0 technologies, enable continuous improvement, enhances organisational outcomes and customer satisfaction. Lameijer et al. (2021) demonstrate that organisational motivation and coordination ensure the successful implementation of continuous improvement projects, leading to better customer experiences and loyalty. Mihaela and Aztefania (2020) provide evidence that overcoming challenges in implementing continuous improvement practices in a university setting results in improved service quality and increased customer satisfaction, which translates into greater patronage.

A strong customer focus is indispensable for enhancing customer patronage. Sandrine and Patrick (2020) establish that a strategic focus on customer needs improves performance in the insurance sector, resulting in heightened customer loyalty and patronage. Repoviene and Pazeraite (2023) confirm that effectively communicating service value through website content improves customer perceptions and loyalty. Businge et al. (2023) demonstrate that board members' strategic orientations toward customer focus positively influence customer loyalty and patronage in Ugandan insurance companies. Duan et al. (2018) identify key drivers of customer focus through online customer reviews, confirming that addressing these factors consistently increases patronage.

Although the positive impact of strategic quality management practices on customer patronage is well-documented, some studies highlighted industry-specific variations and external moderating factors. Rallang and Gutierrez (2024) show that the effects of quality management practices depend on the industry and the specific practices implemented. Kitsis and Chen (2021) and Latif and Vang (2021) affirm the importance of top management commitment while noting that its effects are amplified by supportive organisational culture and external pressures. Yong et al. (2022) and Memon et al. (2022) demonstrate that top management commitment drives improvements but emphasize the necessity of integrating it with other strategic initiatives to maximize customer patronage. Arredondo-Méndez et al. (2021) and Lameijer et al. (2021) highlight the benefits of continuous improvement, while Mihaela and Aztefania (2020) confirm that overcoming implementation challenges is vital for achieving enhanced customer satisfaction and patronage. Sandrine and Patrick (2020) and Repoviene and Pazeraite (2023) validate the positive effects of customer focus strategies, but other studies recognize the influence of market conditions and customer expectations in shaping the outcomes of such strategies. Hence the study postulates that:

H_0: Strategic quality management practices have no significant effect on customers' patronage

Literature Review

Strategic Quality Management Practices

Strategic quality management practices (SQMPs) have gained prominence in contemporary organizational frameworks as a pivotal driver for achieving competitive advantage. Despite varying definitions, scholars largely agree that SQMPs refer to the strategic integration of quality-related activities within an organization's long-term goals, with a focus on continuous improvement and customer satisfaction. Ramasamy and Muthukrishnan (2024) assert that SQMPs encompass the implementation of structured methodologies and tools that guide organizations in aligning their operations with quality standards. This view emphasizes that SQMPs are not isolated actions but are embedded in the organization's overarching strategy. Similarly, Torre et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of soft total quality management practices in enhancing the operational efficiency of companies, pointing to the broader concept of SQMPs as a framework for guiding quality in organizational culture and practices. This approach links strategic decision-making with quality outcomes, demonstrating the intertwining of quality with long-term objectives. As noted by Parast et al. (2024), organizations that adopt SQMPs are better positioned to differentiate themselves from competitors by consistently offering high-quality products and services. The incorporation of innovation as part of SQMPs, as discussed by Ali-Albagawi and Hadi (2024), further strengthens the position of firms in the market by facilitating the development of new products or services. Additionally, Gichure and Gitonga (2024) suggest that SQMPs can serve as a foundation for achieving certifications and meeting regulatory requirements, enhancing an organization's reputation and marketability. The ultimate advantage of SQMPs, as highlighted by Ramasamy and Muthukrishnan (2024), is their role in supporting long-term organizational success by aligning quality practices with the strategic objectives of the organization, ensuring that quality management is not just an operational function but a key component of the firm's overall strategy.

