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EFFECT OF PRICING POLICY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: A STUDY OF MTN NIGERIA, ABUJA

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Abstract

This study was triggered by the recurrent complaints of lack of stability, unfair, and inconsistent pricing policies in the competitive telecoms market in Abuja which were believed to have reduced customer loyalty and value perception. The study aimed at investigating the influence of pricing policy on customer satisfaction of MTN customers in Abuja. This study used descriptive research design. The population of the study were 349 respondents and the sample size was 223 using Yamane's formula with 20% margin of safety for non-response. Stratified sampling technique was used to select the respondents for the study and structured questionnaire with a five-point likert scale was used to gather primary data. SPSS Version 27.0 was used to analyze data by regression analysis. The results showed that the price fairness had a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty with standardized Beta value of .684 and significance value of .000. The results also indicated that competitive pricing positively and significantly affected the perceived value, as measured by a standardized Beta value of .641, and a significance value of .000. The study found out that pricing policy had a significant impact on customer satisfaction for MTN Nigeria customers in Abuja. The study suggests MTN Nigeria should ensure fairness, transparency and consistency in pricing, and keep pricing strategies competitive to reflect customers purchasing power and market options.

Keywords: *Pricing Policy, Price Fairness, Competitive Pricing, Customer Loyalty, Perceived Value, Customer Satisfaction.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pricing policy is no longer simply the means by which firms and consumers determine the value of an exchange in both the developed and emerging economies. As markets become more competitive and inflationary, with rising customer salaries, digital transparency, and a growing number of companies, customers increasingly see pricing as a strategic communication tool that influences their perception of fairness, quality, trust and market credibility. In today's customers, it is not just a matter of looking at the product but more about the whole experience. Instead, they consider if the cost of the service matches the benefit that they expect, alternatives, and the economy. This change has put companies around the world on a fresh path of thinking about the old cost-based pricing models and adopting new customer-centric pricing models that can maintain competitive relevance and long-term relationships. De Toni et al. (2021) insist that value-based pricing is a key element of market performance in the sense that customers have become more and more linked to the pricing behaviour of the organisation and market orientation. Likewise, Kalyanaram and Winer (2022) argue that the nature of behavioural responses to price has become more dynamic in the era of digital access to competing offers, making pricing policy an important factor in modelling customer reactions and evaluating what happens after the sale. In reality, consumers in the city can easily check prices online and make a purchase before the other, just like they do in London, Johannesburg, Lagos and Nairobi. This increasing visibility has led to greater sensitivity to price disparities and to possible forms of exploitation, especially in economies where the purchasing power is not stable.

In general, pricing policy is the principles, strategies and managerial guidelines followed by organisations in setting the prices of products or services in ways that are consistent with the organisations' goals while they are also appealing to customers. It reveals not only the numerical value assigned to products, but also the rationale behind the discounts, competitive positioning, promotional changes, and customer perception of fairness. Pricing policy in the scope of this study is analyzed by two aspects such as price fairness and competitive pricing. Price fairness is concerned with how fair, acceptable and fair the price seems to the customer when compared to the value they are receiving. Prices perceived as manipulative, unfair, or inequitable typically have an adverse effect on customers, particularly during economically challenging times. Singh et al. (2021) noted that the perception of price fairness has strong impact on the customers' attitude and their behavioural intention in service contexts. Hride et al. (2021) also argue that if customers find a firm's pricing practices to be fair, then they are likely to trust and feel connected to that firm. The perception of fairness is especially sensitive in the Nigerian city of Abuja, where consumers are often confronted with rapid price fluctuations between different retail stores, hospitality services, transportation and online shopping platforms.

Customers often ask why some similar products differ significantly from company to company, and such assessments can influence their decisions about repurchasing. Competitive pricing, however, refers to how closely the company's prices match strategically the market and the competitor's products. Commercial firms are not alone, particularly in the urban setting, such as Abuja, where customers are inundated with many options from supermarkets, restaurants, telecom services, and online retailers. So competitive pricing is a balance between profit and price sensitivity and market relevance. Customers tend to compare alternative offers before deciding to make a purchase, making pricing strategies crucial to their decisions, as argued by Ali and Anwar (2021). The Nigerian context has enhanced this comparison behaviour as a result of the increasing economic pressures, instability of the currency, and decreasing disposable income for many households. A restaurant in Wuse, for example, might offer high levels of service, but if they seem to be too high as compared to other comparable restaurants in the area, the customers may switch to a different restaurant.

Customer attraction and retention, then, becomes more of a strategic issue than simply an operational one, when it comes to competitive pricing. Customer satisfaction is one of the most discussed outcomes in the field of marketing and consumer behaviour literature as it is the overall assessment of customers' consumption experience vis-à-vis their expectations. When customers' expectations of performance are met or exceeded, satisfaction is experienced. However, it is not satisfaction per se that is usually the part most likely to be affected by product quality in real-life situations. The overall value of the exchange is assessed by the customer, covering the aspects of pricing, convenience, service contact and perceived value. According to Otto et al. (2020) customer satisfaction plays an important role in the performance of an organisation because it contributes to repeat patronage, profitability and long-term customer relationship. In this study, customer satisfaction is defined by the two concepts of customer loyalty and perceived value. Customer Loyalty is the tendency to persist in a consumer's business dealings with a company regardless of the availability of other companies. Customers who are loyal to a brand will not switch brands impulsively and are likely to be informal brand champions by recommending and spreading positive word of mouth. The findings of Ahmed et al. (2022) indicated that customer loyalty is positively correlated with the perception of price and satisfaction in the context of services. Perceived value, on the other hand, is how customers think the amount that they are giving up is worth the benefits they are getting. Customers in Abuja are now more economical in their buying choices owing to inflation and cost of living issues that have long influenced consumers' buying habits. In industries like hospitality, retail, transportation and telecommunication, many consumers are increasingly concerned with value, rather than simply quality. The relationship between pricing policy and customer satisfaction in the commercial environment of Abuja seems to be on the verge of becoming more complicated and important to study. For companies, there are costs driven by inflation, transportation, exchange rate fluctuations, and energy issues.

