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Improved Customer Service and Customer Satisfaction of Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Article history: Published on 23rd Jan 2026 **Keywords:** Improved Customer Service Service Quality Value Added Services Customer Satisfaction Customer Loyalty	This study investigated the relationship between Improved Customer Service and Customer Satisfaction of Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State. The study focused on two dimensions of improved customer service: service quality and value added services, and examined their relationship with customer loyalty and customer retention. The research was anchored on the SERVQUAL Theory. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from subscribers of major telecommunication operators in Rivers State using a structured questionnaire. A sample size of 384 respondents was determined through the Krejcie and Morgan Table. Findings revealed that service quality has a strong and significant relationship with both customer loyalty and customer retention. The study concluded that consistent service quality, prompt response to customer concerns, and relevant value added services are essential determinants of satisfaction, loyalty, and long term customer retention. It recommended that telecommunication firms invest in infrastructure upgrades to improve service quality; value-added services should be tailored to customer needs and robust customer feedback systems to strengthen customer satisfaction and maintain competitive advantage.

1. Introduction

The telecommunications sector has grown into a key engine of national growth, supporting advancements in technology, society, and the economy. Private companies like MTN Nigeria, Airtel, Globacom, and 9mobile have dominated Nigeria's telecommunications market in the last twenty years, after it had been a government-controlled monopoly. Customers' happiness has evolved into a key differentiator in maintaining market leadership and profitability, which has increased the pressure on businesses to provide excellent customer service in the face of fierce competition (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Everything a business does for its customers with the goal of making them happier and more loyal is part of customer service. Not only does it include fixing issues, but it also encourages proactive participation by improving service quality and providing value-added services (VAS) that make customers' experiences even better. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), a service is considered high-quality if it reliably meets or exceeds client expectations via empathy, responsiveness, assurance, and responsiveness. In contrast, value-added services go above and beyond basic offers to provide supplementary perks like loyalty points, data rollover, free browsing incentives, and individualised customer support (Agyapong, 2011).

Consistent internet services, unreliable network coverage, lost calls, and unhelpful customer service have all been complaints levelled at Nigeria's telecom industry (NCC, 2023). Customer happiness is a crucial driver of long-term success, and organisations have come to realise that the best way to achieve this is to enhance customer service via innovation, technology, and personalised experiences (Adeleke & Aminu, 2012). Better customer service is when a company makes an attempt to consistently and satisfactorily meet the demands, expectations, and preferences of its customers. The goal of customer service, according to Kotler and Keller (2016), is to increase happiness for customers at every stage of the buying process. Improving customer service in today's competitive service market is no longer only about responding to complaints; it's also about proactively creating value that boosts an organization's reputation and ability to compete. Due to the low switching barriers and plenty of service providers in Nigeria's telecom market, focussing on customer care has emerged as a critical competitive differentiator. The key to achieving maximum customer happiness is not just providing dependable network services, but also actively engaging with, educating, and empowering consumers.

According to Oliver (1997), customer satisfaction is a measure of how happy consumers are with a company's goods or services compared to their expectations. Customer retention, which shows how well a business handles long-term relationships with its clients, and customer loyalty, which shows how committed and frequent a customer is to the brand, are closely related. Customer satisfaction increases brand loyalty, word-of-mouth advertising, and the likelihood that consumers will turn down competing

offers (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Homburg, Klarmann, & Vomberg, 2020). Customer complaints over inadequate service delivery are common, even though there have been substantial expenditures in network expansion and digital services (NCC, 2024). Improvements in customer experience and continued growth depend on a firm grasp of the relationships between service quality, value-added services, and customer happiness, loyalty, and retention. So, the purpose of this research is to look at telecommunications companies in Rivers State, Nigeria, and determine whether there's a correlation between better customer service (service quality and value-added services) and happier customers (customer retention and loyalty).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Customers are still not happy, despite the fact that the telecom industry in Nigeria makes a big dent in GDP. Many users have expressed dissatisfaction with the service they have received, citing difficulties such as sluggish internet speeds, billing mistakes, network breakdowns, and inefficient customer care (NCC, 2024). In spite of investments in infrastructure and new technologies, there is still a disconnect between what customers want and what they get when they use a service. As an alternative to enhancing customer experience frameworks, telecommunications companies often resort to aggressive marketing and advertising. There are service quality efforts, but they aren't always put into effect. Additionally, value-added services, such as incentive and reward programs, don't always result in true pleasure because of botched implementation or a lack of customisation. As a result, there is a high churn rate since consumers are always looking for better deals and more reliable services elsewhere.

