SERVICE RECOVERY STRATEGY AND MARKETING PERFORMANCE OF MAJOR MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION NETWORK-PROVIDERS IN KARU

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Abstract

The rate of service failure in today's marketplace is at an alarming rate considering the increasing level of disregard for customer satisfaction at the expense of profit making. The study examined the effect of Service recovery strategies on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication network-providers in Karu local government area of Nasarawa State. The primary objective of this study was to determine how apology affect the marketing performance of mobile telecommunication network provider in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state; assess the effect of speedy response on the marketing performance of mobile telecommunication network provider in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state ascertain the effect of redress on the marketing performance of mobile telecommunication network provider in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state. The study adopted survey research design. The population and the sample size of the study are 152, 320, 572 and 440 subscribers (customers) respectively. The data collected were analysed using multiple regression at 5% level of significance. The results of the analysis shows that apology have insignificant effect on the marketing performance of mobile telecommunication network provider in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state, Speedy response have significant effect on the performance of mobile telecommunication network provider in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state. The result also shows that redress have significant effect on the performance of mobile telecommunication network provider in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state. The study concluded that Service recovery strategies have positive effect on marketing performance of selected mobile telecommunication network-providers in Karu local government area of Nasarawa State. The study recommended that; Managers of mobile service providers should re-design its apology strategies as the current apology strategy is ineffective to represent sincere apology whenever it is been rendered. This can be achieved either through Short Message Service (SMS), Email, and other social media platforms or direct phone call or a *combination of the above. Managers' should also ensure that adequate measures are put in place in order to achieve speedy response to service failure situations.*

Keywords: *Service recovery strategy, Apology, Speedy response, Redress and Marketing Performance.*

INTRODUCTION

Intangible in nature are services when compared to goods as they cannot be touched, carried or seen but felt as they lack physical evidence. Although service companies put in a lot of effort to provide high-quality services, service failure remains a frequent issue (Chen et al. 2018). If not handled properly, these service failures can have negative consequences on customer relationships, leading to customer dissatisfaction and even customer defection (Keiningham et al., 2014). However, service recovery strategies such as apology, speedy response and redress also referred to as compensation has remained to be significant techniques in mitigating and reducing failures relating to the delivering of services in order develop and sustain customer relationship as well as redeeming and re-branding the perception of the market towards the brand image of mobile telecommunication network service providers in recent times.

According to Momo's (2012) report, Nigeria's primary Opinion Polling and Research Organization partnered with The Gallup Organization (USA) and discovered that 45% of mobile phone users utilize dual lines and 19% utilize 3 or more lines to bypass network failures. . This implies that service failure is inevitable but must be minimized. Delivering a quality service is not a day's job, it is a competitive edge that organizations strive to have over other firms, (Atuo & Kalu, 2017). According to Phan et al. (2021), service providers cannot completely avoid failing to meet the growing demands of consumers during service delivery due to the highly competitive nature of the business terrain. This means that service failures, which refer to unforeseen risks during purchasing, are inevitable and cannot be totally prevented.

Service recovery strategies refer to the measures taken by a company to handle service failures and address customer dissatisfaction. As no service provider is immune to errors, customer complaints and dissatisfaction may result in a loss of customers. (Kenesei & Bali, 2020). Although, offering flawless service may be a herculean task, service firms who are able to minimize service failure or are highly responsive to service recovery are able to deliver customers' satisfaction and once a customer is satisfied, there is an inclination of such to be loyal to that particular company or product. Hence, understanding customer expectations is a prerequisite of delivering superior service (Danciu, no date). This implies that strategic thinkers (marketers) are often successful in business due to their ability to identify and properly implement service recovery strategies that gives them competitive edge specifically in the service sector.

Even though managers play significant role in decision making, it is however pertinent for every decision to begin from the customers point of view, because in business today customers are the lifeblood of every business organization, of which service companies like mobile telecommunication network service providers cannot be an exception, as a satisfied customer has the tendency of being loyal to a brand or firm which in turns promotes the brand image of the firm, specifically service firms, because a growing number of companies have realized that when they make customers paramount, there is a radical shift in the way these factors impact marketing performances such as profitability, growth, customer satisfaction, loyalty).

The service delivery process can sometimes be influenced by customers' changing expectations, high human involvement in both the production and distribution of the services offered and some environmental limitations like uncertainty, complexity, risks among other factors. This makes it difficult for the provider to control the various interactions with its customers and these encounters may also be pivotal moments for customers, many of whom experience strong emotional reactions in response to failures in service delivery. These failures have clear negative implication to the company and may affect the marketing performance of the company through customer switching, negative publicity and other factors, depending on how the customer service failure recovery practices are handled. An important aspect of keeping unhappy customers is to establish a suitable service recovery process that helps the responsible organization regain the trust of the customer after a faulty service (Kenesei & Bali 2020).

