



SERVICE QUALITY AND REPURCHASE INTENTIONS AMONG STUDENTS SMARTPHONE USERS IN OYE-EKITI

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between service qualities and repurchase intentions among students' smart phone users at Oye-Ekiti. The independent variable was broken down into three categories: convenience, functionality, and perceived usefulness on users' repurchase intention. A survey research design was used to collect the data for this study through the administration of a questionnaire, and 160 copies of the questionnaire were found to be usable for data analysis. The collected data were presented, tested, and analyzed using correlation through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Results showed that perceived utility, ease, and functionality have a big impact on customers' intention to repurchase. It is advised that phone makers make constant improvements to the functions and designs of their devices in order to increase customer satisfaction and potentially encourage further purchases.

Keyword: Service quality; repurchase intention, smart-phone users, convenience, functionality, and perceived usefulness.

INTRODUCTION

Because of the speed at which technology is developing, mobile phone makers must keep innovating in order to release new products and enhance existing ones. On the other hand, because of the impact of technological improvements, mobile phone users have continued to alter how they produce, share, and consume information (Arif, Aslam, and Ali, 2016). The majority of individuals always carry their mobile phones with them since they have become an essential component of daily life (Smura, Kivi, & Toyli, 2009). According to Suki and Suki (2007), persons who use their phones frequently have greater levels of knowledge, participate in society more, maintain large personal networks, and communicate with people all over the world. In addition to what Suki and Suki (2007) noted, it appears that students used smart-phones as study aids, presenting aids, and sources of illumination. According to Falayi and Adedokun (2014), a smart phone is a mobile device that possesses enhanced computational capabilities and connectivity compared to ordinary feature phones. Smart phones, according to Norazah (2013), are a hybrid of mobile phones and personal device assistants that run sophisticated operating systems, allow users to install new apps, stay connected all the time, and offer a wide range of features from both. According to Falayi and Adedokun (2014), early smart phones often merged the capabilities of a digital camera, media player, personal digital assistant (PDA), or GPS navigation equipment with those of a mobile phone. All of these functions are included in modern smart-phones, along with touch screen computing capabilities like online browsing, Wi-Fi, and third-party apps like hotspot.

Furthermore, according to Norazah (2013), consumers now see smart-phones as multipurpose tools for gaming, socialising, and downloading apps in addition to being tools for making calls and sending texts. This has resulted in a dramatic change in people's behaviour patterns, lives, and social standing. Due to their ability to provide users with easier access to the internet 365 days a year, seven days a week, and 24 hours a day, smart phones are becoming more and more integrated into people's daily lives (Norazah, 2013). People now view smart-phones as necessities in their daily lives rather than as a luxury (Walsh & White,

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2006). As a result, people from a variety of walks of life are using and spreading smart-phones more frequently.

A first-time user or buyer of a smart phone may purchase due to information available in the public domain, or they may follow the lead of a close user, or they may be influenced by the bandwagon effect. Nevertheless, the first-time buyer's intention to repurchase is typically influenced by the item's service qualities and, to some extent, the producer. Convenience, functionality, and usefulness form the crux of independent variables of this work.

Statement of the Problem

The proliferation of smart-phones in developing nations such as Nigeria makes empirical research on consumers' intentions to repurchase them imperative. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there aren't many empirical studies on smart-phone users' plans to repurchase in Nigeria. Researchers Falayi and Adedokun (2014) and Adetola and Ifeanyichukwu (2016) attempted to investigate the factors influencing young consumers' demand for smart-phones. However, it's important to assess how consumers view the value of smart-phone services (as determined by convenience, functionality, and perceived utility) and how much of an impact these views have on consumers' intentions to make additional purchases. This study aims to close the empirical gap by determining the impact of service quality on consumers' intention to buy smart-phones. This information will help manufacturers of the devices identify and address any areas that require improvement.

