

IMPLICATIONS OF TELECOMMUNICATION PROGRAM ON SERVICE QUALITY IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA, FROM 2005 TO 2021

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated mobile telecommunication policy and service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021. Two objectives were identified in the course of the study; two research questions were raised and two hypotheses were put forward for analysis in the study. A survey research was designed and stratified sampling procedure was used in selecting the sample for the study. Structured questionnaire was the instrument used for primary data while library materials, textbook and other relevant materials were also used to source the secondary data. The population of the study consist of staff of MTN and residents of Benin. Tara Yamane formula was used to determine the simple size of 249 from a population of 1,782,000. Findings from the study indicated that government policies have a relationship with mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria. it was also discovered that government regulations have no relationship with mobile telecommunication service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria. In view of the foregoing, it was suggested among others that government should ensure strict compliance with policy and regulatory directives issued to see to its effective implementation by mobile telecommunication operators in the country.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Communication among human beings is a fundamental part of everyday existence. The mode and form of communication have evolved from oral to written to technologically aided means of communication – emails, fax, text messages, social media, phone calls, etc. To this end, the availability of an affordable, reliable and effective telecommunications system is a critical component in ensuring the promotion of prompt socio-economic and political development of any state, nation or society. To be effective and achieve the desired result, the telecommunication system must be globally accessible and cost effective. The cost effectiveness ensures its availability to all categories of persons irrespective of social status and class. Just as social interaction is critical to human existence, telecommunications also, is an essential infrastructure that facilitates the development and smooth operation of other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, health, education, industry, defence, banking, tourism, transportation, among others. In times of disaster and national emergencies, telecommunication becomes an indispensable tool of citizens' engagement, information dissemination, disaster management and control. It considerably reduces the risks and rigours of travel and rural- urban migration (Federal Ministry of Communication, 2000). The importance of telecommunication in a developing country like Nigeria underscores the need for appropriate policy frameworks to position the sector for greater involvement in economic expansion and growth as well as in the improvement of social interaction among individuals and groups. Policies are governmental instruments for addressing issues of national concern. Thus as Ikelegbe, (2008) rightly observe, policy can be seen as a purposive and stipulated course of action established by the government in order to deal with issues of public concern. We make bold to say at this juncture that it will be difficult, if not impossible for government to attempt to address a particular problem outside the framework of policymaking. This is because all governmental actions, proposed actions and even inactions are aspects of policymaking (see Olaniyi, 2008).

The implications of policies are all around us; the provision of services, cost of fuel, the availability or non-availability of goods, both locally made and imported; the scope of our economic activities, employment opportunities, job security, payment of tax etc. are all determined by or are the results of policies (Ikelegbe, 2008). Thus, we hear of

foreign policy, defence policy, health policy, education policy, telecommunication policy, economic policy and policies in almost every area of life. Government commits much time, energy and resources to the formulation and implementation of policies because of the central role it plays in making the citizenry feel the impacts of government.

In order to be relevant in the twenty-first century and beyond, Nigeria must embrace global best practices – in terms of service delivery for all aspects of the telecommunication system; calls, text messages, internet services, etc. – as a strategy for competitive advantage in the global telecommunication market space. Global telecommunications provide the opportunity for a country to share in the wave of science and technology developments, and the general economy in positive ways that account for the remarkable economic growth in advanced countries and the newly industrialized countries. The issue of service delivery in terms of the quality and timeliness of telecommunication services have continued to remain a subject of controversy, thus necessitating the conduct of this empirical study to investigate mobile telecommunication policy and service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Mobile telecommunication services in Nigeria has not been living up to its expectations and potentials. This is even more frustrating as many other aspects of our daily lives as Nigerians is linked directly or indirectly to the telecommunication sector. a service wide disruption in the telecommunication sector will affect the ability of many individuals to access their financial information online or perform financial transactions online. The importance of the telecommunication sector has seen government formulate various policies t better improve the services in the sector. Over twenty years ago when the telecommunication industry in Nigeria was still nascent, call services were charged on the basis of per minute billing on drop calls. What this means is that irrespective of the duration of the call, the network user is charged a flat rate for calls within one to 60 seconds, 61 to 120 seconds etc. It was the regulatory policies of government that addressed that ugly trend and placed the billings for calls on actual number of seconds spent on a call. While the mode of pricing has been resolved, network quality remains a challenge as network users continue to pay for undelivered messages, drop calls that did not go through and data consumption in the face of poor network. Nobody compensates for the seconds of call time spend on the phone without hearing the persons at the other end of the line, neither does any network user get compensated for text messages sent but not delivered, for which payment was swiftly deducted by the mobile network provider.