Top Management Commitment

Top management commitment is widely recognized as a critical factor in the successful implementation of various organisational initiatives, particularly in quality management. Wei et al. (2023) argue that top management commitment involves a deep and sustained engagement from senior leadership in fostering a culture that prioritizes quality and continuous improvement. This perspective is echoed by Xu and Zhao (2022), who emphasize that top management's active involvement in quality-related activities signals to the entire organisation the importance of these initiatives, thereby ensuring alignment and support at all levels. Radhi and Hariningsih (2021) add that top management commitment is not merely about allocating resources but also about setting a clear vision and expectations that guide the organisation's strategic direction. Daoud et al. (2021) further elaborate that top management commitment involves consistent communication and reinforcement of quality goals, ensuring that these goals remain a priority amidst competing organisational demands. Anin et al. (2024a) discuss the financial benefits of top management commitment, noting that organisations with strong leadership commitment to quality often experience cost savings through increased efficiency and reduced waste. Rehman et al. (2024) add that top management commitment can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, as customers are more likely to trust and remain loyal to organisations that consistently deliver high-quality products and services. Nugroho et al. (2024) further highlight that top management commitment can improve an organisation's reputation, as a strong focus on quality can enhance the organisation's image and credibility in the marketplace. Bashar et al. (2024) conclude that top management commitment can also contribute to long-term sustainability, as leaders who prioritize quality are more likely to invest in practices that ensure the organisation's continued success and viability.

Business Process Reengineering

Business Process Reengineering (BPR) is a transformative approach that focuses on redesigning core business processes to achieve significant improvements in performance. Fetais et al. (2022a) define BPR as a fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service, and speed. Adefulu et al. (2020) echo this definition, emphasizing that BPR involves a complete overhaul of existing processes to streamline operations and eliminate inefficiencies. Ziegler et al. (2022) further elaborate that BPR is characterized by its focus on process innovation rather than incremental improvements, aiming to achieve breakthrough results. Eze et al. (2019) add that BPR requires a holistic approach, where every aspect of the process is examined and redesigned to align with strategic goals. Alquqa et al. (2024) discuss the potential for improved employee productivity, as redesigned processes can reduce redundancy and simplify workflows. Maryati et al. (2024) argue that BPR can also lead to enhanced organisational effectiveness, as processes are aligned more closely with strategic goals and business objectives. Mertens et al. (2024) highlight the advantage of better resource utilization, as BPR helps optimize the allocation of resources to areas that deliver the most value. Finally, BPR can improve competitive advantage, as organisations that successfully reengineer their processes are often better positioned to outperform their competitors in terms of cost, quality, and service.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is a crucial principle in modern management that focuses on ongoing, incremental enhancements to processes, products, and services. Sesar and Hunjet (2021) define continuous improvement as a systematic, ongoing effort to enhance various aspects of an organisation through small, incremental changes rather than large, disruptive innovations. Wickramasinghe and Chathurani (2020) further describe it as an iterative process aimed at achieving incremental gains that collectively lead to significant improvements over time. Inan et al. (2022) add that continuous improvement is characterized by a culture that encourages ongoing feedback and learning, ensuring that improvements are sustained and evolve with changing circumstances. The benefits of continuous improvement are well-documented and offer substantial advantages to organisations. Gonzalez Aleu et al. (2021) argue that one of the primary benefits is enhanced operational efficiency, as continuous improvement helps organisations identify and eliminate inefficiencies in their processes. Henrique et al. (2021) further emphasize that continuous improvement leads to better quality products and services, as organisations continuously refine their offerings based on customer feedback and performance data. Van Assen (2021) highlights that continuous improvement fosters a culture of innovation, as employees are encouraged to contribute ideas and seek new ways to enhance processes and outcomes. Beraldin et al. (2022) add that continuous improvement can lead to significant cost savings, as streamlined processes and improved efficiencies reduce waste and operational costs.

