



## CONSUMERISM AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract:**

This study investigates consumerism and consumer behaviour in Rivers State, Nigeria. To achieve its main purpose, three specific purposes and three research questions were posed. The study adopted descriptive research design. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The population of the study was made up of all consumers in the 23 local government areas of Rivers State which are estimated to be around 7,409,304 people, that is, 4,112,001 males and 3,297,303 females. Sample of 230 respondents were selected using convenient sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was tested for reliability using Cronbach alpha test to obtain a reliability index of 0.72. Data collected for the study were analysed using mean and standard deviation and grand mean score to answer the research questions. The demographic profiles of the respondents were analysed using percentage. The study revealed that information about consumers' rights were to a low extent accessed through consumers' association in Rivers State. This means that consumerism in Rivers State is low or relatively new. It also revealed that consumers' behaviour before purchase was to a low extent influence by their information about consumers' rights and their behaviour after purchase was based on gentleman reactions. Therefore, it was recommended among others that educated consumers especially from the academic settings should form associations for creating awareness of consumers' rights in Rivers State. It was also recommended that informed consumers must come together and form genuine movements aimed at championing their rights and instituting actions against unscrupulous marketers and businesses when the need arises.

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**Keywords:** consumer rights, consumer behaviour, consumer movement

## 1. Introduction

Consumers are essential stakeholders in every business marketing efforts. In fact, it is for the purpose of the consumers that businesses establish and maintain vibrant marketing units that can provide them with relevant information relating to the consumers for decision making regarding product, price, place and promotion. Every business takes consumers very imported because as noted by Ogechukwu (2013), customers and consumers are the kings, queens, princes and princesses of business, are sovereign and must be treated excellently well and fairly, to enable companies maintain their profitability, market share and loyalty. Ebitu (2014) opined that consumers' rights are inalienable rights that should be protected by every business marketing units if the desire to remain in business over a long period of time is to be achieved.

Notwithstanding the importance of consumers to businesses, the utilization of marketing practices in such a manner that leads to the development of questionable products promoted through deceptive advertisement and exposing vulnerable consumers to adverse consequence detrimental to their quality of life are evidence in many developing countries like Nigeria. Supporting this, Ogechukwu (2013) noted that defective products are becoming more evident, and producers are denying all the defective products they manufactured. To correct this and protect vulnerable consumers in developing nations who are not much aware of the origins of the goods they purchase on a day-to-day basis, when compared to their counterparts in the developed world (Chaubey, Kala & Gupta, 2012), organized consumers' movements aimed at creating awareness and educating the consumers of their rights are emerging.

In Nigeria, the largest and biggest market in sub-Saharan Africa, the story of consumers' awareness and education of their rights has been informed by the influx of products from across the globe competing with locally made products. In most cases, the consumers in this nation prefer to buy foreign products because of their finishing and cheapness when compared to those produced within the nation. However, unlike in the developed nations where movements to protect vulnerable consumers through creating awareness and education of their rights are championed by organized consumers, the movement in Nigeria seems to be highly championed by government policies and government institutions (Dibie, Unanam, Uwasomba & Onyemali, 2018).

It is worth noting that over the years, the awareness and education of consumers on products' information and quality by National Agency for Food, Drug, Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON), Consumer Protection Council (CPC), and Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has led to the formation of many consumer associations across the country such as: the Tenants Association, the Consumer Association in Lagos, Aba, Kaduna and Onitsha, the Enugu Consumer Movement, the Consumer Club of Awgu, the Consumer Association of Abuja and the Consumer Protection Council of Nigeria (Ogechukwu, 2013). Hence, the effort to protect the consumers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria is not left to government

agencies alone. However, despite the efforts of government agencies and some of these consumers' associations, it seems consumerism has not much influence consumers' behaviour as a higher number of Nigerian consumers are still falling victims to unscrupulous marketing practices of businesses within and outside the country. Supporting this, Ebitu (2014) noted that millions of Nigerians suffer from the consumptions of adulterated goods, defective products, and expired drugs or products which manifest in the increasing rate of ill-health, discomfort and losses. Therefore, the need to continue examining the issues of consumerism and consumers' behaviour in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. It is for these reasons that the present study focusses on investigating consumerism and consumer behaviour in Rivers State, Nigeria. To achieve the main purpose of the study, the study specifically seeks to:

1. determine the extent to which consumers in Rivers State are adequately informed of their rights through consumers' associations.
2. determine the extent to which the information about their rights shape consumers' behaviour before buying product.
3. determine the extent to which the information about their rights shape consumers' behaviour after buying product.

### **1.1 Research Questions**

The following research questions were put forward to guide the study:

- 1) To what extent are consumers in Rivers State adequately informed about their rights through consumers' associations?
- 2) To what extent does the information about consumers' rights shape their behaviour before buying product?
- 3) To what extent does the information about consumers' rights shape their behaviour after buying product?

## **2. Conceptual Review**

### **2.1 Consumerism**

According to Ijewere and Stephen (2011), consumerism refers to the consumerist movement, consumer protection or consumer activism. Chaubey, Kala and Gupta (2012) opined that consumerism is a social movement initiated by the public and voluntary consumers' organizations, which pressurize the government to adopt necessary legal measures to protect consumers' interests. Ebitu (2014) opined that consumerism is the latest development in consumer awareness of, and insistence on their rights. Ogechukwu (2013) opined that consumerism taken to its logical conclusion implies redistribution of wealth. This is because it is aimed at ensuring value for money paid on goods and/or services. No little wonder, Ijewere and Stephen (2011) noted that the basic objective of consumers' association is to assist their members and the general public to obtain greater value for their money in the purchase of goods and services and expose the excesses of the manufacturers and the marketers. Mahajan (2015) noted that consumerism as a concept is concern with making the consumers informed stakeholders in the marketplace

in order to encourage marketing practices that guarantee social justice and fair practices such as: product testing in order to make consumers informed.

It is worth noting that from the context of the definitions reviewed that the purpose of consumerism is to avoid conflicts that may arise between the interest of firms and the interest of the consumers they serve. It is for this reason that Chaubey, Kala and Gupta (2012) opined that the purpose of consumerism is to refine marketing practices in such a way that makes consumers to be more informed and efficient in their buying decision and producers to be more responsive to the needs of consumers, more sincere and more truthful in the presentation of product or service features. Ogechukwu (2013) opined that the aim of consumerism is to protect the rights and interests of consumers and help them deal with all organizations with which they have an exchange relationship. Joseph (2016) noted that consumerism is aimed at promoted the following traditional rights of a consumer:

- 1) The right to buy or not to buy product that is offered for sale.
- 2) The right to expect the product to be safe; and
- 3) The right to expect the product to perform as claimed.

In addition to the above traditional rights of the consumers, advocates of consumerism (John F. Kenney; Ijewere & Stephen, 2011; Ebitu, 2014; Joseph, 2016) advocated for other consumer rights such as:

- 1) The right to be well informed about important aspects of the product;
- 2) The right to be protected against questionable products and marketing practices;
- 3) The right to be heard.

These rights of the consumers promoted through consumerism are aimed at avoiding grievances, frustration and criticisms from consumers that comes with lack of satisfaction from the use of goods and services bought (Ebitu, 2014). Although many authors have supported the need for consumerism, Mahajan (2015) noted that consumerism itself may be manipulative as more informed consumers may use this process to manipulate others into adopting a particular view of how useful or otherwise a product or service offerings may be rather than letting them decide on their own. Joseph (2016) noted that the aim of consumerism movements through company persuasion and legislation is to increase the amount of consumer information, education and protection. Hence, through consumerism, consumers are given value for their money and the firms enjoy long term benefit of customers' patronage.