In 2020, the Minister of Communication and Digital Economy, Isa Ali (Pantami) ordered a slash in data cost for Nigerians. Also, there have been other policies on SIM cards registration, linkage of mobile telephone lines with the National Identification Number (NIN), etc. all of these were supposedly aimed at positioning the telecommunication sector to not only serve its customers better, but to help government in critical areas like data management, security, crime prevention and investigation, among others. However, it appears that despite these efforts, the quality of network services continues to be below expectation in the absence of a nationwide coverage, which accounts for the initial rejection of the proposal for electronic transmission of results by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).in the light of the above, this empirical study to investigate mobile telecommunication policy and service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The broad objective of the study is to examine mobile telecommunication policy and service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To examine the relationship between government policies and mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.
- To examine the relationship between government regulations and mobile telecommunication service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

1.3 Hypotheses

- Government policies have relationship with mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo State Nigeria from 2005 to 2021
- Government regulations have relationship with mobile telecommunication service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Policy

It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to put the various concepts under this study in a single all-encompassing definition. According to Jenkins (in Olaniyi, 2008), public policy is a set of inter-related decisions by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where those decisions should in principle be within the power of those actors to achieve. Public policy can also

be viewed as a government programme of action. It stands for the various degrees of goal articulation and normative regulation of government activities. Public policy is simply what the government intends to do or achieve (goals) and how it intends to do it (implements). Ikelegbe, (2008) sees public policy as the output or product of the governmental process and activity. In an attempt to put forward a more encompassing definition, Olaniyi, (2008) argued that public policy concerns the formulation of a decision, its implementation and evaluation. A key characteristic of public policy is that it has to do with the government. Public policy can be viewed generally as simply a course of action or proposed course of action set by the government and directed at achieving certain goals. Public policy, as an instrument of governance, involves and affects a wide variety of areas such as the economy, education, health, social welfare, foreign affairs, transportation, housing, etc. One fact is key to this analysis; that for policies to be effective and efficient there must be proper planning and budgeting. This is because public policies involve the expenditure of considerable public resources. In fact, a large percentage of scarce national resources are spent on the implementation of public policies and programmes.

2.1.2 Service Delivery

A service is an intangible good provided by organizations or individuals to those that need them. Some of these services could be in the forms of education and training, financial advisory services, haulage services, among others. Therefore, the way and manner that these services are provided is what is known as service delivery. Also, service delivery is the process of providing intangible goods to customers or clients of an organization. It typically includes the procedures leading to the design, development, deployment and operation of services. Services provided by public institutions and the way and manner in which they are provided defines the concept of public service delivery. According to Oronsaye (cited in Onyekwelu, 2016), public service delivery can be seen as “the process of meeting the needs of citizens through prompt and efficient procedures.” This implies that the interaction between government and citizens are such that the needs of the citizens are met in a timely manner, thereby making the citizens key in public service delivery. The implication here is that as the private sector considers its customer as ‘king’, thereby ensuring quality service delivery, the public should be regarded as ‘master’ and the beneficiary of enhanced performance of the public service (Aladegbola and Jaiyeola, 2016). Acceptable service delivery can be seen as one of the core responsibilities for the establishment of public organisations. It is identified as one of the key functions of the public sector. Public service delivery is also the result of the intentions, decision of government and government institutions, and the actions undertaken and decision made by people employed in government institutions. They posit that it is “the provision of public goods or social (education, health), economic (grants) or infrastructural (water, electricity) services to those who need (or demand) them.

