

MEDIATING ROLE OF CUSTOMER PATRONAGE IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND ASSOCIATION DIMENSIONS AND CUSTOMERS SATISFACTION FOR MOBILE NETWORK SERVICES AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF BAYERO UNIVERSITY KANO

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Abstract

Since the liberalization of Nigeria's telecommunications sector in 2001, the industry has become a major contributor to national GDP. Yet persistent issues such as unreliable service, delayed notifications, and unstable pricing continue to undermine customer satisfaction, resulting in high churn and weak brand loyalty. This study examines how brand association affects customer satisfaction, with a particular focus on the mediating role of customer patronage among students of Bayero University Kano. Using a quantitative research design, data were gathered through structured questionnaires from 327 students. The results indicate that brand association positively and significantly influences customer satisfaction. Additionally, customer patronage was found to partially mediate this relationship, suggesting that stronger brand association leads to increased patronage, which in turn enhances satisfaction. The findings highlight that telecom operators should not only strengthen their brand identities but also encourage ongoing patronage especially among the student demographic in order to boost satisfaction and foster customer loyalty.

KEYWORDS: BRAND ASSOCIATION, CUSTOMER PATRONAGE, CUSTOMERS SATISFACTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive business landscape, customer satisfaction is widely recognized as a foundational pillar for achieving organizational excellence and long-term performance. It represents a customer's overall evaluation of a service, shaped by the difference between expected and actual experiences (Ibitomi & Mike, 2021). In the contemporary business landscape, customer loyalty and satisfaction are paramount; companies cannot achieve long-term sustainability without adequately addressing and understanding the needs of their clientele (Almuhanna & Alharb, 2023). Satisfied customers tend to remain loyal, recommend the brand to others, and contribute positively to its image, while dissatisfied customers are more likely to switch providers or share negative experiences, which can erode brand equity. As such, maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction is critical for business continuity, especially in

service-driven industries like telecommunications (Nikou & Khia Bani, 2020).

Since its inception in Nigeria in 2001, the telecommunications sector has experienced remarkable expansion, commencing with the launch of Econet (now Airtel) on August 8 of that year, followed closely by MTN, which also initiated operations in August 2001. As of February 28, 2002, Mobile Telephone Network (MTN) reported approximately 250,000 subscribers. Recent data from the Nigerian Communication Commission indicates that MTN continues to be the largest operator in the market, with an impressive 92.71 million mobile subscriptions. Globacom ranks as the second-largest operator, with 60.76 million subscribers, while Airtel and 9mobile hold shares of 60.30 million and 13.07 million subscribers, respectively (Oluwadamilola, 2023).

In Nigeria, the telecommunications industry plays a pivotal role in economic development and digital inclusion, especially among the youth. As of Q1 2024, the sector contributed ₦2.67 trillion to Nigeria's GDP, driven by over 157 million mobile subscribers (NBS, 2024). For university students, telecom services are essential tools for e-learning, research, communication, and digital transactions. University students rely extensively on mobile networks for key academic activities such as communication, research, and online learning. However, frequent issues such as dropped calls and slow internet speeds significantly undermine their satisfaction and learning outcomes (Egbose, 2025). Despite substantial investments in infrastructure and branding by leading operators such as MTN, Airtel, and Globacom, customer dissatisfaction persists. Common complaints include poor network signals, slow internet speeds, pricing inconsistencies, and unfulfilled service promises (Uwabor et al., 2021). These challenges have led to a disconnection between brand visibility and customer loyalty, particularly among student consumers who frequently switch providers. This trend reveals the urgent need to understand how brand-related factors and behavioural tendencies affect satisfaction within this demographic.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite aggressive marketing, sponsorships, and widespread brand visibility among telecom providers in Nigeria, customer satisfaction levels remain inconsistent, especially among young consumers such as students, who are both highly engaged and critically aware of service quality. While brand association remains strong due to visibility and promotions, this has not translated into stable customer retention. Most students report switching between service providers due to unresolved service issues such as unreliable network coverage, poor data service, unresponsive customer support, delayed transaction notifications, stock outages, slow networks, weak Wi-Fi signals, pricing issues stemming from the devaluation of the naira, and unfulfilled promises.