Companies have face rising operational costs due to inflation, transportation, exchange rate fluctuations, and energy issues. At the consumer end, however, consumers are still looking for fairness, affordability and better value, despite lower purchasing power. This balance is a fine one for businesses trying to stay profitable while not losing customers. A competitive price system and fairness could enhance customers' valuation and foster loyalty in the long run. However, there is also the potential that consumers might be willing to pay more for the product or service when the company is able to convey better service or product attributes. Customers do not typically consider price alone when making a purchasing decision – it is often combined with product information, which influences their satisfaction after purchase, suggests Zhao et al. (2021). However, the connection between pricing policy and customer satisfaction is not always clear-cut in Abuja in particular, as consumer satisfaction differs according to income classes, industry types and preferences. Some customers will focus on price while others will focus on consistency, trust or prestige. This condition makes it imperative to test the impact of the pricing policy dimensions on the customer satisfaction outcomes within the peculiar economic and social environment of Abuja, Nigeria, through empirical research.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In an ideal telecommunications market, MTN Nigeria was to have had a pricing policy that is fair, transparent, competitive and in keeping with the quality of voice, data and digital services offered to customers in Abuja. The pricing was anticipated to bolster customer satisfaction, such as in terms of value perceived by customers, customer loyalty, and less churning of subscribers to other networks. MTN was the leader and was expected to strive to offer affordability and still make a profit as telecommunications services had become a necessity for business, education, banking, social media, and everyday communications.

But MTN Nigeria pricing policy seemed to have caught the attention of its Abuja customers. The decision by NCC to allow for a maximum adjustment of 50% on telecom charges in 2025 has heightened the sensitivity of the populace to data, voice, and service charges. It happened under a challenging economic scenario with Nigeria's headline inflation at 15.69% in April 2026, which reduces customers' purchasing power. As of March 2026, MTN continues to lead the telecom market with approximately 95.7 million subscribers and 51.6% market share, however, in Abuja, customers still seemed to wonder if MTN's data plans, call tariffs, deductions, and bundle values were fair compared to its competitors. This resulted in dissatisfaction for customers who felt they were receiving a poor service quality, that service prices increased but the network quality did not, that data validity was being sacrificed, that there was no transparency in billing, and that their experience was being compromised.

From a practical perspective, several studies had explored the issue of pricing fairness, perceived value, and customer loyalty in various industries, mostly in international settings, outside Nigeria, as cited by Oktafiani and Ariyanti (2025), Aprilia and Septrizola (2025), Zietsman et al. (2019), Jamaludin et al. (2025), Qian (2025), and Ali et al. (2024). A clear conclusion from these studies was that price fairness and competitive prices were significant factors that affected customer satisfaction and loyalty. There is however, very little empirical studies on pricing and the effect on the satisfaction of the subscribers to MTN Nigeria in Abuja, Nigeria. The lack of any contextual and specific evidence, thus presenting an empirical void, made this study necessary to investigate the impact of MTN Nigeria pricing policy on customer satisfaction of their subscribers in Abuja.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the identified problem, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study and provide direction for data collection and analysis.

i. What is the effect of price fairness on customer loyalty of MTN Nigeria, Abuja?

ii. To what extent does competitive pricing affect perceived value of MTN Nigeria, Abuja?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the effect of pricing policy on customer satisfaction. Specifically, the study seeks to:

i. Examine the effect of price fairness on customer loyalty of MTN Nigeria, Abuja.

ii. Determine the effect of competitive pricing on perceived value of MTN Nigeria, Abuja.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

In line with the research questions and objectives of the study, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in the course of the study.

H_{01}: Price fairness has no significant effect on customer loyalty of MTN Nigeria, Abuja.

H_{02}: Competitive pricing has no significant effect on perceived value of MTN Nigeria, Abuja.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study investigated the impact of pricing policy on customer satisfaction in Abuja specifically MTN Nigeria, Abuja. Abuja was chosen as the geographical area of the study because of the prevailing economic condition and the escalating cost of living which made customers sensitive to pricing practices, the highly competitive business environment and the expanding population of consumers. Pricing policy was the independent variable; the degree of price fairness and competitiveness were selected as proxies as these dimensions were typically considered as some of the most important factors influencing the perceptions, intentions and responses of customers in the existing marketing literature (Singh et al., 2021; Ali & Anwar, 2021). Price fairness was defined by customers' perception of the reasonableness and fairness of the prices charged by the organisations, and competitive pricing was related to how competitive the prices of the organisations were compared to the market alternatives. Customer satisfaction, measured by customer loyalty and perceived value, were used as the dependent variables as both served as indicators of customers' post-purchase evaluations and long-term relationship outcomes (Ahmed et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2021). Customer loyalty indicated customers' intent to maintain patronage of the organisation, while customer perceived value indicated customers' evaluation of the benefits they received compared to the monetary efforts that were sacrificed. Therefore, the study looked at the effects of competitive pricing, price fairness on customer loyalty and perceived value of MTN Nigeria customers in Abuja.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Concept of Pricing Policy

The decision on how to price a product is now becoming more than a financial one, and is becoming a more comprehensive strategic tool that can influence a customer's perception, market positioning and competitive advantage. Today's business environment especially one that is characterized by uncertain economy coupled with increased awareness of customers, make it difficult for firms to establish prices based on production cost and anticipated profit margin. Instead, factors such as customer expectations, competitor actions and reactions, perceived value, inflation realities and long-term relationship objectives all influence pricing. De Toni et al., (2021) defined pricing policy as a coherent managerial strategy which directs the organization's pricing decisions to optimise prices in a manner consistent with market conditions, customer expectations and profitability targets. This was because it was believed this would not only impact on revenue generation but also emotional and behavioural reactions of customers to firms. The price is a significant factor that customers associate with quality, fairness, transparency and organisation integrity.

Pricing policy is particularly sensitive in service-based industries like telecommunications, hospitality, banking and retail where customers make purchasing decisions based on available alternatives on a regular basis. Kalyanaram and Winer (2022) said that digital technology and greater availability of market information has turned pricing into a behavioural matter instead of just an economic calculation. Consumers compare prices, prior experience and value today. In economies like Nigeria, where inflationary pressures and loss of purchasing power has continued to influence people's consumption patterns, pricing policy has become more critical. In some cases, firms in Abuja have a hard time achieving a balance between the sustainability of operation and the affordability of the customer. A minor raise on subscription fees, transport costs or service costs could easily lead to customer dissatisfaction or brand switching. So pricing policy now more and more looks like the ability to play psychology as well as market realities with customers instead of mostly financial goals.