Supporting the arguments above, Ohemeng (cited in Onyekwelu, 2016) views public service delivery from the light of its key features as “doing more with less, empowering citizens, enhancing transparency and holding public servants accountable.” Government provides public service directly by engaging in production, distribution or service and indirectly by financing services rendered to the citizenry by third parties. Governments control the resources of the people and are duty-bound to render services that benefit the people albeit in varying degrees. The extent of involvement of government in service delivery to the masses often corresponds to the economic system in use. While the private sector dominates service delivery in a capitalist economic system, the government is the dominant figure in a socialist economy. For a mixed economy like Nigeria, both the private sector and government provide services substantially to the general public. In Nigeria, government constitutes the major service provider through the Public Sector. The Public Sector refers to all organisations that exist as part of government machinery for delivering services that are of value to the citizens. Coopers (cited in Igbokwe-Ibeto 2019) itemises seven core objectives for public service delivery namely:

Speed – The time taken to deliver a service should be the shortest possible for both the customer and the organisation delivering the service, right first time.

Engagement – The manner in which services are delivered should be seen as customer centric (i.e. participatory and trustworthy with the customer’s needs at the core).

Responsiveness – There should be an ‘intelligent’ mechanism in place to address any variation in meeting service levels and to drive changes in the service delivery organisation.

Value – The customer needs to believe that the service delivery mechanism is cost effective, and value is driven by customer outcomes, not organisational processes.

Integration – The service delivery mechanism should be integrated. There should be no ‘wrong door’ policy for the customer.

Choice – There should be multiple channels for service delivery, so that customers can have ‘channels of choice’, depending on specific needs at specific times.

Experience – Personalisation of service is necessary to ensure that customers’ experiences are on a par with what they are used to receiving from the private sector. Arising from the above, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between e-governance adoption and enhanced public service delivery in a country.

According to ISS (2015), there are four main elements for effective and efficient service delivery which include service culture, quality of service, employee engagement and customer experience. Service culture is considered to be a value creation mode for the company as well as the customer. Although the significance of service culture is known, there is a lack of understanding of current conceptual models referring to diverse service perspectives (Davis, 2013). This demonstrates the need to construct and cultivate service value and move from product based to service dominant logic (Brodie, cited in Davis, 2013). Service culture is a basic mode for creating value for service organizations as well as their customers. Service culture is rooted in the organizational philosophy. For private organizations, the culture is usually to see to the satisfaction of the customer at reasonable cost to the customer, which in turn becomes an income to the organization. Therefore, private sector organizations serve their customers and strive to keep them satisfied in the hopes to retain their loyalty and continued patronage. For public sector organization, the culture is usually to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of the populace at reasonable cost to the government (welfarism). In their study Ostrom (2010) have indicated that to develop and maintain a service culture, it should be based on the four key principles):

1. Recruiting, training and rewarding.
2. Developing a service mindset in product focused organizations.
3. Creating a learning service organization by harnessing employee and customer knowledge.
4. Keeping a service focus as the organization grows and evolves.

Once a superior service delivery system and a realistic service concept have been established, there is no other component so fundamental to the long-term success of a service organization as its culture (ISS, 2015). A positive organizational service culture provokes positive customer experience and vice versa. The notion of Customer Experience was first brought into focus by Holbrook and Hirschman in mid-1980s. Since then consumer researchers have extended their view from the mainstream approach which considered customers primarily as rational decision makers. Recently, the experience notion has become an important element to understand consumer behavior. Furthermore, the concept also has been working as a beacon for many significant literatures in marketing arena. Despite various contributions, it has been found that the concept of customer experience lacks solid foundation, mainly because the notion of “experience” is ill-defined. Definitions of experience carry distinct meanings depending on various scientific disciplines such as, philosophy, sociology, psychology and etc. Even, consumer behavior and marketing disciplines hold separated meanings of experience (Caru and Cova, 2007). Thus, before dealing with customer experience, it is essential to look at definitions of experience to highlight some important dimensions of experience.