Strategic Quality Planning

Djordjevic et al. (2020) highlight that strategic quality planning should be dynamic, allowing for adjustments based on performance feedback and changes in the market environment. Zheng and Chin (2005) add that integrating quality planning into the strategic management process enhances its effectiveness, as it ensures that quality initiatives are aligned with overall business goals. Lundgren et al. (2019) discuss the importance of a structured approach to strategic quality planning, including the development of detailed action plans and performance metrics. McLeod and Schapper (2024) argue that strategic quality planning should be data-driven, utilizing performance data to inform decision-making and drive improvements. Benke et al. (2023) emphasize the role of leadership in strategic quality planning, noting that effective planning requires strong commitment and direction from top management. Moya-Salazar et al. (2022) add that effective strategic quality planning improves customer satisfaction, as quality initiatives are designed to meet or exceed customer expectations. Tanzeh (2019) discusses the advantage of increased operational efficiency, as strategic quality planning helps streamline processes and eliminate inefficiencies. Rudolf and Roszak (2022) argue that strategic quality planning supports innovation by identifying areas for improvement and encouraging the development of new solutions. Syreyshchikova et al. (2021) highlight the benefit of enhanced competitive advantage, as organisations with well-developed quality strategies are better positioned to compete in the market. Othman et al. (2018) conclude that strategic quality planning also contributes to long-term sustainability, as it helps organisations build a strong foundation for continued success and growth. Le et al. (2021) add that effective strategic quality planning leads to better decision-making, as quality objectives are aligned with strategic priorities and supported by data-driven insights.

Customer Focus

Sandrine and Patrick (2020) add another dimension, describing customer focus as a strategic alignment of resources to enhance the customer experience, whereas Repovienė and Pažėraitė (2023) emphasize its operational aspect, viewing it as a systematic approach to optimizing customer touchpoints. Meanwhile, Businge et al. (2023) discuss customer focus in terms of adaptability, arguing that it involves a continuous adjustment of organisational practices in response to changing customer preferences. This view is further supported by Duan et al. (2018), who highlight the importance of data-driven decision-making in maintaining a customer-centric approach, thus showcasing the evolving nature of customer focus in the digital age. Schlögl (2024) posits that customer focus can lead to improved financial performance, as satisfied customers are more likely to engage in repeat business and provide positive word-of-mouth referrals. Joseph et al. (2024) echo this sentiment, highlighting the role of customer focus in fostering long-term customer relationships, which are critical for sustaining business growth. Mittal and Jung (2024) add that customer focus can drive innovation, as customer insights often lead to the development of new products and services that meet unarticulated needs. Furthermore, Damayanti (2024) suggests that customer focus can enhance employee engagement, as employees who understand the effect of their work on customer satisfaction are more likely to be motivated and committed to their roles. Abrokwah-Larbi (2024) concludes by noting that customer focus can also improve risk management, as organisations that are attuned to their customers are better equipped to anticipate and mitigate potential risks.

Brand Loyalty

The concept of customer patronage has garnered significant attention in both academic and business circles, as it serves as a critical determinant of business success and market sustainability. Scholars has defined the variable, reflecting its multifaceted nature. therefore, customer patronage refers to the frequency with which consumers make purchases or utilize services from a particular business, brand, or retailer (Bano et al., 2022). This basic definition, however, overlooks the complex interplay of factors that influence consumer behavior (Solomon et al. 2018). Extending the definition, Garga (2016) emphasizes the role of service quality as an important driver of customer patronage, proposing that satisfaction levels, driven by service excellence, are key to encouraging continued patronage. While these initial definitions focus on observable behaviors, they do not account for the underlying psychological or emotional connections that may influence patronage decisions.

The advantages of customer patronage are significant, both from a business and consumer perspective. A robust customer patronage base ensures business sustainability by fostering consistent revenue streams, as returning customers provide a reliable source of income (Patrick et al., 2019). In addition to financial stability, a loyal customer base enhances a company's competitive advantage by creating barriers to entry for new competitors. When customers demonstrate high levels of patronage, they inadvertently act as brand advocates, promoting the business through word-of-mouth and positive reviews (Mustapha & Issa, 2021). This creates an organic marketing effect that extends beyond traditional advertising methods. Moreover, high levels of customer patronage contribute to businesses' market expansion efforts by solidifying brand identity and increasing brand recognition, especially in crowded marketplaces (Waari, 2019). Customers who repeatedly patronize a brand are more likely to introduce others to the brand, creating a cycle of growth and increased market penetration (Bano et al., 2022). The concept of customer loyalty, deeply tied to patronage, offers businesses long-term financial rewards, as loyal customers are often less price-sensitive and more willing to invest in premium products or services (Lim et al., 2020). These challenges underscore the complexities involved in nurturing and sustaining customer patronage, which require businesses to be agile, responsive, and consistently customer-centric in their strategies.