Based on the aforementioned issue, the study aims to investigate the following findings: how users' intentions to repurchase a smart-phone are affected by convenience; how users' intentions to repurchase a smart-phone are affected by functionality; and how users' intentions to repurchase a smart-phone are affected by perceived usefulness.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this research was to determine the impact/effect of service quality on the repurchase intention among smart phones users, specifically, this study sought to:

- i. examine the effect of convenience on users' repurchase intention of smart phone;
- ii. ascertain the influence of functionality on users' repurchase intention of smart phone; and
- iii. find out the effect of perceived usefulness on users' repurchase intention of smart phone.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention was described by Hellier, Gevrsen, Carr, and Rickard (2003) as the act of a person making purchases of goods and services from the same companies. buy intention, according to Rajaobelina and Bergeron (2009), is the level of a customer's perceptual conviction to buy any product (or service) at any particular business or to repurchase a specific product (or service). Repurchase intention, according to Harris and Goode (2010), is the intention to use a specific brand in the event that one day one needs its services. A strong desire to support a specific product or service provider's offering again is known as repurchase intention (Xu & Liu, 2010). Repurchase intention was defined by Goh, Jiang, Hak, and Tee (2016) as the consumer's initiative to seek out and buy the same brand, goods, or services again. According to the definitions given above, a smart phone user's intention to repurchase a phone offer from a specific brand in the future is known as their repurchase intention. Repurchase intents, according to Goyal, Maity, Thamizhvanan, and Xavier (2013), are indicators of a service provider's capacity to persuade clients to stick with them, pay higher prices, voice issues to other clients, and voice problems to the business. With the expectation that they will stick with the products and return to purchase similar products, Kaur and Quareshi (2015) suggested that repurchase intentions can be assessed by looking at customers' perceptions of a specific brand or manufacturer as their first choice when purchasing similar products in the future. They also thought that customers with strong repurchase

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intentions are more inclined to recommend a product to others and generate favorable word-of-mouth advertising about it after having a positive first experience with it.

Users' Contentment

According to Kim, Chan, and Gupta (2007), a user's level of satisfaction is determined by how much they believe a product or service has met or exceeded their expectations in terms of quality or performance. The degree of cognitive or emotive appraisal that goes into choosing and utilizing a good or service is referred to as satisfaction (Kim, Wong, Chang, & Park 2016). Users experience satisfaction when their expectations are fulfilled. This may lead to the same product or service being purchased and used again. A user's sense of pleasure may also be influenced by their emotional response to the acquisition and use of the commodity or service, as well as by their cognitive evaluation of the difference between their expectations and reality (Oliver, 1999). Customer satisfaction was described by Chang, Kim, Kim, and Park (2011) as a post-consumption response and assessment on a certain good or service. According to Oliver (2019), user satisfaction is a cognitive process and is defined as the discrepancy between a product's actual efficacy and a consumer's expectations of it prior to or after use. Users' degree of satisfaction with the features of smart-phones and other evaluations they make while using them can have a significant impact on how satisfied they are with them (Kim et al., 2016; Ha & Park, 2013). Functionality, design, usability, applications, and price were all noted by Andrews, Drennan, and Russell-Bennett (2012) as significant characteristics of a smart-phone that can affect consumers' degree of pleasure. According to Kim et al. (2016), consumers are more satisfied with a specific smart-phone manufacturer if they believe that each of these traits has a higher value.

Quality of Service

According to Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1991), service quality is the difference between what customers expect from a company and how they perceive the services the company provides. The customer's entire evaluation of a service is what is known as service quality (Eshghi, Roy & Ganguli, 2008). According to Inegbenbor (2006), a service is any intangible advantage given to people, companies, governments, or other organizations by way of carrying out a range of tasks or by giving someone else's use of physical space, a good, or an activity. Based on the aforementioned criteria, it can be concluded that the degree to which service providers satisfy the requirements or expectations of their clients constitutes service quality. When something is regarded to be below expectations, the quality of the service is viewed as low, and vice versa (Bello & Adekunle, 2015). In their investigation into the reasons for mobile platform switching, Lin *et al.* (2017) defined service quality in terms of assurance, personalization, responsiveness, and dependability. The ease, functionality, and perceived utility of cell-phones are measured in this study using the service quality metric. Prior research conducted by Arif *et al.* (2016), Hew, Badaruddin, and Moorthy (2017), and Chong (2013) deemed these metrics essential for assessing the quality of service provided by cell-phones.