According to consumer behavior study “an experience is above all a personal occurrence, often with important emotional significance, founded on the interaction with stimuli which are the products or services consumed” (Holbrook and Hirschman cited by Caru and Cova, 2007). This definition acknowledges that experience is subjective and personal in nature. Here, subjectivity refers to a personal psychological state, for example, consumers’ emotions during consumption experience are subjective, which changes according to change in environments. Moreover, the above definition also recognizes the roles of emotions as important features of experience, which have been neglected before. The marketing discipline views experience from a more objective point of view, where marketers aim to create unforgettable experiences at various interactions that take place between service providers and their customers (Caru and Cova, 2007). Such kinds of experiences are termed as extraordinary experiences. In order to make an experience memorable or extraordinary, creating positive emotions are crucial. From this perspective, marketing literatures can be found emphasizing emotions in creating experiences. Despite differences, both consumer behavior and marketing studies have given importance to the roles of emotion to create superior value for customers through experience. The basic premise of this definition is the assumption that customers cannot predict the outcomes of an event due to vague expectations, dynamic interactions with other customers, and changes of contexts.

Having looked at characteristics of experience, some notable definitions of customer experience that can be found in existing customer experience literatures. One of the recent Customer Experience definitions proposed by Gentile, Spiller and Noci (2007): “The Customer Experience originates from a set of interactions between a customer and a product, a company, or part of its organization, which provoke a reaction. This experience is strictly personal and implies the customer’s involvement at different levels. Its evaluation depends on the comparison between a customer’s expectations and the stimuli coming from the interaction with the company and its offering in correspondence of the different moments of contact or touch points” (Gentile et al, 2007). This definition gives a rather broad view on the concept of customer experience. Firstly, the definition conceptualizes that customer experience is multidimensional, which means that it includes sensory, cognitive, affective, physical and relational components (Gentile, et al 2007). Secondly, it recognizes the importance of both rational and emotional aspects of customer experience, which correlates with one of the distinguished feature of experience that was mentioned in the previous section. Thirdly, moments of contact or touch points notion consider all stages of customer experience specifically-pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase experiences (Davis and Dunn, 2012). Finally, the above definition also sheds light on customer experience measurement by comparing customers’ prior expectations with the actual experience in various touch points.

The above presented customer experience definitions share some common premises. Specifically, experience is characterized as internal and subjective to the customer. However, the second definition provides enriched dimension by extending the range of touch points by considering both direct and indirect contacts. Identification of all touch points is crucial in order to deliver total customer experience because the brand can impact and be impacted by both direct and indirect touch points. It is important to note that not all touch points are important for a company. For that reason, a company needs to identify the key touch points. It can be seen, that the concept of context is rather implicit in both of the aforementioned customer experience definitions. One might argue the various touch points can be regarded as context.

A third component is service quality. The quality of service determines the experience of the customer, which defines its competitive edge in the industry or market. The concept of service quality should be generally approached from the customer's point of view because they may have different values, different ground of assessment, and different circumstances (Chiang and Birtch, 2010). Service quality is not only involved in the final product and service, but also involved in the production and delivery process, thus employee involvement in process redesign and commitment is important to produce final tourism products or services. Another research study on service quality is presented by Grönroos (2007) who focuses on a model that is a comparison between customer expectations of the service and their experience of the service they have received before. This model is named "total perceived service quality". As he emphasizes on what customer is really looking for and what they evaluate, the service quality is based on two dimensions. The first dimension is the technical quality and this dimension refers to the outcome, what is delivered or what the customer gets from the service. The next dimension is the functional quality which refers to the manner in which the service is delivered or how it is delivered. Both dimensions affect the corporate image and the perception of quality in various ways. According to total perceived service quality model, perceived quality of a service is not only affected by the experiences of the quality dimensions that the consumer used for evaluating whether quality is perceived as good, neutral, or bad.

It is also affected by the perceived quality of given service as well as the outcome of the evaluation process. This model shows an integrated view of the consumer-company relationship. The main idea of the model is focused on the premise that service quality is dependent on the size and direction of the five gaps that can exist in the service delivery process.

