AN EVALUATION OF THE NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (NCC) CONSUMER OUTREACH PROGRAMME (COP): A STUDY OF ABUJA MUNICIPAL AREA COUNCIL RESIDENTS

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN MASS COMMUNICATION

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation titled AN EVALUATION OF THE NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (NCC) CONSUMER OUTREACH PROGRAMME (COP) : A STUDY OF ABUJA MUNICIPAL AREA COUNCIL RESIDENTS has been carried out by me in the Department of Mass Communication, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and list of references provided. No part of this work was previously presented for another degree at this or any other institution.

YAKUBU USMAN _____ _____

Signature Date

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation titled AN EVALUATION OF THE NIGERIA COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (COP) CONSUMER OUTREACH PROGRAMME (COP): A STUDY OF ABUJA MUNICIPAL AREA COUNCIL RESIDENTS by Yakubu Usman meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Masters of Science in the Department of Mass Communication, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late grandfather Oche of Obagaji, and acting Oche of Agatu land Ahmadu Ogwola. May the Almighty Allah continue to reward you in the life beyond for your astute belief and love for education (Amin).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AMAC	Abuja Municipal Area council
AMEC	Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication
CAB	Consumer Affairs Bureau
COP	Consumer Outreach Programme
CTM	Consumer Town-hall Meeting
GSM	Global Service for Mobile Communication
IDI	In-depth Interview
IPR	Institute of Public Relations
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
NCC	Nigerian Communications Commission
NITEL	Nigerian Telecommunications Limited
NPC	National Population Commission
PRSA	Public Relations Society of America
SPs	Service Providers
SPSS	Statistical package for Social Science
TCP	Telecom Consumer Parliament

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to evaluate the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) Consumer outreach programme (COP) among Abuja Municipal Area Council residents. The study is set out to find out the public relations strategies used by COP of the NCC to achieve its objective, to assess consumers level of awareness of and participation in COP amongst Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) residents and to find out the benefit consumers of GSM resident in AMAC obtained from COP. The study adopted two-way symmetric model and relationship management theory as the theoretical frameworks and cross sectional descriptive survey as the research methed. The sample size for this study was 384 and interview three senior management staff of the commission. The sampling techniques is simple random, convenience and purposive. Data were collected with the aid of questionnaire and interview schedule as instrument of data collection. Afterward, the data from the respondents were analyzed with statistical package for social science (SPSS) using simple frequency percentages table as well as chi square. The major findings revealed that the public relations strategies used by consumer outreach programme are interactivity and publicizing the programme in local language of the city location where the programme will take place. The awareness level of Consumer Outreach Programme is moderately low 45.5% as against 55.5% who are not aware of the consumer outreach programme. Participation among participants is said to be in area of asking questions 38% and tabling complaints 38% as well as the programme is beneficial in terms of improved knowledge of consumer's right 54.5%. Based on the findings, it is recommended that the Nigerian Communications Commission should intensify its publicity regarding COP as to reach out to a large population of consumers. This can be achieved by using the mobile networks to send messages in form of unsolicited text messages to mobile phone users. The voice mobile advert can also be used as well in sensitizing people about the activities of COP. The advantage is that the network bears part of the cost which will make the networks sensitive to improving the quality of service they provide to consumer.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background to the Study

To maintain a good relationship between an organization and its public, an organization formulates strategies and these help the organization to relate effectively with its publics. Public Relations other than managing problems or issues, helps management to be informed and responsive to public opinion. In order to do so, Public Relations practitioners use strategic communication activities research as its principal tools (Cutlip, Center and Broom, 2006). However, Public Relation is fundamental to the survival and development of any organization. It is the oil that facilitates the continuous relationship between an organization and its publics and this relationship is built on mutual understanding and full truth. Public Relations create a favourable atmosphere for any service, idea, and goods/product to thrive. Public Relations link an organization with its publics and focused on relationship, one that mutually benefits organization and its publics.

In formulating Public Relations strategies, an organization should take into cognizance consumer behaviour which Lamb, et al. (2000:142) states that it is the acts of decision-making that directly involve the obtaining and using need-satisfying products and services, thus includes the decision-making process which precedes and determines these acts of buying a product. Therefore an organization like the Nigerian Communications Commission should be able to recognize the importance of customer satisfaction from its publics as without them the commission cannot stand. Consumers over time can develop positive or negative perception about an organization, therefore, organization such as the Nigerian Communications Commission must be careful on how they handle issues and matters relating to its public because it could either make or break the commission. Rice (1997:78) states that consumers are people who use products and services and who make payment for

those things which are bought. Based on what Rice said the Nigerian Communications Commission as a way of trying to smoothened its relationship between the commission and its publics and keep to its mandate of regulating the telecom industry, set up Consumer Outreach Programme to ensure consumers get quality services from various telecom networks they are subscribed to.

This however brings us to the challenges faced by the telecommunication industry in Nigeria which are poor service, poor customer relations and bad network, overcharged calls as well as unsolicited text message. The Nigerian Communications Commission assigned with the responsibility to regulate and ensure Nigerians enjoyed services provided by the network company in the face of these challenges set up Consumer Outreach Programme.

Evaluating a Public Relations strategy is the hallmark of an organization that intends to ascertain if a particular programme is working or not therefore, this brought about the need for this research. According to Grunig and Grunig (2001), evaluation research is necessary to establish the effectiveness of public affairs programmes and their contribution to organizational effectiveness. It provides the vital information necessary to plan Public Relations actions. The drive towards accountability means practitioners must show that Public Relations activities help their organization or clients to achieve meaningful goals (Johnson, 1994; Kirban, 1983).

However, Nigerian Communications Commission have been relating with consumers of mobile phone network users through interactions from 2003 to 2017 with the purpose of listening to consumers complaints and also educating and informing them on their right (NCC report, 2010). The drive towards achieving mutual understanding between Nigerian Communications Commission and it mobile phone users led to the establishment of Consumer Outreach programme in 2003, two years after the commercial rollout of Global Service for Mobile Communications (GSM) in

August 2001 by the Econet Wireless (now Airtel Nigeria), and MTN Nigeria by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC). Babaita (2010) states that before the commercial rollout of Global System for mobile communication services, over 90 per cent of the Nigerian population was cut off from telecommunications because there were gross insufficient telecommunications devices and platforms for communication. Then, only the affluent in the society were able to communicate through the NITEL landlines and analogue mobile devices. Specifically, in 2001, Nigeria could boast of only 400,000 landlines and 25,000 analogue mobile devices for a population of 120 million people (NCC report, 2010).

The rollout of GSM services opened the vista of opportunities for Nigerians to communicate via digital mobile telephone devices. Even then, the opportunities also came with some challenges for subscribers and service providers in the areas of tariff structure, accessibility to networks, affordability and efficiency of the services rendered. Then, the efficiency of service quality stood out to be the major challenge, which still lingers till date. However, in order to address the challenges, especially that of poor service quality that led to the rise in consumers' complaints, NCC established the Consumer outreach programme (COP), which is designed to bring subscribers and operators together on a single platform, where subscribers will make their complaints and operators will listen and address them accordingly. The NCC further created a new department, called the Consumer Affairs Bureau (CAB) and mandated it to oversee consumer complaints and ensure that their interests and rights are adequately protected bearing in mind the challenges confronting the telecom industry such as poor network service, overcharged calls, switching of costumers tariff plan without their permission.

Therefore, this study will evaluate the Consumer outreach programme of the Nigerian Communications Commission among residents of Abuja municipal Area Council.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The telecom industry in Nigeria, like every developing country in the world, is battling with different challenges militating against rapid growth and development in all sectors of its economy. The major challenges of the telecom industry in Nigeria are: poor service, poor customer's relations, and bad network, overcharged calls and also unnecessary or unsolicited text messages. In the light of these challenges, the NCC as a regulatory body is assigned with the responsibility of making sure Nigerians enjoy improved services provided by the network company. The commission therefore, set up Consumer Outreach Programme (COP) which serves as a forum where GSM users lay their various complaints to the commission with the operators of mobile phones network in attendance. The forum also serves as an avenue where the commission informs and educates subscribers on the progress or happenings in the industry.

Therefore, in an attempt to address the problems encountered by GSM subscribers in Nigeria, Nigerian Communications Commission has been taking certain steps to checkmate the activities of telecom industry in Nigeria. In 2008 MTN and Celtel were directed by NCC to pay compensation to subscribers who were active on network as penalty for poor quality of service (Babaita, 2010). The focal point of Consumer Outreach Programme is for subscribers to use the platform to lay their complains as well as getting information on the happenings in the telecommunication industry.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to evaluate how Nigerian Communications Commission have been able to use Consumer Outreach Programme to help address consumers complains.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of Study

The main objective of the study is to evaluate Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) Consumer Outreach Programme (COP) among Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) while the specific objectives are:

RO1. To find out the public relations strategies used by Consumer Outreach Programme of the Nigerian Communications Commission to achieve its objectives

RO2. To assess consumers awareness and participation in Consumer Outreach Programme activities by Abuja Municipal Area Council residents

RO3. To find out the benefit consumers of Global System for Mobile communication residing in Abuja Municipal Area Council obtained from COP activities.

1.4 Research Questions

The following are the Research Questions (RQ) set to generate data for the study

RQ1. What are the strategies used by Consumer Outreach Programme (COP) of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) to achieve its objectives?

RQ2. What is the consumer awareness of and participation in COP activities among Abuja Municipal Area Council residents?

RQ3. What are the benefits Abuja Municipal Area Council residents have obtained from Consumer Outreach Programme activities?

1.5 **Hypothesis**

The following hypothesis will be tested

H_0 There is no significant association between educational qualification and levels of awareness about Consumer Outreach Programme among Abuja Municipal Area Council residents

H_1 There is a significant association between educational qualification and levels of awareness about Consumer Outreach Programme among Abuja Municipal Area Council residents

1.6 **Scope and limitations of the Study**

Despite the existence of Consumer Outreach programme from 2003 to 2017, there is a lack of knowledge by mobile phone users about Consumer Outreach Programme which serves as a forum where consumers lay complains about the services provided by telecommunication companies in Nigeria. Therefore this work studied the Nigerian Communications Commission's Consumer Outreach programme among Abuja Municipal Council Area Residents. The justification for the choice of Abuja Municipal Area Council is as a result of it been among the pilot location for the programme and also among the few locations where COP has taken place more than once, notwithstanding, it may be difficult to study the entire locations where COP has taken place from 2003 to date within a limited time. The limitation of the work is the exclusion of respondent ages 0-18 years because they might not be able to attend COP and those with informal education in responding to the questionnaire. Another limitation is that this work cannot be generalised beyond Abuja Municipal area Council residents.