Pricing policy has been variously defined by scholars in their study based on the aims and conditions of their study. Ali and Anwar (2021) considered pricing policy as one of the strategic marketing tool that can attract customers, customers purchasing decision as well as competitiveness of the market. Also, Zhao et al. (2021) stated that pricing policies influence the perceived value of the product for the customer and directly influence on the post-purchase outcomes of satisfaction. All these viewpoints together would indicate that the pricing policy is more than just the process of giving monetary values to products or services. It includes the overall management policy with respect to the generation of value for customers, the competitiveness of the firm and its sustaining of customer relationships. Pricing policy for this study focused on price fairness and competitive pricing which directly reflected customers' views on equity, affordability, and comparison of the market in the consumption decision.

The increased significance of pricing policy in customer satisfaction research also can be attributed to changes in consumer behaviour patterns around the world. Today's customers are not particularly accepting of "exploitative" or "inconsistent" pricing, particularly when there are other options available. For example, in the telecommunications sector, consumers in Nigeria often shop around for the best data rates, packages, and call pricing before deciding on which service to select. This is an example of how pricing policy is impacting brand loyalty, not just for customers in the current moment, but also their longer-term sentiment towards a brand. This is why businesses are increasingly looking for pricing models that build and foster trust, retention, and positive customer experiences in highly competitive situations.

2.1.2 Price Fairness

Price fairness involves customers' sense that the prices a firm charge are fair, just and in line with the value received. The idea comes from the behavioural pricing literature that suggests that price decisions are not only perceived as price but as perceived legitimacy and equity as well. Customers may feel the product's prices are fair in comparison to the quality of the product, what other companies are offering, and market conditions. As customers perceive pricing practices as fair and transparent, they tend to have positive emotional and behavioral reactions, Hride et al. (2021) explained. On the other hand, if they feel that they are not being treated fairly, they might become dissatisfied, distrustful and switch, despite the product quality being satisfactory. The behavioural dimension of pricing has been growing in importance in recent times when the information customers have at their disposal is readily available and when they are more aware of competing offerings.

To them, price hikes that come suddenly and without warning can be seen as exploitation, especially when there is an economic crisis. This reality has become more apparent in Nigeria where the inflationary pressure has made the prices of goods and services across various industries fluctuate. In Abuja, consumers regularly compare prices, and they will sometimes wonder if there is a difference in prices and quality. In the telecom industry, for example, consumers can be displeased if they see their subscription fees increase without receiving any better service or quality of network. Singh et al. (2021) suggested that the perceptions of price fairness can have a significant impact on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, as customers consider fair prices as indicators of the firm's honesty and customer focus.

Another aspect in the matter of price fairness is consistency and transparency in pricing. In general, customers like to be kept up to date on pricing, and they don't like price structures that they don't fully understand. Jamaludin et al. (2025) indicated that transparency in the reasons for pricing and consistency of pricing across customer segments enhance perceptions of fairness. This is especially important in in-service businesses where the customer might not know what is being deducted or charges hidden. In the competitive business climate of Abuja, customers are more conscious of businesses' justification for price changes, and they are more likely to view them as transparent and reasonable. Otherwise, there could be a sense of exploitation and loss of customer confidence in the organisation.

Price fairness has additional relational connotations in addition to the direct purchase consequences. When customers feel the price they pay is reasonable, they tend to feel more attached to the companies they deal with and less inclined to switch to another company just because of a lower price. According to Ahmed et al. (2022), perceptions of fairness play an important role in the creation of customer loyalty, as customers are likely to view fair treatment as a sign of respect and reliability of the organisation. This indicates that companies aiming for sustainable customer satisfaction need to be mindful of both the cost and the customer's perception of fairness in these costs in the current economic climate.

2.1.3 Competitive Pricing

Competitive pricing is a pricing strategy that involves firms setting the price for their product, based on the market conditions of the time and the pricing structure of its competitors. Competitive pricing puts emphasis on responsiveness to market and strategic positioning in contrast to purely cost based pricing approaches. The premise is that consumers always shop around when purchasing products, particularly in very competitive markets where there are competing products or services easily available. Competitive pricing can be defined as a market oriented strategy in which companies attempt to maintain their customer base and market relevance through price competition, while still being profitable (Ali & Anwar, 2021). This perspective was promoted in today's business climate, where switching costs are relatively low.

In the more competitive sectors, the importance of competitive pricing has grown more evident with price sensitive consumers. In Nigeria, for example, telecommunications companies often change subscription fees, data rates and promotions in response to activities by their competitors. Prices are a likely comparison point used by customers when choosing their network. This kind of behavior highlights the fact that competitive pricing is not just a business choice, it's also a reaction to the overall market conditions and customer expectations. Customers' evaluation of value can also be affected by competitive pricing, as customers often believe that if something is cheap, they will be making a better decision, especially in economically volatile times, according to Qian (2025).

Competitive pricing doesn't always mean the lowest prices in the market, though. Instead, it's about setting prices that customers feel are fair in comparison to the value provided and what competitors charge. It is important to note that this separation is essential, so as to avoid any questions about the quality or service reliability of the product at extremely low prices. Kalyanaram and Winer (2022) argued that to have a competitive price for a product, it is important for the firms to be aware of the customer psychology and the market behaviour to balance the price and a sense of quality. In the urban business environment of Abuja, where consumers face a variety of choices every day, companies that cannot keep their prices competitive will have difficulty in keeping their customers, even if their service is fairly high.

Competitive pricing helps influence customer satisfaction results in other ways as well, such as providing a sense of the organisation's responsiveness and market awareness. Generally, the customers like the companies that are sensitive towards the economic situation and the purchasing power of the consumers. In Nigeria, in the times of inflation, consumers became more discriminating about their expenditures, and focused more on companies that appeared to provide more value for money. This is why competitive pricing has become a more effective tool to help build customer trust, satisfaction and retention in dynamic and economic challenging environments.

2.1.4 Concept of Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is one of the most fundamental strategies in marketing and consumer behaviour as it reflects the general perception of customers about the products, services and organizations. Satisfaction is frequently related to quality, but it is not just about the technical aspects of products. After use, customers assess if their price, convenience, service interaction, reliability and value expectations have been met. Otto et al. (2020) defined Customer Satisfaction as a psychological state which is the result of the customer's comparison between the expected and actual performance results. If the organisation's performance is acceptable then the customer will have positive emotions and intentions to patronise the organisation. But discontent can arise when customers feel there is a disconnect between the experiences they've been promised and those they've received.