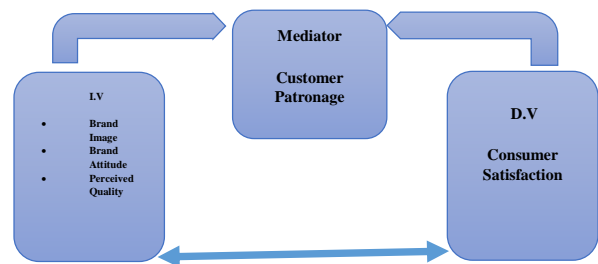
This gap raises key questions: Do positive brand perceptions actually drive loyalty? Is there a behavioural bridge, such as continued patronage that must occur before satisfaction is achieved? And how do these dynamics play out in a digitally active, price-sensitive student population? Addressing these questions is crucial for designing evidence-based strategies to improve user experiences and enhance telecom loyalty among Nigerian youth. While telecommunication services are crucial for enhancing customer experience, the industry often does not rank highly among sectors recognized for providing exceptional service. According to the 2022 State of Customer Churn in Telecom report, customer loyalty has dropped by 22% post-pandemic due to poor customer experience. One significant reason for this decline is the prolonged time it takes to resolve issues, which continues to contribute to unsatisfactory experiences and drives customers toward competitors. Some scholars have emphasized the significance of brand association in influencing consumer purchasing decisions and customer satisfaction. Relevant studies include those by Ashraf, Sulehri & Abbas (2018), Harcourt and Ikegwuru (2018), Oeleye Mustapha, Umar & Bakare (2023), Quana, Chia, Nhunga (2022), Kwaja, Eldin, Ali & Mostapha (2021), Ngana & Phonga (2020), Sumarwan, Simanjuntak and Yusuf (2019), Mackintosh, Chukwuemele & Didia (2020), Susetyo (2022), and Bhaya (2017).

A prior study by Kwaja, Eldin, Ali, and Mostapha (2021) suggested that other factors influencing brand loyalty and customer satisfaction should be explored. Furthermore, due to consistent findings in previous research, this study will treat customer patronage as a mediating variable, following the suggestion of Baron and Kenny (1986). Customer patronage enables consumers to assess the true quality and image of services, leading to satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth for the product, service, company, or brand (Bataneh, 2015). Kotler (2007) suggests that customers exhibit varying degrees of patronage towards specific services, stores, and entities. This study will investigate the mediating role of customer patronage in the relationship between brand association and customer satisfaction within the telecommunications sector. Bayero University Kano presents an excellent opportunity for this observation. The existing theoretical frameworks of brand equity and customer satisfaction have not been adequately integrated to explain the mediating mechanisms of customer patronage. Therefore, this study intends to explore the theoretical postulations of Fishbein and Ajzen's Theory of Reasoned Action (1975) along with Keller's (2003) Customer-based Brand Association theory. In summary, this study aims to address the stated contextual, conceptual, and theoretical gaps by examining the mediating role of customer patronage among mobile network service customers (undergraduate students) at Bayero University Kano, thereby contributing to

a nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics driving customer satisfaction in this critical sector.

Research questions

1. To what extent does brand image affect consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK Students?
2. To what extent does brand attitude affect consumer satisfaction with mobile network Services among BUK Students?
3. To what extent does perceive quality affect consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK Students?
4. Does customer patronage mediate the relationship between brand image and consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK Students?
5. Does customer patronage mediate the relationship between Brand attitude and Consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK Students?
6. Does customer patronage mediate the relationship between perceived quality and consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK Students?
7. To what extent does customer patronage affect consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK Students?