- i. **Convenience:** Arif *et al.* (2016) define convenience as the state in which work is easy, streamlined, or performed with minimal effort, discomfort, or difficulty.
- ii. **Functionality:** According to Lee, Eze, and Ndubisi (2011), a smart-phone's functionality is its ability to give consumers an efficient and effective delivery method in a timely manner. The advent of smart-phones and mobile applications has led to increased functionality and a shift in how people communicate and look for information (Nathalie & Henk, 2013).
- iii. **Perceived Usefulness:** According to Chiu *et al.* (2009), this is the degree to which a customer thinks a product would improve their transaction performance. Perceived usefulness was defined by Lau, Lam, and Cheung (2016) as users' perception that a smartphone may improve their performance in areas of communication, entertainment, personal activity management, and agenda-setting.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

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Service Qualities and Repurchase Intention

There is a wealth of empirical data regarding the connections between repurchase intention and service quality. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1991), customers' perceptions of actual service performance in relation to expectations were the bases for their assessment of high and low service quality. According to Parasuraman *et al.* (1991), there is a favorable correlation between customers' desire to refer the business and their impressions of the quality of the services received. Boulding, Kalra, Richard, and Zeithaml (1993) and Cronin and Taylor (2022) have also looked at the relationship between the characteristics of individual behavioral intentions and the quality of the service. While Boulding *et al.*, (1993) concentrated on both repurchase intentions and willingness to recommend, Cronin and Taylor (2022) only considered repurchase intention. While Boulding *et al.* (1993) discovered a positive association between service qualities and repurchase intentions, Cronin and Taylor (1992) found no substantial (positive) effect of service quality on intentions to purchase again. According to research by Balaji and Sarkar (2013), the degree of failure affects how recovery attempts and consumer reaction behaviors like loyalty and unfavorable word-of-mouth interact. Caruana (2002) discovered that the relationship between service quality and service loyalty is mediated by customer satisfaction. Gonzalez, Comesana, and Brea (2007) provided evidence regarding how consumer satisfaction and service quality affect behavior intentions in the travel and tourism sector. The findings showed that customer satisfaction and service quality had a substantial beneficial impact on behavior intentions in the travel and tourism sector.

Customer satisfaction is positively impacted by service quality, according to studies on mobile services conducted in South Korea and Canada by Tung (2004) and Kuo *et al.*, (2009), respectively. Research has demonstrated a favorable correlation between customers' pleasure and their propensity to make another purchase (Brady, Robertson & Cronin, 2001; Cronin, Brady & Hult, 2000). This is consistent with the findings of Kuo *et al.* (2009), who found that customers who are happier with a product are more likely to promote and repurchase it. This implies that when customers are happy, repurchases may occur more frequently. Tung (2004) and Gerpott, Rams, and Schindler (2001) conducted studies on the German telecom market and found a favorable correlation between customer satisfaction and desire to repurchase.

In conclusion, prior research has demonstrated a noteworthy and affirmative correlation between service quality and the desire to repurchase (Wang, Lo & Yang, 2004; Alexandris, Dimitriadis & Markata, 2002; Cronin & Taylor, 2022). This suggests that good repurchase intentions can be induced in customers by providing high-quality service. According to Ahamed and Skallerud (2015), relationship continuation is a direct result of satisfaction. The study conducted by Fang, Chiu, and Wang (2011) revealed that repurchase intention was positively impacted by both trust and satisfaction, with satisfaction having a greater influence than trust. Repurchase intention was found to be directly correlated with satisfaction by Loureiro, Kaufmann, and Rabino (2014). Oliver (2019) also believed that customer happiness encourages repeat business and usage of goods and services.