As far as I am aware, there is a lack of empirical data in Rivers State on the effects of enhanced customer service (via VAS and service quality) on satisfaction, loyalty, and retention. Prior research has mostly examined one service industry, such as banking or hotels, or has drawn broad conclusions about Nigeria as a whole (Adeleke & Aminu, 2012; Agyapong, 2011). Thus, by zeroing down on the telecom business in Rivers State, our study addresses a gap in the literature that is contextual, dimensional, and sectorial.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to examine the relationship between Improved Customer Service and Customer Satisfaction of Telecommunication Firms in Rivers State. The specific objectives are to:
  i. Determine the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.
  ii. Examine the relationship between service quality and customer retention of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.
  iii. Ascertain the relationship between value-added services and customer loyalty of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.
  iv. Explore the relationship between value-added services and customer retention of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Improved Customer Service

When a company makes concerted attempts to consistently and satisfactorily meet the requirements, expectations, and preferences of its customers, it is demonstrating improved customer service. The goal of customer service, according to Kotler and Keller (2016), is to increase happiness for customers at every stage of the buying process. In today's cutthroat service industry, customer service has transformed from a reactive procedure of managing complaints to a proactive strategy of creating value that boosts the reputation and competitiveness of organisations. Due to the low switching barriers and plenty of service providers in Nigeria's telecom market, focussing on customer care has emerged as a critical competitive differentiator. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to provide dependable network services and to actively engage, educate, and empower clients so that they may get the most out of what the company has to offer.

A wide variety of organisational tasks that enrich the customer experience are encompassed under the idea of better customer service. According to Grönroos (2020), companies may enhance their services by creating procedures that are effective, considerate, and in line with what consumers want. This implies that on both digital and physical platforms, telecommunications companies in Rivers State must provide fast call resolution, effective issue solutions, clear communication, and personalised interactions. What defines great customer service has been redefined by the advent of artificial intelligence, chatbots, and self-service tools, which lends credence to the idea. Since this is the case, better customer service incorporates both human and technology components to guarantee dependability, accessibility, and response.

2.2 Service Quality

When a service provider reliably meets or exceeds their customers' expectations, they are said to have excellent customer service. The SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988) states that in order to quantify service quality, one must take five important factors into account: dependability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. The following factors are considered tangibles: the firm's reliability in providing the promised services, the speed with which customers are assisted, the employees' competence and politeness, the level of empathy shown towards customers, and the physical facilities and appearance of staff. Reliability of network coverage, call clarity, data connection, customer service responsiveness, and businesslike communication are all aspects of service quality in Rivers State's telecom companies. Liyu and Bello (2021) found that when these factors are well-managed, customer happiness and loyalty are the inevitable results.

Customers are more likely to be satisfied, spread the word positively, and stay loyal to a business that consistently delivers high-quality service. In contrast, Zeithaml et al. (2020) found that unsatisfactory service causes customers to have bad experiences, get frustrated, and eventually switch brands. Companies in Nigeria are pouring resources into digital infrastructure, customer-facing

staff training, and quality assurance after customers lost faith in the market due to frequent network outages and uneven data delivery (NCC, 2024). In the telecom business, service quality is still a key factor in gaining and maintaining a competitive edge.

2.3 Value-Added Services (VAS)

Value-added services (VAS) go beyond just providing clients with connection; they go above and beyond to increase the perceived value of the core service. Data rollover, loyalty awards, caller music, free SMS bundles, mobile banking integration, and entertainment bundles are all examples of such telecoms features (Agyapong, 2011). In industries where basic services are uniform, VAS help businesses distinguish apart and attract loyal consumers (Kandampully et al., 2018). In the telecommunications industry, value-added services (VAS) supplement standard services by adding new features that customers love. Among them are entertainment bundles, caller music, mobile banking, loyalty programs, and bonus data plans. A company's product is viewed as having more value when value-added services are provided, which helps to differentiate it in competitive marketplaces (Agyapong, 2011). In order to attract and keep consumers, especially in highly competitive metropolitan areas like Port Harcourt, telecom carriers in Nigeria including MTN, Airtel, and Globacom have started using VAS. To be successful, VAS need to be relevant, personalised, and easy (Eze, Adebayo, and Akinola, 2022). When not executed properly, these services have the potential to annoy or even annoy users.