## **2.2 Consumerism in Nigeria**

Ijewere and Stephen (2011) noted that the level of consumerism in Nigeria is relatively low as many Nigerian consumers lack access to genuine product information and education on how to seek for redress in the case of dissatisfaction due to lower quality of goods and/or services. Ebitu (2014) noted that consumerism as an organized effort is relatively new in Nigeria and are promoted through organized actions of individuals, groups and governments to protect the interest of Nigerian consumer. Dibie, Unanam, Uwasomba and Onyemali (2018) also noted that consumerism in Nigeria is at its early

stages of development because many of the consumers rely more on government to protect them.

### **2.3 Consumers' Behaviour**

According to Barmola and Srivastava (2010), consumer behaviour focuses on the search, evaluation, purchase, consumption and post purchase behaviour of the consumers which includes the disposal of purchased products keeping environment and personal characteristics in mind. Kardes, Cronly and Cline (2011) opined that consumer behaviour has to do with all activities associated with the purchase, use, and disposal of products and services including consumers' emotions, mental and behavioral responses that precede or follow those activities. Singh (2016) defined consumer behavior as a systematic process relating to buying decisions of the consumers which consist of the following activities: identification to buy the product; information search relating to the product; listing of alternative brands; evaluating the alternative (cost-benefit analysis); purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation by the marketer. Sunday and Bello (2016) opined that consumer behaviour refers to the decision making process of individuals who are directly involved in obtaining and using goods and services and how it leads to actual purchase, use and disposal of goods and services.

At this juncture, it is worth noting that consumer movements which are aimed at helping the consumers to develop positive behaviour that supports their interest when buying goods and/or services wouldn't have been an issue for businesses if through their marketing efforts, issue of consumers concern is properly addressed. Nevertheless, since businesses would not stop engaging in unscrupulous marketing practices; consumer movements are meant to shape consumer behaviour during and after purchases. It is still important to note that in Nigeria, consumerism seems not to have achieved much success in shaping consumer behaviour. Supporting this, Ogechukwu (2013) noted that many problems associated to consumerism in Nigeria are caused partly by the consumer's own attitude towards government policies and efforts to protect them from unscrupulous business practices largely due to incompetence, carelessness or ignorance and/or reluctance to make concerted effort required for informed buying decisions.

### **2.4 Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour**

According to Kardes, Cronly and Cline (2011), factors influencing consumer behaviour can be internal or external to the consumer. The authors noted that the internal factors are: personal and inter-personal (relationship between people) factors. Personal factors could be psychological, demographic (level of income/expected income); lifestyle (psychographic); age (youths, adults, and old people); occupation and social status; while the external factors are: those things outside of the individual consumer that has the capacity to influence buying decision such as: culture, sub-culture (example, religion), social class, reference groups such as family, clubs, aspiration groups, opinion leaders; and situations such as rain, economy and climate. Singh (2016) also opined that the factors influencing consumer behaviour can be group into internal and external factors. The author noted that the internal factors are: consumers' perceptions, attitudes,

motivations and lifestyles while the external factors are: marketing, cultural, social and economic backgrounds. Sunday and Bello (2016) also noted that factors such as cultural factors, social, personal and psychological influence consumer behaviour with regard to the purchase of goods and/or service.

## 2.5 Empirical Reviews

Chaubey, Kala and Gupta (2012) conducted a study to investigate consumer attitudes towards consumerism and different marketing practices and government regulations: a study of consumers of pharmaceutical products. For this, 315 respondents were surveyed from different part of Utrakhand State and it was found that there is a significance difference in the different factor across the educational category and occupation of the respondents and factors promoting consumerism. Consumers believe that consumerism and consumer education are associated with one another. Moreover, the aspect of consumerism has made manufacturer to be more sensitive regarding price, quality and composition of their products. The study also revealed that the combination of variable like the wide variety of competing products and brands makes intelligent buying decisions more difficult, manufacturers advertisements of drugs are reliable sources of information about the quality and performance of products, for most types of products the differences among competing brands are insignificant and unimportant. Several suggestions were drawn to enhance consumers' awareness and concern towards the consumerism issues in a country.