It's gained more importance in today's business world due to the rise of greater customer awareness, variety of options and customer bargaining power. Digital communication channels have enabled consumers to share their experiences, their opinions and have a huge impact on how people view companies. Organisations are therefore more aware of customer satisfaction as a competitive advantage and a survival strategy. In real-world scenarios, unhappy customers could quickly switch to other brands and share their negative experiences openly on social media sites. It has become a reality especially in the service industry of Nigeria, where competition is now getting tough among telecommunications, the banking sector, hotels, and retail sector. In Abuja, for example, the question of product availability is not the only criterion by which businesses are judged, but also affordability, service and reliability, and value for money.

Relational and behavioural perspectives have been adopted by scholars to examine customer satisfaction. Current studies and literature on satisfaction instead focus on the process of evaluation rather than a single transaction as a result of satisfaction.More recent work and literature on satisfaction focuses on this process of evaluation rather than satisfaction as a result of a single transaction, as repeated interactions and emotional experiences shape satisfaction. Zhao et al (2021) states that customer satisfaction is a combined assessment of customers about the value that firms have consistently been able to provide, in comparison to their expectations and sacrifices. From this view, satisfaction is a variable, and its magnitude depends on the changes in the market, the priorities of customers and the practices of organizations. In this study, customer satisfaction was explored as a dimension of customer loyalty and customer perceived value as they signified behavioural and evaluative attributes of the customers' consumption experience.

Customer satisfaction is not only important for immediate sales effectiveness, but it also can be vital to the sustainability of an organisation, as satisfied customers can return to the organisation, recommend others to the organisation, and have positive word of mouth about the organisation. Ahmed et al. (2022) found that customer satisfaction enhances the relationship commitment between customers and companies, making it less likely that customers will turn to other companies. With the growing competition in the commercial world in Abuja, customer satisfaction is a major factor since businesses are operating in a world where customers are price and experience sensitive. Companies with a history of meeting customer expectations will thus have a better chance of remaining viable, profitable, and competitive.

2.1.5 Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty can be defined as the consistent behaviour of consumers to continue to buy products from a specific firm or brand in the face of other available options. This is not limited to repeat purchases as loyalty can also be an emotional, trust-based loyalty over time. Favourable attitudes to an organisation and a less susceptible responsiveness to competitors' marketing mix and/or price changes are likely to be formed by the loyal customers of a firm. Customer loyalty is facilitated by customers' consistent satisfaction with the value they derive from firms' interactions with them, as per Ahmed et al. (2022). This implies that loyalty is the result of constant organisational efforts to satisfy customers, not an accident.

Customer loyalty is one of the most valuable intangible assets that a firm can have in the high competitive markets. It may be more cost-effective and strategic to retain existing customers, while new customers can be acquired at a much higher cost. When a customer comes repeatedly to an enterprise, they often help to secure the revenue of the enterprise and can be unpaid brand ambassadors by making recommendations and positive referrals to other customers. In the Nigerian telecom sector, for instance, the fact that the public feels that the network quality, pricing and service delivery are stable makes it more likely that they will keep their services with a given competitor even in the face of these promotions.

Customer loyalty is also closely linked with customers' sense of organisational fairness and reliability. Exploitative, disappointing and uncertain experiences with firms don't keep customers around. Singh et al. (2021) stated that the transparency of the organisation's practices, such as pricing, and its customer orientation create a feeling of loyalty among customers. This is particularly relevant in the context of the dynamic commercial environment in Abuja which is characterized by the availability of competing alternatives and the dynamic nature of the markets. As a result, companies are always challenged to provide fair treatment and value to customers, which puts a constant strain on them to maintain customer confidence.

Loyalty can be expressed on a behavioural level as repeat purchases, switching resistance, advocacy and emotional involvement with firms. Loyalty, however, is not a forever or ever and ever loyalty. As the economy changes and people have new experiences in the marketplace, contemporary consumers rethink their relationships with organisations. The increased cost of living in Nigeria has sharpened the customer's question to whether or not companies truly deserve their business. Therefore, organisations looking to improve customer loyalty need to continuously find the right balance between price, quality, and service delivery that will keep customers loyal to the business over time.

2.1.6 Perceived Value

The perceived value is the overall evaluation of the value of the product or service that customers receive when compared to their monetary and non-monetary sacrifices incurred in acquiring the product or service. The idea is highly subjective since customers judge the value according to their expectations, experiences, financial resources, and options. Perceived value is therefore more than just the objective value of the product and embraces emotional, functional and economic aspects. Zhao et al. (2021) described the positive consumption experiences as when customers think their benefits are more than what they have to pay for. This evaluative process affects satisfaction, intentions to return to firms and general attitudes towards firms.

Customers don't always perceive value as low prices in real life business environments. Instead, they determine if prices are in line with the convenience, reliability and service experience of the product and its quality. Where the benefits to the customer are greater than the sacrifice of the costs he is willing to make. At the other extreme, however, dissatisfaction can occur when prices are higher than what customers think they can get for the service they are receiving. In the commercial landscape of Abuja, where inflation and economic hardships are still influencing buying habits, the significance of perceived value has grown and plays a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior. Consumers are now more critical of whether organisations actually give them experiences for the money.

Perceived value also encompasses psychological and relational aspects of consumption. Customers tend to evaluate their needs against the services provided by other companies before deciding if they're getting good value from a company's services. Qian (2025) argued that the competitive environment drives customers to evaluate value even more: customers constantly evaluate that of other options available in the market. This is why companies increasingly strive to invest in marketing communication, service changes and price optimization to reinforce customers' sense of value. With carriers like telecom, customers might consider value on a set of dimensions such as network quality, data affordability, customer support, and service reliability and not just pricing.