2.4 Customer Satisfaction

When a product or service meets or exceeds a client's expectations, the result is customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). It is an important indicator for forecasting consumer behaviour and measuring the success of customer service initiatives. Customer satisfaction in the telecommunications business is achieved when the customer's perception of value for money is in harmony with the network's responsiveness, dependability, and additional advantages (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Homburg et al. (2020) states that when consumers are happy, they are more likely to trust the company, be loyal, and even advocate for it, which boosts the company's reputation and helps it dominate the market. Customer turnover, unfavourable word of mouth, and complaints are the results of unhappiness. Due to mobile number portability and fierce competition, customers in Rivers State have several network alternatives, making customer happiness crucial for survival. In order to maintain consistent happiness across all consumer categories, organisations need to constantly innovate and personalise their offerings.

A customer's overall level of satisfaction is influenced by their whole experience with a service provider across time. Zeithaml et al. (2020) asserts that a customer's happiness is derived from the whole service relationship, not just one interaction. Network reliability, data transfer rates, cost, and the speed with which problems are addressed are important factors that determine the level of satisfaction among telecom users in Rivers State. Quickly eroding satisfaction and prompting clients to transfer providers are inconsistencies in service quality or billing problems. Consistently providing excellent service, being reliable, and being transparent in communication are essential for keeping customers satisfied. Additionally, customer happiness connects service quality to behavioural outcomes like retention and loyalty. According to Homburg, Klarmann, and Vomberg (2020), when it comes to the connection between service performance and customer loyalty, satisfaction acts as a mediator. Customers are more likely to be loyal and less likely to look for alternatives when they feel that their interactions with a firm are highly valuable. Brand strength and future income potential in Nigeria's telecommunications business are now measured by customer happiness. When it comes to customer retention and profitability, businesses that put an emphasis on making customers happy via regular service delivery and new innovations that provide value usually come out on top.

2.5 Customer Loyalty

Loyalty in the consumer market occurs when a consumer chooses one brand over another over the long run, even when other options are available (Reinartz & Kumar, 2003). They elaborated by saying that brand loyalty is made up of two parts: the first is attitudinal loyalty, which is a feeling of emotional investment in the brand, and the second is behavioural loyalty, which shows itself in things like returning customers and spreading the word about how great the company is. Customer loyalty in the telecom sector is shown when customers repeatedly renew data plans, stick with the same network, and suggest the provider to others. Loyal consumers are less price sensitive and more willing to promote the brand on their own, making them an important marketing metric for telecommunications companies in Rivers State. Loyalty may take two forms: an emotional investment in the brand, known as attitudinal loyalty, and a commitment to making repeat purchases, known as behavioural loyalty (Dick & Basu, 1994). Loyal clients in the telecom industry are more likely to spend more money, have lower churn rates, and even suggest the network to others (Eshghi, Haughton, & Topi, 2007).

Trust in the dependability of the brand, open and honest communication, and constant high-quality service all contribute to fostering loyalty. Psychological ownership makes client switching unlikely when consumers think their service provider continuously offers greater value (Ojo & Duru, 2021). Hence, loyalty is a crucial measure of happiness and success in the long run.

2.6 Customer Retention

According to Reichheld and Sasser (1990), customer retention is the capacity of a business to keep its current customers over the years by reliably catering to their requirements and efficiently fixing any service problems that may arise. As a result of being happy and loyal, it shows how strong the connection is between the supplier and the consumer. According to Kandampully et al. (2018), loyalty programs, personalised promotions, and improved post-purchase assistance are retention techniques in the telecommunications business. In a study conducted by Adeola and Evans (2020), it was shown that keeping current customers is more cost-effective than finding new ones. This is because existing customers have the potential to generate larger profits via

repeat purchases and word-of-mouth advertising. Telecommunication companies in Rivers State place a premium on customer retention in order to keep their subscriber bases stable and income streams steady, due to the intense service rivalry in the state. Strategic decision-making in this market is on comprehending the factors that influence retention, especially improvements in service quality and innovations that bring value.