Conceptual Framework

We suggested a framework, which is shown in Figure 1, based on the analysis of the body of existing literature. The model's main goal is to ascertain how service quality affects customers' intentions to make additional purchases. The study aims to ascertain whether the convenience, functionality, and perceived utility of a service, as indicators of quality, have an effect on consumers' desire to repurchase it. Figure 2.1 displays the relationships' graphic representation:

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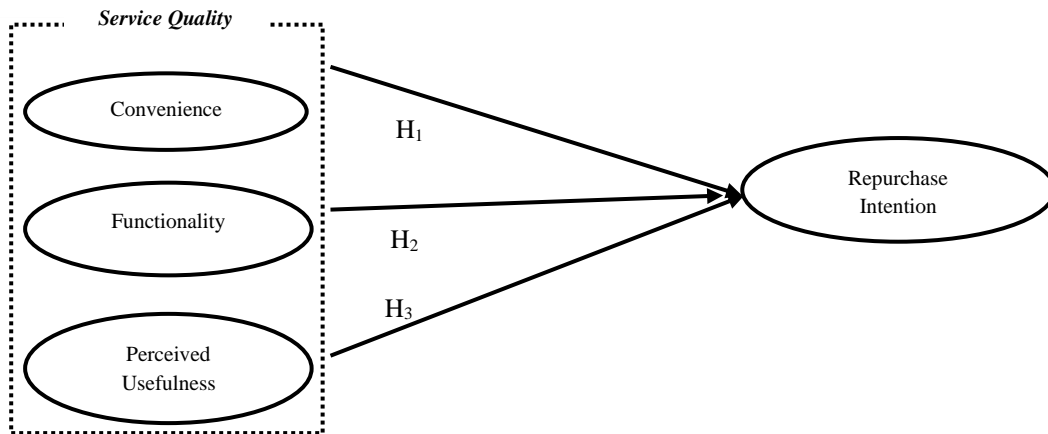


Figure 2.1: Research model
Source: Researcher’s conceptualization (2024)

METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was chosen for this investigation. In order to get data from the sampled population, a questionnaire is used as the research tool. This is in line with Agbonifoh and Yomere's (1999) description of survey research design, which is the methodical collection of data from respondents with the aim of comprehending and/or forecasting a demographic characteristic. The study's population consisted of Oye-Ekiti smart-phone users. This population was primarily made up of residents of the surrounding Federal University especially students. Since no known population size is found in any record, the population is therefore infinite. Nevertheless, for convenience's sake, an accessible sample of 160 people was fixed, chosen at random from the densely populated areas around school roads, student residences, and bus terminals. To accomplish our goals, respond to our research inquiries, and support our theories, inferential statistics were employed in the analysis of the collected data. Correction analysis was performed for inferential statistics, and the F-statistic was employed to evaluate the hypotheses. The statistical software for social sciences (SPSS version 22) was utilized in the study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Test of Hypotheses

When utilizing correlation to determine whether to reject a hypothesis, the general guidelines state that a relationship exists if the coefficient is +0 or higher, -0 or lower, and 0 indicates that there is "no relationship." It also follows that there is a strong association when the coefficient is +0.5 or higher.

Table 1: Correlation Results

		phone’s convenience	phone’s functionality	perceived usefulness	repurchase intention
phone’s convenience	Pearson Correlation	1	.992**	.991**	.992**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	160	160	160	160
phone’s functionality	Pearson Correlation	.992**	1	.994**	.978**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	160	160	160	160

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perceived usefulness	Pearson Correlation	.991**	.994**	1	.976**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	160	160	160	160
repurchase intention	Pearson Correlation	.992**	.978**	.976**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	160	160	160	160

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author's Fieldwork (2024)

The findings of the correlation test between the independent variables (phone functionality, convenience, and perceived usefulness) and the dependent variable (repurchase intention) are shown in Table 1.