Customer service failure recovery (CSFR) refers to the process of detecting, analyzing, and addressing customer issues to promote retention and dissuade customers from taking detrimental actions after consuming a product or service. When service providers face situations where customers are dissatisfied and perceive service failures, the operators' way of addressing those issues becomes the service recovery strategies, which can either strengthen relationships or worsen the negative effects of the failure. Some companies even look for failures in their products or services without customers' complaints to recover from failures. Therefore, it is crucial for companies and manufacturers to distinguish their products from their competitors. Companies therefore make enormous commitment to invest in developing a brand strategy for their products and services. Various studies have suggested that those companies that are able to build and sustain a positive brand image, generates more loyal customers' as a result of the firm's consistency in delivering value to its target audience. Even if the service provider is not to be blamed, every customer complaint is an opportunity to reinforce commitment and pleasurable behavior. When a company encounters service failures, it's an opportunity to quickly rectify the situation, share ideas for improvement, and enhance its marketing approach to encourage repeat business and overall improve its marketing performance. In recent literature, there has been increasing attention on recovery strategies to achieve customer satisfaction and loyalty. This interest extends beyond individual firms, with regulatory agencies also taking an active interest in consumer satisfaction. In Nigeria, the Consumer Protection Council promotes consumer rights and interests, as well as competition.

In reference to Nigeria, poor mobile services during phone calls, browsing the internet and texts messaging, having to wait on the queue for a long time before accessing services like SIM registration and retrieval, absence of warm reception by sales personnel, the rigorous stress of linking SIM card with NIN to avoid disconnection, unnecessary charges for inscribed services, and absence to instant response to customer error relating to mobile-banking are some of the challenges customers do experience as service failure from the mobile telecommunication service providers. Mobile network providers are making attempts to attract more customers by offering attractive gifts or bonuses to customers such as giving data bundle, free airtime and tendering apology through text message whenever service failure occurs. It is becoming more evident that service providers need to identify the unique characteristics of a service failure situation in order to effectively implement a systematic recovery process. This involves matching appropriate responses to specific failure scenarios and assessing the impact of those responses. With this in mind, the purpose of this study is to fill the gap in understanding the effectiveness of Service Recovery Strategies in satisfying and retaining disgruntled customers following a service failure. It specifically examines the impact of these strategies on customer satisfaction and loyalty in Karu Local Government of Nasarawa State.

Statement of the Problem

Considering the dynamism of the business sphere, service firms like the telecommunication service providers today operate in a fast changing and competitive business terrain. Despite efforts such as recruitment of more personnel to curtail the negative effect of service failure, resulting from factors such as uncertainty, risk, and change in customer taste, lack of employees' etiquette among others; yet these firms have not been able to achieve their marketing performance target. These unfavourable situations of service failure and incompetent recovery efforts generate a double deviation effect, which further worsens the situation of the firm's performance (Ellyawati, 2017).

In spite of several studies that have been investigated the impact of service recovery strategies, including apology, speedy response, and redress, on various marketing performance metrics, such as customer satisfaction and loyalty, across industries such as tourism, hotels, logistics, insurance, manufacturing, and banking. However, there has been little research in the telecommunications sector. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no such study has been conducted in the Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by examining how service recovery strategies affect angry and disappointed customers when there is a service network failure in the Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Research Questions

In line with the above statement of the problem, this research seeks to provide answers to the under listed questions:

i. To what extent has apology affected marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
ii. How does speedy response affect marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
iii. What effect does redress have on the marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state?

Objectives of the study

The broad objective of the study is to examine the effect of service recovery strategy on marketing performance of selected mobile telecommunication network service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. More so, the specific objectives are to;

i. ascertain the effect of apology on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.
ii. assess the effect of speedy response on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
iii. explore the effect of redress on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Research Hypotheses

In view of the aforementioned objectives of this study, the following null hypothesis were formulated, and tested.

H_{O1} - Apology has no significant effect on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government of Nasarawa State.

H_{O2} - Speedy response has no significant effect on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

H_{O3} - Redress has no significant effect on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