2.0 Conceptual Framework

The below model presented brand image, brand attitude, and perceived quality which are the independent variables (IV), on the other hand is the dependent variable of customer satisfaction (DV), while Customer patronage is the mediating variable (MV). 2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Brand Association: Brand association refers to the cognitive and emotional connections that consumers make with a brand, encompassing attributes, benefits, and attitudes linked to it (Keller, 1993). These associations can be based on tangible elements such as price and service quality or intangible ones such as prestige and trust. In the telecom industry, strong brand associations, such as reliability, affordability, and innovation help shape consumer expectations and influence satisfaction.

Customer Patronage: Customer patronage involves the behavioral aspect of customer engagement, reflected in repeat purchases, loyalty, and continued use of a service. It is a

behavioral expression of satisfaction and brand trust (Oyeniyi & Abiodun, 2008). Frequent patronage indicates customer commitment and serves as a key indicator of brand loyalty. Customer Satisfaction: Customer satisfaction is defined as a customer's overall evaluation of a product or service based on their experience compared with expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In telecommunications, satisfaction depends on service quality, reliability, responsiveness, and value for money. Satisfied customers are more likely to remain loyal, recommend the service, and resist switching to competitors.

2.2 Empirical Review

Several studies have examined the interrelationship among brand association, customer patronage, and satisfaction. For instance, Aydın and Özer (2005) found that positive brand associations significantly enhance customer loyalty in the mobile telecommunications sector. Similarly, Ogba and Tan (2009) reported that strong brand image and trust influence both satisfaction and repurchase intentions.

In Nigeria, Adeola and Ezenwafor (2019) observed that brand associations related to network reliability and affordability strongly predict satisfaction among telecom users. However, their findings did not account for patronage as an intermediary variable. Meanwhile, Ebitu (2016) suggested that repeated patronage enhances satisfaction through familiarity and service adaptation. These studies highlight the need for a mediating analysis to better understand how brand associations translate into satisfaction via customer patronage. University students represent a unique subset of consumers who exhibit dynamic brand behaviors influenced by social networks, digital exposure, and value sensitivity. Their perceptions of telecom brands can offer predictive insights into broader market trends, particularly as their consumption patterns are shaped by technology-driven communication habits. Furthermore, Empirical evidence across recent studies affirms that branding variables play a crucial role in shaping customer behaviour and satisfaction. Ukeme, Uford, and Etuk (2024) revealed that brand personality, awareness, and identity significantly influenced customer patronage of UNIUYO Table Water in Nigeria, though brand association did not show a combined effect. In contrast, Gbandi and Isibor (2022) established a strong positive relationship between branding and customer patronage among restaurant customers in Benin City. Similarly, Oluchi and Ireneus (2024) reported that brand association had a significant positive influence on customer satisfaction with locally made textile products in South-East Nigeria, while Ilhamalimy, Sujeni, and Krisnahadi (2023) found that brand association, as part of brand equity dimensions, significantly enhanced satisfaction among Oppo smartphone users in Indonesia. Brand image has also been consistently associated with satisfaction; Akeke and Akeke (2024) observed a significant positive effect of brand image on customer satisfaction in Unilever Nigeria Plc, whereas Suhad and Iswati (2024) confirmed that both service quality and brand image directly and significantly impact customer satisfaction and loyalty within the insurance sector. In addition, Yun and Lim (2022) demonstrated a strong relationship between brand attitude and customer satisfaction among restaurant customers in South Korea, corroborated by Chung, Lee, and Heath (2013), who found that customer-business relationships strengthen the link between brand attitude and satisfaction. Recent research further highlights perceived quality as a dominant determinant of customer satisfaction. Ribeiro et al. (2024) reported that perceived service quality significantly influences customer loyalty and reduces churn among telecommunication users in Portugal, while Abidin and Subroto (2023) found that perceived quality

positively and significantly enhances customer satisfaction within construction service firms. Collectively, these studies provide robust empirical support for the assertion that brand-related constructs, such as association, image, attitude, and perceived quality are critical determinants of both customer satisfaction and patronage across diverse sectors and cultural contexts.

2.4 Theoretical Foundation

This study is anchored on two key theoretical frameworks: the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) and Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model (1993, 2003).