- Gap 1: the gap between customer expectations and those perceived by management to be the customer's expectations.
- Gap 2: the gap between management's perception of consumer expectations and the firm's service quality specifications.
- Gap 3: the gap between service quality specifications and service delivery.
- Gap 4: the service delivery, external communication gap.
- Gap 5: the perceived service quality gap, the difference between expected and perceived service (Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry, 2015).

The first four gaps are identified as functions of the way in which service is delivered from the service provider to the customer, while gap number five is connected to the customer and as such is considered to be the truth of service quality. Gap five is also the gap that the SERVQUAL instrument influences. It is important for a service organization to define the level of quality at which to operate. It is more relevant to speak of the "right quality" than of merely high quality. The word quality means different things to people according to the context. Lovelock and Wirtz (2007) mention that David Garvin identifies five perspectives on quality.

- The transaction view of quality is synonymous with innate excellence: a mark of uncompromising standards and high achievement. This viewpoint is often applied to the performing and performing of visual arts. It is argued that people learn to recognize quality only through the experience gained from repeated exposure and managers or customers will also know quality when they see it is not very helpful.
- The product-based approach sees quality as a precise and measurable variable. Differences in quality, it is argued, reflect differences in the amount of an ingredient or attribute possessed by the product or service. Because this view is totally objective, it fails to account for differences in the tests, needs, and preferences of individual customers or even entire market segments.
- User based definitions starts with the premise that quality lies in the eyes of the beholder. These definitions equate quality with maximum satisfaction. This subjective, demand oriented perspective recognizes that different customers have different wants and needs.
- The manufacturing based approach is supply based and is concerned primarily with engineering and manufacturing practices, quality is also operation driven.
- Value based definitions define quality in terms of value and price. By considering the tradeoff between perception and price, quality comes to be defined as "affordable".

The fourth variable on employee engagement is an individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work (Harter, 2012). This definition added the expectation of an individual's satisfaction level, significantly

altering the way engagement had been viewed. In addition, prior to Harter (2012), employee engagement was seen as a broad-based variable organizations assumed they had or did not have—a concept that executive leaders assumed that they controlled. Harter (2012) showed that organizational culture should be measured at the individual level by looking at separate business units, separate unit managers, and separate unit employees.

The first academic research to specifically conceptualize and test antecedents and consequences of employee engagement occurred in 2006 (Saks, 2006). Prior to Saks (2006), practitioner literature was the only body of work connecting employee engagement drivers to employee engagement and its consequences. Saks believed employee engagement developed through a social exchange model and was the first to separate job engagement and organizational engagement into separate types of employee engagement. Using 102 working employees enrolled in a graduate course at a large Canadian university, Saks defined employee engagement as “a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components associated with individual role performance.

2.1.3 Mobile Telecommunication Environment in Nigeria

The mobile telecommunication environment in Nigerian can be traced to back to 1886 when the first facilities were established by the colonial administration. The aim was to foster the effective discharge of administrative functions of the colonial administrators, rather than the enhancement of the socio-economic advancement of the country. Consequently, public telegraph services were introduced to link Lagos by submarine cable to other parts of the west coast of Africa, linking Ghana, Gambia, Sierra-Leone and on to England. That was of a greater priority to the colonial government than a robust telecommunications network across the length and breadth of Nigeria. At independence in 1960, the total number of active telephone lines was only 18,724 for an estimated population of 40 million people (Federal Ministry of Communication, 2000). This translated to a tele density of about 0.5 telephone lines per 1,000 people. The telephone network consisted of 121 exchanges of which 116 were of the manual (magneto) type and only 5 were automatic. Since independence in 1960 to date, there have been a number of policies and plans to develop, expand and modernize the telecommunications industry in Nigeria, in terms of network coverage, quality and services. Sadly, most of these plans were not fully implemented. Between 1960 and 1985, the entire telecommunications sector consisted of the Department of Posts and Telecommunications (P&T) in charge of the internal network and a limited liability company, the Nigerian External Telecommunications (NET) Limited, responsible for the external telecommunications services. NET provided the gateway to the outside world. Telecommunications development during this period was characterized by serious short-falls between planned targets and their realization, principally because of capacity.