2.7 Theoretical Review
2.7.1 SERVQUAL Theory
An essential framework for evaluating service quality along five dimensions tangibles, dependability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy is provided by the SERVQUAL theory. It states that the difference between what customers anticipate and how they perceive a service's performance is what ultimately determines the service's quality. Infrastructure and network equipment are examples of tangibles in the telecom industry. Reliability refers to the consistency of service, responsiveness to the speed with which customer issues are addressed, assurance to competence and politeness, and empathy to personalised attention are examples of intangibles (Zeithaml et al., 2020). This model connects service quality to happy and loyal customers, which is the basis of the current research. This data reveals that customer happiness, loyalty, and retention are all positively impacted when businesses routinely go above and above in these areas. This idea is in line with the study's emphasis on better customer service as a prerequisite for satisfaction and retention, and it highlights the mental process by which consumers assess the performance of a service.

2.8 Empirical Review
Afolabi and Aremu's research, "Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in Nigerian Telecommunication Firms," was carried out in 2022. Telecom users in Abuja and Lagos were the subjects of an investigation on the relationship between customer happiness and the four characteristics of service quality: responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and dependability. We used a descriptive survey approach to collect data from 250 telecom subscribers. We then used Pearson correlation to analyse the results. There was a robust positive correlation ($r = 0.74$, $p < 0.05$) between customer satisfaction and service quality, according to the data. The most important factors that determine customer happiness, according to the survey, are reliable networks and how quickly complaints are addressed. The report concluded that telecommunications companies should put more money into improving network infrastructure and training customer support representatives. The importance of service quality in determining customer happiness and loyalty is highlighted by this conclusion, which supports the present study.

A research named "Value-Added Services and Customer Satisfaction among Telecommunication Users in Nigeria" was conducted by Eze, Adebayo, and Akinola (2022). Loyalty programs, data incentives, and entertainment packages are examples of value-added services (VAS) that were the subject of the study. The poll used structured questionnaires to collect data from 300 consumers of MTN, Airtel, and Globacom. Customers are more likely to be satisfied with value-added services, according to regression analysis ($\beta = 0.63$, $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, the research found that customers' perceptions and emotional connections to the brand are enhanced when VAS offers are personalised and relevant. In order to build value-added services, it suggested constantly innovating and dividing customers into different groups. In highly competitive telecom markets such as Rivers State, the findings provide solid evidence that value-added services are crucial in determining customer loyalty and retention.

In their 2020 study, Adeola and Evans investigated how CRM and retention tactics in Nigeria's telecom sector relate to one another. The research used a combination of survey and semi-structured interview methods to gather data from 210 telecom workers and customers. The results showed that customer retention was significantly improved by successful CRM strategies such proactive communication, personalised offers, and constant service support ($r = 0.69$, $p < 0.05$). Customer interaction and feedback methods are more important to telecom companies than sales campaigns alone, according to the report. It came to the conclusion that transactional incentives should not be the foundation of retention but rather the establishment of long-term relationships. By emphasising retention as an outcome of consistently high-quality service and interaction that adds value, this is in line with the present research's approach.

Applying the SERVQUAL model as a theoretical framework, Aliyu and Bello (2021) examined the correlation between service quality and customer loyalty in the telecom business of Nigeria. In the states of Kano and Kaduna, 350 surveys were sent out to those who had used MTN, Airtel, or Globacom. The data was examined by means of correlation and multiple regression analysis. Customer loyalty was positively and significantly impacted by all five aspects of service quality: dependability, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy ($R^2 = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$). Findings indicated that certainty and responsiveness were the most important variables. Consistently high-quality encounters that establish trust and emotional connection are what create loyal consumers, according to the research. There is a strong correlation between service quality and customer loyalty among telecom consumers, according to this empirical data, which supports the present study's hypothesis (H_{01}).

