PERCEIVED CONVENIENCE AND CUSTOMER PATRONAGE OF FINTECH FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT

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Article history:		Abstract:
		This study empirically examined the relationship between perceived convenience and customer patronage of financial technology (FinTech) firms in Port Harcourt. Despite the efforts by financial technology firms in their customer services, there seems to be unsatisfactory customer service, which has led to low customer patronage. The study adopted a descriptive research design and data was collected from both primary and secondary source. To achieve the purpose of this work, two hypotheses were formulated and a questionnaire was designed to enable the researcher obtain information required to test the stated hypotheses, Three hundred and eighty-two (382) copies of questionnaire were therefore distributed to the target units, covering the specified target geographical scope (users of FinTech in Port Harcourt), From the total number distributed, retrieval recorded a success rate of three hundred and seventy-one (371) which suffices at a 97.1 percent statistical model representation which were tested statistically using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool with the aid of statistical Package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. The test revealed amongst others, that there is a strong positive correlation between perceived convenience and purchase intention of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt. The study concludes and made recommendations amongst others that: FinTech firms need to develop a more in-depth understanding of the customer's processes and activities, also those that are not directly related to the core service offering. The researcher also suggested to other researchers interested in a further study on this topic to extend their scope into other region, state and country using other measures of the variable.

INTRODUCTION

Significant technical advancements have emerged in the financial service industry in the last few years, as we have witness significant revolutions in the way and method of delivering financial transactions, payment methods and exchange mechanisms. Many managers have frequently considered their Information Technology (IT) units to improve efficiency and assist game changing innovation which to an extend have reduced cost. Financial Technology (FinTech) is an emerging industry that develops new technology in order to disrupt old-fashioned financial markets for new improvement in its activities. The integration of new technology into our daily lives has resulted in diverse adoption patterns and varied consumer participation.

Financial technology (FinTech) is an emerging innovation in the financial industry, fuelled in part by the era of internet access and mobile communications, making Nigeria one of the biggest markets for digital financial services in the world, which includes checking bank balances, online payments, and performing account operations (Tiwari, & Kartika, 2019). Forbes reports that consumer usage of financial applications surged by 71% in 2019 (Salz, 2020). Surprisingly, stakeholders continue to invest in Nigerian enterprises, with total Nigeria Start-up Funding in 2018 reaching $178,440,980, an increase of 56% over 2017 investments. Records indicate that FinTech start-ups received 58% of these financing in 2018, reaching $103,410,795 in total (Techpoint Africa, 2018).

During the Covid-19 lock down, when stores and harbors were closed, there were numerous opportunities for financial technology firms (Talwar et al., 2020). Prior research has examined numerous topics, including perceived risk, data security (Fernando and Touriano, 2018; Lim et al., 2019), perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness (Chuang et al., 2016; Das, 2019; Fu & Mishra, 2020a; Kauflin & Mishra, 2020b; Salz & Kauflin, 2020; Wang and Chang, 2018), and interaction perspectives (Gimpel et al., 2018). As a result, consumers are more likely to utilize financial services made

feasible by technological advancements. (Saksonova & Kuzmina-Merlino, 2017; Chuang et al., 2016; Lim et al., 2019; Ryu, 2018). In addition, it is essential to note that each subsector of the Nigerian FinTech industry contains a unique assortment of financial products and services. In other words Fintechs in Nigeria offer different products and services. The categories includes; payments, mobile money and digital banking, lending, Crypto currency, Savings, Investment and crowdfunding, InsurTech, Entreprise services and infrastructure, Venture capital and private equity, Association and facilitators , Accelerators and incubators etc.

However, failure of FinTech firms to develop an all-round effective convenience service mechanism has impacted negatively in customer patronage. This formed the basis for carrying out this study on perceived convenience and customer patronage of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In today's competitive business environment, it is more important than ever to understand and meet the requirements of customers. Consequently, firms now prioritize customer requirements over product innovations (Hanson, 2000). In the service sector, it is more difficult to differentiate one's products from the competition than in the industrial sector. Presently, Point-of-Sale (POS) agents operated by various Financial Technology firms can be found in profusion at virtually every shop, outlet, store, grocery store, and gas/petrol stations in Port Harcourt (FINTECH). These POS assistants are designed to facilitate and expedite the acquisition of financial services. Due to the daily influx of new entrants into the market, customer satisfaction has become the most important differentiator among financial service providers. The current business climate is characterized by intense competition, particularly in the FinTech industry.