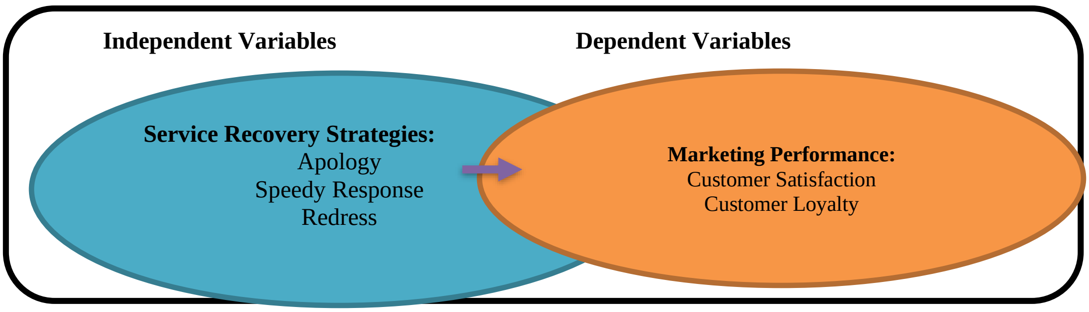
Service Recovery Strategy

Service recovery strategy implies the steps that service providers take in response to service failures, both in terms of the outcome and the process. These failures occur when customers' expectations are not met, as explained by Li (2015). During a highly competitive time, individuals are becoming increasingly refined and exacting due to higher education levels compared to the past, which is coupled with easier access to information (Kim & Jang, 2016). In today's world, consumers have greater autonomy when it comes to choosing products and services, as well as deciding how to allocate their money. Service recovery, as defined by Hess-Juniors et al. (2013), refers to the measures that a company and its employees take to make up for a customer's loss. Customers today will always search for a better alternative if their current choice fails to meet their expectations. As a result, it is critically important for all firms to not merely maintain high quality standards, but to exceed them (Calisir et al., 2016). The primary goal of service recovery is to make customers happy, shifting them from a state of dissatisfaction to one of contentment and, most notably, building a strong bond with them (McGrath, 2011).

According to Vidal (2012), it is essential for companies to implement service recovery strategies in different service failure situations to avoid dissatisfaction and break down in the relationship between the customer and the provider. Nimako and Mensah (2014) suggest that failures caused by stable reasons can damage the company's reputation and increase the likelihood of customers switching to competitors. Therefore, a company's service recovery strategy must include tangible efforts and appropriate employee behavior when dealing with service failures (Bambauer-Sachse & Rabeson, 2015).

The concept of service recovery has been raised to address the negative impact of service failure after it occurs, as it is almost impossible to prevent such failures. Previous literature has examined various service recovery mechanisms, including voice, recovery voice, initiative, facilitation, credibility, response speed, apology and compensation. It is widely recognized that well-implemented service recovery is a critical component in the success of customer relationship management (Cambra-Fierro et al, 2015).

Apology as a service recovery strategy involves apologizing to customers for any service failures. One of the most researched and supported recovery strategies is offering compensation to customers to improve their tangible outcomes. This study focuses on three recovery strategies - apology, speedy response, and redress/compensation - because they have a direct impact on bridging the expectation gaps in input and output. Therefore, this study investigates the use of apology, speedy response, and redress/compensation as service recovery strategies. It considers redress and compensation to be interchangeable.



Source: Author's Computation, (2023)

Apology

Service recovery strategy involves using apologies to make up for service failures. Through a sincere apology, a company acknowledges responsibility for the error and expresses regret. This is according to Rasoulian et al. (2017). It's also essential to treat every customer as an individual with specific needs and preferences. The significance of apology in the service recovery process is explicable through the Interactional Justice Theory. According to Ishak et al., (2010), interactional justice in a service recovery context refers to the evaluation of how fairly customers have been treated during the recovery process by employees of service firms. This definition puts more emphasis on the recovery effort than the failure itself when it comes to customers' perception of justice. Service managers are therefore expected to manage customers' emotional experience during and after a service failure with care. Previous literature suggests that six sub-dimensions are involved in Interactional justice: courtesy, honesty, offering explanations, empathy, endeavor, and offering apologies. Of all these sub-dimensions, apologies are perhaps the most frequently researched variable in this field, (Ishak et al., (2010).

Providing a sincere apology to a customer is one of the most effective techniques in service recovery (Vo & Lan, 2015). Apology is defined by various dimensions which are same as those of interactional justice with the exception of honesty and offering explanation. This provides justification for using the concepts interchangeably. From the foregoing, this study defines apology as an effort to minimize the negative effect of service failure in the minds of consumers through effective interaction procedure.

According to Okorie (2015), three factors significantly impact customer satisfaction: apology, facilitation, and credibility. Apology was found to have the strongest effect. Meanwhile, Webster and Sundaram (2008) believe that apology is the only effective strategy for service recovery that enhances customer satisfaction. The Interactional Justice Theory explains the role of apology in the service recovery process. In this context, interactional justice refers to how customers evaluate the fairness of human interactions with employees of service firms during the recovery process. As Ishak, Malliga, and Mohammed (2010) point out, service managers must be diligent in managing customers' emotional experiences during and after service failures.

Speedy response

Speedy response pertains to how quickly customer service representatives address customer concerns or issues (Okorie, 2012). A quick response when there is a problem is vital in the effective management of service failure. This helps customers feel that the company values them and is paying attention to their needs (Tsai et al., 2014).Paraphrased: The significance of prompt response or quickness is founded in the theory of procedural justice, which considers the fairness of the policies, procedures, and parameters adopted by decision makers in resolving a dispute or negotiation. The focus of procedural justice mainly revolves around the decision-making procedures. In the context of service recovery, it refers to the degree of fairness perceived by consumers regarding the policies, procedures, and parameters used by service organizations to fix any service failure (Holloway et al., 2009). The evaluation of procedural justice can be achieved by following six rules-consistency (bias suppression, accuracy, correct ability, representativeness, and ethicality); however, in the case of service encounters, it is described by features such as adaptability/accessibility, timeliness/quick responsiveness, and effectiveness (Mattila et al., 2013).