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA): TRA posits that behaviour is determined by behavioural intention, which in turn is influenced by attitudes and subjective norms. In this study, students' attitudes toward telecom brands which is formed through brand associations, shape their behavioural intentions to patronize those brands. This patronage, in turn, influences overall satisfaction.

Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Theory: Keller's CBBE model explains how brand knowledge and associations impact consumer responses. When customers perceive strong and favourable brand associations, they are more likely to develop trust, loyalty, and satisfaction. The four components of CBBE; brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty, collectively influence customer satisfaction and retention.

TRA and CBBE jointly explain how cognitive perceptions (brand associations) and behavioural intentions (patronage) interact to produce satisfaction. This integration allows for a nuanced understanding of the mediating effect of patronage within the brand satisfaction relationship, particularly in a student-driven telecom market like Bayero University Kano.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted quantitative research approach to assess the relationships among the three constructs. It is a research design that places emphasis on the use of descriptive approach to collation of primary data (data collected directly from respondents themselves) from selected representatives of a larger population. The study adopts descriptive survey research design in which data was collected once during the whole study. the research population is the totality of faculty of management science undergraduate student in Bayero University Kano. According to BUK 2023 Annual report Bayero University Kano, Faculty of management students for level III and IV has a total population of 948 students for the 2022/2023 academic sessions. Therefore, the faculty of Management Science 948 students of level III and level IV student serves as unit of analysis. drawn based on Krejci & Morgan (1970) table, 349 is total sample size arised the study added the 30% from the minimum sample size of 269 (Diehl, 2011). stratified sampling was used. Samples are drawn from each stratum. A data were obtained using a questionnaire, 70 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents(from the study population). employed to ascertain the internal consistency reliability and construct validity of the constructs used in the pilot study. PLS path modelling using Smart PLS 4.0 M3 software employed (Ringle, Wende & Will, 2005) to test the theoretical model. The PLS path modelling is considered as the most suitable technique in this study for several reasons: First, even though PLS path modelling is similar to conventional regression technique, it has the advantage of estimating the relationships between constructs (structural model) and relationships

between indicators and their corresponding latent constructs (measurement model) simultaneously.

4.0 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 4.1 Response Rate

Items	Frequency	Percentage %
Distributed questionnaires	349	100
Returned and usable questionnaires	327	93.7%
Returned and excluded questionnaires	7	0.3
Questionnaires not returned	22	6%

Source: Researcher (2025)

4.1 Assessment of Measurement Model

The assessment of a measurement model involves determining individual item reliability, internal consistency reliability, content validity, convergent validity and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009).

4.1.1 Individual item reliability

Individual item reliability was assessed by examining the outer loadings of each construct’s measure (Hair et al., 2014; Hulland, 1999). Following the rule of thumb for retaining items with loadings between .40 and .70 (Hair et al., 2014), it was discovered that out of 29 items 2 items were deleted because they presented loadings below the threshold of 0.40 therefore in the whole model, only 27 items were retained as they had loadings between 0.519 and 0.910.

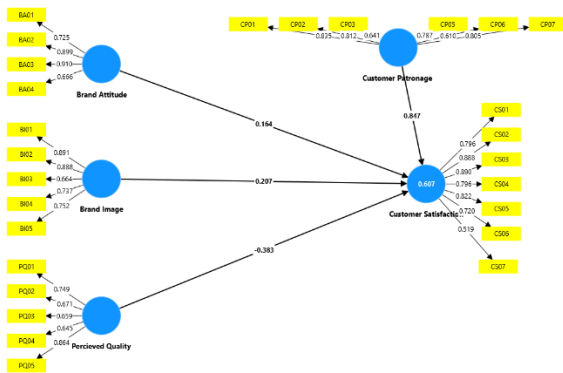


Figure. 4.3 PLS Algorithm Graph for Exogenous Construct, Mediator and Customer Satisfaction

Table 4.1 Loadings, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

Latent Constructs and Indicators	Standardized Loading	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Attitude		0.880	0.652
BA01	0.725		
BA02	0.899		
BA03	0.910		
BA04	0.666		
Brand Image		0.892	0.626