Ndubisi, Anyanwu, and Nwankwo (2016) conducted study to examine the protection of Nigerian Consumers with particular reference to the role of Consumer Protection Council of Nigeria (CPC) established by the Act C25 of 2004 and charged with the responsibility to promote, protect and safeguard the rights and interests of consumers in all areas of goods and services. The study analyzed primary data against the background of the objectives of the study. Evidences available indicated that consumer protection in Nigeria, like in most less developed countries had remained at the lowest ebb in spite of the prevalence of unwholesome business practices. The study also found that most of the consumers do not take time to study the labels on products before purchase and as a result, they do not have full information about the products that would help them to protect their rights. Consumers' awareness of their protection laws is low, which results in the absence of litigations against sellers even in cases of obvious infringements. The authors recommended intensified consumer education, by Consumer Protection Council, focusing on consumers in order to increase their knowledge as well as push for the amendment of specific sections of the Act C25 of 2004 to add more powers to the Council to enable them give the aggrieved consumers unfettered access to courts to pursue their rights.

Dibie, Unanam, Uwasomba and Onyemali (2018) conducted study to investigate the place of consumerism in Nigerian. The target population of this study consists of randomly selected consumers in Abia state and precisely Aba North Metropolis. The total population of consumers in the aforementioned LGA approximates to over 360,537 (National Population Census, 2006). The population of this study consists of men, women

and youth. Consumers below the age of 18 were not being included in this study. A total of Fifty (50) respondents from the population of the study which is heterogeneous comprising men, women and youth were selected. Judgmental sampling was employed in this study in order to ensure that the samples drawn are representative of the population. The main research instrument used in this study is the interview. The interview schedule was titled Consumer Rights and Protection (CRP). The interview find out the personal data and educational background of respondents, the factors militating against the advancement of consumerism in Nigeria, the stage of consumerism in the country and the extent to which government and private sector are contributing towards the development of consumerism in the country. The study revealed that the stage of consumerism in Nigeria is low. It also found out that there was high level of illiteracy in the country coupled with the fact that they were not willing to fight for their right. The government should pass a bill that would establish minimum product warranties. The media should focus more on consumerism because, for the most part, Nigerian consumers do not seem to know what is troubling them until the extent of the problem is publicized and they realize that several other consumers share similar worries.

Joseph (2016) conducted a study on consumerism and its influence on food and drug marketing in Nigeria. The research was carried out in Ikeja metropolitan city of Lagos State between March – July 2016. The objectives of this paper include (i) To X-ray the ideals of the marketing concept and find out if Nigerian Food and Drug manufacturers and Sellers (Marketers) have been following these ideals (ii) To examine the reasons for consumerism and find out the extent to which Nigerians have been involved as it relates to food and drug marketing (iii) To make a comparison between the ideals of marketing concept and consumerism and find out whether there existed a reasonable gap among others. The paper employs two hypotheses and four research questions. The hypotheses were tested with the aid of quantitative statistics while logical answers were provided to the research questions. As regards findings of the paper, it is pathetic to note that many marketers in their pursuit of profit have not faithfully implemented the ideals of marketing concepts. However, the laudable activities of National Agency for Food, :Drug, Administration & Control (NAFDAC) and the recent moves of the Standard Organization of Nigeria will help to positively change the attitude of Nigerian marketers towards the Nigerian consumers.