The increasing importance of perceived value in the study of customer satisfaction can be correlated with the changing consumer expectations in the contemporary economies. Expectations for customers are shifting in the quest for an affordable experience that's also high quality and convenient. When firms are not providing enough value for customers, dissatisfaction and switching behaviour can manifest itself very rapidly. Nigeria has seen this trend more prominently in the past where the fear of economic uncertainty has brought customers to be more deliberate and selective about their consumption. Thus, companies that are able to establish robust perceptions of value will be better positioned to enhance customer satisfaction, retention, and market positioning in fluid markets.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on the Equity Theory of John Stacey Adams, 1963. The theory was developed in the field of organisational behaviour but is now being increasingly used in marketing and consumer behaviour spheres to account for the perception of fairness in exchange situations. In Equity Theory, people continually compare what they are putting into their exchange transactions to what they are getting out of them. Satisfaction occurs where the customer feels there is equilibrium, fairness, and proportionality in the give and take. However, dissatisfaction happens when customers believe there is some inequity or unfair treatment. Customers' reactions to pricing practices and satisfaction outcomes have been explained using fairness perspective as per contemporary scholars like Hride et al. (2021) and Singh et al. (2021) with equity theory as the theory of fairness.

One particular factor that kept theory relevant in this study is that the theory is mainly related to the customers' assessment and perception of the set of relationships they have with each other as it comes to the issue of pricing. MTN Nigeria's Abuja's customers were likely to value the consistency in pricing offered by the telecom service and its quality, reliability of services and competitors. Customers who felt fair and valued were more likely to be loyal and satisfied when they felt a competitive value. In turn, the concept of equity theory was a valuable conceptual basis for understanding the effects of price fairness and competitiveness on customer loyalty and perceived value.

Although it is relevant, Equity Theory has come under criticism for the assumption that people assess fairness objectively and uniformly in situations. However, critics have expressed that customers' perceptions are not only based on objective comparisons, but on their emotions, social surroundings, cultural background, and psychological biases. Even the same pricing scenarios can be understood differently by various customers, based on their own expectations and experiences. Even so, theory was useful as it acknowledged the importance of fairness perception in satisfaction and behavioral reactions. It's primary advantage is to provide a rationale for customers to respond not only to prices, but to the fairness and value of what the organisation is offering in terms of pricing. This explanatory ability allowed the theory to be applied to the study of the relationship between pricing policy and customer satisfaction as observed in the competitive telecommunication market in Abuja.

2.3 Empirical Review

Oktafiani and Ariyanti (2025) studied the influence of service quality, price fairness and perceived value on customer loyalty through the intervening variables of customer satisfaction, corporate image and trust among customers of super air jet airlines in Indonesia. This study used quantitative research design with a study site in Indonesia which was limited to airline service consumers. The population consisted of airline customers who had previously used Super Air Jet services and the sample size was 385 respondents who were selected through purposive sampling technique. The primary data was obtained by using online structured questionnaires to respondents. The data analysis technique used in this study was Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with SmartPLS software. The results showed that the factors price fairness and perceived value had a significant impact on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, and that the trust and corporate image also reinforced the link between service quality and loyalty. The study suggested that airline companies should adopt clear and customer-friendly pricing strategies that foster trust and customer loyalty. The study was, however, conducted in only one airline company in Indonesia and the results may not be generalisable to other sectors and countries with different economic realities.

Aprilia and Septrizola (2025) studied the influence of Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty as an intervening variable for Go-Ride customer users in Padang City, Indonesia. This study was descriptive and causal type, which is a research method that aims to describe and explain the phenomena and users of online transportation services in Padang city. The population was active Go-Ride users and the sample was 200 respondents using purposive sampling technique. The data were gathered from primary sources using questionnaires and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The results showed that price fairness positively and significantly affected customers' satisfaction and customers' loyalty, and that customers' satisfaction partially mediated between customers' price fairness and their loyalty to the company. The study suggested fair pricing mechanisms and quality service delivery by online transportation companies to create competitive advantages and ensure customer satisfaction. However, the study was limited in scope because it only covered a single city and a single ride-hailing platform, limiting the applicability.

Jamaludin et al. (2025) investigated the implications of convenience, trustworthiness, and price on customer perceived value in digital commercial settings. The study took a quantitative survey research design and was carried out in Malaysia. The total population was the users of digital platforms and the 310 respondents were sampled by the convenience sampling technique. Structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data and regression analysis and Structural Equation Modelling were used in analyzing the data. The results indicated that the pricing significantly influenced the customer perceived value in the case of transparent and trustworthy pricing perception. The researchers suggested that convenience and price transparency should be part of digital businesses' service systems to fortify perceived value among customers. However, the respondents to the study were mainly digital commerce users, and the study focused primarily on digital commerce, excluding traditional service industries, which reduced the applicability of the context.

Qian (2025) studied the effects of pricing strategy and perceived value on purchase intention among Chinese consumers. The study used a quantitative explanatory design and consumer purchasing behaviour in digital and retail markets was examined. The population consisted of the online consumers and 400 respondents were obtained by random sampling technique.

Questionnaires were used to collect primary data which was analysed using correlation and regression analysis. The results showed that price strategies had a significant effect on customers' perceptions of value and buying willingness, especially when they felt prices were a true reflection of the product's actual quality and price. The study suggested that companies should implement customer pricing policies that are able to enhance value perception and customer loyalty. However, the study was somewhat restricted, as it focused primarily on the purchase intent and not on the broader aspects of customer satisfaction like customer loyalty and customer retention.

Utami et al. (2025) conducted a study on the psychological pricing and perceived value influencing purchase decisions in the managerial and digital entrepreneurship context in Indonesia. The study used a quantitative research method and focused on digital consumers and entrepreneurs in the online commercial markets. The population consisted of consumers of online business, and the samples were obtained by purposive sampling technique which is 250 respondents. Structured questionnaires were used to gather data and multiple regression analysis to analyze the data. The results showed that psychological pricing was strongly related to the perceived value and customer's purchasing decision, particularly in the digital entrepreneurial environment. The research suggested that the business managers should incorporate the pricing policies based on values and the psychologically appealing pricing policies into their activities so as to be able to get better responses from their customers and make the business more competitive. To this end, the study focused primarily on purchase decision issues and not on satisfaction issues post-purchase.