Theoretical Review

Dynamic Capabilities Theory serves as a robust framework for examining the interplay between strategic quality management practices and brand loyalty, particularly in the context of the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) manufacturing sector in Lagos State, Nigeria. This theory emphasizes a firm's ability to sense emerging opportunities, seize them through strategic actions, and reconfigure resources to sustain competitiveness in volatile environments (Owoseni & Twinomurinzi, 2018). In the FMCG industry, where consumer preferences shift rapidly and product lifecycles are short, strategic quality management practices such as consistent product excellence and process innovation become critical drivers of brand loyalty (Akpan et al., 2021). Unlike the Resource-Based View, which focuses on static internal strengths, Dynamic Capabilities Theory highlights adaptability, enabling firms to align quality initiatives with evolving market demands (Zhou et al., 2021). This adaptability fosters trust and loyalty among consumers by ensuring that quality remains a dynamic, responsive capability rather than a fixed attribute (Binuyo et al., 2019). Thus, the theory provides a comprehensive lens for understanding how FMCG firms can leverage quality management to strengthen brand loyalty amidst competitive pressures. The FMCG industry, known for its swift product turnover and shifting consumer preferences, necessitates a theoretical framework that accounts for internal capabilities while prioritizing the ability to adapt to external changes (Akpan et al., 2021). Hence, Dynamic Capabilities Theory's focus on sensing opportunities, seizing them, and reconfiguring resources is particularly pertinent for this study (Owoseni & Twinomurinzi, 2018).

Conceptual Model

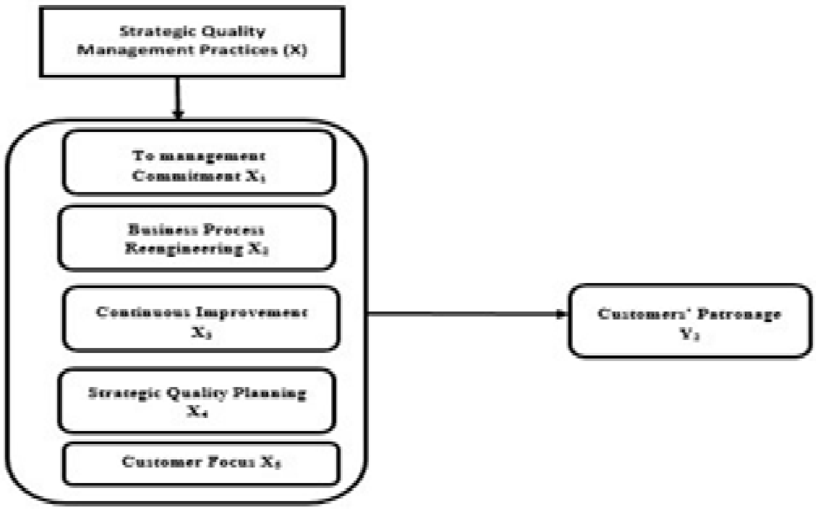

Figure: Conceptual Model for Strategic Quality Management Practices and Customers' Patronage
Source: Researcher's Conceptualization (2025)

Methodology

The research utilized a survey design and targeted a population of 10,375 managers from selected FMCG manufacturing companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. A sample size of 419 was derived using the Research Advisor's sampling table. Samples were proportionally distributed among the chosen FMCG companies, with respondents selected through simple random sampling. Data was collected using a structured and validated questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the constructs ranged from 0.72 to 0.91, and the response rate was 94.5%. The collected data were analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics, including multiple and hierarchical regression, at a significance level of 5%.