## **2.6 Knowledge Gap**

The empirical review shows that study has been conducted to investigate consumer attitudes towards consumerism and different marketing practices and government regulations: a study of consumers of pharmaceutical products. It also revealed that study has been conducted to examine the protection of Nigerian Consumers with particular reference to the role of Consumer Protection Council of Nigeria (CPC) established by the Act C25 of 2004 and charged with the responsibility to promote, protect and safeguard the rights and interests of consumers in all areas of goods and services. Another study was conducted to investigate the place of consumerism in Nigerian; and finally, study has been conducted on consumerism and its influence on food and drug marketing in

Nigeria. However, a cursory look at these studies show that none of the study focused on extent of customers' awareness of their rights to be informed about important aspect of product such as: product's origin, ingredients, process of utilization, expiring date, durability and how these information influence consumer's behaviour before and after purchase in Rivers State. Hence, it is this gap in existing literature that the present study intends to fill.

### 3. Methods

The study adopts quantitative approach using descriptive research design. The research design was used to gather primary data from the respondents using questionnaire. The total population of consumers in the 23 local government areas of Rivers State was pegged at about 7,409,304 people, that is, 4,112,001 males and 3,297,303 females (source 2007 provisional population census figures). However, a sample size of 230 respondents made up of ten respondents from each of the 23 LGAs was used for the study. Convenient sampling technique was used to select every participant in the study based on accessibility. A questionnaire tagged "Consumers Rights Awareness and Behaviour Questionnaire CRABQ" was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire is made up of two sections. Section A covers the demographic profile of the respondents and section B contains 20 items meant to answer the research questions posed. The questionnaire was structured on the basis of four rating scales of Very High Extent (VHE – 4points), High Extent (3-points), Low Extent (2-points) and Very Low Extent (1-point). The questionnaire was validated by a marketing lecturer from Federal College of Education (Tech.), Omoku and a marketer from United Bank of Africa (UBA), Omoku branch. The questionnaire was subjected to reliability of internal consistency using Cronbach alpha test computed with data collected from 15 bank service consumers in Omoku town of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local government area of Rivers State. The reliability index of 0.72 was obtained from the computation done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21.0. Data collected from the administration of instrument was analysed using percentage analysis for the demographic data, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, for decision making, the following were used as guide:

- Mean of 3.0 above will be regarded as Very High Extent,
- 2.0 to 2.99 will be regarded as High Extent,
- 1.5 to 1.99 will be regarded as Low Extent, and
- below 1.5 will be regarded as Very Low Extent.



#### 4. Results and Discussion

This section analyses demographic profile of respondents. The sample represents a cross section of the population regarding age, gender, and marital status. Table 1 shows that the sample is dominated by those respondents (37%) who are in the age group of 20-30 years and followed by those respondents with the age group of 30 to 40 years (28%). Majority of the respondents also belongs to male category, married and with educational status below first degree.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Demographic Characteristics	Characteristics	No of Respondents	%
<b>Total Number of Respondents</b>	-	230	100
<b>Age</b>	up to 20 years	32	14
	from 20 to 30 years	86	37
	from 30 to 40 years	65	28
	from 40 to 50 years	33	14
	from 50 years and above	14	07
<b>Gender Category</b>	Male	119	52
	Female	111	48
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	156	68
	Unmarried	74	32
<b>Educational Status</b>	Below first degree	148	64
	Masters	56	23
	PhD	26	13

**Research Question 1:** To what extent are consumers in Rivers State adequately informed about their rights through consumers' associations?

Table 2 shows that the respondents are of the opinion that they are informed about consumers' right to buy or not to buy product to a high extent through consumers' associations with mean score of 2.04 and standard deviation of 1.08 respectively. The respondents are also of the opinion that they are informed about consumers' rights to expect the product to be safe; to be well informed about important aspects of the product; to be protected against questionable products and marketing practices and right to be heard to a low extent through consumers' associations with mean scores of 1.92, 1.55, 1.56, 1.84, and standard deviation of 1.08, 0.86, 1.00, 1.06, and 1.10 respectively. However, when the grand mean score of 1.79 and standard deviation of 1.03 are considered, it can be concluded that consumers in Rivers State are to a low extent adequately informed about their rights through consumers' associations.