BI01	0.891		
BI02	0.888		
BI03	0.664		
BI04	0.737		
BI05	0.752		
Customer Patronage		0.886	0.568
CP01	0.835		
CP02	0.812		
CP03	0.641		
CP05	0.787		
CP06	0.610		
CP07	0.805		
Customer Satisfaction		0.917	0.616
CS01	0.796		
CS02	0.888		
CS03	0.890		
CS04	0.796		
CS05	0.822		
CS06	0.720		
CS07	0.519		
Perceived Quality		0.843	0.522
PQ01	0.749		
PQ02	0.671		
PQ03	0.659		
PQ04	0.645		
PQ05	0.864		

Discriminant Validity

Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) was conducted using Smart PLS 4.0 software. The criterion has high sensitivity and specificity in detecting discriminant validity problems and more empirical evidence is needed to use this approach. However, to assess discriminant validity,

Table 4.2 HTMT Result

	Brand Attitude	Brand Image	Customer Patronage	Customer Satisfaction	Perceived Quality
Brand Attitude					
Brand Image	0.335				
Customer Patronage	0.720	0.419			
Customer Satisfaction	0.600	0.469	0.736		
Perceived Quality	0.599	0.316	0.761	0.535	

Source: PLS-SEM Output

In addition, discriminant validity was also assessed by comparing indicator loadings with cross loadings (Kura, 2014). Accordingly, the indicator loadings of the latent construct should be higher than the cross loadings. Table 4.7 below shows that all the indicator loadings exceeded the cross loadings.

4.2 Assessment of Significance of the Structural Model

Having ascertained the measurement model, next, the present study assessed the structural model. The study also applied the standard bootstrapping procedure with a number of 5000 bootstrap samples and 354 cases to assess significance of the path coefficients (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009).

Figure 4.4 and Table 4.8 therefore show the estimates for the full structural model, which includes mediator variable.

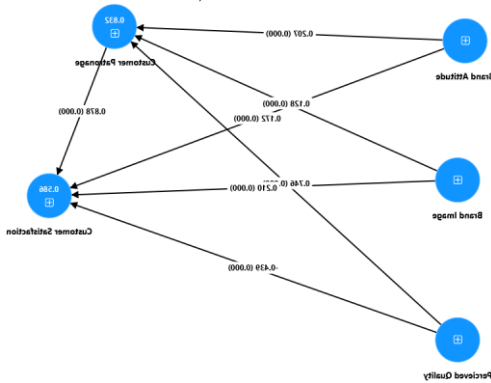


Figure 4.4 Structural Model with Mediator (Full Model)
Table 4.3 Structural Model with Mediation (Full Model)

Hypotheses Relationship	Beta	SD	T-value	P-value	Finding
BA->CS	0.171	0.04	3.55	0.000	Rejected
BI->CS	0.211	0.04	4.99	0.000	Rejected
PQ->CS	-0.443	0.07	5.65	0.000	Rejected
BA->CP->CS	0.207	0.02	7.77	0.000	Rejected
BI->CP->CS	0.130	0.02	5.71	0.000	Rejected
PQ->CP->CS	0.745	0.02	27.5	0.000	Rejected
CP->CS	0.884	0.07	12.0	0.000	Rejected

Note: *** Significant at 0.01 (1 Tailed), ** Significant at 0.05 (1 Tailed)

4.3 Discussion of Findings

Relationship between Brand Image influence Customer Satisfaction.

Hypothesis one addressed the extent to which Brand Association dimension Brand Image influence Customer Satisfaction. The Null hypothesis states that ‘There is no significant effect between Brand Image and Customer Satisfaction’. The result of the study shows that brand image was found to be positive and significant (Beta value of 0.211, T-value of 3.558& P- value at 0.000) Therefore, the decision of the result hypothesis was rejected, but are in line with previous research of study conducted by Akeke and Akeke (2024) and Chigwende, Shylet(2021). This implies that a favorable brand image boost satisfaction, which in turn increases loyalty and reduces switching behavior among youth and student like segments, Mobile network providers should cultivate a positive brand image focusing on prestige and trustworthiness, and strong identity to directly enhance satisfaction among undergraduate users.