Model Specification

The model for the variables is denoted in the equations below:
X = Strategic Quality Management Practices
Y = Customers' Patronage (CPG)

Independent Variables

x_1 = Top Management Commitment (TMC)
x_2 = Business Process Reengineering (BPR)
x_3 = Continuous Improvement (CI)
x_4 = Strategic Quality Planning (SQP)
x_5 = Customer Focus (CF)

Dependent Variables

Y = Customers' Patronage (CPG)

Hypothesis

$y_{1=} f(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5)$
$y_1 = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_{4X4} + \beta_5 x_5 + \mu$
$BLT = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 TMC + \beta_2 BPR + \beta_3 CI + \beta_4 SQP + \beta_5 CF + \mu$ .... Equ (2)

Results and Discussion

The data were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 27.0, with a significance level of 5% maintained across all analyses. This methodology ensures the findings align with the research objectives. The researcher distributed 419 copies of questionnaire were administered senior, middle and low level manager of which 396 copies of the distributed questionnaire were dully filled and returned and used for the analysis. This represents a response rate of about 94.5% of the population employed in the study, which was considered on appropriate response rate. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed to analyze the data.

Restatement of Research Hypothesis

$H_0$1: Strategic quality management practices have no significant effect on customers' patronage

In hypothesis one, strategic quality management practices (top management commitment, business process reengineering, continuous improvement, strategic quality planning, and customer focus) are the independent sub variables, while the customers' patronage was dependent variable. Data for strategic quality management practices (SQMP) were generated by adding together scores of responses from all the items under each practice to generate independent scores. Data for customer patronage was generated by adding together the responses of all items under the variable to create an index of it. The results of the analysis and parameter estimates obtained are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Hypothesis

N	Model	*B*	T	Sig.	ANOVA (Sig.)	R	Adjusted R^2	F (5, 390)
	(Constant)	9.032	4.671	.000				
	Top management commitment	.114	2.050	.041	0.001^{b}	0.408^{a}	0.156	16.510
396	Business process reengineering	.063	1.000	.318				
	continuous improvement	.169	2.696	.007				
	strategic quality planning	.272	4.217	.000				
	Customer focus	.024	0.357	.721				
	a. Dependent Variable: Customers' Patronage							
	b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Focus, Top Management Commitment, Business Process Reengineering, Continuous Improvement, Strategic Quality Planning							

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation

Table 1 shows the multiple regression analysis results for the effect of strategic quality management practices on loyalty of selected fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) manufacturing companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The result revealed that top management commitment (β = .114, t = 2.050, p < 0.05), continuous improvement (β = 0.169, t = 2.696, p < 0.05), strategic quality planning (β = .272, t = 4.217, p < *0.05*) and customer focus (β = .024, t = 0.357, p < *0.05*) all have a significant positive effect on customers' patronage of FCMGs manufacturing companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. However, business process reengineering (β = 0.063, t = 1.000, p > 0.05) have a positive but insignificant effect on customers' patronage. The results of the analysis revealed that four strategic quality management practices (top management commitment, continuous improvement, strategic quality planning, and customer focus) have significant effect on customers' patronage of the selected fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) manufacturing companies in Lagos State. This indicates that top management commitment, continuous improvement, strategic quality planning, and customer focus were critical predictors of customers' patronage of selected FMCGs manufacturing companies in Lagos State.

The correlation coefficient was 0.408 which indicates a moderate positive relationship between strategic quality management practices and customers' patronage. This means that as strategic quality management practices improve, customers' patronage to also increase, but the relationship is not very strong. Furthermore, the $Adj.\ R^2$ was 0.156 implying that 15.6% variations in customers' patronage of selected FMCGs in manufacturing companies in Lagos State was attributable to the strategic quality management practices while the remaining 84.4% of variances are accounted by other variables not included in the model. This suggests that though strategic quality management practices affect customers' patronage, there are other prominent variables that contribute to changes in customers' patronage. This implies that the regression model is a good fit. Moreover, strategic quality management practices have low effect on customers' patronage of selected FMCGs in manufacturing companies in Lagos State. The predictive and prescriptive multiple regression models are thus expressed:

$CP = 9.032 + 0.114TMC + 0.063BPR + 0.169CI + 0.272SQP + 0.024CF + U_i$--------Eqn i (Predictive Model)

$CP = 9.032 + 0.114TMC + 0.1694CI + 0.272SQP + 0.024CF + U_i$ ----Eqn i (Prescriptive Model)

Where:
CP = Customers' Patronage
TMC = Top Management Commitment
BPR = Business Process Reengineering
CI = Continuous Improvement
SQP= Strategic Quality Planning
CF = Customer Focus