1.7 **Significance of the study**

Studies done on Public Relations have shown a trend that focused on the Public Relations activities of organisations (Wright e tal, 2009, Okechukwu and Wilfred, 2014, Johnson and Ifedayo, 2013) as such this study will focused on Nigerian Communications Commission Consumer Outreach Programme among Abuja Municipal Area Council Residents. Despite the existence of the Consumer Outreach programme, the problems that have struck the telecommunication industry in Nigeria from its inception still exist to date, hence the need for this study. Nigerian Communications Commission's Consumer Outreach Programme (COP) may not have been fully utilize by the consumers of telecom service as their exist challenges of poor services despite its existence since 2003 which therefore, indicate the gap in knowledge which this study intends to fill.

The findings of this study will be beneficial to the NCC; this is in consideration of the importance placed on the COP activities of the organization as the fulcrum of managing its Public Relations activities as it relates to providing quality service to GSM users in Nigeria. This study will provide evaluative feedback to the organization and also ascertain GSM users response about Consumer Outreach Programme in terms of awareness, participation and benefits.

Other beneficiaries of this study will include other government and privately owned organizations that are into public relations practice as comparisons can be made to also evaluate its Public Relations activities with a view of improving its practices. More so, researchers will also benefit from this study as it will add to the body of existing literature in the area of evaluation of Public Relations activity in an organization, which is an area of concern in the Public Relations literature.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Participation: Attendance and raising of questions during consumer outreach programme

Awareness: knowledge of the existence of Consumer Outreach Programme

Benefits: The degree to which consumer outreach programme can help improve quality service by telecom operators.

Strategy: activities put in place to achieve COP

1.9 Organization of Work

This dissertation has been structured to contain five chapters.

Chapter one contains introduction, statement of the research problem, research objective; it goes further to highlight the research question and hypothesis. It also has scope and limitation of the study, significance of the study as well as operational definition of terms.

Chapter two contains the literature review that talks about Public Relations, consumer behavior and its relationship with Public Relations. The Public Relations strategies and also evaluation and research in Public Relations were discussed. This chapter also reviewed empirical work, it goes further to explain two way symmetric model and relationship management theory which was adopted as the theory for the study.

Chapter three explains the research methodology, the method used and the purpose of using such method taking into consideration its strength and weaknesses. It also looks at the way the data was collected and analyzed.

Chapter four contains the analysis and the interpretation of data. It goes further to compare the findings of the present research with the past once.

Finally, chapter five contains the summary, conclusion and recommendations of this study.

CHPATER TWO
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, relevant literature will be reviewed to serve as a guide to the researcher. The literature review in this chapter includes conceptual, empirical and theoretical literature. For the conceptual literature, a cursory look was taken at public relations, public relations strategies, public relations practice in Nigeria, measurement and evaluation of Public Relations, consumer behavior and its relationship with public relations. In addition, the empirical literature was also reviewed based on the previous studies conducted by other researchers, while the last part of this review deals with the explanations of the theory adopted for the study.

2.2. The Concept of Public Relations

In this interdependent world, it is important for almost every organisations to keep a long term and trustworthy relations with the community or public groups in order to handle the up-coming challenges and also to maintain the survival and success of an organisation. The field of Public Relations is all about developing understanding and building good relationships with various public groups including government, media, employees, investors, suppliers, retailers and customers etc. Danladi (2009) sees public relations as a systematized effort in order to build the image and reputation of a business in social context. The worth of public relations in any organisation cannot be overlooked. This is largely dependent on the fact that the Public Relations unit of any organisation is a crucial factor deciding the success of any organisation by developing and fostering its corporate image. Even in such a stiff and challenging competition, the success and organisational growth is possible through better Public Relations. Bernays (1961) sees Public Relations “as a combination of

philosophy, sociology, economics, language, psychology, journalism, communication and other knowledge into a system of human understanding".

Also Hindson (1965) sees Public Relations as "the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics. The British Institute of Public Relations (IPR) states that "Public Relation is the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish a mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics.

Also Harlow (1976:45) defines Public Relations as

> The distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; helps management to keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication as its principal tools.

In Public Relations, reference is made to "Publics" rather than to the general public and some dictionary definitions may be misleading. This is so because PR massages, unlike advertising, are addressed to specific groups of people or special sections of the public (audience). These publics may be referred to as members of the local community, employees, investors, electors, donors, distributors or various kinds of consumers and users, according to the type of organisation. These groups can be subdivided into even more specialized groups e.g. a company has many grades of staff. When we consider that Public Relations is undertaken by every organisation, commercial or non commercial and in both public and private sectors, the identification of publics and the use of different techniques to reach them, becomes a very important aspect of campaign planning. Public Relations is used in different ways by various individuals to educate people on the profession. It has also been compared with many management courses. This makes Public Relations an entity of its own and it is

fundamental if an organisation must grow, such organisation should employ the use of effective public relations practice.

Public Relations is that discipline that helps reconcile institutional or individual behavior in a manner that accords with the public interest and, when effectively communicated, creates opinions or attitudes that motivate target audiences to specific courses of action (Bernays, 1961). Public Relations is the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organisation and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends (Cutlip, Center and Broom, 1985:4).

Black in 1989 defines Public Relations as the art and science of achieving harmony with the environment through mutual understanding based on truth and full information. This implies that peaceful co-existence must and should be maintained between an organisation and its environment based on truth; that is, without lies. All information given out about the organisation must be what is tenable whether internally or externally. Keghku (2005) sees Public Relations as the process of making known and acceptable, an organisation's policies, programmes and actions through effective communication for the overall mutual benefit of the organization and its target.

Also the Mexican Statement 1978 defines Public Relations as the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organisations leaders, and implementing planned programmes of actions which serve both the organisation's and public interest.

The overall idea about Public Relations is to create mutual understanding through truthfulness in the communication of all organisation messages to its publics; this however, would help in building organisations equity in the minds of its publics.

2.2.1 Functions of Public Relations

Public Relations as a top management function bestow managerial function to public relations officers, such that advice are being given to the management in the development of sound policies that are in the best interests of the public as well as the company, even though some traditional organisation still refuse to admit the public relations function by placing public relations officers in the management positions.

Public Relations like any other profession have its function which can be highlighted from the definition of Public Relations as follows:

i. Public Relations is establishing the relationship among the two groups (organisation and public)
ii. It is the art and science of developing reciprocal understanding and goodwill
iii. Public Relations analyses the public perception and attitude, identifies the organisation policy with public interest and then executes the programmes for communication with the public.

Moreover, Public Relations help to solve crisis and image reputation of an organisation, without which an organization may fold up. Organisations publics are fundamental to the survival and progress of an organisation, so effectively functional public relations department or as it implies to NCC Public Affairs Bureau department is of great importance in the maintenance of the image of the organization and improving quality service to all Nigerians.

In a statement formally accepted by Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) assembly in 1982 in Obe and Adebayo (2010:13) states the following as the meaning of public relations management functions.

i. Anticipating, analyzing and interpreting public opinion, attitudes and issues which might impact, (for good or ill), the operations and plans of the organisation.

ii. Counseling management at all levels in the organisation with regards to policy decisions, courses of action and communication, taking into account their public ramification and the organisation's social or citizenship responsibilities.

iii. Researching, conducting and evaluating, on a continuing basis, programs of action and communication to achieve informed public understanding necessary to the success of an organization's aims. These may include marketing, finance, fund raising, employee, community or government relations and other programs.

iv. Planning and implementing the organisations efforts to influence or change public policy.

v. Setting of objectives, planning, budgeting, recruiting and training staff, and developing facilities- in short, managing the resources needed to perform all of the above.

vi. Example of the knowledge that may be required in the professional practice of Public Relations include arts, psychology, social psychology, sociology, political science, economics and the principles of management and ethics.

2.2.2 Functions of Public Relations in a Corporate Organization

i. Public Image Strategy: Public Relations strategists work with top executives in a corporate organisation to outline an overview of how the company wants to be perceived, and how it is going to project a positive image. This can also involve focusing in on the right message, and also deciding on the broad outlines of a campaign to disseminate the message. Examples of this by the Nigerian Communications Commission are Consumer Outreach Programme, Consumer Town-Hall Meeting and Telecom Consumer Parliament, these are strategies put in place by the commission to strengthen its public image. It shows the

consumers how much the commission is willing to go in other for consumer's interest to be served.

ii. Outreach Events: Public Relations professionals in a corporate organisation often arrange events to raise the profile of the organisation as well as lend its brand and name to a charitable event that can represents the philosophy of the company. The Nigerian Communications Commission usually held sport event like long tennis and golf competition annually to promote its image and also help to discovered talent within each zones of the country.

iii. Media Relations: Communicating with the media is a core function of Public Relations departments in a corporate organisation. Public Relations professionals field questions from reporters, arrange for interviews with key individuals in the organisation and write press releases to make the media aware of the commission events or achievements. This can be seen from events televised by various media houses like Nigerian Television Authority, Africa Independent Television e.t.c.

iv. Social Media: One of the emerging functions of Public Relations is to maximize an organization's positive use of social media to build its image. Managing a Twitter feed, a Facebook page and a YouTube channel are all vital ways to connect with possible new customers or stakeholders. Monitoring public comment about the organisation on the Internet can also give Public Relations professionals' early warning of any emerging trends or problems. With this in mind the Nigerian Communications Commission set up a unit under its Public affairs Department called Online Media and special publication Unit to handle issues on the social media.

v. Employee Communications: In addition to conveying a company's messages to external audiences, corporate communicators may also be called on to function as employee communications managers, which include designing printed publications and writing emails to announce company news, benefits information and training opportunities. Based on this the commission has strictly use its .gov.ng email address open for all its staff to disseminate information between its staff and therefore private mail are prohibited for the exchange of work place ideas and information. They advise senior management on how to improve relationships with their staff and gain support for their initiatives.

2.3. Consumer Behaviour and Public Relations

Overtime, there has been a growth in consumerism. Since this is the case, then understanding consumer behaviour becomes paramount. The preceding statement seems simple in theory, however understanding why consumers go for a particular product and not the other is as complex as their culture, environment, finance, socio economic background, religion, political inclination, age, gender etc. Similarly, the nature of the motive that impels the purchase of a product can be pride, fear, comfort, vanity or possession. Whatever the case may be, any business or organization that has the aim of maximizing profit must necessarily be consumer focused or oriented. There are several ways that organizations and businesses can learn to be consumer focused and oriented. One of such ways is public relations. The survival or failure of an organization can depend on public relations. As it is, public relations goes beyond publicity and it can make a difference between profitability and failure. Before a linkage can be made between consumer behaviour and public relations; it is important to understand these concepts separately.

Walters (1974) stated that a consumer is an individual who purchases, has the capacity to purchase, goods and services offered for sale by marketing institutions in order to satisfy personal or household needs, wants, or desires.

By extension, Schiffman & Kanuk (2004) define consumer behaviour as the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products, services, and ideas. They further elaborated on the definition by explaining that it is the study of how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption-related items. It includes the study of what, why, when, where and how often they purchase and how they use the purchased product. In addition, it encompasses all the behaviours that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs.