Achieving a high level of customer satisfaction is advantageous for businesses in the financial technology industry in a number of ways, with increased customer loyalty being the most significant (Amadi, Igwe, & Anucha, 2020). Customers who are satisfied with a FinTech company's services are more likely to make additional purchases, which in turn helps to spread the word about how great the company is. Customers are more likely to be satisfied when their expectations are met, and attaining this level of satisfaction is a key goal of customer relationship management (Jones et al., 2007). Despite the fact that the proliferation of e-self-service initiatives in the FinTech industry may have contributed to shortened wait times at brick-and-mortar locations, the level of consumer comprehension is still abysmal. The majority of customers have not yet adopted the innovation because many experienced users continue to complain about poor network service, privacy and security issues, and delays in handling complaints, complicated online processes, and a lack of assistance from customer service representatives. If a consumer is satisfied with the service they received, they are likely to continue doing business with the same company indefinitely (Amadi, Igwe, & Anucha, 2020). There is still a significant quantity of research to be conducted in the field of FinTech on how E-self-service can improve consumer engagement and business outcomes. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to assess the degree to which Port Harcourt's FinTech enterprises have incorporated E-self-service and the level of consumer participation.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this study is to examine the relationship between perceived convenience and customer patronage of Fintech firms in Port Harcourt. Specifically; to

i   Ascertain the relationship between perceived convenience and purchase intention of Fintech firms in Port Harcourt

ii.   Investigate the relationship between perceived convenience and repeat purchase of Fintech firms in Port Harcourt.
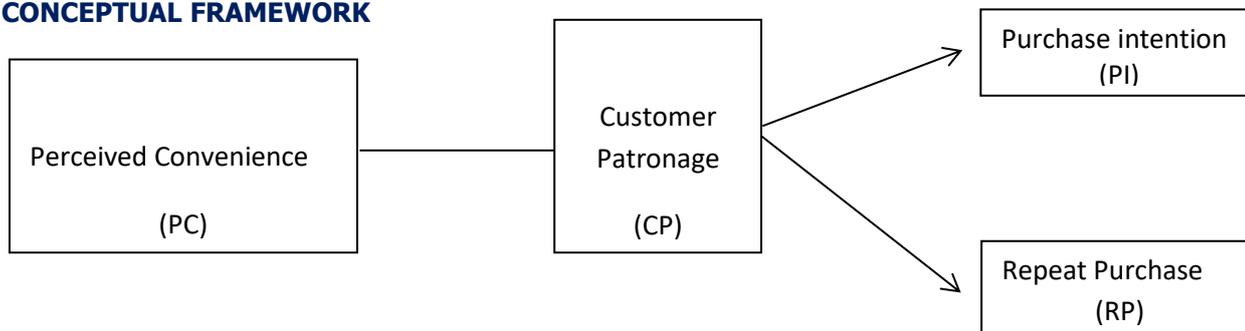
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1:   Conceptual framework showing the relationship between Perceived convenience and Customer Patronage of FinTech Firms in Port Harcourt.

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Source: *Adapted from the works of Minh, 2021; Hsiang-Ting, 2021 & Davies, 1989.*

LITERATURE REVIEW
Theoretical Foundations
Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Davis first put up the idea of TAM in 1989 with the intention of explaining the reasons why a user decides to embrace or reject information technology. TAM offers a foundation for tracing the ways in which beliefs, attitudes, and intentions to utilize a product are influenced by factors in the environment. The TAM proposes two cognitive beliefs: one is that of perceived utility, and the other is that of perceived ease of use. According to this theory, "users" are more likely to embrace a new component of technology. If they perceive that it will be of advantageous to them and easy to learn. People's attitudes toward technological advancements are influenced by both of these factors. The TAM model was expanded by Davis et al. (1992) to include additional variable called perceived pleasure. They came to conclusion that higher pleasure derived from using technological tools is a factor in adoption of such tools. TAM is also a key notion for perceived convenience adoption.

Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT)

Rogers (2003) defines innovation as "an idea, practice, or thing that a person or other unit of adoption sees to be novel." Innovation may take the form of a process, but it can also be an object. According to this theory, an innovation's uniqueness is determined not only by how long it has been since its discovery or execution but also by the extent to which it has been modified to take on additional tasks or perform the same or a previously performed task in an innovative manner. This is because the theory is based on the idea that newness is not limited to the passage of time since the innovation's first discovery or use. To put it another way, an innovation may be defined as a novel approach to performing an established function (Lawrence et al., 2018). An invention is beneficial only to the degree it is accepted by a social structure. An innovation must engage in the process of diffusion in order for it to be accepted by the social system.

Financial Technology (FinTech) Firms

It is generally agreed that the Agent Networking approach is the most crucial part of the Fintech industry in the current economic environment. Users of fintech for the first time naturally engage with the suppliers to the sector. This is where customers first become familiar with the products and where they begin to develop faith in the reliability of the service. Signing up for a mobile wallet, completing KYC, and adding funds can all be done at the agent's location, making it convenient for customers who are not as comfortable with technology. For both recognized and unlisted customers, the agent is responsible for all transactions involving money transfers, sales, and expenses made outside of the country. As an inducement, the representative receives a fee for each transaction that is finalized at their location. This charge benefits the agent's well-established business. Recent estimates by the Central Bank of Nigeria put the number of active traders in Nigeria at over 150,000 (CBN). Many different financial technology firms now use these middlemen as points of communication. It collaborated with service providers to aim high and double the existing number to 500,000. Thus, the efforts of FinTech operators will have resulted in 150,000 well-established firms experiencing higher sales and profits. An informed Paga resident told me that the average monthly salary of the 27,653 authorized workers in the region is between ₦10,000 and ₦500,000 (Adebayo, 2021).

The method classifies Financial Technology Agents according to the usual transaction volume and value handled at each place. The top 25% of traders receive more than ₦500,000 monthly on average, making them the best paid professionals in the business. Overhead costs are greater for these businesses because they have numerous locations, hire employees, etc. Of all spies, 60% are considered to be low-level agents, while 40% are considered to be intermediate-level agents. Agents at the mid-level have access to a private room and an assistant. Typically, lower-level workers run the service on their own, either as a side gig or as a supplement to their primary occupation. The Paga agency's efforts to boost employment have resulted in the creation of about 17,000 new positions for the economy. Agency banking services provided by the agent network have a good societal impact because they increase consumer access to banking services. Customers in less-populated areas, where it may be too expensive or inconvenient for big institutions to open up business, stand to gain the most from this. The first and second lockdowns that occurred during the unusual breakout of the COVID-19 crises further solidified the worth of agents as a viable alternative to bank offices. Agent locations saw an increase in commerce of about 30% during both lockdowns. According to EFInA's "Impact Assessment" of the Fintech industry in 2020, this sector has the potential to add $50 billion to the GDP of the Digital Financial Services industry by 2025. This could be the result of longer workdays, larger financial investments, and greater production made possible by technical progress.

Keep in mind that each subset of Nigeria's FinTech industry is home to an assortment of FinTech businesses. This matter requires careful consideration. To restate, Nigerian financial technology firms offer a variety of options. Today, nine distinct financial instruments exist: Insurance technology; accelerators and incubators; venture capital and private equity; associations and facilitators. Payment systems, mobile money, and digital banking; lending; crypto currencies, investments, savings, and crowd funding; enterprise services and infrastructure, insurance technology, venture capital and private equity.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW
Concept of Perceived convenience