The impact of CRM on customer loyalty in Nigeria's telecom sector was the subject of research by Ojo and Duru (2021). Finding out how relationship-building methods boost consumer happiness and loyalty was the goal. We used a quantitative approach and used structured questionnaires to collect data from 250 telecom consumers in Port Harcourt. A strong positive association ($r = 0.77$, $p < 0.05$) was found between customer engagement activities (CRM) and loyalty according to the findings of the correlation study. Loyalty results were most affected by emotional connection, personalised communication, and continuous involvement, according to the research. It suggested that telecommunications companies build customer relationship management systems that work together to provide customers with tailored experiences and forecasted service. This research lends credence to the current body of knowledge by providing actual evidence that proactive and personalised customer service tactics do, in fact, increase loyalty in Rivers State.

3. Methodology

The researchers in this study used a descriptive survey approach. Participants in this research were end users of four (4) main Nigerian telecom providers serving the Rivers State area: 9mobile Nigeria, Globacom Limited, MTN Nigeria, and Airtel Nigeria. Unfortunately, there is no way to know how many people use the services of the four(4) main telecom companies since their client bases are unlimited. The research presupposed an endless population due to the reasons mentioned before. The researchers used the Krejcei and Morgan Table to calculate the appropriate sample size for the investigation. Using the table, any population more than one million, or infinite, is equal to 384. Consequently, 384 clientele of telecommunications companies in Rivers State constitute the sample for this research. This research made use of the main data source. Primary data was gathered by administering a structured questionnaire to participants in order to elicit pertinent information on the study's variables. As part of our statistical analysis, we used SPSS (Version 27) and the Cronbach's Alpha technique. The assumptions were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). Customer satisfaction (customer loyalty and retention) and enhanced customer service (service quality and value-added services) were both identified via the correlation analysis, which helped to establish the direction and strength of the associations. Results were shown in tables for clarity and simple interpretation, and hypotheses were evaluated at a 0.05 level of significance.

4. Findings

Hypothesis 1

Ho$_1$: There is no significant relationship between Service quality and customer loyalty of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Table 1: Correlation result on Service quality and Customer loyalty

		Service quality	Customer loyalty
Service quality	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.659**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
	N	373	373
Customer loyalty	Correlation Coefficient	.659**	1.000
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
	N	373	373

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)
Source: Survey Data, 2025.

Telecommunications companies in Rivers State were analysed using bivariate models to determine the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. The results are shown in Table 1. The result demonstrates a robust and positive association between service quality and customer loyalty (r =.659**), with the ** signifying a significant correlation at the 0.01 level. This finding supports the alternative hypothesis and disproves the null hypothesis (Ho1). This leads us to believe that the telecommunications companies in Rivers State benefit much from maintaining a high level of customer loyalty as a direct result of providing excellent service.

Hypothesis 2

Ho$_2$: There is no significant relationship between service quality and customer retention of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Table 2: Correlation result on Service quality and Customer retention

			Service quality	Customer retention
Pearson Correlation (r)	Service quality	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.723**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	373	373
	Customer retention	Correlation Coefficient	.723**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	373	373

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)
Source: Survey Data, 2025.

Bivariate analysis was conducted between service quality and customer retention of telecommunications providers in Rivers State, and the results are shown in Table 2. The conclusion shows that telecommunications companies in Rivers State may expect a positive correlation between service quality and customer retention rates of 0.723**, with a significance level of 0.01 denoting this link. Based on this, we may conclude that telecommunications companies in Rivers State have a positive and statistically significant association between service quality and customer retention, therefore rejecting the null hypothesis (Ho2) and accepting the alternative hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3

Ho$_3$: There is no significant relationship between Value-added services and customer loyalty of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Table 3: Correlation result on Value-added services and Customer loyalty

			Value-added services	Customer loyalty
Pearson Correlation (r)	Value-added services	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.429**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	373	373
	Customer loyalty	Correlation Coefficient	.429**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	373	373

***Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)*
Source: Survey Data, 2025.

Telecommunications companies in Rivers State were analysed using bivariate models to determine the relationship between value-added services and customer loyalty (Table 3). The results demonstrate that customer loyalty to telecommunications companies in Rivers State is somewhat positively correlated with value-added services (r =.429**), with the ** indicating that the connection is significant at the 0.01 level. The alternative hypothesis (Ho2) is accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho3) is rejected according to these results. To put it another way, we can now admit that telecommunications companies in Rivers State may thank their value-added services for the somewhat favourable and statistically significant correlation between the two.