Relationship between Brand Attitude and Customer Satisfaction

Hypothesis two addressed the extent to which Brand Association Dimension Brand Attitude `Influence Customer Satisfaction. The Null hypothesis states that ‘There is no significant effect between Brand Attitude and Customer Satisfaction’. The result of the study shows that Brand Attitude was found to be positive at (Beta value of 0.171, T-value of 3.558& P-value at 0.000). Therefore, the decision of the result hypothesis was rejected, this is in support of the notion by Yun and Lim (2022) and Suh and Youjae (2006). this implies that a strong brand attitude can enhance customer

satisfaction and foster loyalty. Therefore, Companies should focus on building positive brand attitudes through consistent messaging, quality offerings, and customer engagement.

Relationship between Perceived Quality and Customer Satisfaction.

Hypothesis three addressed the extent to which Brand Association dimension Perceived Quality influences Customer Satisfaction. The Null hypothesis states that ‘There is no significant effect between perceived quality and customer satisfaction’. The result of the study (Beta value of-0.443, T-value of 5.651 and P-value at 0.000) indicated a significant relationship between the variables. This further justified the findings of Ribeiro et al., (2024).

Customer patronage Mediate the Relationship between Brand association dimension Brand attitude, Brand image, and perceived Quality) and Customer satisfaction.

The fourth research question of this study asks, if customer patronage mediate the relationship between brand image and consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK students? and the research to investigate the mediating effect of customer patronage on the relationship between brand image and consumer satisfaction. And this stands for fourth research hypothesis that *Customer patronage does not mediate the relationship between brand image and consumer satisfaction with GSM Services*. Hypothesis were formulated and tested using PLS path modeling. The result of the mediation test for the Customer patronage on the relationship between brand image and consumer satisfaction was revealed as (B – value of 0.013 T- value of 5.715 P-value at 0.000). Therefore, H4 is Rejected. The fifth research questions of this study. Does customer patronage mediate the relationship between brand Attitude and consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK students? and the research to investigate the mediating effect of customer patronage on the relationship between brand attitude and consumer satisfaction. And this stands for fifth research hypothesis that *Customer patronage does not mediate the relationship between brand attitude and consumer satisfaction with GSM Services*. Hypothesis were formulated and tested using PLS path modeling. The result of the mediation test for the Customer patronage on the relationship between brand attitude and consumer satisfaction was revealed (B-value of 0.207 T- value of 7.770 P-value at 0.000), the hypothesis was also rejected. And the Sixth research questions of this study. Does customer patronage mediate the relationship between perceived quality and consumer satisfaction with mobile network services among BUK students? and the research to investigate the mediating effect of customer patronage on the relationship between perceived quality and consumer satisfaction. And this stands for sixth research hypothesis that *Customer patronage does not mediate the relationship between perceived quality and consumer satisfaction with GSM Services*. Hypothesis were formulated and tested using PLS path modeling. The result of the mediation test for the Customer patronage on the relationship between perceived quality and consumer satisfaction was revealed (B -value of 0.745 T-value of 27.529 P- value at 0.000). this relationship is stronger for customer with high patronage than it is for customer with low patronage. Because the findings regarding mediating effects represent the main contributions of this research, possible explanations of the mediating customer patronage could be explained from theoretical perspectives rather than prior empirical studies. scholars have at various times, explored theoretical postulations of Fishbein and Ajzen’s Theory of Reasoned Actions (1975) as well as Keller (2003) propounded customer-