According to Wang (2012), Collier and Barnes (2015), Collier and Sherrell (2010), and Zhu et al. (2013), the effectiveness of e-self-service is a significant instrument of e-self-service. The ease of utilizing ESSs is also a factor. The concept of convenience in this context refers to the amount of time and effort spent by a customer in the course of their interaction with a member of staff (Bawan and Elma, 2017). Furthermore, Brown (1990) argued that customers value services more when they are provided for them by a third party, and value them less when they must be given by the customer themselves. However, when it comes to web-based self-service, such an approach is totally out of place (Collier and Sherrell, 2010). Yet when the level of convenience offered by ESS increases for its users and customers, those individuals will choose to carry out the service themselves rather than having a staff carry it out on their behalf (Chen and Li, 2010; Collier et al., 2014). On the other hand, Collier and Sheller (2010) came to the conclusion that customers would not utilize the e-self-service channel if it is inconvenient to do so, and this was their conclusion based on their research. In the context of ESSs, perceived convenience refers to both the customer's engagement with and usage of the online service, as well as the particular setting in which the customer makes use of the online service (Chen and Li, 2010; Zhu et al., 2013). The concept of convenience in relation to the electronic self-service channel may be broken down into two components: the amount of work needed to utilize the ESS, as well as the user's estimation of how much time using it will take (Zhu et al., 2007; Collier et al., 2014).

A significant number of academics have highlighted the significance of respondents' assessments of how convenient things are (Meuter et al., 2000; Chen and Li, 2010; Zhu et al., 2013; Collier and Barnes, 2015; Klier et al., 2016). When assessing e-self-services, the customer's perception of how convenient the service is is the most important factor, according to Durkin (2004). According to the findings of Pujari (2004), consumers placed the highest value on their own time and the accessibility of relevant information. These are two distinct measurements of perceived convenience. While doing an analysis of customer satisfaction with e-self-services, Collier and Sherrell (2010) found that one of the most significant criteria was the consumers' perceptions of how convenient the service was. In the same vein, a research that was carried out by Ding et al. (2011) revealed that one of the indicators that consumers use while assessing the service quality of ESSs is perceived convenience. When evaluating e-self-services, one of the most important factors for clients to consider is how convenient the service seems to be.

Convenience has been shown to have a substantial effect on the number of consumers who use an ESS, and new studies (Collier and Sherrell, 2010; Ding, et al., 2011) have stressed its significance as a major source of happiness in connection to e-self-service (Durkin 2004; Evans and Brown 1988). Customers can finish a transaction at their own convenience with a self-service choice, bypassing the time and location constraints of the conventional service route. Therefore, a user-friendly e-self-service has the potential to extend the range of available transactional choices and reduce the time and effort required to start and finalize a transaction. While most prior work on e-self-service has concentrated on how users feel about the system's intuitiveness, we believe speed to be a more nuanced and multifaceted concept. Conversational effort is also considered within this paradigm. "it is the degree to which a user expects an interface to be completely effortless," as defined by Davis (1989). While usability evaluates how simple it is for a user to accomplish their intended goal while utilizing a particular online service, ease takes into account the user's time and energy before, during, and after a transaction. The concept of simplicity of use places an emphasis on the internet user's experience over other potential sources of mental effort. Additional considerations include the location, actual address, and accessibility of the online shop in relation to its target market. When evaluating the convenience of a service, it is important to look at the whole picture rather than just one part.

The effort required to complete an e-self-service transaction is directly related to how easy it looks to the consumer. Both mental and bodily work could be deemed assets depending on the terms of the contract. In a self-service setting, customers play an integral role in the planning process, and their impression of the transaction's success and revenue may hinge on things like how intuitive it is to complete. Customer satisfaction with e-self-services and subsequent purchasing intent will change. This is so if fewer efforts are needed from potential buyers before they commit to a purchase.

Concept of Customer Patronage

Customer patronage is a key conception in marketing. This concept has been described from the attitudinal and behavioural view point. Ding, Lu, and Ge (2015), for example, describe customer devotion as favoring one company over others in the same industry. The word describes a customer's choice for one company over another in the same industry. The buying patterns of a client are a clear indicator of their choice for a company's products or services (Anucha, 2019). Customers are devoted when they make repetitive purchases of a company's products or services based on their positive impressions and experiences with that business, as defined by Garga and Bambale (2016). A customer's level of patronage for a company is measured by both the regularity with which they make transactions and the stability with which they perceive the company. When a customer repeatedly buys the same thing from a store, they are said to have developed a "patronship" (Gremler & Brown, 1996). According to Oliver, customer loyalty is demonstrated when consumers prefer to buy a company's products over those of its competitors. (1999). Oliver interprets this in his own way. Similarly, Seock (2009) defines devotion as returning to the same store repeatedly to buy both staples and specialty products. This could refer to any kind of purchase.