Ali et al. (2024) explored the effect of varying pricing mechanisms on the perceptions and buying preferences of consumers in online markets, focusing on discount and bundle prices. The research design adopted in this study is quantitative survey research which was conducted in India. The population consisted of online consumers who regularly do e-commerce transactions and a convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample of 350 respondents. Questionnaire administration was the main approach used to collect data and descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The results revealed that the discount pricing and bundling strategies were significant in shaping the consumer perception of value and purchase behaviour in online markets. The researchers called online retailers to make competitive pricing that is not only affordable but profitable. The study had its limitations as it did not explore the various components of customer satisfaction (loyalty and trust) beyond online buying behaviour.

Coutelle et al. (2020) analyzed the connection between pricing and value and suggested fresh research angles on consumer pricing behaviour in a marketing context. The study was done in France and used a conceptual research model that was not an empirical survey model but rather an extensive literature review and theoretical analysis. Secondary sources such as books, journals and previous marketing literature were used as sources of data. Qualitative content analysis was used to extract the emerging trends associated with pricing and customer value. The results indicated that the customers started looking at price dimensions other than monetary and the value judgements made them think of emotional, psychological, and relational elements. The research suggested that companies need to take a step beyond the traditional pricing methods and embrace value-based strategies that can enhance customer relationships. The study, however, was conceptual in nature, and it didn't include any field data to validate the concept in practice.

Zietsman et al. (2019) studied perceived price and service quality as mediators between price fairness and perceived value in business banking relationships in South Africa. This research consisted of an explanatory and quantitative approach, and targetted the banking customer base within the South African financial sector. The population comprises of the banking customers in business bank while 271 respondents were sampled via convenience sampling technique. Structural Equation Modelling method was used to analyse primary data gathered from questionnaires. The results highlighted that the relationship between price fairness and perceived value of the banking customers is significantly mediated by perceived price and service quality. Based on this study, the researchers suggest that enhancing customer value evaluations and outcomes of their relationships with financial institutions could be achieved by making their perceptions of fairness and service quality more positive. The business banking relationship was studied only within the South African context, which was the limitation of the study.

Ali (2025) investigated how price policies affect the consumer's perception of the quality and value of products among the young consumers of India. The research design employed was quantitative, and the sample consisted of young consumers in the retail and digital markets in India. The population consisted of young consumers (18-35 years), and the sample size was 300 respondents who were selected through purposive sampling technique. The primary data was collected by using structured questionnaires and analyzed by the regression analysis method. The results showed that pricing strategies had a significant impact on customer perceptions of the quality of the product and perceived value, especially for price-sensitive customers. The study suggested that companies aiming at younger customers should continue to have competitive and transparent pricing systems that can boost value perception and buying confidence. However, the study was limited as it focused only on the young consumers and excluded the older categories.

In Greece, Solakis et al. (2022) examined the notion of value co-creation and perceived value from the customer's point of view in the hospitality sector. This study has been conducted using quantitative research design and the study population were the hotel customers of the hospitality sector. The population comprised users of the hospitality services with a convenience sampling technique giving 420 respondents. Questionnaires were used for data collection and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used for analysis. Results revealed that value co-creation had a significant impact on perceived value and customer satisfaction in hospitality contexts when customers are involved. The researchers suggested that for better customer satisfaction and long-term satisfaction, hospitality organizations should foster customer interaction and value-based customer service interactions. A limitation of the study was its focus on hospitality businesses in one country.

Edens and Joosten (2026) studied value based pricing as a strategic managerial approach in the current business environments. The study was conceptual and theoretical with the use of secondary data sources including journal articles, business reports and academic literature. Thematic and conceptual interpretation were used as qualitative data analysis. The results indicated that value-based pricing increased customer satisfaction and organisational competitiveness when companies set prices based on the customer's perception of value and not just manufacturing costs. The study suggested that a customer-oriented pricing structure that allows for improving long-term relational results should be a priority for organisations. The study was however, not empirically validated as it was dependent primarily on conceptual analysis and not field investigation.

Putra et al. (2025) studied the relationship between the pricing and the level of customer satisfaction in Indonesia, specifically regarding brand strategy. The research design was quantitative, explanatory and the study population were customers of selected business organizations. The population consisted of consumers of branded products and services and purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample 100 people. Questionnaire survey was used to gather primary data which were analysed using multiple regression analysis. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the levels of customers' satisfaction as a result of the pricing strategy and positioning of the brand. The study suggested a combination of pricing and branding as an approach to enhance customer satisfaction and organisational performance. However, the present study suffered from some limitations as it did not consider customer loyalty and perceived value as the aspects of satisfaction.

Ozarko et al. (2024) studied price strategies and their effect on consumers' behavior in a competitive business environment in Ukraine. This research adopted a quantitative survey research design, and the study emphasized consumers in competitive retail markets. The population was retail consumers and 320 respondents were taken in stratified sampling technique. Questionnaires were used to gather primary data which were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. This revealed that the competitive pricing strategies had significant impact on consumer behaviour, customer preference and purchasing decisions in competitive markets. Overall, the researchers suggested that companies need to have flexible pricing structures that are responsive to evolving customer preferences and economic conditions, as well as to economic factors. Economic and geopolitical issues influencing consumers' behaviour in Ukraine, however, were a limiting factor in the study.

2.4 Literature Gaps

While the literature base on pricing policy and customer-related outcomes continues to grow, the researchers found several gaps in the conceptual, contextual, and methodological literature that warranted the present study. While the majority of previous studies, e.g. Oktafiani and Ariyanti (2025), Aprilia and Septrizola (2025), Solakis et al. (2022) focused on other industries outside Nigeria, especially in Asian and European environments, they could not be applied in the Nigerian telecommunication industry and the peculiar economic context of Abuja. Likewise, Qian (2025), Ali et al. (2024) and Utami et al. (2025) emphasized mainly on purchase intention and consumer buying behaviour, instead of other broader measures of customer satisfaction like customer loyalty and perceived customer value. On the methodological level, the majority of the studies addressed in this paper used foreign samples and online consumer populations, with few studies focusing on subscribers of telecommunications companies in developing countries where there is inflationary pressure and unstable pricing. In addition, although some studies (Zietsman et al., 2019; Jamaludin et al., 2025) considered perceived value and price fairness, however only a few studies combined the two factors of price fairness and competitive pricing as two aspects of pricing policy in relation to customer loyalty and perceived value. These inconsistencies and context limitations thus formed the need for this study to look at the impact of pricing policy on customer satisfaction of MTN Nigeria customers in Abuja.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive research design which allowed the researcher to access detailed and factual information on the effect of pricing policy on the satisfaction of the customers of MTN Nigeria in Abuja. Descriptive research design was chosen because it enabled the researcher to collect the quantitative data from the respondents and to describe the existing conditions and relationship between the study variables without manipulation. The study population consisted of 349 of the MTN Nigeria employees and customers in Abuja, whereas the target population was MTN Nigeria customers in Abuja. Thus, the study respondents consisted of 349 respondents which comprised MTN Nigeria staff and customers in Abuja.