A significant amount of academic research has investigated the relationship between response time and different aspects of marketing performance. However, the findings have been somewhat inconclusive, and the measures used to assess marketing performance have largely been based on post-complaint behavior. For example, dissatisfied customers who receive a full refund after going through a lengthy and complicated process may still perceive the process as unfair. Therefore, it is crucial that any procedures implemented are consistent, impartial, representative of all parties, and based on accurate information and ethical standards to be deemed as fair. According to Braithwaite (2015), MTN is considering introducing self-service options that would enable customers to resolve some issues on their own. According to studies by Boo and

Kim (2013) and Komunda and Osarenkhoe (2012), providing timely and speedy responses to customer complaints has a positive impact on satisfaction, corporate image, attitude, re-patronage, and word-of-mouth valence. It is found to be more effective than delayed response.

Redress (Compensation)
Redress is concerned with resolving negative experiences that consumers encounter by offering concrete proof that service providers are just and reasonable. It is an essential means of remedying service failures and restoring balance in exchange relationships, or suggesting links to distributive justice (Bhandari et al., 2007). Gelbrich et al. (2016) discovered that company's recovery strategies included some sort of compensation. They suggest that refunds are the most effective compensation for customer losses compared to other methods. According to this study, compensation refers to all efforts made by telecommunication providers to their customers to make up for any inconvenience caused by service failure. Distributive justice focuses on the perceived fairness of tangible outcomes. Developed from the social exchange theory, distributive justice follows the principles of equity, equality, and need. In service recovery, distributive justice is used to determine whether the resolution offered is perceived as fair or not. When recovery is guided by distributive justice, it involves providing tangible compensation, such as refunds, replacements, discounts, coupons for future purchases, and store credits. The level of compensation depends on the severity of the service failure, which determines the expectation gap. Additionally, customers may consider other factors when evaluating the outcome of the exchange, such as the image of the responsive organization compared to others in similar situations. Distributive justice is therefore, the perceived fairness of the tangible outcome of the service encounter. The variable that marketing studies have mostly focused on as a measure of distributive justice, is compensation and more often than not, it is used interchangeably with distributive justice.

Marketing Performance
Marketing Performance refers to the evaluation and enhancement of the productivity and efficiency of marketing. The aim is to ensure that marketing activities, strategies, and metrics are aligned with the business objectives. In today's large-scale marketing organizations, managers require performance measurement systems to regulate and monitor marketing efforts. Measuring marketing performance incorporates standardized knowledge-based routines and procedures that determine the impact of marketing functions towards the company's objectives and end-goals over a period of time (Simmons, 2000).

After examining the service recovery strategy and its components, it is important to analyze the dependent variable, marketing performance, and its specific dimensions within the context of this study. It can be concluded that marketing performance aids in the establishment of periodic objectives, provides feedback on the progress made towards achieving those objectives, and compares them to current targets or evaluates them alongside other measures over time. Since these measures are used to make comparisons, they do not necessarily have to represent absolute values but rather serve as a guide for monitoring and controlling, driving improvement, maximizing the effectiveness of improvement efforts, achieving alignment with organizational goals and objectives, and rewarding and disciplining. The performance is analyzed from both financial and non-financial perspectives. There are several financial and non-financial performance measures that companies use to gauge their success. Financial measures such as profit-after tax, return on investment, sales volume, market share, inventory level, and cash at hand are all directly related to a company's bottom line. On the other hand, non-financial measures such as customer satisfaction scores, customer loyalty, product quality, competitive positioning, and brand equity provide insight into the overall customer experience and market position. Despite the variety of performance measures available, there is no consensus among scholars on which ones are the most appropriate. According to Dalrymple et al. (2004), the debate centers on whether output measures, input factors or qualitative measures are the best indicators of performance. This unresolved issue highlights the complexity of measuring a company's success and the need for a multifaceted approach to performance measurement.

Customer satisfaction, as defined by Chueh, Wang & Liao in 2014, refers to how customers evaluate the products they have purchased or the services they have received by comparing their experiences to the actual situation. It can be expressed as a measure of how well a company's products and services meet or exceed customer expectations. Customer satisfaction is measured by the number or percentage of customers whose reported experiences with a company, its products or its services exceed specific satisfaction goals. This is an important performance indicator for businesses and is often included in a Balanced Scorecard. In a competitive marketplace where companies vie for customers, customer satisfaction is a crucial differentiating factor and has become an integral part of business strategy. Within an organization, customer satisfaction ratings can have a significant impact. In (Sengupta, Balaji, & Krishnan, 2015), it is emphasized that employees should focus on meeting customers' expectations. The authours explained that when overall satisfaction with a company is high, customers are more likely to commit to a long-term relationship and do more business with the company. On the other hand, when satisfaction ratings decrease, it could signal problems that may affect sales and profitability. As such, it is vital for businesses to manage customer satisfaction effectively. For this to happen, companies need to have reliable and representative measures of satisfaction.

Loyalty is a term that carries various meanings according to different scholars. Generally, it has been associated with commitment and zealous devotion towards a person or cause. In terms of customers, loyalty can be assessed based on their willingness to repurchase, recommend the product/services to others, and their tolerance towards pricing. According to Khoa (2020), customer loyalty is crucial for business growth, as only a loyal consumer would recommend a product or service to others through word of mouth. This loyalty reflects their trust and commitment to the product or service. With the service industry constantly expanding, customers have more options to find a provider that can meet their needs and expectations (Nwokorie, 2016). However, if a service fails, the provider can maintain a positive perception by apologizing, responding timely to resolve the issue, and offering compensation like a refund or discount.