Patronage Intention: Patronage intention is defined as the willingness and desire of a potential buyer of a certain company's product or service to patronize the products or services of the company (Ding et al, 2015). In other to maximize profit, every business including FinTech firms wants to increase patronage intention in other to remain in business nevertheless; this would be contingent on the customers' perceptions of the quality of service delivery provided by a company. Customers' intentions to become repeat customers would increase as a result (Anucha, 2019). In a typical scenario, the intention of a consumer to use a FinTech product would decline if the service offered by the firm did not live up to the standards they had set for it.

A consumer's motivation to become a regular patronage of a FinTech company is proportionate to the value they place on the firm's promised improvements in usability, responsiveness, privacy, and security. If a product or service continually meets or exceeds customer standards in terms of quality and happiness, as argued by Panda (2013), it is likely to enjoy broad adoption. If customers have low expectations for the services provided by a FinTech company, they are less apt to do business with that firm. Executives in the FinTech industry need to have a deep familiarity with the reasons why consumers buy (Choi and Chu, 2001). Understanding customer patronage intention would help the industry managers to forecast their future purchasing behaviour (Anucha, 2019).

Repeat Purchase: In a real life scenario, nobody would like to return back happily to where he/she was rejected or treated with no respect. In the case of repeat purchase, every customer with a happy satisfactory memory would most likely return to buy again and over again. The term "repeat patronage" describes a customer's tendency to maintain their support for an organization into the future (Jere, et al, 2014). Panda (2013) explains that devoted consumers are those who continue to purchase from a company despite knowing that competitors offer similar products and services. According to Nwulu and Asiegbu (2015), a repeat purchase is when a customer buys something from the same company many times in a row. Nevertheless, it can also be understood as when a customer purchases a product or service from the same brand. Customers who make repeat purchases are consumers who are intellectually, emotionally, and physically happy with the offers of an organization. This satisfaction may come in the shape of a product that surpasses the customers' expectations (Nwulu & Asiegbu 2015). It's possible that a customer's position on the loyalty tier might be considerably changed by a larger number of repeat purchases. Customers often gauge their loyalty to a brand by the frequency with which they make repeat purchases; a high repeat purchase value indicates that the customer has been successfully retained and are satisfied with the product; and a high repeat purchase value drives higher customer value, which improves the brand's position at the top of the loyalty ladder (Nwulu & Asiegbu 2015).

Empirical Reviews on perceived convenience and Customer Patronage

Perceived convenience is comprised of user/consumer perceptions of the time and effort required to commence service delivery (Brown, 1990). It requires user/consumer actions to seek service and, in most circumstances, their physical presence to obtain it. Customers may commence service in-person (by physically visiting to the service station), remotely (by calling in a take-out order), or through both methods (telephoning for a reservation and then going to the service point). According to Meter and colleagues (2000), one of the multiple reasons for the expanding adoption of self-service technologies is that many of them tend to minimize time and effort costs for interdependent services. Consumers/users self-perform various services mostly out of a sense of convenience. Self-service minimizes customers' reliance on inconveniently accessible service providers and workers. In the streets of Port Harcourt, POS agents are popular because they are present when financial institution offices are closed. Customers' opinions of convenience have a direct impact on their judgments of a company's service quality and pleasure with a particular contact or experience. As time and effort are personal resources that customers must sacrifice in order to purchase or utilize a service, consumer convenience expectations that are not met may also raise fairness concerns.

Amir, Hadi, Ebrahim, and Hossein (2014) analyzed the impact of service convenience on customer satisfaction and behavioral reactions in the banking business. To retain clients in service marketing, firms must please them, especially in the service sector. There are five forms of service convenience: choice, access, transaction, benefit, and after-benefit. The purpose of the research was to examine the influence of service ease on customer satisfaction and behavioural reactions. The results indicate that service convenience has a good influence on customer satisfaction and behavior, whereas customer satisfaction has a favourable effect on word-of-mouth communication and desire to switch. Similarly, Moutinho and Smith (2000) investigated the relationship between accessibility (banking convenience), customer happiness, consumer loyalty, and switching behaviour. According to their findings, there was a direct and positive relationship between the convenience of banking and subjective satisfaction. Moreover, increased levels of customer satisfaction minimize switching intentions and boost client retention (Chang & Polonsky, 2012). Customers place a high value on perceived convenience because if they have a problem with the service, product, brand, or delivery date, they require a service provider to assist them in addressing their problems (Jiang et al., 2013; Chang et al., 2012).