The regression model revealed that if SQMP were held constant (or set to zero), customers' patronage of the selected FMCGs manufacturing companies in Lagos State will be 9.032, implying that in the absence of SQMP, customers' patronage will be 9.032. This suggests that if all the independent variables take on the values of zero, there would be 9.032 customers' patronage in the fast-moving consumer goods manufacturing companies in Lagos State (baseline value). From the predictive model, four dimensions of the SQMP (top management commitment, continuous improvement, strategic quality planning, and customer focus) have significant and a positive effect on the customers' patronage while business process reengineering have positive but insignificant effect on customers' patronage. This variable, therefore, was not prescribed for the FMCGs manufacturing companies in this study. From the prescriptive model, an improvement in top management commitment, continuous improvement, strategic quality planning, and customer focus would further increase customers' patronage by 0.114, 0.169, 0.272, 0.024 units respectively. These results suggest that top management commitment, continuous improvement, strategic quality planning, and customer focus are significant predictors of customers' patronage of selected FMCGs manufacturing companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. These companies should implement these variables to improve customers preferences and repeat purchase.

The *F*-statistics (df = 5, 390) = 16.510 at p <0.05) showed that the overall model for predicting the effect of SQMP on customer patronage is significant. The p-value is less than 0.05; it implies that effect of SQMP on brand loyalty is significant. Moreover, the results showed that among the SQMP, top management commitment have the highest effect on customers' patronage of selected FMCGs manufacturing companies in Lagos State followed by continuous improvement, strategic quality planning, customer focus while business process reengineering had insignificant effect. Based on results of *F*-statistics, the null hypothesis two (H_{02}) which states that strategic quality management practices have no significant effect on customers' patronage was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The second hypothesis test revealed that strategic quality management practices have a significant effect on customer patronage as confirmed by its results. The results of the hypothesis test confirm that strategic quality management practices have a significant effect on customer patronage. This finding aligns with extant literature, which underscores the role of strategic quality planning, top management commitment, continuous improvement, and customer focus in shaping customer behaviour (Torre et al., 2024; Gichure & Gitonga, 2024). Notably, studies have consistently demonstrated that firms that actively integrate quality management principles into their strategic operations witness increased customer retention and loyalty (Rallang & Gutierrez, 2024). The positive impact of such practices has been well-documented across industries, from the ferry sector to real estate and manufacturing (Khan & Naimi, 2024). However, while these findings reinforce the established consensus, it is imperative to critically evaluate the contextual nuances influencing the degree to which these practices translate into customer patronage. For instance, Khan and Naimi (2024) contend that external factors, such as regulatory pressures and market dynamism, may moderate the effectiveness of quality management initiatives. Thus, while the present study affirms the overarching positive relationship, it also necessitates a deeper exploration of contextual and industry-specific variations.

The role of top management commitment in driving customer patronage has been extensively examined, with several scholars positing that leadership commitment to quality enhances customer satisfaction through improved service delivery (Kitsis & Chen, 2021; Yong et al., 2022). The current study corroborates this position, reinforcing the notion that a strong leadership commitment to quality practices fosters a culture of excellence that resonates with customers. However, some scholars argue that leadership commitment alone does not guarantee sustained customer loyalty, as its impact is often contingent upon complementary organisational factors such as employee engagement and resource allocation (Memon et al., 2022). Latif and Vang (2021) further highlight that while management commitment fosters prosocial behaviour among lean team members, its effect on customer patronage is mediated by the organisational climate. This underscores the argument that while top management commitment is a critical enabler, its efficacy is not absolute but rather dependent on broader organisational dynamics. Hence, while the present study substantiates the claim that leadership dedication to quality management positively influences customer patronage, it also reinforces the call for a more holistic approach that integrates complementary strategic enablers.