S/N	Category of Respondents	Population	Proportion (%)
1	MTN Nigeria staff in Abuja	49	14.04%
2	MTN Nigeria customers in Abuja	300	85.96%
	Total	**349**	**100%**

The sample size for the study was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula expressed as: $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$ where: n= sample size, N= population size, and e= level of significance (0.05). Substituting the values into the formula gave: $n = \frac{349}{1+349(0.05)^2} = 186$. An additional 20% margin of error was also included in the estimated sample size to allow for non-response, incomplete questionnaires and data loss during data collection in the field. Therefore, 37 more questionnaires were added to the sample, bringing the total to 223 respondents. The margin of safety enhanced the representativeness and reliability of the study results by minimising the impact of sampling error and respondent attrition. Stratified sampling design was used in the study because of the different characteristics of the individuals that the population comprised, in the departments and units, and because stratification was suitable for ensuring the fair representation of the various groups to be studied in the study population. The study employed primary data and data was collected by administering structured questionnaires with a five-point Likert scale format from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. To assess the research instrument reliability, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used as it indicated the internal consistency and stability of the items in the questionnaire. The reliability coefficient for the study variables were found to be higher than the minimum acceptable value of 0.70 as shown in Table 3.1, thus the instrument is reliable as presented. The reliability statistics of study variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Reliability Statistics of Study Variables

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Price Fairness	5	0.812
Competitive Pricing	5	0.847
Customer Loyalty	5	0.833
Perceived Value	5	0.801

An assessment of validity was done by content validity in which the questionnaire was carefully discussed with experts in business administration and marketing to ensure the items covered the intended study constructs and were consistent with the study's objectives. The data obtained were analyzed with the use of regression analysis program of IBM SPSS Statistics. Regression was used because it allowed the researcher to make estimate of the effect and predictive relationship of the independent and dependent variables. The regression models for the hypotheses were: for hypothesis one, $CL = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PF + \mu$where CL represented Customer Loyalty and PF represented Price Fairness; while for hypothesis two, $PV = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CP + \mu$where PV represented Perceived Value and CP represented Competitive Pricing.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 Response Rate.

	Number	Percentage
Questionnaire Distributed	223	100%
Returned Questionnaire	193	86.5%
Unreturned Questionnaire	30	13.5%

Source: Field Survey, (2026)

Table 2 showed the response rate for the questionnaire sent to respondents during the field survey. The table revealed that 223 questionnaires were distributed to the employees of MTN Nigeria in Abuja with 100% of the total questionnaires administered for the present study. Of these, 193 questionnaires were filled out and returned correctly for an 86.5% response rate, 30 questionnaires were not returned (13.5%). The high response rate indicated that the respondents were cooperative and interested in the study and were able to provide sufficient data for the meaningful analysis and interpretation of the study. The questionnaire returned was deemed adequate for the study as the response rate was above the standard minimum for survey research, which in turn supported the reliability, validity and generalisability of the results. Low response rates in questionnaires also indicated little non-response bias and therefore, minimal bias on the validity of the study.

4.1 Test of Hypotheses

4.1.1 Hypothesis One

H_{01}: Price fairness has no significant effect on customer loyalty.

$CL = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PF + \mu$ ………………......1

Table 3 **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.684[a]	.468	.465	.457

a. Predictors: (Constant), PF

Source: SPSS Output Version 27.0

Table 3 showed that price fairness had a strong positive relationship with customer loyalty, as indicated by the R value of .684. The R Square value of 0.468 indicated that price fairness accounted for 46.8% of the variance in customer loyalty among the respondents and other factors not measured in the model accounted for 53.2% of the variance. This suggested that customer value perception and price fairness emerged as one of the key indicators of customer loyalty in the study as customers felt prices were fair and reasonable, the probability of their loyalty to the organization seemed to be higher.

Table 4 **ANOVA**[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	35.100	1	35.100	168.060	.000[b]
	Residual	39.900	191	.209		
	Total	75.000	192			

a. Dependent Variable: CL

b. Predictors: (Constant), PF

As seen in Table 4, the regression model was statistically significant (F = 168.060, significant value = .000). The significance value was below the 0.05 level of significance, indicating that the model was suitable to explain the effect of price fairness on customer loyalty. This meant that there was a significant effect of price fairness on customer loyalty and the result gave sufficient statistical evidence to reject the null hypothesis that price fairness did not significantly influence customer loyalty.

Table 5 **Coefficients**[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.914	.182		5.022	.000
	PF	.732	.056	.684	12.964	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CL

Source: SPSS Output Version 27.0

The results in Table 5 indicated that price fairness positively and significantly affected customer loyalty with an unstandardized coefficient of .732, a standardized Beta value of .684, a t-value of 12.964 and a significance value of .000. This resulted in an increase in customer loyalty of .732 units for each unit increase in price fairness. The standardized Beta value also showed that price fairness made a strong contribution to customer loyalty. Thus, the result indicated that fair practices were significant in relation to customer loyalty which resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis.

4.1.2 Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: Competitive pricing has no significant effect on perceived value.

$PV = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CP + \mu$ ………………......2

Table 6 **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.641[a]	.411	.408	.486

a. Predictors: (Constant), CP

Source: SPSS Output Version 27.0

Table 6 indicated that there is a positive relationship between competitive pricing and perceived value on R value of 0.641. The R square value of .411 indicated that competitive pricing accounted for 41.1% of the variance in perceived value among respondents and the remaining 58.9% was accounted for by other factors not accounted for in the model. This suggested that price was a critical measure of value in the study, and that customers' perceptions of value increased as their perceptions of the organization's price were lower than the alternatives.