According to Aagja et al. (2011) and Colwell et al. (2008), perceived convenience has a substantial impact on customer loyalty. In a similar vein, Aagja et al. (2011) find that consumers are better happy when the convenience of on-demand accessibility and delivery schedule is offered. Based on this review, we developed the following hypothesis:

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between perceived convenience and purchase intention of FinTech Firms in Port Harcourt.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between perceived convenience and repeat purchase of FinTech Firms in Port Harcourt.

METHODOLOGY
Research Design
A descriptive research design was selected as the most acceptable strategy for reaching the aims of this study since it takes into consideration both the research philosophy that was chosen and the subject matter that is currently being investigated. In order to answer the where, who, when, what, and how questions that surrounded the many aspects of this inquiry, this strategy was used (Burns & Veeck, 2017). Due to the fact that this study was a sociological investigation of client loyalty, a descriptive research strategy was used so that the connection between the study variables could be explained (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2018). Because of the way it was designed, we were able to gather information on the perspectives, routines, and attitudes of respondents about the factors that impact their product purchases.

The proposed research will utilize a descriptive study methodology and a cross-sectional survey to investigate the impact that self-service technology has on customer patronage of financial technology (Fintech) businesses in Port Harcourt. As the data obtained from the target consumers was reviewed, leading to conclusions that informed the rejection or acceptance of the study's hypotheses, this descriptive research technique was found to be suitable. Positivism, which is typified by a quantitative approach, objectivity, and the testing of hypotheses as theory-building pillars, is the underpinning of this research technique.

Population of the Study
The population is used to characterize the variables of interest to the study. In this analysis, Fintech firms in Port Harcourt served as the population. Twenty-three (23) Fintech businesses were active in Port Harcourt at the time of this research (according to Nigeria Fintech Census 2022: The Nigerian FinTech market map covers a wide range of FinTechs across each category payments, mobile money and digital banking). Those who were aimed at were the firms' clientele. Students at the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University of Science and Technology, and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education make up the accessible population since the population is unlimited. Below is the population according to the various Universities:

Table 1: Population of undergraduate and postgraduate students in University institutions in Port Harcourt

S/N	University	Population
1	University of Port Harcourt	38,740
2	Rivers State University	29,770
3	Ignatius Ajuru University of Education	13,490
	Total	**82,000**

Source: *Researcher's Desk Survey, 2023 & The Institutions Website*

Sampling Technique and Sample Size
This study selected clients from twenty-three (23) different financial technology (FinTech) organizations using the stratified sample approach. This method of sampling was adopted because it was required to segment the population into subgroups (strata) of concern in order to properly analyse the data. Researchers choose a subset of the population to survey in order to draw conclusions about the whole. Three Hundred Eighty-Two (382) was chosen as the sample size after taking into account the characteristics of the research population and the nature of the study. This decision is supported by of Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) which recommends that any population further than Seventy-Five Thousand (75, 000) will by default, generate a sample size of Three Hundred and Eighty Two (382).

Data Collection Instrument
The research instrument that was used for this investigation was a fully validated questionnaire. The questionnaire was chosen because it enabled the gathering of information from a large number of respondents in a short period of time, it was easy to administer, and it allowed respondents to stay anonymous. These were the primary reasons for the adoption of the questionnaire. Also, the standardization of questions contributed to an increase in the homogeneity of the responses (Saunders et al., 2016). The questionnaire made use of a Likert scale with a five-point measure that was borrowed from instruments used by other researchers, but with questions that were adapted to the purpose of the current study (Can & Erdil, 2018; Imbambi & Kinoti, 2018; Muturi et al., 2018).

Data Collection Method
This study collected data from a variety of sources, including both secondary and primary sources. The secondary data came directly from a variety of publications, including journals and reports (Saunders et al., 2016). Using secondary sources, we were able to obtain information such as a list of the financial technology (FinTech) firms located in Port Harcourt. In order to collect the primary information necessary for the study, a questionnaire was used.