The installed switching capacity at the end of 1985 was about 200, 000 lines as against the planned target of about 460,000. All the exchanges were analogue. Telephone penetration remained poor and is estimated at one telephone line to 440 inhabitants, well below the target of telephone line to 100 inhabitants recommended by ITU for developing countries. The quality of service was largely unsatisfactory. The telephone was unreliable, congested, expensive and customer unfriendly. Arising from the foregoing, in January 1985, the erstwhile Posts and Telecommunications Department was split into Postal and Telecommunications Divisions. The latter was merged with NET to form Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL), a limited liability company, while the Postal Division was reconstituted into another organisation called the Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST). The main objective of establishing NITEL was to harmonize the planning and co-ordination of the internal and external telecommunications services, rationalize investments in telecommunications development and provide accessible, efficient and affordable services. NITEL was the national operator and monopoly service provider for domestic and international services. This had serious repercussions in terms of inefficiency, high cost of service, and lack of universal access. Since 1985 when NITEL was inaugurated, there has been a modest development in the telecommunications industry. As at January 2021, Nigeria has a public network of about 187.9 million lines capacity, corresponding to about 90 percent of the total population of Nigeria. despite this impressive level of network penetration, Nigeria still lags behind comparable and even less endowed African countries, let alone advanced countries in terms of network and service quality. The process of deregulating the industry was initiated to tackle these observed shortcomings. This began with the establishment of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) by Decree 75 of 1992 whose main objectives include:

- Creating a regulatory environment to facilitate the supply of telecommunications services and facilities;
- Facilitating the entry of private entrepreneurs into the telecommunications market; and
- Promoting fair competition and efficient market conduct among all players in the industry.

Since the inauguration of NCC in July 1993, it has set out guidelines for private sector participation and issued licenses to a number of companies for the following telecommunications undertakings:

- Installation and operation of public switched telephony;
- Installation of terminal or other equipment;
- Provision and operation of public payphones;
- Provision and operation of private network links employing cable, radio communications, or satellite within Nigeria;

- Provision and operation of public mobile communications;
- Provision and operation of telephones;
- Provision and operation of value-added network services;
- Repair and maintenance of telecommunications facilities; and
- Cabling

According to the Federal Ministry of Communication, (2000), a wide range of telecommunications services are offered in Nigeria

- Telephony
- Telex
- Cellular Mobile Telephony
- Facsimile
- Radio/Television Carrier
- Gentex (Extension of Telex Terminals to rural areas)
- Voice Cast/Press Receipt
- Private Leased Circuit
- Alternate Leased Circuit
- Maritime Mobile Service, INMARSAT, Ship Shore, etc.
- Global Mobile Personal Communications Services [GMPCS]
- Data Communications
- High Speed Data Transmission
- Telegraphy (xv) Public Payphones
- Value Added Services
- Business Network Services
- Computer Networking
- Internet Service
- Telecommunications Consultancy Services
- Paging Services
- Mobile Radio Trunking Services.

Presently, the Nigerian telecommunication sector is the largest segment of the Information and Communication sector. Nigeria has one of the largest telecom markets in Africa. The Nigerian Telecommunication sector has evolved over the years to an oligopolistic market structure (a small number of firms have the majority of market share). The sector includes a strong multinational presence. The leading players, according to official figures from the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) for the second quarter of 2019, are MTN, a South African based multinational company with a market share of 37.21 percent, Airtel (an Indian based multinational telecommunication) with a market share of 26 percent, Glo (a Nigerian multinational company) with a market share of 27 percent and 9mobile (formerly Etisalat) with a market share of 9 percent. The sector over the years has contributed immensely to Nigeria's economy and the lives of Nigerians. The advancement of mobile phone usage from basic phone telephony to new enhanced services and the introduction of new technology within diverse sectors of the country have seen the sector grow massively. The sector has experienced rapid growth and has provided easier access to banking services (bank mobile apps) and e-learning platforms to Nigerians.