Table 7 **ANOVA[a]**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.058	1	32.052	133.300	.000[b]
	Residual	45.942	191	.241		
	Total	78.000	192			

a. Dependent Variable: PV

b. Predictors: (Constant), CP

As seen in Table 7, the regression model was statistically significant, as the value of F was 133.300, and the significance value was .000. The significance value was below 0.05, which was considered the level of significance, so the model was deemed acceptable to explain the effect of competitive pricing on perceived value. This meant that the pricing had a definite impact on perceived value, and the result was statistically robust enough to reject the null hypothesis of no significant impact of the pricing on the perceived value.

Table 8 **Coefficients[a]**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.987	.197		5.010	.000
	CP	.681	.059	.641	11.545	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PV

Source: SPSS Output Version 27.0

As seen in table 8, competitive pricing was significant and positively related with perceived value with an unstandardized coefficient of .681, a standardized Beta value of .641, a t-value of 11.545, and a significance value of .000. For each additional unit of competitive pricing, perceived value rose by .681 units. The standardized Beta value also revealed that competitive pricing was a significant contributor to the perceived value. Therefore, it implied that competitive and market-sensitive pricing practices had significant influence on enhance customers' perceived value as the null hypothesis was rejected.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The outcome of hypothesis one revealed that price fairness had a positive and significant impact on customer loyalty with a standardized Beta value of .684 and a significance value of .000. The p value was less than 0.05, therefore we reject the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant effect of price fairness on customer loyalty. This finding suggested that when customers found MTN Nigeria is fair, reasonable and justifiable in their price practices, they were more likely to be loyal to MTN Nigeria in Abuja. When it comes to actual customers, they seemed to appreciate pricing systems that were consistent and transparent in regard to the quality of the services they received. The results was in line with the results of Oktafiani and Ariyanti (2025) which showed that price fairness was a significant factor that affected customer loyalty of airline customers. It also confirmed the findings of Aprilia and Septrizola (2025) that price fairness has a positive impact on customer loyalty as measured by customer satisfaction in the Go-Ride users. Likewise, Zietsman et al. (2019) noted that in business banking relationships, price fairness influenced customers' perceived value, which indirectly validated the present study as customers whose value perception is gained from price fairness will be more likely to remain loyal. The finding was also consistent with the theory of Equity: Customers judge the fairness of an exchange by the ratio of their costs to their benefits. Thus, the higher the perceived fairness of the price charged by MTN with respect to its attributes and its benefits obtained, the more loyal the customers will be. However, some studies (Coutelle et al., 2020; Edens and Joosten, 2026) were not directly empirical as it were, but were conceptual studies. Furthermore, the research on purchase intention and consumer buying behaviour laid more emphasis than loyalty, as seen in the study of Qian (2025), Utami et al. (2025), and Ali et al. (2024). The studies in the above literature, therefore, were not exactly in opposition to the present finding, but they had slight differences from the present study.

The result of hypothesis two showed that competitive pricing had a positive and significant effect on perceived value, with a standardized Beta value of .641 and a significance value of .000. Because the p-value was below 0.05 this means that the null hypothesis is rejected, and that a competitive pricing effect is significant on perceived value. This finding indicated that customers' perception of value rose when the MTN Nigeria prices were perceived as competitive, reasonable, and affordable when compared with the alternatives available in the telecommscape. The result indicated that customers did not only pay attention to the price value in itself but also to the value of services in comparison to the benefits they received and the competitors' prices. This was aligned with Jamaludin et al. (2025) result that price had a significant influence on customer perceived value particularly when the pricing was considered transparent and trustworthy. It also backed Qian (2025) who stated that consumers' purchase intention in terms of consumer values was affected by the pricing strategy. Conversely, Utami et al. (2025) found that psychological pricing and perceived value influenced the purchasing decision of customers, and Ali et al. (2024) showed that pricing strategies like discounts and bundling have an impact on the consumer perception of value. The result was confirmed by Ali (2025), who discovered that pricing strategies affect consumers' quality and value perceptions of products among young consumers. Ozarko et al. (2024) also found this to be true as they demonstrated how competitive pricing strategies affected consumer behaviour in competitive markets. Furthermore, Putra et al. (2025) revealed that pricing and brand strategy are significant factors in customer satisfaction and Solakis et al. (2022) proved that perceived value has a significant role in enhancing customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry. Theoretically, the finding was in line with Equity Theory as customers evaluated the rewards they get from MTN services against the cost they paid. Customers felt that the exchange was balanced and valuable, when they felt the price to be competitive and fair, as compared to the competitors. There was no empirical study directly contradicting the present finding. While Coutelle et al. (2020) and Edens and Joosten (2026) gave more conceptual than empirical support, Solakis et al. (2022)

did address value co-creation in the hospitality industry, but not in telecommunications pricing. Hence, these studies were not conflicting with the present result, but rather offered indirect and contextual support. The overall findings indicated that pricing policy has a great impact on customer satisfaction among MTN Nigeria customers in Abuja. The price fairness was a strong predictor of customer loyalty, and competitive pricing contributed to an enhanced value perception. These findings reinforced the fact that customers were "sensitive" to the price setting, presentation and comparison process of prices and alternatives in the market. The results were in line with the theoretical approach of equity theory which focuses on exchange relationships that involve fairness, balance and proportionality. The study was broadly supported by the empirical literature and there was no significant empirical evidence that directly contradicted the study findings. Some previous studies were different from the present study in terms of context, industry, country, and outcome variables; thus, they could partially and indirectly support the present study.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed that pricing policy was a significant contributor to customer satisfaction of MTN Nigeria customers in Abuja. In particular, the price fairness was found to positively and significantly influence customer loyalty, and competitive pricing was found to positively and significantly influence perceived value. It meant that customers were more likely to remain loyal if they felt the prices were fair, reasonable and justifiable and they were more likely to feel value in the price if it was competitive with other options in the market. Hence, fair and competitive pricing continued to be essential assets for enhancing customer satisfaction and building long-term customer relationships.

Recommendations

i. MTN Nigeria needs to enhance price fairness in its pricing policy. The company should make sure that its prices, charges, data plans and service tariffs are transparent, reasonable and communicated to the customers. This will help lower consumer complaints, build trust and increase customer loyalty.

ii. MTN Nigeria should stick to pricing strategies that are competitive. The company should frequently benchmark its pricing to other telecom companies, and create competitive pricing packages that are budget friendly for its customers. This would add value to the customers, thereby building customer loyalty.

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