In any case, the consumers are individuals and individuals are heterogeneous. This factor of heterogeneity makes consumers quite complex. There are two different types of consumers namely; personal and organizational consumers. Personal consumers purchase products and services for personal or household use or as a gift to someone else. Personal consumers, therefore, purchase for final consumption. Organizational consumers on the other hand purchase products and services to run an organization, including profitable and non-profitable organizations', government organizations' and institutions. In whatever category they exist, the customer is the center around which the business world revolves. There are stages that a consumer goes through before they decide on what to purchase. These stages include:

i. Need recognition: these are unsatisfied needs which came to be as a result of internal and external factors

ii. Information search: in order to satisfy this need, adequate information is needed on the product that has the capacity to satisfy the need.

iii. Evaluation: this deals with pricing, brand decision e.t.c.

iv. Purchase decision: having evaluated the product, final purchase is made depending on factors like finance option, dealer terms, falling prices amongst others.

v. Post purchase behaviour: this behaviour is determined by whether or not the buyer is satisfied with the product or not. If the buyer is satisfied, s/he becomes a silent advertiser. But where no satisfaction was derived, the consumer is likely to discard the product.

Having made this few points on consumer behaviour, it is important to also make a case for public relations. Among the many competing definitions of public relations, Grunig and Hunt's is the most widely cited definition of public relations. They defined public as the management of communication between an organization and its publics (Grunig and Hunt, 1984).

It is also seen as the distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication as its principal tools.

Again, in 1982, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) adopted the following definition of public relations that helps identify its purpose; Public relation helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other (Public Relations Society of America 2009 b). In its "Official Statement on Public Relations," PRSA goes on to clarify the function of public relations:

i. Public Relations help our complex, pluralistic society to reach decisions and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions. It serves to bring private and public policies into harmony.

ii. Public Relations serve a wide variety of institutions in society such as businesses, trade unions, government agencies, voluntary associations, foundations, hospitals, schools, colleges and religious institutions. To achieve their goals, these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or publics such as employees, members, customers, local communities, shareholders and other institutions, and with society at large.

iii. The managements of institutions need to understand the attitudes and values of their publics in order to achieve institutional goals. The goals themselves are shaped by the external environment. The Public Relations practitioner acts as a counselor to management and as a mediator, helping to translate private aims into reasonable, publicly acceptable policy and action. (Public Relations Society of America, 2009a).

Since Public Relations can be used to understand the values of their publics in order to achieve their institutional goals where the goals are shaped by the external environment and the consumer is part of that external environment then; consumer behaviour is fundamental to the formulation of public relation goals and achieving the set target. For instance it is through public relations that an organization understands its publics. This understanding helps to determine how its product should be marketed. This brings into play the notion of marketing communications also known as integrated marketing communications or integrated communications. Publicity and product promotion targeting the specific public consumers is the focus of this term. Public Relations strategies and tactics are used to increase awareness and persuade consumers to try or buy a certain product. As stated earlier,

companies and businesses want to maximize profit and to do so they must understand their consumers or customers as the case may be. If the just stated premise is correct then public relations and its linkage with consumer behaviour is instrumental in understanding customer value; the difference between all the benefits derived from a total product and all the costs of acquiring those benefits than competitors. Providing superior customer value requires the organization to do a better job of anticipating and reacting to the customer needs than the competitor. Marketing strategy is basically the answer to the question: How will company provide superior customer value to its target market?

The answer to this question requires formulation of marketing mix which is anchored on product, price, place and promotion and strategies. The right combination of these elements meets customer expectation and provides customer value. For example, marketer of a bike must know the customers performance expectations, desired service, Price willing to pay, information he seeks and after-sales service to provide superior customer value.

The most important marketing decision a firm makes is the selection of one or more segments to focus their marketing effort. Marketers do not create segments but they find it in the market place. Market segmentation is the study of market place in order to discover viable group of consumers who are homogeneous in their approach in selecting and using goods or services. Since market segment has unique needs, a firm that develops a product focusing solely on the needs of that segment will be able to meet the target group desire and provides more customer value than competitor.

2.3.1 Consumer behaviour and Research

Studying consumer behaviour enables marketing researchers to predict how consumers will react to promotional messages and to understand why they make the purchase decision they do. Marketers realized that if they know more about the consumer decision making criteria, they can design marketing strategies and promotional messages that will influence consumers more effectively.

The importance of consumer behaviour made marketers to think of a separate branch in marketing research - Consumer research, to deal exclusively for consumer related issues. The current focus of consumer research is on study of underlying needs and motives in taking purchase decisions, consumer learning process and attitude formation process.

2.3.2 Consumer Behaviour and Product Positioning

It is also consumer behaviour that determines where and how products will be positioned. Product positioning is placing the product, service, company, or shop in the mind of consumer or target group. Through positioning marketers seek the right fit between a product and desired customer benefits. The right positioning means understanding the consumer perception process in general and perception of company‘s product in particular. For example, Samsung brand is perceived as premium brand by few customers and value-driven brand by others in the market, but marketer must find out what makes their target market to perceive differently and position it accordingly.

From the foregoing, consumer behaviour and public relations complement can be said to each other. The discussions so far may not have made a case for why consumers chose certain products over others. There are various models that seek to explain why consumers behave the way they do. By understanding these models, organizations public relations can target its consumer pubic appropriately. Some of these models are:

i. Economic or Marshallian Model

This model was first advanced by the economists. They gave formal explanation of buyer behaviour. According to this theory the consumers are assumed to be rational and conscious about economic calculations. They follow the law of marginal utility. An individual buyer seeks to spend his money on such goods which give maximum satisfaction (utility) according to his interests and at relative cost. The buying behaviour is determined by the income – its distribution and level - affects

the purchasing power. The economic factors which affect the buyers' behaviour are: Disposable Personal Income, size of family income, tendency to spend and save etc.

ii. **Learning or Pavlovian Model**

Psychologists explain how consumers learn about a product and the way they can recall from the memory, and the development of buying habits. All theories of buyer's behaviour have been primarily based on a learning, viz., Stimulation-Response or S-R model, this theory of learning is explained as a process of repetition, motivation, conditioning and relationship. Repetition improves learning. For example, when advertisements are repeated, people may be able to understand further about the product. This is aimed at repeated advertisements for drawing the attention and interest of the people.

iii. **Psychoanalytical Model**

Sigmund Freud developed this theory. According to him human personality has three parts:

i. The **Id**, is the source of all mental energy that drives us to action

ii. The **super ego**, the internal representation of what is social is approved conscience

iii. The **Ego**, the conscious director of id impulses for finding him satisfaction in socially acceptable manner.

The buyer behaviour depends upon the relative strength of the three elements in the personal ability. Motivational research has been involved in investigating motives of consumer behaviour so as to develop suitable marketing implications accordingly. This approach has been used to generate idea for developing- design, features, advertising and other promotional techniques.

iv. **Howard - Sheth Model**

The Howard - Sheth model shows the processes and variables influencing the buyer behaviour before and during the purchase. It emphasizes three key variables- perception, learning and attitude

formation. It explains the way consumers compare available products in order to choose the best which fits their needs and desires. Consumers learn by finding out the relevant information about products through two sources of information; namely- social sources and commercial sources. These few models have given insight into why consumers make the choices that they do.

Public Relations four models by Grunig and Hunt explained the practice of public Relations over the years. Public Relations can use a one way communication model which involves publicity and dissemination of information. This includes:

Press Agentry: it's a type of Public Relations in which press agents attempt to generate publicity for their clients with little regard to the truth; it is based on a simple one-way dissemination of information. Historically, it is the first type of public relations.

Public Information: An approach to public relations in which Public Relations specialists use objective and factual information to educate the public about their clients. It is used especially in government reporting, quarterly earnings statements, and reports. Based on a one way dissemination of information, it is simply intended to inform (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

There is the two way communication model which is the strategic management of PR. It includes:

The Asymmetrical model: It is a research-based, two-way model of communication in which the imbalance of information favors the communicator. The public's beliefs about an organization or issue of importance are incorporated into the public relations messages distributed by the organization. The information presented seeks to persuade the public to adopt the attitudes and beliefs that are favorable to the organization.

The symmetrical model: It is a research-based, two-way model of public relations in which research is used not with the intent to persuade but to build mutual understanding between publics and

organizations. It is a collaborative approach to building understanding in which organizations are open to changing internal policy based on what they learn from the public.

Mixed motive approach: An approach to public relations that facilitates communication on both sides of an issue, both for organizations and for publics. In this approach, public relations professionals not only want to aid their employer or client, but also to assist the publics outside the organization to access and understand the inner workings of the firm (Public Relations, 2012). Organizations can decide what format to adopt, depending on the situation and the target they hope to meet be it consumer behaviour prediction or projecting a good image. Furthermore, the two-way symmetric model will be discussed as one of theories adopted for this study.

2.4 Public Relations Strategies or Activities:

Public relations strategies or activities are crucial to the survival of any organisation; it is that which keeps the organisation in tune with its publics. Strategy which is an activity implies ways in which an organiation uses to reach out to its publics. It can also be seen as a plan of action designed to achieve a long time goal. Botan (2006) proposes that effective public relations require three levels of strategic planning: grand strategy, strategy and tactics.

> Grand strategy is the policy-level decisions an organisation makes about goals, alignment, ethics, and relations with publics and other forces in its environment. Strategy is the campaign-level decision making involving manoeuvering and arranging resources and arguments to carry out the organisational grand strategies.Tactics are the specific activities and output through which strategies are implemented-the doing or technical aspects of public relations (Botan, 2006:225-226).

Botan (2006) argues that a company's strategy and tactics must be consistent with the overarching grand strategy of the organisation, so that stable and positive relationships are built with strategic publics during public relations campaigns.

While intuition and experience are essential, public relations program especially need the substantiation and justification that research and analysis can provide. The goal of a public relations strategy is universal: deliver the right message to the right audience at the right time (Turnbull, 2013). As an organization plans a new public relations campaign, the use of monitoring tools to understand the micro and macro media landscape is fundamental. On the macro level, monitoring tools will help an organisation to understand the overall brand perception, competition, industry and customer (Olson, 2011).

As an organisation plans strategy, it tends to voice its opinions and instincts, as to what else should go into a Public Relations strategy? What should an organisation be discussing and how the correct mix of experience-based instinct, research and data will lead to a public relations strategy that delivers measurable results. What are the research and data needed to build brilliant public relations strategy? Strategy is the direction and scope of an organization over the long-term which achieves advantage for the organisation through its configuration of resources within a challenging environment to meet the need of markets and to fulfill stakeholder expectations (James, 2011).

2.4.1 Strategy at Different Levels of an Organisation

Strategies exist at several levels in any organisation - ranging from the overall business (or group of businesses) through to individuals working in it. Turnbull (2013) explain strategy from three perspectives which are discussed below:

Corporate Strategy - is concerned with the overall purpose and scope of the business to meet stakeholder expectations. This is a crucial level since it is heavily influenced by investors in the

business and acts to guide strategic decision-making throughout the business. Corporate strategy is often stated explicitly in a "mission statement".