The stated hypotheses to be validated are:

Hypothesis One

H₀1: Smart phone convenience has no significant influence on users' repurchase intention.

A favorable and statistically significant association between phone convenience and repurchase intention is established by the correlation coefficient of 0.992%. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to the conclusion that among Oye-Ekiti smart-phone users, convenience has a major impact on customers' intentions to repurchase phones. Furthermore bolstering this position is the two-tailed significance of 0.000.

Hypothesis Two

H₀2: Smart phone functionality has no significant effect on users' repurchase intention.

The phone's functionality and the intention to repurchase are positively and significantly correlated, as indicated by the correlation value of 0.978. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is determined that smart-phone functionality significantly influences Oye-Ekiti smart-phone customers' intention to repurchase. Furthermore bolstering this position is the two-tailed significance of 0.000.

Hypothesis Three

H₀3: Smart phone usefulness does not have significant effect on users' repurchase intention.

A favorable and statistically significant association between phone usability and repurchase intention is established by the correlation coefficient of .976. As a result, the null hypothesis is disproved, and it can be concluded that among smart-phone users in Oye-Ekiti, smart phone usefulness significantly influences users' desire to repurchase. Furthermore bolstering this position is the two-tailed significance of 0.000.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the survey show a significant and positive association between the independent variables—the phones perceived usefulness, convenience, and functionality—and the dependent variable, which is repurchase intention. These findings go counter to those of Cronin and Taylor (1992), who discovered no meaningful (positive) correlation between intentions to repurchase and service quality. Still, this study's findings support those of many other research, such as the one by Parasuraman *et al.* (1991), which found that customers' perceptions of a company's level of service quality and their willingness to recommend it are positively correlated. The results of this study align with those of Gonzalez, Comesana, and Brea (2007), who demonstrated how traveler dispositions to behave in particular ways are influenced by customer satisfaction and service quality. The study's findings demonstrated that customer satisfaction and service quality have a substantial beneficial impact on behavior intentions in the travel and tourism sector.

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SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Findings

The research's conclusions were as follows: Repurchase intention and each of the explanatory factors (convenience, functionality, and perceived usefulness of the phone) had a positive and highly significant association.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study looked into Oye-Ekiti smart-phone consumers' repurchase intentions and service quality. The variables of interest were primarily divided into two categories: intention to repurchase and service quality. Convenience, functionality, and perceived utility are the metrics used to quantify the quality of services provided by smart-phones. The study's findings demonstrated that smart phone users' intentions to repurchase are positively and significantly impacted by service quality, which includes simplicity, functionality, and perceived utility.

Policy Implications:

First and foremost, this study suggests that phone manufacturers should always work to improve the features and designs of their devices in order to increase customer happiness and encourage further purchases. Users should find their smart-phones to be both convenient and psychologically comfortable to use. Second, a smart-phone's usability and functionality are essential requirements. Consequently, it is advised that smart-phone producers ascertain what features consumers' desire from their devices and focus more on those features. Manufacturers should design cell-phones that are easy to understand, even for those who are not very tech-savvy, and that have simple menu configurations to ensure that they are as useful as possible for the intended user base.

Contribution to Knowledge

This research adds to our understanding in several ways. It adds to the scholarly conversation about what influences smart-phone users' intentions to repurchase. The repurchase decision-making elements that smart-phone users deem significant have been empirically established by this study. Within the framework of research, this study will add to the growing body of knowledge regarding how Nigerian smart-phone users assess convenience, functionality, perceived usefulness, and intention to repurchase. This study offers a current effort and insightful information on the relationship between service qualities and repurchase intention among Nigerian smart-phone users.

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