Reliability of Instrument
After the completion of a preliminary investigation, a full-scale test of the research instrument using version 23 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was carried out (SPSS). Internal consistency was assumed for items or variables with a Cronbach Alpha of 0.7, and reliability was inferred from an overall alpha of 0.7 for the instrument used in the research (Field, 2013).

Data Analysis Techniques
After fieldwork, the data will be prepared for analysis. Included in data preparation are questionnaire validation, editing, cleaning, coding, and information entry into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. (Kirkpatrick,

2015). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were compiled. Using the Pearson correlation coefficient, an examination of the significance level of bivariate variables was conducted by correlation analysis (r). Since the research assumed that the independent variable had an influence on the dependent variable and that the two variables were linearly connected (Kothari, 2004), Pearson correlation and partial correlation were used to examine the moderating variable.

A correlation value of r 1.00 was taken as signifying a perfect negative or positive correlation between the variables. At r = 0.01, the link was fairly weak, and r = 0.90 indicated an extraordinarily robust correlation between variables. If r = 0, this meant that there was no association between the variables. In addition, a correlation was regarded significant if the probability value was equal to or less than 0.05 (p-value 0.05). (Saunders et al., 2016).

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The retrieval rate of 371 out of the total number of disseminated copies is adequate for a statistical model representation of 97.1 percent.

Table 2: Showing the Questionnaire Distribution Results

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage
Distributed	382	100
Retrieved	371	97.1
Not retrieved	11	2.9
Retrieved usable	367	98.9
Retrieved not usable	4	1.1

As shown in Table 2, the distribution and retrieval of questionnaires for this research are demonstrated. As a result of incomplete and certain double-entries filling, some copies were invalid and not useful for further analysis. Total of three hundred and eighty-two (382) copies of questionnaires were distributed, three hundred and seventy-one (371) copies representing a percentage response rate of 97.1 percent were retrieved while eleven (11) which represent 2.9 percent were not retrieved. From the three hundred and seventy-one (371) retrieved, three hundred and sixty-seven (367) which represent 98.9 percent were usable, and four (4) which represent 1.1 percent were not usable for the study.

BIVARIATE ANALYSIS USING PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION COEFFICIENT AND PARTIAL CORRELATION

Decision Rules: Accept the null hypothesis (Ho) and reject the alternative hypothesis (Ha) if the significant probability value (PV) is less than 0.05, indicating the absence of a significant coefficient. Reject the null hypothesis (Ho) and accept the alternative hypothesis (Ha) if the significant probability value (PV) is less than 0.05, indicating the presence of a significant coefficient. -0.1 to -0.3 (weak negative influence), -0.4 to -0.6 (moderate negative influence), -0.7 to -0.9 (strong negative influence), and -1 (perfect negative influence); +0.1 to +0.3 (weak positive influence), +0.4 to +0.6 (moderate positive influence), +0.7 to +0.9 (strong positive influence), and +1 (perfect positive influence) (perfect positive influence).

Hypothesis One

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between perceived convenience and purchase intention of FinTech Firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between perceived convenience and purchase intention

Correlations			Perceived Convenience	Purchase Intention
Perceived Convenience	Pearson Correlation		1	.848
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000
	N		367	367
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation		.848	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N		367	367
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Interpretation: Table 3 above revealed a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) of 0.848 and probability value of 0.000 (**Sig< 0.05**). This result suggested a favorable and very significant association between perceived convenience and purchase intent among FinTech firms in Port Harcourt. Furthermore, $r^2 = 0.719$ suggested that the coefficient of determination of the association between perceived convenience and buy intention = 71.9%, indicating that perceived convenience has a high and significant link with the purchase intention of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt.

The null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, which indicated that there was a strong association between perceived convenience and purchase intention of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt.