2.1.4 Mobile Telecommunication Policies in Nigeria

The first policy on Nigerian telecommunications came into existence in the year 1998. Though, it was produced in 1995, its approval was granted in 1998. This was due to difficulties faced by the country, as well as other factors such as economic, social and environmental at that moment. Therefore, at the time it was publicized, some parts of the policy were outdated due to the rapid development in the sector both nationally and internationally. This made it a necessity for Nigeria to form another telecommunication policy. At the time of President Olusegun Obasanjo, a week after he took the leadership, he formed a committee to look into the issue of the telecommunications policy in Nigeria. The committee was then chaired by the vice president. The committee worked by consulting stakeholders and the public to receive opinions on the issue by organizing an international workshop. The outcomes of this served as the basis on which the new policy was drafted which was then approved by the president, and by October 1999, it was launched. The main objective of the policy is to develop the telecommunication sector in Nigeria as rapidly as possible in order to meet up with international standards as well as cope with global developments in the sector. This will lead to national development, economically and socially as well as connect the nation to the global telecommunications network. The services offered by the telecommunication companies should be of high quality, affordable by the general masses and also reliable. Because the telecommunication sector grows at a very fast rate, long term objectives cannot be formed. Meanwhile short term and

medium term policy objectives were formed. Amongst the short term objectives is that projects that will expand networks are to be developed in order to meet up with International Telecommunications Union (I.T.U.) standard of 1 telephone per 100 people inhabiting an area, to improve access to the internet, to stimulate competition in the telecommunications market, to make laws regarding telecommunications, to frequently review the policy as well as regulate the activities of telecommunication operators with the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) as the sole regulatory body.

The medium term policy was to make accessibility easier for each community within the country, to install both fixed and mobile lines equipment, to satisfy the communication needs of each sector of the Nigerian economy, to develop expertise in the production of telecommunication hardware and software locally, to encourage Nigerian telecommunication companies compete with global ones, to attract investors in the sector and to ensure the protection of each citizen. Later on, the policy was updated but the objectives are identical. The policy formed the basis for two separate legislative initiatives that led to the promulgation of the Nigerian Communications Act, chapter N97, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 (the “Communications Act”), which became the root for the liberalisation of the sector, major reforms and licensing. It is important to note at this juncture that one of the core issues in the formulation and implementation of mobile telecommunication policies is the issue of customer satisfaction and service delivery. The Nigerian Communications Commission has tried its best to draw the attention of telecommunication customers/subscribers to their rights when dealing with telecommunication operators. This was done through the establishment of the following customer related initiatives:

Telecom Consumer Parliament (TCP): This brings together the consumer / subscriber, the telecommunication operators and the regulating body (NCC) to discuss on issues affecting subscribers. It is being broadcast on television and is only in Nigeria that this started, which takes place monthly in each of the six geopolitical zones. The initiative has been well acknowledged by ITU.

Consumer Outreach Program (COP): This program highlights some issues concerning consumers. It informs consumers about the services it provides, educate them on their rights and also bring the consumers to face telecommunication operators for questions on issues that concerns them.

Customer Care Centers: This is a unit within NCC. The unit receives complains through emails, postal service, telephone or by an individual. Only problems in which the telecommunication operators are unable to solve or are unwilling to solve are entertained by the unit. Through this customer care Centre, lots of consumer problems have been solved.

Collaboration with Consumer Protection Groups: NCC has collaborated with a number of such groups in order to ensure that customers are not deprived of their rights pertaining telecommunications service delivery. A memorandum of understanding between NCC and Consumer Protection Council (CPC) has also been signed with the sole aim of protecting telecommunications customers.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Survey research design was adopted. This method according to Chukwuemeka, (2019) refers to investigations into a phenomenon or events that exists or occurs at the time of problem situation that is felt over a wide area of a large population. Survey research design is seen by Nwodu (2006) as “Focused on representative sample derived from the entire population of the study.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study is 1, 782, 000 which is derived from the national population census as number of residents in Benin city Edo state and 148 staff of MTN which consist of both Senior and Junior staff in Benin, Office. Thus, making the population

3.3 Sample Size Determination

Determination of the population of 1,782, 148 of residents of Benin and staff city, involve the application of Taro Yamani formula (Yamani 1967):