Business Unit Strategy - is concerned more with how a business competes successfully in a particular market. It concerns strategic decisions about choice of products, meeting needs of customers, gaining advantage over competitors, exploiting or creating new opportunities etc.

Operational Strategy - is concerned with how each part of the business is organized to deliver the corporate and business-unit level strategic direction. Operational strategy therefore focuses on issues of resources, processes, people etc.

2.4.2 Need for Public Relations Strategy

For effective implementation of the Public Relations objective a Public Relations strategy is to be evolved. According to Shri and Shri (n.d) the process of strategy starts with planning which consist of the following:

i. Determining Key results area

ii. Define roles

iii. Selecting and setting objectives

iv. Preparing action plans relating to programming, scheduling, budgeting, fixing accountability and establishing rules and procedures.

Shri and Shri (n.d) stated that Rice and Paisley suggested the guidelines for planning a successful campaign.

i. Assessment of the needs, goals and capabilities of target audiences.

ii. Systematic campaign planning and production

iii. Continuous evaluation

iv. Complementary roles of mass media and interpersonal communication

v. Selection of appropriate media for target audiences.

Public Relations Process: The definition of Public Relations as relations with the general public through publicity, those functions of a corporation, organisation, branch of military service, etc., concerned with informing the public of its activities, policies, etc., attempting to create favourable public opinions. Public Relations is the planned effort to influence opinion through good character and responsible performance, based upon mutually satisfactory two-way communications.

i. Research-listening**:** This involves probing into the opinions, attitudes and reactions of those concerned with the acts and policies of an organisation, then evaluating the inflow. This task also requires determining facts about the organisation.

ii. Planning-decision making: This involves bringing these attitudes, opinions, ideas and reactions to bear on the policies and programmes of the organisation. It will enable the organisation to chart a course in the interests of all concerned.

iii. Communication-action: This entails explaining and dramatizing the chosen course to all those who are affected and whose support is essential.

iv. Evaluation: This has to do with evaluating the results of the programme and so also the effectiveness of techniques utilized.

2.4.3 Consumer Outreach Programme Public Relations Strategies

i. Distribution of fliers to consumer at the event of Consumer Outreach programme, so as to provide consumers with ample knowledge of what the theme is?, also other necessary information that is needed by consumers of telecommunication services.

ii. Consumer education factsheet is been distributed to consumers at the event.

iii. Consumers are addressed in their local dialect depending on the town in which the programme is held to achieve a sense of belonging between the commission and the host city.

iv. The commission organize street dance to pull people out of their homes to avail themselves the opportunity of participating in Consumer Outreach Programme.

v. The Consumer Outreach Programme is not just about teaching and informing the consumer of their rights but also ample time is spend getting complains from consumer. This means there is a strong level of interaction between consumers and the commission.

2.5 Measurement and Evaluation of Public Relations Research

Approaches to measurement and evaluation of Public relations effectiveness have evolved since the practice was in its infancy (Watson, 2012; Michaelson and MacLeod, 2007). In the first half of the 20th century, practitioners focused on polling and analyses of media stories. In the second half of the century, as the practices of public relations expanded, greater emphasis was given to media analysis but evidence also suggested that measurement and evaluation were more discussed than actually undertaken. Even at the earliest stages of PR measurement, studies of practitioner attitudes and behavior showed widespread reluctance to engage in measurement practices (Watson, 1994). Measurement of PR effectiveness was often seen as simply too complex to be integrated into the workings of everyday practice.

Beginning in the 1980s, academics began to take part in these conversations about the role and importance of measurement, as did sophisticated research departments at agencies like Burson-Marsteller, Ketchum, and Edelman (Watson, 2012; Michaelson and Stacks, 2011). In addition, professional organizations such as Institute for Public Relations (IPR) and Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) also played a critical role in the evolution of PR measurement and evaluation (Lindenmann, 2005). In 1999, the U.S. Commission on Public Relations Measurement and Evaluation was formed with an aim to become "the inclusive, authoritative arbiter of accepted standards for research and measurement relating specifically to public relations, as well as for research and measurement in related communications disciplines that may apply, or be linked in some way, to public relations programs and activities." The Coalition for Public Relations Research Standards was formed in 2012 to create a platform of standards for research and measurement, consisting of organizations such as PRSA, IPR and International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communications (AMEC).

However, the tensions between those advocating best practices and evidence that practitioners were not practicing in this way have continued (Gregory, 2008). The rise of digital and social media has amplified the volume of this concern. New tools for the practice of PR and strategic communication have opened up new possibilities for measurement and evaluation—many of them relatively "easy," quantitative metrics—yet their appropriate application has remained elusive in much of the practice (Pestana and Daniels, 2011; Watson, 2012). In sum, as Watson (2012) frames it, it is widely believed that "practitioners still talk more about evaluation than actually practice it" (p. 396).

2.6 Empirical Review of Related Studies

Leong and Krishnan (2012) in an exploratory study to assess the perception of Malaysian PR practitioners in corporations towards evaluation research, the extent to which it is conducted, and the criteria and methods used. The researchers interviews five PR practitioners from corporations in different industries, from banking to automotive and property. The findings show that evaluation is practised in PR corporations and perceived to be important by PR practitioners. The researchers found that common methods of evaluation include survey and content analysis. Corporations also prefer to outsource media monitoring to reduce cost. They also perceive a PR return on investment (ROI) in terms of media coverage and branding. This study reveals that PR practitioners are aware of the importance of evaluation research, but their concerns are not shared by the upper management. Thus, they find it hard to get sufficient budget and support to carry out the evaluation research, which hampers their ability to examine the effectiveness of their PR programmes and activities to see if their objectives and goals have been achieved.

A survey by Gaunt and Wright (2004) and the more recent Wright *et al*. (2009) explored what practitioners perceive as the barriers to improving the quality of measurement programs. In the 2004 study, respondents listed cost, lack of time, lack of expertise, and questionable value of results as the most important barriers. Cost, lack of expertise and lack of time remained among the most important obstacles in the 2009 study as well. Qualitative responses in the study suggested that practitioners are deeply concerned about the availability of "right ways" to do research. In addition, pressure from clients wanting to see proof of creation of value has made for continued reliance on metrics that have already been vetoed from an academic viewpoint.

Grantham **,** Vieira and Trinchero (2011) in a study revealed that practitioner categories were developed to define the range of activities associated with public relations work. The researcher

surveyed 5000 public relations practitioners through the use of email. The finding revealed that practitioners who provided technical support did not believe that public relations activities were highly valued or that measurement of these activities was valued. Although technicians did not clearly indicate a dominant mode of communication, the findings imply that measurement and/or assessment were not key aspects in their interaction. A limitation to this work is that participants were purposively selected. Practitioners not involved in measuring public relations effectiveness were less likely to participate.

Okechukwu and Wilfred (2014) envisage that as part of refinement process, periodic evaluation of the success or otherwise of the stakeholder management strategy of an organization, including update in the register, re-assessment of their interest and influence, should be carried out. The focal areas of the study are: whether the organization's stakeholder management strategy is working; whether the organizational influence and communication is effective; and whether there are any update and appearance of new stakeholder. The findings according to the researchers are that organizations operate in a continually changing environment and these changes affect how organizations formulate and implement their strategies. Furthermore, businesses are changing from being more profitable to more of a collaborative/mutual relationship. Since these mutual relationships have become increasingly important, there is the need to coordinate the society. This requires the departure from the traditional approach of public relation to a more modern strategic approach. Good stakeholder relationship management which is one of the tools of modern public relations, foster a sense of joint ownership, prevents undue bureaucracy or industrial disputes, makes resources available, keeps information/knowledge and feedback flowing, and enhances cooperation to achieve the desired outcome of socio economic development.

Research by Sungun (2005) examined how organization-public relationships affect organizational reputations in a causal model. Survey research was used to collect data, and structural equation modeling was used to empirically test the causal effects of organization-public relationships on organizational reputation in four South Korean based organizations. In the causal model, organization-public relationship outcomes and types of relationships (communal and exchange relationships) predicted organizational reputation, taking into account the exogenous influences of communication behaviors of publics, experience, and familiarity with the organizations studied. This study found a significant positive effect of organization-public relationship outcomes on organizational reputation for all organizations studied. This study found significant effects of types of organization-public relationships on organization-public relationship outcomes and organizational reputation. It showed the relevance of key antecedents of organization-public relationship outcomes and organizational reputation. The study found a stronger effect of communication behaviors on the quality of relationship outcomes than the effect of familiarity. Finally, it found a different distribution of cognitive representations for profit and nonprofit organizations. The final causal models for all organizations studied showed three distinct routes to organizational reputation, based on significant causal relationships in the models: a communication-based route, a communitarian route, and a familiarity based route.

Johnson and Ifedayo (2013) also examine the structures and operations of the Nigeria Police Public Relations department (NPPRD) saddled with the responsibility of improving relationship between the Police and the civil populace. In-depth interview method was employed to ascertain the structures and strategies put in place by NPPRD to engender a civic, corrupt-free, public friendly and operationally capable police force for Nigeria. The interviewed covered a cross section of the Nigerian Police and members of the police community relations. The study revealed that NPPRD has vibrant

structures and mechanism such as police complaint bureau, police community relations committees and the various organs of the community-policing project scattered all over the country which are aimed at bridging the gap between the police and the public with a view of curbing the inappropriate use of lethal force, extra-judicial killings, extortion, illegal arrest and detention.

In a study carried out on consumer protection by Monye, Boniface, and Chukwunta (2014), which purpose is to contribute to the empowerment of individual consumers through the realization of their consumer rights. Focus Group Discussions with urban- and rural based consumers; and in-depth interviews with two key regulatory agencies in Nigeria were conducted. The finding revealed that most Nigerian consumers are not aware of relevant laws that protect them in their daily transactions. The Focus Group Discussions revealed that consumers are not interested in approaching the courts for redress because of lack of faith in the judicial system as well as high cost of litigation. For similar reasons including sentiment, complaints are not readily lodged with service providers. The in-depth interviews revealed that regulatory agencies are making appreciable efforts in line with their statutory functions. Also the finding from the focus group discussions is that consumers are not utilizing the existing processes optimally due to reason of low awareness and that awareness creation has been neglected. The result is that many consumers are neither aware of these laws nor the channels of redress therefore there is a need of awareness creation.

2.7 Gap in Literature

From the existing discussion, it was observed that literature on evaluation of public relations activities of an organization have long been a focus in research. However, researches on the evaluation of the Nigerian Communications Commission Consumer Outreach Programme among Abuja

Municipal Area Council residents were rarely found in the existing literature. Consequently, this clearly indicates the gap in literature, which this study intends to fill.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by two way symmetrical model of Public Relations and relationship management theory.

2.8.1 The Two-Way Symmetrical Model of Public Relations

In 1984, James E.Grunig, a noted Public Relations theorist, developed the four models of Public Relations: press agentry, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetric model of public relations.