Hypothesis 4
Ho4: There is no significant relationship between Value-added services and customer retention of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Table 4: Correlation result on Value-added services and Customer retention

			Value-added services	Customer retention
Pearson Correlation (r)	Value-added services	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.478**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	373	373
	Customer retention	Correlation Coefficient	.478**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	373	373

***Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)*
Source: Survey Data, 2025.

Data from a bivariate investigation of the relationship between value-added services and customer retention for telecom companies in Rivers State is shown in Table 4. The results show that telecommunications companies in Rivers State have a fairly favourable association between value-added services and customer retention (r =.478**), which is significant at the 0.01 level (**). As a result, we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis (Ho4). So, we're going to go ahead and assume that telecommunications companies in Rivers State that provide value-added services have a somewhat favourable and statistically significant correlation with customer retention.

Discussion of Findings
The first finding shows that service quality has a strong and significant relationship with customer loyalty of telecommunication firms in Rivers State (r = .659, p < 0.01). This implies that customers who perceive their telecom provider as reliable, responsive, empathetic, and professional tend to remain emotionally attached and demonstrate repeated patronage. This aligns with the SERVQUAL model which asserts that consumers judge service performance based on reliability, assurance, empathy, tangibles, and responsiveness. The finding supports Afolabi and Aremu (2022) who found that high service quality significantly improves loyalty in Nigerian telecom firms. Similarly, Aliyu and Bello (2021) noted that responsiveness and reliability are the strongest drivers of loyalty. The present result indicates that network stability, quick resolution of service issues, and courteous customer service agents increase loyalty among telecom users in Rivers State.
The second finding indicates that service quality has a strong positive relationship with customer retention (r = .723, p < 0.01). Customers remain with a provider when they experience consistent service delivery and prompt attention to concerns. This supports the Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory which states that satisfaction and long-term retention occur when service performance aligns with or exceeds customer expectations. The result aligns with Adeola and Evans (2020) who found that improved service interactions and proactive communication increase retention among Nigerian telecom subscribers. For telecom users in Rivers State, consistent call clarity, reliable data services, and accessible support channels reduce switching intentions. Thus, service quality plays a major role in retaining customers in a highly competitive and low switching barrier market.
The third finding reveals that value-added services have a moderate and significant relationship with customer loyalty (r = .429, p < 0.01). This demonstrates that attractive bonuses, loyalty rewards, entertainment bundles, and mobile banking features enhance perceived value and strengthen loyalty. This agrees with Agyapong (2011) who found that innovative VAS offerings create differentiation and emotional attachment among telecom subscribers. Eze et al. (2022) also reported that personalized and relevant

VAS shape customer experiences and improve brand preference. In Rivers State, customers appreciate promotions and additional services that enrich their usage experience, encouraging them to remain loyal to their providers.

The final finding shows that value-added services are moderately and significantly associated with customer retention (r = .478, p < 0.01). This means VAS offerings that are useful, innovative, and convenient play an important role in reducing switching behaviour. The finding agrees with Adeola and Evans (2020) who argued that consistent rewards, bonuses, and convenience-based services improve subscriber retention. Loyalty programs and renewal bonuses foster habitual subscription and reduce churn in telecom firms. This strengthens the argument that retention in the telecom sector is not driven by network strength alone but by the cumulative value customers receive.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Findings from this research indicate that telecommunications companies in Rivers State may greatly benefit from better customer service in order to increase consumer satisfaction. Trust, emotional connection, and ongoing provider choice are all outcomes of consistently high-quality service. Both loyalty and retention are impacted by how reliable the network is, how quickly complaints are resolved, how polite the service is, and how easily help channels can be accessed. Additionally, the research found that value-added services are crucial for differentiating products and increasing their perceived worth. Customers are more likely to stay loyal to their network providers if they get incentives, loyalty awards, entertainment features, and new services that are relevant to them. Thus, basic service quality and additional service features both significantly impact total satisfaction.

5.2 Recommendations

The following suggestions are offered in light of the results:

i. To maintain customer loyalty, telecommunications companies can improve service quality by upgrading their network infrastructure continuously and resolving customer complaints quicker.

ii. Tailoring value-added services to client demands using data analytics raises the perceived value of the service and ensures its relevance.

iii. To encourage customer retention and decrease switching behaviour, telecom providers could create incentive schemes.

iv. Businesses should put money into customer service training so agents are more polite, professional, and quick to respond.

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