Compensating customers to enhance their tangible results is a recovery tactic that has been extensively researched and supported. While compensation may lead customers to attribute more blame to the service provider, it is still a fundamental approach to improving perceived fairness and has a straightforward impact on bridging the gap between input and output expectations. A successful compensation program addresses different types of customer complaints; specific types or combinations of remedial measures may influence customer behavior differently. In Nigeria, former NCC head Dr. Ernest Ndukwe ordered MTN and Celtel (now Airtel) to compensate all active subscribers as of January 31, 2008, as a fine for inadequate service delivery (Adekeye, 2008; Babaita, 2010). It can be inferred from the statement that Nigerian operators are now acknowledging the importance of having fair policies, procedures, rules, and providing compensation for unsatisfactory service. Orsingher, Valentini, and de Angelis (2010) conducted a study which demonstrated that offering free gift wrap (as a form of redress) in situations where there was lack of attention or slow service (without any explicit loss) had a significant impact on customer satisfaction. However, the study also revealed that the effect of redress was significant only when the level of attentiveness was high. When the level of attentiveness was low (or when there was rudeness), the effect of redress was not significant. The results suggest that if a 50% or 15% discount is given with courteous and respectful treatment, customers are more likely to repurchase and less likely to spread negative reviews than if they had a full exchange but experienced rude treatment

Loyal customers are essential assets for service companies. To ensure repeat business, it is crucial to provide a product or service that meets or exceeds customer expectations every time. Even when the delivery falls short, attempts should be made to rectify the situation. Psychologically, a simple apology that acknowledges the mistake and promises to make it right can go a long way in restoring a customer's satisfaction and loyalty. According to Sweeney and Jofre (2012), offering an apology has a significant impact on customer loyalty.

Seiders and Berry (2013) identified four key tasks that service representatives must undertake to improve their response time to customer complaints and in turn increase customer loyalty: Developing a database within the front-office system that tracks and analyzes each customer's shopping profile, including factors such as demographics, attitudes, perceptions, psychographics, and purchase history. This allows for a better understanding of customer preferences, activities, tastes, dislikes, likes, and complaints; Customizing marketing programs based on the individual customer or customer group's life cycle stage and/or level of loyalty to the company's offerings. By predicting customer movement in the relationship ladder and how purchases are financed, businesses can tailor their marketing efforts to best suit the needs and desires of each segment of customer; and providing checks and balances on any changes in customer purchases. By monitoring changes in customer behavior and preferences, businesses can quickly make adjustments to their marketing strategies and ensure that they are meeting customer needs. The company may try to determine the cause of such a change in customer behavior. Relationship marketing involves using a data warehouse or back-office system to fulfill and support customer orders and store customer information, allowing the recovery team to monitor and make informed decisions on how to add value to the buyer-seller transaction. This approach also relies on a deep understanding of customer preferences to instill a sense of teamwork and collaboration across all units of the organization, including external partners like dealers and suppliers. The end goal is to build a unique business model that fosters lasting customer relationships and enables quick resolution of any complaints. These efforts are supported by sophisticated technology and internet services that enable these four interactive tasks to function smoothly. According to Chandrashekaran et al. (2007), when households encounter service issues, only 54% of them will remain loyal to the brand after the issues have been resolved satisfactorily. The authors conclude that true customer satisfaction is the only way to guarantee loyalty, and that prior experience with the service provider can also lead to loyalty.

Empirical Studies

Cheng et al., (2018) explord the effect of service recovery on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the hotel industry of Malaysia. They distributed questionnaires to 500 participants who had stayed in hotels in Malaysia and used structural equation technique to analyze the relationship between the model and the hypotheses. The results showed that the different aspects of service recovery are closely linked to customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Ndidi (2020) studied the connection between service failure recovery and the competitive position of telecommunication companies in Port Harcourt. The study formulated six objectives, research questions and null hypotheses to guide its research. 350 well-structured questionnaires were administered to employees of telecommunication companies in the study area, and both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the research questions and hypotheses. The results showed that apologies have a significant impact on market penetration and market share (market performance) of telecommunication companies. The study also found that service rebranding has a significant relationship between market penetration and market share of telecommunication companies. The study revealed that follow-up had a significant influence on market penetration and market share of telecommunication companies. In conclusion, service failure recovery is a tool that can be used to revive poorly performing products which does not meet consumer expectations. Actions to incorporate the companies into the market include saying sorry, urgent reinstatement, empathy, sympathy, symbolic atonement, service rebranding, follow-up, and compensation.

Ekiz and Arasli (2017assessed the impact of apology, redress, explanation, attentiveness, and promptness on customer satisfaction, repurchase intentions, and word-of-mouth communication. The study utilized a sample of Turkish customers staying in three, four, and five-star hotels in Northern Cyprus. Through regression analysis of 394 respondents, the results revealed that apology, promptness, and redress were positively associated with customer satisfaction. It is important to note that the study solely focused on the hotel and catering industry and may yield different results in the telecommunications industry."