Grunig first introduced these models as a way to understand and explain the behavior of public relations practitioners. Grunig conceptualized the press agentry and public information models as forms of one-way communication. He also noted that not all forms of two-way communication are the same; some are asymmetrical – "Public relations people did research and listened to publics in an effort to determine how best to change their behavior to benefit the organization and some are symmetrical – by "serving as the organizational function that attempts to balance the interests of organizations with those of their publics.

These models, especially the two-way symmetrical model, have been debated components of the excellence theory (which considers managerial, strategic, symmetrical, diverse and ethical values and tactics in decision making (Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002)

Arguments for the Two-Way Symmetrical Model of Public Relations according to Grunig and Grunig (1996) claim that use of the two-way symmetrical model allows public relations practitioners

to play key roles in adjusting or adapting behaviors of (institutional) dominant coalitions, thus bringing publics and dominant coalitions closer together. Fitzpatrick & Gauthier (2001) argued that "this 'win-win' approach provides an ethical basis for public relations because it 'provides a coherent framework for socially responsible practices.

The two-way symmetrical model "emphasizes communication exchange, reciprocity, and mutual understanding" thereby allowing an organization to adjust and adapt to each other until consensus is reached.

The two-way symmetrical model attempts to ethically balance the interests of the organization and its publics and uses research and communication to manage conflicts – as a result, this model produces more long-term relationships than do the other three models (Botan & Iazelton, 2006)

However, arguments against the Two-Way Symmetrical Model of Public Relations are that the approach to public relations does not guarantee that all involved will benefit equally. For true symmetry to result, both sides must consider and weigh the effects of institutional decisions and actions and have the power to affect a particular outcome (Fitzpatrick & Gauthier 2001)

How far should public relations practitioners go in ensuring that mutual benefit is gained? Do their responsibilities lay heavier with defending the interests of their employers? Or are they to ensure that no harm results from an anticipated action or decision? The institution that sets the "rules" could raise concerns around the ethics of this process as it could allow the power of the operating principles and development of the outcome of the decisions made to remain in the hands of one party.

Grunig and Grunig (1996:6) contend that the Two-Way Symmetrical model defines ethics as a process of public relations rather than an outcome through dialogue and mutual understanding because communication leads to understanding. According to Marsh (2001), Two-Way communication seeks

to build consensus and holds that an organization itself, and not an opposing public, sometimes may need to change to build a productive relationship.

Consumer Outreach programme seeks to set up a level plain ground for subscribers and the NCC to be on the same page has questions are raised and appropriate responses are given by the telecom operators. This is a two way communication to ensure that mutual understanding is gained and consensus is reached between the parties involved. The two-way communication model lays emphasis on the need for two way communication between an organisation (in this case, the government) and its publics. That is, it calls for feedback. The organisation needs to know about the publics and the publics also need to know about the organisation; in this way, mutual understanding and goodwill will be achieved, this will however lead to the achievement of the aims and objectives set by the organization (Asemah and Asogwa, 2012). Thus, the concept envisages the existence of two-way communication with inbuilt feedback between an organisation and its publics; also the Consumer Outreach Programme is structured to elicit feedback by way of face-to-face communication. Based on this, the research adopts this model to justify and explain his findings.

2.8.2 Relationship Management Theory

Relationship management theory was propounded by Ferguson in the year 1984. The idea emerged during the 1950s, when Public relations scholars consider investor relations to be a specialized field of public relations, which academic researchers have largely neglected, except for a few noteworthy studies (Laskin, 2011). Ledingham and Brunig (2000), states that despite the neglect there is a substantial progress that public relations scholars have made in the past several decades in the development of theory specific to public relations, such as relationship management. Relationship

management theory holds that the purpose of public relations is to manage the relationships between an organization and its publics.

According to Ferguson (1984) Relationship management theory, emphasize on relationships instead of the organization, the organization's publics, or the communication process. Boie (2012) states, that the relationships between an organization and its publics represent a central concern for the research and practice of public relations. Some of the well-known professors, from PR have tried the development of some relevant measures for the relationships between an organization and the public and have identified indicators such as trust, mutual control, commitment, satisfaction that can measure the quality of these relationships. This is perhaps why Ferguson (1984) states that Relationship management in the field of public relations implies mutually advantageous relationships between organizations and their key publics that are developed, maintained, and expanded over time.

Furthermore, according to Chandler (2014) multiple disciplines agree that relationships whether interpersonal or professional are characterized by a set of expectations two parties have of one another's behavior that are derived from the nature of the parties' connection. As noted by Ferguson (1984) relationships were the most relevant focus of research in public relations, academic studies focused on the understanding of organization-public relationships have increased substantially. Similarly, Casey, and Ritchey (1997) examined the concept of relationship to identify meaningful properties of relationships to be measured. They reviewed the literature in the fields of interpersonal communication, psychotherapy, inter-organizational relationships, and systems theory, in which relationship is a key concept. Because of the wide range of definitions of the concept of relationship across these disciplines, the researchers concluded it would be difficult for Public Relations scholars to advance a relationship centric theory of public relations until the concept of relationship was more clearly defined. Ledingham and Brunig (1998: 62) responded by positing a definition of the

relationship as “the state which exists between an organization and its key publics, in which the actions of either can impact the economic, social, cultural or political well being of the other”.

To further advance the understanding of relationships management theory, Hon and Grunig (1999) suggested the following principles:

i. Access : parties to the relationship have access to each other’s decision making processes; the parties respond to communication from each other and the parties are willing to communicate directly to the other parties when they have complaints or questions instead of taking unsatisfactory experiences and unanswered questions to a third party.
ii. Positiveness: parties to the relationship engage in activities that make the relationship more enjoyable for the other parties involved.
iii. Openness: parties to the relationship are willing to be open about thoughts and feelings.
iv. Assurance: parties to the relationship make the effort to assure the other parties that they and their concerns are legitimate while also making the effort to demonstrate a commitment to the relationship.
v. Networking: organizations build networks and alliances with the same groups with which their publics have alliances.
vi. Sharing of tasks : organizations and publics work together to address mutual or separate problems

The Relationship management theory holds that the essence of public relations is building mutually beneficial relationships with the public’s that can enhance or hinder an organization’s opportunities to achieve its goals (Ledingham and Bruning, 2000). Furthermore, Hon and Grunig

(1999) suggested the following four measureable predictors of the quality of successful organization public relationships:

i. Control mutuality: the extent to which parties agree to the rightful power to influence one another. Enduring positive relationships between organizations and publics need to be characterized by some degree of control over the other, even though some degree of power imbalance is natural in organization-public relationships.
ii. Trust: one party's level of confidence in and willingness to be open to the other party. Underlying dimensions of trust are integrity (the belief that an organization is fair and just), dependability (the belief that the organization will do what it says it will do), and competence (the belief that an organization has the ability to do what it says it will do).
iii. Satisfaction: the degree to which one party feels favorably toward the other as a result of positive expectations about the relationship being met. Also, in a satisfying relationship, the benefits outweigh the costs. Satisfaction also results when one party believes the other party is making a sincere effort to maintain the relationship.
iv. Commitment: the extent to which the parties in the relationship believe and feel that it is important to invest energy in maintaining and developing the relationship.

Reasons perhaps not far from why, Ferguson (1984) posits it would be possible to study the significance of these relationships. Researchers could then gain insight about the various attributes of the relationships between an organization and its publics and also measure the impact of these relationships on attitudes and behavior toward an organization. Grunig (1993: 136) states that:

> Since symbolic (communication-based) relationships are divorced from behavioral (grounded in actions and events) relationships, public relations practitioners reduce public relations to the simplistic notion of image building which offers little of value to the organizations they advise because they suggest that problems in relationships with publics can be solved by using the

proper message disseminated through publicity or media relations to change an image of an organization.

Finally, as the relationship management theory gained more acceptances among many public relations scholars (Ledingham and Brunig, 2000). Thus, the researcher adopts the theory for the study to justify and explain his findings. The Consumer Outreach Programme is a strategy employed by NCC to strengthen or maintain a favourable relationship with its publics towards improving quality network services to all Nigerians. This also entails that communication is important as it can bring about trust, commitment, satisfaction and control mutuality between NCC and mobile phone users as both parties' major concerns is to work towards improving the quality of mobile network service across the country.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology of this study. Issues considered here include the research method, population of the study and sampling technique. Other key issues discussed here are the sample size, method of data collection, research instruments use for the study and data presentation methods.

3.2 Research Method

This research work employed mixed research method that is the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative aspect adopted in this study is the cross sectional descriptive survey while the qualitative is In-Depth Interview (IDI). Descriptive survey is the type of inquiry that deals with the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions and ongoing process, current practices and attitudes (Ogbuoshi, 2006). The main aim of descriptive survey is not merely to describe existing state of affairs but most importantly to discover reliance and meaning. This study made use of descriptive survey for the reason stated by Ugeghu (2009) that descriptive survey as the name implies is concerned with description rather than explanation, its aim is to provide accurate measurement of distribution of certain characteristics in a given population. Suleiman (2007) is of the idea that the aim of survey research is to obtain information from sample respondents that relates to the problem being studied as this forms the fulcrum of this study. This is an efficient method for systematically collecting data from a broad spectrum of individuals as such owes its continuing popularity to its versatility and efficiency (Babbie, 1990).

3.3 The Study Population

The population of the study consists of the residents in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) of FCT with a population of 1,405,201 (National Population Commission (NPC), projection, 2012). However the study population will comprise of mobile phone users who falls within the ages of 18 and above, while senior management staff of the commission form the population of the in-depth interview, for the fact they posses in-depth knowledge about Consumer outreach programme and are directly involved in the programme.

3.4 The Sampling Size and Technique

The sample size for this study was determined using the survey online system sample size calculator. With the confidence interval of 5 and the confidence level of 95%, from the population of the study, therefore, according to the sample size calculator (see appendix) the sample size is 384.

The simple random sampling method was employed. According to NPC (2006), there are 14 districts in AMAC. The districts are; *Central* district, *Wuse*, *Maitama*, *Asokoro*, *Kado*, *Durumi, Gudu*, *Utako*, *Jabi*, *Mabuchi, Katampe*, *Wuye* and *Gwarimpa.* Out of these 14 districts 6 were randomly selected for this study to allow the researcher effectively covered the districts selected. The districts selected were *Asokoro, Maitama*, *gudu, jabi, Wuye* and *Utako.* This research work employed the following procedure to arrived at the percentages of the respondent that the questionnaire were administered to based on the streets within a district

$$\frac{\text{No of Streets}}{\text{Total No of Streets}} \times \frac{384}{1} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ 3.1$$

The number of streets is divided by the total number of streets while the answer arrived at is multiply by the sample size of 384 and further divided by one. This is done to arrive at the sample size for each of the districts as shown below:

Districts	Streets	Sample Size
Asokoro	90	78
Maitama	130	113
Utako	29	25
Jabi	70	61
Gudu	103	90
Wuye	20	17
Total	442	384

The research work used simple random balloting system to select the streets in which the questionnaire was distributed to. The questionnaire was further administered to the respondents through convenience sampling method as the researcher distributed the research instrument until the sample size was attained in each districts.