**Table 2:** Summary of Mean on the Extent to which Consumers are Informed about their Rights through Consumers' associations

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
Right to buy or not to buy product.	2.04	1.08	HE
Right to expect the product to be safe.	1.92	1.08	LE
Right to expect the product to perform as claimed.	1.55	0.86	LE
Right to be well informed about important aspects of the product.	1.56	1.00	LE
Right to be protected against questionable products and marketing practices.	1.84	1.06	LE
Right to be heard.	1.85	1.10	LE
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>LE</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent does the information about consumers' rights shape their behaviour before buying product?

Table 3 shows that the respondents are of the opinion that the information about consumers' rights to high extent shape their behaviour relating to searching for information about manufacturing date and expiring date; searching for information about the ingredients composition of a product; and choosing from alternatives without being limited before purchase with mean scores of 2.12, 2.19, 2.35 and standard deviation of 0.82, 0.85, and 0.87 respectively. The respondents are also of the opinion that to a low extent the information about consumers' rights shapes their behaviour relating to identifying product origin, examining alternative brands, asking for product testing, and negotiation for fair price before purchase with mean scores of 1.80, 1.81, 1.69, 1.80 and standard deviation of 0.60, 0.58, 0.78, and 0.59 respectively. However, when the grand mean score of 1.97 and standard deviation of 0.73 are considered, it can be concluded that information about consumers' right to a low extent shape the behaviour of consumers in Rivers state before buying products.

**Table 3:** Summary of Mean on the Extent to which the Information about Consumers' Rights Shape their behaviour before Buying Products

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
Identifies product origin	1.80	0.60	LE
Search for information about manufacturing and expiring date.	2.12	0.82	HE
Examines alternative brands.	1.81	0.58	LE
Search for information about ingredients composition.	2.19	0.85	HE
Ask for product testing before purchase.	1.69	0.78	LE
Choose from alternatives without being limited.	2.35	0.87	HE
Negotiate for fair price.	1.80	0.59	LE
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>LE</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

**Research Question 3:** To what extent does the information about consumers’ rights shape their behaviour after buying product?

Table 4 shows that the respondents are of the opinion that information about consumers’ rights to a high extent shape their behaviour relating to returning of defective product, asking for refund of money paid for defective product, stop patronizing the business product due to bad experience and protest against poor quality of business products after purchase with mean scores of 2.37, 2.28, 2.48, 2.40 and standard deviation of 0.95, 1.01, 1.00, and 0.85 respectively. The respondents are also of the opinion that information about consumers’ rights to a low extent shape their behaviour relating to instituting legal actions against unscrupulous business practices, complaining to consumer protection council, and asking for compensation for fraudulent business practices with mean score of 1.67, 1.66, 1.70 and standard deviation of 0.94, 0.93, 0.92 respectively. However, when the grand mean score of 2.08 and standard deviation of 0.94 are considered, it can be concluded that information about consumers’ right to a high extent shape the behaviour of consumers in Rivers state after buying products.

**Table 4:** Summary of Mean on the Extent to which the Information about Consumers’ Rights Shape their Behaviour after Buying Products

Items	Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
Return defective product.	2.37	0.95	HE
Ask for refund of money paid for defective product.	2.28	1.01	HE
Institute legal against unscrupulous business practices.	1.67	0.94	LE
Complain to consumer protection council in case of poor quality of product.	1.66	0.93	LE
Ask for compensation for fraudulent business practices.	1.70	0.92	LE
Stop patronizing the business product due to bad experience.	2.48	1.00	HE
Protest against poor quality of business products.	2.40	0.85	HE
<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>2.08</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>HE</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