Sciarelli et al., (2017) conducted a study on a sample of 430 internet customers in Egypt using the partial least squares (PLS-SEM) approach to identify the relationships between service recovery strategies, service recovery satisfaction, and customer loyalty towards internet providers. The study sheds light on how the seven service recovery strategies impact customer loyalty, both attitudinally and behaviorally, directly and indirectly, through service recovery satisfaction. This study has significant implications for service managers and researchers interested in understanding how service providers deal with service failures and customer dissatisfaction in the B2C context. The results of the study indicate that the service recovery strategies positively influence service recovery satisfaction and customer loyalty towards internet providers. Additionally, service recovery satisfaction positively impacts customer loyalty.

In 2012, Doaei et al., examined the impact of service recovery (including apology, redress, explanation, and promptness) on complainant satisfaction, customer loyalty, and word-of-mouth (WOM) communication. The research was conducted on guests staying at five-star hotels in Mashhad and focused specifically on clients who had complained during their stay. Data was collected through a standardized questionnaire and analyzed using regression or path analysis. The results indicated a significant correlation between service recovery and increased levels of complainant satisfaction, customer loyalty, and WOM communication. Additionally, the study found that the various components of service recovery were also related to these outcomes.

Zaid et al., (2021) investigated service recovery on building customer loyalty by examining the mediating role of customer satisfaction and corporate image. The study involved 126 consumers who received recovery for service failures from five logistics companies operating in Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. The researchers collected data using a questionnaire, distributed through Google Forms to all participants. The study's structural model was evaluated using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method. The study findings revealed that service recovery has a significant positive direct impact on customer satisfaction and corporate image. The study also found that customer satisfaction and corporate image have a reciprocal relationship, which contributes to customer loyalty. Service recovery indirectly influences customer loyalty through the mediating role of customer satisfaction and corporate image.

Nwokorie (2016) conducted a study that focused on service recovery strategies and their influence on customer loyalty in the hotel industry. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using inferential statistics and the Z-test technique to test study hypotheses. Results showed a significant correlation between service recovery strategy, timing, customer loyalty, and satisfaction. The study concluded that effective recovery efforts, including compensation, have a significant impact.

Komunda and Osarenkhoe (2012) conducted a study at Makerere University Business School in Kampala to explore the relationship between service recovery, customer satisfaction, and loyalty in the context of commercial banking. The study involved 120 participants, including staff and students at the Business School. The researchers employed factor analysis and Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the relationships among the variables, as well as regression analysis to identify predictors of customer loyalty. The findings of the study revealed a significant relationship between communication and service recovery, and that higher levels of redress led to positive consumer responses. Further, the study found that the interaction between employee responsiveness and courtesy had a positive impact on customer evaluations. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of effective service recovery strategies and customer-oriented behavior in enhancing loyalty in commercial banking environments.

Theoretical Framework

A number of scholars have postulated different theories in the field of marketing specifically service recovery strategies which include; interactional justice theory, procedural theory and distributive theory which are a sub-divisions of the perceived justice theory and others include equity theory and attribution theory. However, this study is underpinned by perceived Justice Theory.

Perceived Justice Theory

Hocutt, Chakraborty, and Mowen, (1997) established the perceived justice theory which seeks to explain customers' subjective reactions to organizational response to service failure. It is important to assess the complainant's response in a subjective manner because peoples' perceptions of reality are often biased and can influence their behavior. Blodgett and Anderson (2000) assert that previous research has shown that complainants' actions are largely based on their perception of justice. When there are higher levels of distributive, interactional, and procedural justice, there is a greater likelihood of positive intentions for repeat business and less likelihood for negative word of mouth. The justice theory is divided into three; interactional, procedural and distributive.

The perceived justice theory is adopted as the theory that underpins the research. This is because it encompasses the three theories used in this research and presents a more realistic framework for explaining and predicting consumers' behavior following service failure and recovery process. It also explains whether the fairness offered by the service providers in the event of any failure has an effect on customers' perceptions of justice.

Methodology

The study is limited to the already established proxies of service recovery strategy SRSs; apology, speedy response, and compensation (redress) and as well used in Ekiz and Arasli (2017), while the marketing performance is proxied by (customer satisfaction and customer loyalty). This study choses these variables because they are not only easy to understand by the intended respondent, but also easy to measure; the population for this study was restricted to only MTN, GLO, 9mobile and Airtel mobile telecommunication service subscribers/customers resident in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State due to the density of commercial activities which is aided by communication facilities. The time frame is within the period of 2022-2023. The main reason for selecting this period is because of the increasing level of commercial activities and demand for telecommunication facilities. Survey research design was used. The population of this study consist of mobile telecommunication providers subscribers of the major mobile telecommunication network providers in Nigeria which include; MTN, GLO, Etisalat (9mobile) and Airtel. According to June, 2006 report MTN had 58, 000, 000 subscribers, Globacom 36, 320, 572 subscribers, Etisalat 28, 000, 000 subscribers and Airtel had 30, 000, 000 subscribers in basically in Karu Local Government of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. These figures were obtained from the offices of the various mobile telecommunication network providers as the most reliable data available. In order to obtain a manageable sample upon which the result can be used to generalize the entire population of the study, Taro Yamane's (1973) formula was used and a sample size of 400 was arrived at. The formula is represented as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:
n= sample size required
N = number of people in the population
e = allowable error (%)

$$n = \frac{152{,}320{,}572}{1 + 152{,}320{,}572(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 399.9989$$