Purposive sampling was employed to pick three management staff for the in-depth interview and the reason for this is because these set of senior management staff are directly involved in Consumer Outreach Programme activities. According to Best and Kahn (2011), purposive sampling is recommended for case studies such as survey and other opinion-based research. In other words, the respondents are selected because they are typical and possess some specific qualities such as having the richest information and manifest the most characteristics needed by the researcher (Ogbuoshi, 2006).

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

Two instruments were used for data collection. Questionnaire was administered to the respondents in the six districts selected for the study, while the second instrument employed is the interview schedule which served as a guide to the researcher in conducting the IDI. Closed ended questions allow for respondent to tick or choose from the list of options provided in the questionnaire. Twelve questions were asked in two sections which are demography and general questions. This contain questions that address the research questions in chapter one of this work. The interview schedule was a semi-structured one which allows for a follow up questions for further clarification. The justification for the use of In-Depth Interview by the researcher is as a result of what Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005) said that In-Depth Interview is used when a researcher wants to delve deeply into a topic therefore it gives the researcher the required information to understand thoroughly the answers provided.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire and interview schedule were used for data collection. The questionnaire is useful in getting the feelings, beliefs, experiences or activities of the respondents. The questionnaire was administered to 384 respondents cutting across the 6 different districts. Data were collected by the researcher through on-the-spot administering by interview with the help of five research assistants to cover the six districts selected for the study.

The interview schedule was used for the In-Depth Interview (IDI). The IDI was conducted through face to face contact with three management staff of the commission which the researcher purposively selected which includes a deputy director and a chief consumer officer in the Department of Consumer Affairs Bureau and a deputy director in Public Affairs Department of the commission.

This is done because the staffs chosen are well informed about the Consumer outreach Programme of the commission and they are senior management staff. Survey research according to Toluhi (2001) can be carried out when a population or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people. Its purpose is not collection per se but the discovery of meaning in the data collected so that facts and events can be better understood, interpreted and described as was achieved by this study.

Bello and Ajayi (2000) noted that survey can be a useful tool adopted when handling a large population especially on issues that involve systematic collection of data through the use of questionnaire and interviews. In-Depth Interview (IDI) as stated earlier which was adopted for this study provides an informed views or opinion on the Public Relations programme of the commission through the use of Consumer Outreach Programme as a forum where mobile phone users are brought together under one umbrella to voice out the difficulties they are facing with the services provided by the telecom operators in Nigeria such as Globacom, MTN, Etisalat and Airtel in order to find solutions to it.

3.7 Data Presentation Methods

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and chi-square were used to analyze data gathered from the field using statistical package for social science (SPSS 24) for the questionnaire. The in-depth interview (IDI) was interpreted using thematic analysis. This was analyzed by generating natural units of meaning and by classifying, categorizing and ordering these units of meaning based on the research question one. This however was done by noting patterns and themes which stems from repeated themes and conclusions were drawn based on it (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

CHAPTER FOUR
4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data gathered, analysis and interpretation as well as discussion of findings. The chapter includes qualitative and quantitative data presentation using tables. Also findings were discussed in the same chapter. In the course of gathering data, the problems experienced were difficult access to female respondents and in some streets people are hardly seen outside. 384 questionnaires were issued and the 384 were retrieved thereby having a response rate of hundred percent.

4.2 Qualitative Data Presentation

The thematic analysis approach was used to present the data from the In-Depth Interview conducted with the three senior management staff of the Nigerian Communications Commission.

The Consumer Outreach Programme (COP) is designed to bring together stakeholders in the telecom industry especially mobile phone users to be informed and educated on issues in the telecom industry and it serves as a platform where consumers or users of mobile phones lay their complains about the services of the telecom operators. The forum also serves as an avenue in informing consumers about their right as subscribers. COP has been going on since 2003 to date, it is held monthly across the state capitals all over the country.

The Creation of COP

The coming of mobile phone into the country came with some challenges and these challenges cut across bad network, unwanted text messages, over charged tariff etc. With these challenges the

commission set up a department to protect consumers' right and this brought about Consumer Bureau department. Among several of its consumer based programme is Consumer Outreach Programme.

What informed the creation of Consumer Outreach Programme?

Respondent one: The interviewee puts it as thus

> It is a programme that brings together all stakeholders in the telecom industry to be informed and educated on the happenings of the industry and also to listen to consumers complaints on poor quality network of telecom operators in the country. It cuts across the urban and rural areas and it includes TCP, CTM and COP that you are working on. For the COP it is usually held in urban areas and we keep moving from one state capital to the other

Respondent two:

> Consumer outreach programme was informed to ensure that consumers across the nation were properly protected by listening to and addressing their complaints, to also inform and educate consumers on their rights.

Respondent three:

> COP came about during the introduction of GSM, a lot of issues arose between consumers and SP's about service providers, so COP was created as a platform for consumers and SP to come together and solve issues by way of listening to consumer's complaints.

From these comments above it shows there are no differences as the interviewees gave similar observations when the same question as to what informed the creation of COP was raised.

Objectives of COP

Any given public relations programme comes with an objective, the objective could be one or more. The fundamental objectives of COP are to listen to and address consumer complaints, to inform consumers on the situation of the telecom industry and to educate consumers on their rights. These are crucial to improving the quality of mobile phone network in the country as series of complaints by the consumers in the forum are taken note of by the representatives of the telecom operators in attendance.

The forum will as a matter of fact help consumers to know the right channels to further take up cases infringing on their rights as consumers and further understanding the challenges facing the industry which the major players in the industry are grappling to resolve.

What are the objectives of Consumer Outreach Programme?

Respondent one:

> I will be brief on this; the objective of COP is to protect consumers that are mobile phone users and to educate and inform them on their rights.

Respondent two:

> The objective of consumer outreach programme is to inform consumers on the situation of the telecom as well as educating consumers on their rights and most importantly to listen to their complaints.

Respondent three:

> The objective set out by the commission is to protect and promote interest of consumers, to educate consumers and to inform consumers as regards the telecom industry.

Effectiveness of COP

Consumer outreach programme (COP) is said to have been effective with positive feedback from the Nigerian communications commission and other stakeholders in the telecom industry. However, more publicity needs to be done to increase the awareness level of COP in the country.

How effective would you say Consumer Outreach Programme has been?

Respondent one:

> COP has been very effective, the drastic improvement you experience today in the telecom industry cannot be farfetched from the good work COP has been doing. COP was recognized by ITU as an effective programme to reach out to consumers so on our part I can categorically say we are doing well.

Respondent two:

> It has been effective with positive feedbacks from consumers and other stakeholders in the telecom industry. We are pleased with the high level of interaction during the programme and as a commission we see that both the consumers and the operators want to achieve the same result.

Respondent three:

> Very effective but more still needs to be done in terms of publicity, we as a commission are aware of this and we are working towards still improving on our effective publicity.

Public Relations Strategies Employed by COP

The strategies employed by the commission as stated by the interviewees are; publicizing the time, venue of the programme in the local language of the location or town were the programme will take place. This is carried out to improve the number of attendance. Another strategy of COP is interactivity that is giving voice to each set of groups in attendance. These include the consumers and operators while the commission serves as moderator.

What are the public relations strategies employed by consumer Outreach Programme by your commission?

Respondent one

> The commission use local language to inform Nigerians of the location and venue of the programme and also the commission focused on making the section as interactive as possible so has to give everyone the opportunity to speak and be listen to.

Respondent two

> We are of the idea that the use of local language will help mobilize a good number of mobile phone users to attain and avail themselves the benefits of consumer Outreach programme, the progamme is interactive in nature.

Respondent three

The used of local language and making the programme very interactive is the strategy of Consumer Outreach Programme.

From the respondents comment above it can be deduced that the public relations strategy used by Consumer Outreach Programme is local language and interactivity designed to communicate and give participants equal right to be listened to during the course of the programme.

4.3 Quantitative Data Presentation

This part contains the quantitative data in which the descriptive statistics was used for analyses. The first section comprises of the bio-data and the second section consists of the main data aimed at responding to the research questions.

4.3.1. Demographic data presented in table 4.1 and 4.2 which contains age groups, educational qualification, sex of respondents and mobile phone network respondents subscribed to.

Table 4.1 Demographic data of Age Groups, Sex and Educational Qualification

	Frequency	
Demographics	N	Percentage
Age		
18-25	099	25.8
26-33	137	35.7
34-41	105	27.3
42 & Above	043	11.2
Total	384	100
Sex		
Male	223	058
Female	161	042
Total	384	100
Educational Qualification		
SSCE	096	25
NCE/OND	125	33
Degree/HND	135	35
Master & Above	028	07
Total	384	100

Age group

This reveal the age groups of the people in the vicinity were the data was collected based on the scope of the study.

Sex

Male has the highest population with 58% while female has 42%. This is because it was easier to reach the male population as against the female population. This can be attributed to the fact that men are more curious and freer to make their comment as against the female population who are reserved and not as free as the male population.

Educational qualification

The above table shows that majority of the respondents are degree/HND holders representing 35% while NCE/OND stands at 33% and masters and above represent 07%. This reveals that the respondents are highly educated while SSCE have 25%. This shows the educational qualification of the people within the area of study and it also goes to show that education may have a bearing on respondent's willingness to fill the questionnaire as well as the respondents are educated enough to respond correctly to the questionnaire.

Table 4.2. Mobile Networks Use by Respondents

Mobile Network	Responses	
	N	Percentage
MTN	59	15
AIRTEL	44	11
ETISALAT	48	13
GLO	56	15
MTN, GLO, ETISALAT	92	24
AIRTEL, ETISALAT	35	09
GLO, AIRTEL	50	13
TOTAL	384	100

The result of the analyses in table 4.2 above reveals that the most patronize mobile network is MTN with 15%, while most people use MTN, GLO and Etisalat which account for 24%. Furthermore, the data shows that there is no cut clear leader among Airtel, Etisalat and Globacom service providers as the patronage margin is not much; the reason for this could be as a result of stiff competition resulting in low tariff and cheap data services. The reason why MTN is ahead in terms of patronage could be the fact that the network was able to spread around quickly during its inception.

4.3.2 Awareness level

The following tables seek to find out the awareness level of COP among AMAC residents. Table 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 addressed issue of awareness, sources of information and the objective of COP.

Table 4.3 Awareness of Consumer Outreach Programme

Required response	Frequency	Percentage
NO	213	55.5
YES	171	44.5
Total	384	100

The results of the analyses in table 4.3 reveal respondents have moderately low awareness of the consumer outreach programme with 44.5% as against 55.5% who are not aware. It appears that publicity carried out by NCC is not as effective as it should have been. The analysis in table 4.3 to 4.5 will rely on the responses of 171 representing 44.5%.