based brand association theory which states that brand association is the effect brand knowledge has on consumer response toward the purchase of a brand. The effect occurs when the brand is known and when the consumer possesses favorable, strong and unique brand associations toward the brand among others. While establishing the relationship between Theory of Reasoned Action and Consumers' patronage behavior, Simbolon (2015) asserts that consumers' behavioral tendencies are predicated on prior intention to act in a particular way with supporting variables. Customer-based brand association theory is considered to possess such variables. But unlike Theory of Reasoned Actions which is anchored on prior intention, Stern's Impulse Buying Theory, as reflected in the study carried out by Zhang, Haiqin, Zhao and Yu (2018) is on consumers' exposure to spur-of-the-moment factors. Usalan (2016) therefore the Theory of Reasoned Actions (1975) as well as customer-based brand association theory (2003), significantly affect the customer satisfaction. This collectively implies that Telecoms that cultivate strong brand image, foster positive brand attitude, and deliver high perceived quality tend to encourage greater customer patronage (such as repeat subscriptions or service renewals). In turn, this continued patronage reinforces customer satisfaction, completing the causal chain.

Relationship between Customer patronage and Customer Satisfaction

Hypothesis seven addressed the extent to which customer patronage affects customer satisfaction. The Null hypothesis states that 'There is no significant effect between customer patronage and customer satisfaction. In other words, customer patronage influence customer satisfaction. But the result of the study shows a significant (Beta value of 0.884, t-value of 12.012 & p value at 0.000) Therefore, the decision of the result hypothesis was rejected. This implies that when customers are satisfied, they are more likely to remain loyal, leading to sustained patronage. Satisfied customers are less likely to switch to competitors, ensuring a stable customer base. Positive Word-of-Mouth attracts new customers through referrals thereby boosting the company's revenue and providing a competitive edge to the company in a crowded market.

5.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that brand image, perceived quality and customer patronage significantly influence customer satisfaction. The significant positive impact of perceived quality and brand image on customer satisfaction highlight the need for companies to focus on these areas. Customer patronage serves as a vital mediator amplifying the effect brand image, perceived quality and attitude on satisfaction. This further underline the value of developing loyalty programs and consistently engaging in strategies to ensure long term customer relationship. The current study answered all of the research questions and objectives despite some of its limitations. The first research objective was to ascertain the extent to which Brand image affects customer satisfaction. The PLS path modelling result revealed that the model was supported. Therefore, network administrators should stay updated to prevent issues before they occur, so as to help boost the image of their brand in the eyes of their clients. The Second research objective was to ascertain the extent to which brand attitude affects consumer satisfaction. The PLS path modelling result revealed that the model was supported.

Managers need to offer products that enhance the reputations level among customers in which this higher satisfaction would influence brand attitude. The third research objective was to ascertain the extent to which perceived quality affects customer satisfaction. The PLS path modelling result revealed that the model was supported. Network providers should adapt, maintenance and improvement of perceived quality and satisfaction. Regularly this will help businesses understand evolving needs and preferences. The fourth fifth and sixth research objectives are to examine the mediating effect of customer patronage on the three dimensions of brand association and customer satisfaction. The PLS path modelling result revealed that the models were all supported therefore telecom administrators should consistently improve the quality of strategic service factors that influence customer patronage and loyalty programs and their motive.

5.2 Recommendation

- I. Network providers in the Nigerian contexts should ensure they continuously monitor their networks as well as stay up to date with their hardware and software updates to prevent issues before they occur
- II. Network administrators can reconfigure local routes to shift network request to faster servers.
- III. Network providers should Leverage customer feedback regularly so that they can gather and act upon customer feedback to maintain and improve perceived quality and satisfaction.
- IV. Businesses should prioritize building a strong, positive brand image and also deliver high quality products and services, as these are key drivers of customer satisfaction.

5.3 Limitation and Future Directions

First, the present study adopts a cross-sectional design, which does not allow causal inferences to be made from the population. Therefore, a longitudinal design in future needs to be considered to measure the theoretical constructs at different points in time to confirm the findings of the present study. Secondly the research model was able to explain 60% of the total variance customer satisfaction, which means there are other latent variables that could significantly explain the variance. In other words, the remaining 40% of the variance for Customer Satisfaction respectively could be explained by other factors.

However, the study was carried out using the Bayero university undergraduate students as a parameter to ascertain the relationship between brand association and customer satisfaction as well as the mediating effect of customer patronage on the variable.

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