However, 10% of the estimated 399.9 sample size was calculated and added to the actual sample size so as to enable the researcher obtain not less than the actual sample size of 399.9989 which would be valid enough to represent the entire population of the study and valid enough to conduct analysis. This is calculated as follows;

$$\frac{10}{100} \times 399.9989 = 39.9$$

Hence, 399.9989 + 39.9 = 440 respondents were considered for the study questionnaires were administered.

The data for the study was obtained from primary source and secondary source. Primary data was collected through personally administered questionnaires to customers or subscribers of MTN, GLO 9mobile, and Airtel resident in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, while the secondary source data comprised of extracts from text books, scholarly journals and other relevant publications on the topic under consideration. A well-structured close-ended questionnaire designed on a five points Linkert scale in measuring the intensity or the degree of agreement by respondents to the research questions, Strongly Agree (SA) = 5; Agree (A) = 4; Disagreed (D) = 3, Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 2, Indifferent (I) or Undecided (U) = 1. Also, simple random sampling of probability sampling was used, this is because it gives every unit of the population equal chance of being included in the sample.

Reliability Test

Reliability test through Cronbach's Alpha is conducted in order to ascertain the construct validity. The criterion adopted is from Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black, (1998) who opined that proposed construct reliability assessed should be greater than 0.70.

Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's α	No. of Items
Apology	.78	3
Speedy response	.75	3
Redress (Compensation)	.73	3
Customer Satisfaction	.76	3
Customer Loyalty	.79	3
Recommended α	α ≥ 0.70	

Source: SPSS Output version-27

Reliability was assessed by Cronbach's α, and all scales showed values above 0.70: with Apology at 0.78; speedy response 0.75; redress 0.73; customer satisfaction 0.76 and customer loyalty 0.79. Since the reliability estimates exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, the lower limit of acceptability, this suggests a high-level of reliability. The reliability test show that all variables are above the recommended threshold of α ≥ 0.70, thus indicating that the measurement instrument is reliable. Note that the highest value is customer loyalty while the lowest is redress (0.73).

Techniques of Data Analysis

Quantitative analysis was adopted for this study using questionnaire to collect primary data on the independent and dependent variable. The purpose of analysing data is to obtain usable and useful information. More so, it involves critical analysis and interpretation of figures and numbers, and attempts to find rationale behind the emergence of main findings. Descriptive and inferential statistics, excel were used to present data collected using percentages and frequency count. Pearson's Chi-square test statistics was employed in analysing data collected using Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS version 23.

Model Specification

The model specification is stated below:
Independent Variable = Service Recovery Strategy
Dependent Variable = Marketing Performance

$Y = \alpha + bx + \mu$…………………………………………………(i)

Where:
Y = dependent variable
a = constant
x = independent variable
b = coefficient
μ = Error term

This model can also be expressed in a statistical form.

Model for the study: MKP= Bo+ B_1APG + B_2SPR + B_3RDS + e…………….(i)

Whereby;
MKT= Enterprise growth
Bo = constant
B_1, B_2, B_3 = coefficients of the parameter estimates
APG = Apology
SPR = Speedy response
RDS = Redress
e = error term representing all other variables not specified in the model.

Data Analysis and Result

Table 2: Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.922[a]	.849	.848	.49415

a. Predictors: (Constant), RDS, APG, SPR

Table 2 above shows the co-efficient of the regression R^2 with a value of (0.849) which implies that (85%) of the variation in Marketing Performance can be explained by Apology, Speedy response and Redress. While the remaining value of (0.151) representing (15%) can be explained by other related factors not stated in the regression model which is refer to as error term.

Table 3: ANOVA

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	602.290	3	200.763	822.186	.000[b]
	Residual	106.708	437	.244		
	Total	708.998	440			

a. Dependent Variable: MKP
b. Predictors: (Constant), RDS, APG, SPR

Decision Rule: 5% level of significance
Table 4 reveal the fitness of the model earlier formulated. The F-statistics value of (822.186) is significant at 5%, and since the tabulated p-value (0.000) is less than the 5% level of significance i.e., (0.000<0.05) the implication is that, the model is well fitted and the null hypotheses can be rejected and concluded that Service Recovery Strategy has significant effect on Marketing Performance.