Table 4.4 Cross Tabulation of awareness by Educational qualification

Educational Qualification	Awareness of COP		
	Yes	No	Total%
	n (%)	n (%)	
SSC	48 (50)	48(50)	25
OND/NCE	58(46.4)	67(53.6)	33
Degree/HND	52(38.5)	83(61.5)	35
Masters & above	13(46.4)	15(53.6)	07
Total	171	213	100

X^2 =3.356, df=3 Sig=0.340

The table shows that educational qualification has nothing to do with awareness level of COP among AMAC residents. Similarly the chi square result reveal that the calculated p-value (> .340) which is greater than 0.05 implies that there is no significant relationship between educational qualification and levels of awareness about COP.

Table 4.5 Respondent Sources of Information on COP

Sources of Information	Frequency	Percentage
Broadcast media	77	45.0
Print media	41	24.0
Internet	28	16.4
Billboards	13	07.6
Friends/ Relatives	12	07.0
Total	171	100

From the table above the major source of information through which respondents get informed about the existence of COP is the broadcast media, their responses revealed that 45% sources of information is through the broadcast media. While 24% of the respondents source of information is the print media. This reveals that respondents' major sources of information are the conventional mass media and one of the comments made by a respondent is that the 'event should be captured on live broadcast so that people can watch and enjoy the benefits.

Table 4.6 Objective of COP

Objectives	Frequency	Percentage
Protect users against telecom operators	66	38.6
Complain about poor mobile service	61	35.7
Purchase mobile application	44	25.7
Total	171	100.0

Table 4.6 above presents data on the awareness of the objectives of COP. It reveals that majority of the respondents are aware of the objective of COP while 25.7% of the respondents indicates that the objective of COP is to purchase mobile phone application which shows this set of respondents are not aware.

4.3.3 Participation in COP: What is the Consumer level of Participation in COP among AMAC residents?

The following tables are on participation and they are table 4.7 and 4.8. The questions answered by these tables are on respondents' attendance on COP, respondents' roles while participating in COP.

Table 4.7 Attendance at COP

Attendance	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	99	57.9
No	72	42.1
Total	171	100.0

The above table 4.7 revealed that majority of the respondents who are aware of COP attend the programme. This is evident in the fact that 57.9% of the respondent indicates that they have attended consumer Outreach Programme while 42.1% indicates that they have not attended COP. The reason for this 42.1% of the respondents who have not attended COP may be that the publicity carried out by Nigerian Communications Commission is not persuasive enough and may not have been able to inform the respondents about the importance of attendance as well as what their inputs means in improving and providing quality mobile networks to all Nigerians. The responses of 57.9% will be used for the analyses in the remaining tables.

Table 4.8 Respondents roles while participating in COP

Roles played	Frequency	Percentage
Usually raise question in COP	38	38.4
Table complaints in COP	38	38.4
Mobilize people to attend	17	17.2
Write about the COP to media	6	6.1
Total	99	100

Table 4.8 above indicates that the participation level is high. This may be due to the high educational level of the respondents. The data reveals 38.4% of the respondents raised questions in

Consumer Outreach programme to seek clarification, while 38.4% said they table complaints in the forum, also 17.2% indicates that they mobilize people to attend the forum. Also 6.1% indicates they wrote about COP in the media, this may mean that, these set of respondents are journalist who attend COP.

4.3.4. What are the benefits Abuja municipal Area Council Residents have obtained from Consumer Outreach Programme?

The table below seeks to find out the extents of benefits participants of COP derived from issues discussed in COP, also if telecom services may have improved as a result of COP and if consumers and network provider's relationship may have improved due to COP. These questions were answered by tables 4.9., 4.10., and 4.11.

Table 4.9 Benefits derived from Issues Discussed

Required Response	Frequency	Percentage
Knowledge of consumers right	54	54.5
Better Services	32	32.3
Fair Hearing	09	09.1
Understanding Service providers	04	04.0
Total	99	100

Table 4.9 above revealed benefits derived by respondents who have participated in COP. The results show that 54.5% of the respondents have benefits of increased knowledge of

consumer's rights as well as other benefits of fair hearing representing 09.1% while understanding service provider account for 04.0%.

Table 4.10 Level of Agreement on the Service of Telecom Operators Improvement Due to COP.

Levels of Agreement	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	63	63.6
Agree	23	23.2
Disagree	07	07.1
Strongly disagree	04	0 4.0
Neutral	02	02.0
Total	99	100

From table 4.10 it can be said that COP may have helped improve the telecom services as the operators are meant to work on resolving issues of bad network, unsolicited text and calls e.t.c. to avoid repeated complaints in subsequent events. In responds to this, 86.8% agree that there is an improvement in mobile services as a result of COP. Also 11.1% indicates they strongly disagree COP activities have improve mobile services.

Table 4.11 Improved Relationship Between Consumers and Network Providers Due to COP

Levels of Relationship	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	60	60.6
Agree	23	23.2
Disagree	14	14.2
Strongly disagree	02	02.0
Neutral	00	00
Total	99	100

Majority of the respondents agreed that COP activities can improve consumers and mobile operator's relationship. This is evident as 83.8% agreed that COP can help improve consumers and operators relationship while 16.2% Disagreed that COP can help improve relationship between the

consumers and operators. Based on all indications, it shows that COP is useful and can as well help in improving the relationship between consumers and operators amongst AMAC residents.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

This segment of this chapter further discusses the major findings of the study by way of responding to the research questions.

What are the strategies used by Consumer Outreach Programme (COP) of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) to achieve its objectives?

In responding to the research question of the public relations strategies used by Consumer Outreach Programme of the Nigerian Communications Commission to achieve its objectives, the result of the analyses sought from an in- depth interview revealed that the Public Relation strategy used by COP such as publicizing the venue and date when the programme will take place in local language and also making the programme interactive in order to achieve its objectives. This is in line with the two way symmetric model and relationship management theory. A responsive communication is one that is quick, sound and credible and flow two-way in a cyclical manner (Zorte, 2011), this is also in line with the strategy of interactivity employed by COP and also that of the two-way symmetric model of public relations.

The objective of COP which is also a strategy of public relations is to listen to and address consumer complaints, informed consumers on the situation of the telecom industry and to educate consumers on their rights. The findings of listening to consumers' complaints and informing consumers on their rights is in line with Johnson and Ifedayo (2013) which revealed that for an organization to have a good image and also maintain public trust, it must come up with strategies to effectively protect its publics. Thus, communication is an important tool that could be used by an organization to reach the public. This component of effective communication between the

organization and the public is evident in the two-way symmetric model of Public Relations. Furthermore, the relationship management theory as stated by Ferguson (1984) and Boie (2012), that emphasizes relationship instead of organization, Hon and Grunig (1999) states some key principles of relationship management which "Access" means parties to a relationship have access to each other's decision making processes; the parties respond to communication from each other and are willing to communicate directly to the other parties when they have complaints or questions instead of taking unsatisfactory experiences and unanswered questions to a third party. It was found that the public relations strategy used by COP is the use of the local languages of the location where COP will take place to inform the people about COP, thereby, mobilizing mobile phone users through the conventional mass media.

What is the consumer awareness of and participation in COP activities among Abuja Municipal Area Council residents?

In responding to the level of consumer awareness of and participation in COP activities among AMAC residents, the results of the analyses are in table 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6. The responses to awareness on the Consumer Outreach Programme among residents of Abuja municipal Area Council (AMAC) revealed that majority of the respondents are not aware of COP while those that are aware said their sources of information about COP was through broadcast media. Awareness about COP is moderately low compared to non-awareness which in turn affects the attendance. The finding of this study is in line with that of Monye (2008) which revealed that when consumers are less aware of a channel of redress, it affects attendance, and this shows effective publicity may have been lacking that is why awareness is moderately low. Monye (2008) states that most Nigerian consumers are not aware of relevant laws that protect them in their daily transactions, this could have affected attendance in COP. Atomatofo and Ewesor (2013) finding is in line as the

reason for low level of awareness among science teachers on the new nine year basic education curriculum in Nigeria is the lack of proper sensitization on the part of universal basic education board (UBEB). In terms of respondents sources of information broadcast media accounts for the major source of information which could be as result of the fact that majority of the people residing in AMAC may have access to television and radio.

The results of analyses on participation are on tables 4.7 and 4.8. The responses indicate that participation during COP is high which highlight the importance of the progrmme. This could be as a result of the eagerness of respondents to be part of a process in improving the services provided by the telecom operators which is central to them the consumers. Furthermore, it could be for the fact that consumers do feel cheated, hence faced with the opportunity to air their complaints may have contributed to the high level of participation. Participation of respondents are in the area of; raising questions in COP, table complaints in COP, mobilizing people to attend COP and write about COP in the media.

What are the benefits Abuja Municipal Area Council residents have obtained from Consumer Outreach Programme activities?

The results of the analyses on the benefits AMAC residents have obtained from COP activities which are on tables 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11, the findings revealed that majority of the respondents who have participated in COP amongst AMAC residents indicates that issues discussed in COP is beneficial hence, majority of the respondents are of the view that relationship between subscribers and operators may have improved due to COP activities. The Relationship management theory holds that the essence of Public Relations is building mutually beneficial relationships with the public's that can enhance or hinder an organization's opportunities to

achieve its goals (Ledingham and Bruning, 2000). The overall idea about Public Relations is to create mutual understanding through truthfulness in the communication of all organisation messages to its publics; this would help in building organisations equity in the minds of its publics. The benefits derived are; Awareness of consumer's rights, fair hearing, better or improved services and also, understanding service providers as to the effort being put in place to improve quality service.

CHAPTER FIVE
5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Study

The study focused on the evaluation of the Nigerian Communications Commission Consumer Outreach Programme among Abuja Municipal Area Council Residents. The aim of the study was: To find out the Public Relations strategies used by Consumer Outreach Programme (COP) of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) to achieve its objectives, also, to assess consumers awareness and participation in COP activities and lastly to find out the benefit consumers of GSM operators residing in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) have obtained from COP activities.

The researcher reviewed that evaluation research in Public Relations is important, however management do not share such concerns as they are not ready to release budget for evaluation on the premise that it is waste of money. Also it was gathered that there may be insufficient literature in Public Relations evaluation in Nigeria as it could be seen that organizations are yet to embrace evaluation of its Public Relations programme or strategies.

In addition, the study adopts the Relationship Management theory propounded by Ferguson in 1984 and the two-way symmetrical model of Public Relations propounded by Gruing and Hunt. The Relationship management theory emphasized on relationship instead of organization, the organizations publics, or the communication process(Ferguson, 1984), it also upholds the essence of public relations that is building mutually beneficial relationships with the public's that can enhance or hinder an organization's opportunities to achieve its goals (Ledingham and Bruning, 2000). The two- way symmetric is propel towards organizational function that attempts to balance the interests of organizations with those of their publics.