Hypothesis Two

Ho_5: There is no significant relationship between perceived convenience and repeat purchase of FinTech Firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between perceived convenience and repeat purchase

Correlations			
		Perceived Convenience	Repeat Purchase
Perceived Convenience	Pearson Correlation	1	.855
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	367	367
Repeat Purchase	Pearson Correlation	.855	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	367	367
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

Interpretation: Table 4 above revealed a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) of 0.855 and probability value of 0.000 (**Sig< 0.05**). This finding demonstrated a favorable and very significant correlation between perceived convenience and repeated purchases from FinTech firms in Port Harcourt. In addition, r2 = 0.731 suggested that the coefficient of determination of the association between perceived convenience and repeat purchase = 73.1%, indicating that perceived convenience has a high and significant link with repeat purchase of FinTech Firms in Port Harcourt. With sig value 0.05 and r > 0.5, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, stating that there was a significant association between perceived convenience and repeat purchases of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 5: Summary of Results with respect to the Hypotheses

	Hypothesis	**Results**	**Decision**
Ho_1	There is no significant relationship between perceived convenience and purchase intention	R=0.848	Rejected
Ho_2	There is no significant relationship between perceived convenience and repeat purchase	R=0.855	Rejected

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first hypothesis (H_{01}) suggested that there is no significant relationship between perceived convenience and purchase intention of FinTech businesses in Port Harcourt. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient demonstrated a positive association between perceived convenience and purchase intention of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt, with a value of 0.848%. This indicates a significant correlation between the variables. This demonstrates that purchasing intent is positively correlated with perceived convenience. This suggests that there is statistical evidence against the hypothesis H_{01}, suggesting statistical significance. Consequently, we reject the first null hypothesis, leading us to the conclusion that perceived convenience is significantly related to purchase intention. This indicates that FinTech firms have grown more reliable, consistent, and dependable. Their services are more proactive, extensive, and client-centric.

Hypothesis five (Ho_2) stated that perceived convenience does not significantly relates with repeat purchase of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt. The outputs from Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient revealed a positive of 0.855 relationship between perceived convenience and repeat purchase of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt. This suggests a strong relationship between the variables. This shows that repeat purchase is a positive function of perceived convenience. This implies that there is statistically significant, indicating statistical evidence against H_{02}. Hence, we rejected hypothesis five, leading us to the conclusion that perceived convenience is significantly related to recurrent purchase. This means that the FinTech firms have become more dependable, consistent and trustworthy. Their services are more proactive, widely spread and customers' oriented.

CONCLUSION

The study therefore concludes that:

i.   The findings revealed that FinTech firms in Port Harcourt can improved on customer patronage by adopting perceived convenience initiatives.

ii.   The perceived convenience initiated by FinTech firms in Port Harcourt affects customer patronage.

iii.   Perceived convenience to a very large extent has a positive impact on purchase intention, repeat purchase and referral, thus, a significant

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this research are applicable to any type of organization, regardless of whether or not such organizations have significant issues regarding buy intention, repeat purchase, or recommendation. Based on the conclusion, recommendations are made as follows;

i.   FinTech firms need to complement perceived convenience with additional service features to secure more control over the service and a steady customer flow.
ii. FinTech firms need to find innovative ways of identifying and tracing some uninvited problems.
iii. FinTech firms should also make sure that the technical features of the perceived convenience meet the customer requirements and resources, as this is an important feature affecting both the service process and outcome.

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The following are the ways in which this work contributes to the corpus of knowledge:

i.   The findings of the study present a detailed assessment of the nexus between E-self-service and customer patronage of FinTech firms in Port Harcourt.
ii. Through its specific focus on service convenience, the findings from the study can serve to enrich decision making with regards to the activities of Financial Technology firms management in Nigeria at large.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Our primary data was sourced with structured copies of questionnaire; however, some respondents' avoidance to respond   posed a challenge which becomes a limitation. Also, there were numerous dimensions of perceived convenience and different measures of customer patronage, the few dimensions and measures adopted in this study may not be a complete representation and cannot be seen as superior to others not used. This therefore, constituted a major limitation to the study.

Moreso, the study was limited to the consumers' of the FinTech firms in Port Harcourt as the research was not allowed to go beyond the shores of Port Harcourt in River State, Nigeria. We suggest that this study be carried in other geo-political zone in Nigeria as our study was domiciled in Port Harcourt. It also suggested that the study be done in other industries such as hospitality, airlines, transportation and telecommunications etc.

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