## 5. Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study relating to specific purpose one shows that consumers in Rivers State are to a low extent adequately informed about their rights through consumers’ associations. The findings emanated from the fact that most of the respondents are of the opinion that to a low extent they are informed about consumers’ right to expect the product to be safe; to be well informed about important aspects of the product; to be protected against questionable products and marketing practices and right to be heard through consumers’ associations. This means that the extent of consumerism in Rivers state is low. The findings are in line with the observation of Ijewere and Stephen (2011) when they noted that the level of consumerism in Nigeria is relatively low. The findings are in line with the opinion of Ebitu (2014) who noted that consumerism as an organized effort is relatively new in Nigeria promoted through organized actions of individuals, groups and governments to protect the interest of Nigerian consumer. The findings of

this study are also in line with the discovery of Diebie, Unanam, Uwasomba and Onyemali (2018) when the authors discovered that the stage of consumerism in Nigeria is low due to illiteracy in the country coupled with the fact that consumers were not willing to fight for their right.

The findings related to specific purpose two shows that the respondents are of the opinion information about consumers' right to a low extent shape the behaviour of consumers in Rivers state before buying products. The findings emanated from the fact that most of the respondents are of the opinion that the information about consumers' rights to a low extent shaped their behaviour relating to identifying product origin, examining alternative brands, asking for product testing, and negotiation for fair price before purchase. This means that consumer behaviour prior to purchase was to a low extent influence by their knowledge of consumers' rights. The findings is supported by the discovery of Ndubisi, Anyanwu, and Nwankwo (2016) when the authors discovered that most of the consumers do not take time to study the labels on products before purchase and as a result, they do not have full information about the products that would help them to protect their rights.

The findings relating to specific objective three revealed that the respondents are of the opinion that information about consumers' rights to a high extent the behaviour of consumers in Rivers state after buying products. The findings emanated from the fact that most of the respondents are of the opinion that to a high extent information about consumers' rights shaped their behaviour relating to returning of defective product, asking for refund of money paid for defective product, stop patronizing the business product due to bad experience and protest against poor quality of business products after purchase. This means that despite not adequately informed of their rights most Nigerians consumers in Rivers State take human friendly steps outside court to ensure they get back what they paid in the case of defective products. The findings are in line with the opinion of Ijewere and Stephen (2011) when they noted that many Nigerian consumer lack access to information and education on how to seek for redress in the case of dissatisfaction due to lower quality of goods and /or services. The findings of this study is supported by the findings of Ndubisi, Anyanwu, and Nwankwo (2016) when the authors discovered that consumers' awareness of their protection laws is low, which results in the absence of litigations against sellers even in cases of obvious infringements.

## **6. Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that most consumers in Rivers State do not have access to adequate information about their right through organized consumers' movements. This is largely due to the fact that the activities of organized consumers' movements are relatively low or new within the State and many of the consumers are not aware of their activism. Hence, the benefit that comes with group or collective pressure on businesses to refine or redefine their marketing practices to serve the interest of both the firm and its consumers will be totally absent. This means many unscrupulous businesses practices will never be challenged except through the pressure

of government agencies such as NAFDAC, CPC, SON and others who are helping to protect the right of the consumers in Rivers State and Nigeria as a whole. Therefore, to complement the efforts of these government agencies, there is need for genuine consumers' movement in order to sensitive and educate Rivers State consumers to act towards ensuring the actualization of their rights before and after purchasing products. Consequently, some recommendations are put forward.

### **6.1 Recommendations**

Based findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, it is recommended that:

- 1) Educated consumers especially from the academic settings should create awareness of consumers' rights in Rivers State.
- 2) Informed consumers must come together and form genuine movements aimed at championing their rights and instituting actions against unscrupulous marketers and businesses.
- 3) Consumers' protection council needs to collaborate with National Orientation agency to educate Rivers State consumers on how to seek redress in the case of infringement of their basic rights.
- 4) Concerned consumers should use the social media and other conventional media houses to publicize the extent of infringement of consumers' rights in Nigeria in order to give many Nigerian consumers the courage to share similar worries and report unscrupulous businesses practices to seek redress.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors of this work have no any conflict of interest to declared, the financial obligations relating to the study were borne by the researchers in order to advance of knowledge in marketing practices and consumerism and not for any personal of organization's interest.

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