The study adopted cross sectional descriptive survey research design. The population of the study is 1,405,201 from which a sample of 384 respondents was drawn using simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected with the aid of questionnaire and interview schedule. The Copies of questionnaire were administered to 6 districts out of the 14 districts in Abuja Municipal Area Council. The data gathered was analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Science tool (SPSS 24) using simple percentages and frequency table. In the end, it was found that:

i. The public Relations strategy used by COP is the use of the local language of the location or community where COP will take place to inform the people about COP thereby making it easy to mobilize them using the conventional mass media.

ii. The awareness level among AMAC residents about COP is moderately low

iii. Participation of respondents are in the area of; raising questions in COP, table complaints in COP, mobilize people to attend COP and write about COP in the media.

iv. The benefits derived includes: Awareness of consumer's right, fair hearing, better or improved services and also, understanding service providers as effort have been put in place to improve quality service.

v. Consumers are informed and educated on their rights

vi. Respondents' source of information is the electronic media

vii. Relationship between subscribers and operators may have improve due to COP

viii. There is no significant association between consumers level of awareness and educational qualification

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the following findings, there seem to be moderately low awareness level about this channel (COP) of redress among AMAC residents, even though the public relations strategy used by COP is the use of the local language of the location or community where COP will take place to inform the people about COP thereby making it easy to mobilize them using the conventional mass media.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the benefits participants of COP derived include: Awareness of consumer's rights, fair hearing, better or improved services and also, understanding service providers as effort were put in place to improve quality service. From the findings it can be concluded that effective publicity is an essential instrument for awareness creation.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the above findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made.

i. The Nigerian Communications Commission should intensify it publicity regarding COP as to reach out to a large population of consumers. This can be achieved by using the mobile networks to send messages in form of unsolicited text messages to mobile phone users, also voice mobile advert can be used as well in sensitizing people about the activities of COP. The advantage is that the network bears part of the cost which will make the networks sensitive to improving the quality of service they provide to consumers.

ii. The commission should ensure that complaints raised by consumers are looked into by mobile service operators. The commission should also get email addresses of participants as well as those that raised complaints to find out if their complaints have been addressed by the network operators. This will help to know if the networks take the COP seriously

and if not, sanctions should be meted on the network operators in form of fine that will force the network to do the right thing.

iii. The commission should broadcast the programme on live television network and also use social media to get the views of consumers who tune in to watch the programme as it is going on regardless of the location where it is taking place.

5.4 Suggestion for Further Studies

Research on the evaluation of public relations programme in an organization cannot be exhaustive; this means that further studies can be carried out in the following areas:

i. An evaluation of the Nigerians Communications Commission Consumer Outreach Programme should be carried out using three regional locations in Nigeria. This will enable any researcher to compare awareness level among the different regions in Nigeria.

ii. A qualitative study should be carried out to get the views of consumers and the network providers on the activities of consumer outreach programme in other to find out if the programme has any influence on the improvement of the services they provide and as well to know if consumers feel there are any improvement as a result of COP activities.

iii. A trend study of the consumer outreach programme can be done to see if there is progress or achievement made over five to ten years of its inception.

iv. The inability of the researcher to get the population of GSM users in AMAC prompted the researcher to use the population of AMAC for this study, so future research can be done by drawing the sample size from the population of GSM users only.

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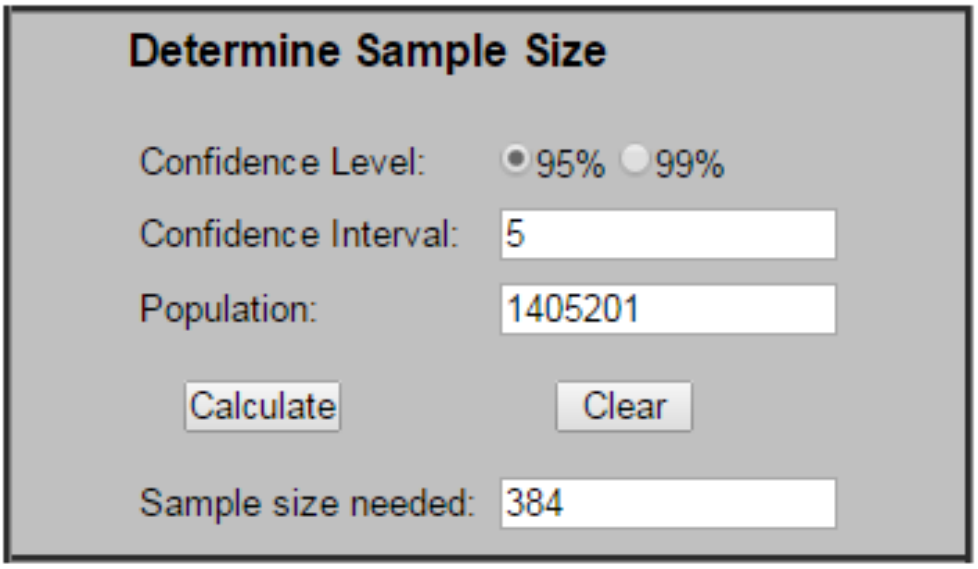
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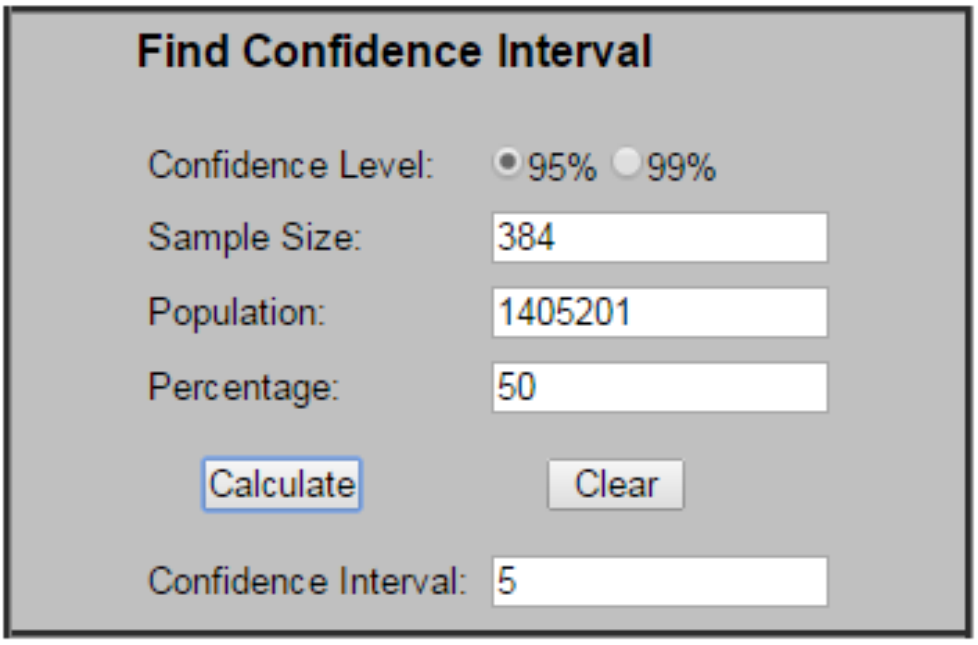
Appendix i

Chi-Square Tests for table 4.6

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.356[a]	3	.340
Likelihood Ratio	3.371	3	.338
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.913	1	.167
N of Valid Cases	384		

Appendix ii


Determine Sample Size
Confidence Level:
95%
99%
Confidence Interval:
5
Population:
1405201
Calculate
Clear
Sample size needed:
384


Find Confidence Interval
Confidence Level:
95%
99%
Sample Size:
384
Population:
1405201
Percentage:
50
Calculate
Clear
Confidence Interval:
5

Appendix iii

Department of Mass Communication

Faculty of social sciences

Ahmadu Bello University

Zaria- Kaduna state

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of the above mentioned institution undertaking a research entitled "*An Evaluation of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC's) Consumer Outreach Programme (COP)"*. Kindly assist in filling this questionnaire. However, all information provided will be strictly used for academic purposes and be treated as confidential.

Thank you.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF RESPONDENTS

Instruction: Please tick as appropriate

1. Gender

   (a) Male [ ]

   (b) Female [ ]

2. Age

   (a)18-25 [ ]

   (b) 26-33 [ ]

   (c) 34-41 [ ]

   (d) 42 and above [ ]

3. The highest educational qualification obtained

   (a) Secondary School Certificate

   (b) OND/NCE

   (c) Degree/ HND

   (d) Masters and above

SECTION: GENERAL QUESTION

4. What mobile network do you subscribe to (you can tick more than one option)

(a) MTN [ ]

(b) Airtel [ ]

(c) Etisalat [ ]

(d) Globacom [ ]

5. Are you aware of Consumer Outreach programme (COP) (Tick one option from questions 5 & 6)

(a) Yes [ ]

(b) No [ ]

6. If yes, how did you come to know?

(a) Broadcast media [ ]

(b) Internet [ ]

(c) Print media [ ]

(d) Friends/ relatives [ ]

(e) Billboard/ others [ ]

7. What is the main objective of COP?

(a) To serve as avenue for mobile phone users to purchase mobile application [ ]

(b) To provide avenue for mobile phone users to complain about poor mobile service [ ]

(c) It serves to protect mobile phone users against telecom operator [ ]

8. Have you attended consumer Outreach Programme?

(a) Yes [ ]

(b) No [ ]

9. Which of the following applies to you? (Tick as appropriate)

(a) I usually raise question in COP [ ]

(b) I table complaints in COP [ ]

(c) I mobilize people to attend [ ]

(d) I write about the COP to media [ ]

10. What benefit did you derived from issues discussed when in attendance

(a) Increase knowledge of consumers right [ ]

(b) Better services [ ]

(c) Fair hearing [ ]

(d) Understanding service providers [ ]

11. Did the services of telecom operators improve due to consumer outreach programme actions?

(a) Strongly agree [ ]

(b) Agree [ ]

(c) Strongly disagree [ ]

(d) Disagree [ ]

(e) Neutral [ ]

12. Has your relationship with your network providers improved as a result of Consumer outreach programme?

(a) strongly agreed [ ]

(b) agreed [ ]

(c) strongly disagree [ ]

(d) disagree [ ]

(e) Neutral [ ]

Appendix iv

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What is Consumer Outreach programme (COP) or what is it all about?
2. What inform the creation of COP/ how did it come about?
3. What are the objectives of COP?
4. What methods do you use to achieve COP objectives?
5. How effective would you say COP has been?
6. How would the consumers know about COP taking place?
7. What informs who attend COP or what category of people is expected to attend Consumer Outreach Programme?
8. What is the public relations strategy of COP?
9. What numbers of participants are expected?
10. What inform the choice of venue or state?
11. Primarily, what do you focus on during Consumers outreach programme meeting?
12. Is the focus the same for every venue?
13. In all, would you say that COP has improved how GSM subscribers see NCC?

Thank you.