Continuous improvement, another integral dimension of strategic quality management, has been widely acknowledged as a driver of enhanced customer experiences and satisfaction (Arredondo-Méndez et al., 2021; Lameijer et al., 2021). The study's findings align with this position, demonstrating that organisations that embrace continuous improvement initiatives experience heightened customer patronage. However, the literature presents a more nuanced perspective, indicating that the success of such initiatives is often contingent upon internal organisational capabilities and external market conditions (Mihaela & Aztefania, 2020). Specifically, Mihaela and Aztefania (2020) argue that while continuous improvement strategies contribute to service excellence, their implementation is often fraught with challenges that may hinder their efficacy. This critique is particularly relevant to industries with rigid operational frameworks where the integration of improvement initiatives faces systemic resistance (Lameijer et al., 2021). Thus, while the study's findings reinforce the broader assertion that continuous improvement enhances customer patronage, they also necessitate a critical evaluation of industry-specific constraints that may mediate this relationship.

The theoretical underpinnings of this study are aptly situated within the framework of Dynamic Capabilities Theory, which emphasises adaptability, sensing opportunities, and resource reconfiguration in response to market changes (Zhou et al., 2021). The study's findings strongly align with this theory, as strategic quality management practices inherently demand an adaptive and proactive approach to maintaining customer loyalty. Unlike the Resource-Based View, which assumes a static perspective on competitive advantage, the Dynamic Capabilities Theory provides a more fluid and pragmatic lens through which the effect of strategic quality management on customer patronage can be understood (Binuyo et al., 2019). The ability of firms to continuously refine their quality management strategies in response to shifting customer preferences and competitive pressures is emblematic of the dynamic capabilities' perspective (Owoseni & Twinomurinzi, 2018). As the FMCG sector is inherently volatile, requiring firms to swiftly adapt to changing consumer behaviours, the findings further validate the applicability of this theoretical approach in elucidating the link between quality management practices and business outcomes (Makinde et al., 2023). This substantiates the argument that firms with robust dynamic capabilities are better positioned to leverage strategic quality management as a means of sustaining customer patronage and competitive advantage.

While the study contributes significantly to the discourse on strategic quality management and customer patronage, it also unveils critical limitations that warrant further examination. The literature suggests that the effect of quality management practices on customer patronage is not always linear, as external market conditions, competitive intensity, and regulatory constraints often moderate this relationship (Sandrine & Patrick, 2020; Repovienė & Pazeraite, 2023). This perspective is particularly relevant given that customer loyalty is inherently dynamic and influenced by an interplay of psychological, economic, and organisational factors (Duan et al., 2018). Although the study confirms the efficacy of strategic quality management in enhancing customer patronage, it does not fully account for the contingencies that may attenuate this effect in specific industry settings. Consequently, future research should explore the moderating role of external environmental factors in shaping the efficacy of quality management initiatives. By extending the discourse beyond a binary confirmation of existing literature, this study advocates for a more integrative approach that acknowledges the complexity of quality management dynamics and their implications for customer patronage.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that strategic quality management practices significantly influence customer patronage among selected Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) manufacturing companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. This finding underscores the importance of implementing robust quality management strategies to enhance customer trust and retention in a highly competitive market. The research highlights that consistent product quality, effective process optimization, and customer-focused quality initiatives are pivotal in fostering a loyal customer base, which in turn strengthens the customers' patronage position. These results align with the notion that quality management is not merely an operational necessity but a strategic tool for building long-term relationships with consumers in the FMCG sector.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that FMCG companies in Lagos State prioritize the adoption and continuous improvement of strategic quality management practices to bolster customers' patronage. Management should invest in training programs to equip employees with skills for maintaining high-quality standards and encourage the integration of customer feedback into quality improvement processes. Additionally, companies should leverage technology and data analytics to monitor quality performance and identify areas for enhancement. Policymakers and industry stakeholders could also support this effort by promoting frameworks or incentives that reward quality excellence, ensuring that firms remain competitive while meeting consumer expectations in Nigeria's dynamic FMCG landscape.

Suggestion for Further Study

For further study, researchers could investigate the mediating factors, such as customer satisfaction or perceived value, that link strategic quality management practices to customers' patronage in FMCG companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. Expanding the research to include a wider range of FMCG firms across different regions or comparing urban and rural markets could reveal variations in the impact of quality management on patronage. Additionally, exploring the role of emerging technologies, like artificial intelligence in quality assurance, could provide insights into innovative approaches to sustaining customers' patronage over time in this sector.

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