Table 4: Co-eficients

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.190	.075		2.534	.012
	APG	.103	.059	.094	1.757	.080
	SPR	.199	.062	.190	3.196	.001
	RDS	.663	.050	.656	13.309	.000

a. Dependent Variable: MKP

Table 4 shows the co-efficient of Apology (0.103) which is positive but insignificant in enhancing Marketing Performance. MKT = 0.190 + 0.103APG shows that Marketing Performance decreases by 10% for every 1 unit increase in Apology. The co-efficient of Speedy response (0.199) is significant in improving Marketing Performance. MKT = 0.190 + 0.199SPR shows that Marketing Performance increases by 20% at every 1 unit increase in Speedy response.

The co-efficient of Redress (0.663) is significant in improving Marketing Performance. MKP = 0.190 + 0.663RDS shows that Marketing Performance increases by 66% at every 1 unit increases in Redress.

Test of Hypotheses

Decision rule: 5% Level of Significance

Test of Hypothesis One

$H0_1$: Apology has no significant effect on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government of Nasarawa State

The result from the co-efficient table 4 shows that Apology with a co-efficient value of (0.103) implies that apology has a positive but insignificant effect on marketing performance since the probability value of (0.080) is greater than the estimated significant value of (0.05). This means that Apology influences on marketing performance, therefore leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis which states that apology has no significant effect on on marketing performance while the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

Test of Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: Speedy response has no significant effect on marketing performance of major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

The co-efficient of Speedy response has a positive value of (0.199) with a probability value of (0.001). This indicates that Speedy response has positive effect on marketing performance and is statistically significant at (5%) as the probability value of (0.001) is less than 0.05. This therefore; means that speedy response has positive contribution on marketing performance.

Test of Hypothesis Three

H_{03}: Redress has no significant effect on marketing performanceof major mobile telecommunication service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

The co-efficient of Redress has a positive value of (0.663) with a probability value of (0.000). This indicates that redress has positive effect on marketing performance and is statistically significant at (5%) as the probability value of (0.000) is less than 0.05. This therefore; means that redress has significantly affect marketing performance.

Discussion of Findings

From the investigation carried out on the effect of Service recovery strategies on marketing performance, the findings are as follows;

The first null hypothesis (H_{O1}) is accepted and the alternative rejected. This implies that there is no significant relationship between apology and marketing performance. This finding is in disagreement with the result of the study conducted by Cheng, Gan, Imrie and Mansori, (2018) which state that service recovery dimensions are significantly related to customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. Also, the findings of Ndidi, (2020); Ekiz and Arasli (2017) shows that apology significantly influence marketing performance (market penetration and market share) of telecommunication firms which are all in line with this study.

The second null hypothesis (H_{O2}) is rejected and the alternative is accepted. This means that speedy response has significant influence on marketing performance. The study agrees with the findings of Sciarelli, Nagm, Dakrory, Tani, and Khashan, (2017); Zaid, Palilati, Madjid and Bua, (2021) that service recovery strategies positively influence both customer satisfaction and customer loyalty toward internet providers. Doaei, Rajaee, Tavassoli, and Doaei, (2012) carried out a similar study, the results of the main assumption and its related suppositions show there is a significant correlation between service recovery and complainant satisfaction, customer loyalty and WOM communication. Moreover, a significant relationship was also found to exist between the dimensions constituting service recovery.

Also, the third and the last null hypothesis (H_{03}) is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which is an indication that compensation or redress has significant effect on Marketing performance. The study concurs with the study of Nwokorie, (2016) whose result indicate that effective recovery efforts have a significant impact; hence compensation among recovery strategies adopted by most hotels studied. Hotel establishments should adopt the concept of relationship marketing since it is practically impossible to totally avoid service failure in the service delivery process. More so, the findings of Komunda and Osarenkhoe (2012) reveal that higher levels of redress (compensation) independently increased positive consumer responses.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made;
Apology offered by the mobile telecommunication service provider during service failure encountered by customers and recovery process has not brought about significant improvement in customer satisfactions and loyalty.

Speedy response to service failure in a bid to solve the problem leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty. The procedural justice theory which suggests that the effective procedures that are employed during service failure will make customers happy and satisfied with service provider is supported. As such timeliness is key factor to reckon with in service recovery process.

Distributive justice theory explained that redress as a service recovery process influences customer satisfaction. This is a pointer that compensation as a communication strategy is fundamental and can limit dissatisfaction among customers.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;
Managers of mobile service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state should develop mechanism to reduce the rate at which apology are offered as a result of service failure, as frequent offering of apology may not be perceived as a remedy due to regular failure of service

Managers' of mobile service providers in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa state should also ensure that adequate measures are put in place in order to achieve speedy response to service failure situations. Checks should be made to evaluate each service delivered, so as to detect any form of failure that might have occurred since they are not avoidable, and swift action considered necessary to resolve issues related to service failure even before customers get to register such service failures. It should be made known to customers that technicians and/or engineers are on top of the situation as soon as the failure occurs, so they don't feel unattended to.

Redress, which is compensating the customers, as a recovery strategy should also be encouraged by the service providers. Managers should not only formulate sound compensation policy for their employees but also design a good compensation provisions to improve the marketing performance of the firm. When customers are refunded in the case of service failure, it tends to reduce their anger and the tendency of switching to competitors.

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