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

Where N= study population

n = sample size

e= tolerate error (usually 0.05 or 5%)

thus, n= 1,782,148

$$1 + 1,782,148 (0.5)^2$$

N= 249

The proportion of the samples size of respondents for each categories of stake holders was allocated using the Bowler's formula:

$$ns = \frac{NP \times n}{N}$$

$$ns = \frac{NP \times n}{N}$$

ns = the sample size allocated to each unit

np = The population size of each unit

n= the total sample size

N= the total population size

The allocations are:

Categories	Population		Sample % Sample
Residents	511	193	0.09
Senior Staff of MTN	62	23	0.13
Junior staff of MTN	<u>86</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>0.17</u>
	659	249	100%

3.4 Sampling Technique

Cluster sampling technique was used in selecting the residents of Benin that fell into the sample with cluster sampling, the researcher divides the population into separate groups called clusters. Then, a simple random sample of clusters is selected from the population:

The researcher selected the three categories of stakeholders which include, residents, senior staff and junior staff of MTN to represent the clusters. Thereafter, the categories that would serve as the sample were selected from the identified residents, senior and junior staff of MTN office Benin through simple random sampling.

3.5 Method of data collection

Data were collected using questionnaire, face to face interview, focus group discussion guide and secondary (non-reactive data) methods

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, each item in the instrument was cross matched with research questions to be answered. The instrument was also scrutinized and evaluated by experts in the field of study.

3.7 Reliability of Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire was determined by a test and re-test technique. This involved the administration of few copies of the questionnaire on few individuals who were not part of this study and after two weeks, fresh copies of same questionnaire were then compared with those of the second questionnaire through the use of person correlation coefficients. Data collated and tested for reliability using person correlation. The coefficient of the test was 0.846 which was deemed adequate.

3.8 Method of data analysis

This study adopted qualitative and quantitative analytical methods. Descriptive statistics such as frequency table, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to present and analyze the data. Chi square non parametric statistics were used to test the hypotheses.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES

4.1 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Two hundred and forty-nine copies of the questionnaire were distributed to residents of Benin and staff of MTN office, Benin city based on convenience sampling technique as indicated in chapter three. Table 4.1 below represents the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 1

Distribution of the Respondent by Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	94	41.0	41.0	41.0
	Female	135	59.0	59.0	100
	Total	229	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data, 2022

As highlighted in Table 1. 94 respondents are male and this represents 41% of the total respondents, while 135 of the respondents are female, representing 59%. thus, female constituted a larger percentage of the respondents.

Table 2

Distribution of the Respondents by Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Married	85	37.2	37.2	37.2
	Single	111	48.4	48.4	85.6
	Separate	21	9.2	9.2	94.8
	Widow	12	5.2	5.2	100.0
	Total	229	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data, 2022

As heighted in table 2, 85 respondents are married, and this represents 37.2% of the total respondents, 111 of the respondents are singles representing 48.4%, 21 respondents are separated and this represents 9.2% of the total respondents, and 12 respondents are widow. This represents 5.2% of the total respondents. Thus, the single constituted larger respondents.

Table 3

Distribution of the Respondents by Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Less than 20 years	31	13.6	13.6	13.6
	20-29 years	72	31.6	31.6	45.2
	30-39 years	46	20.0	20.0	65.2
	40-49 years	33	14.4	14.4	79.6
	50-59 years	28	12.0	12.0	91.6
	Above 60 years	19	8.4	8.4	100.0
	Total	229	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data, 2022

As indicated in table 3, 31 respondents fall into the age group of less than 20 years, representing 13.6% of the total respondents. 72 of the respondents consisting 31.6% of the total respondents fall into age group of 20-29, 46 of the respondents constituting 20.0% of the total respondents fall into age group of 30-39, 33 of the respondents constituting 14.4% of the total respondents fall into age group of 40-49, 28 of the respondent constituting 12% of the total respondents fall into age group of 50-59 and 19 respondents consisting 8.4% of the total respondents fall into age group of above 60 years. The age group is well distributed and 20-29 years having the largest respondents.

Table 4

Distribution of Respondents by Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	WAEC/GCE	26	11.2	11.2	11.2
	DIP/OND/NCE	53	23.2	23.2	34.4
	HND/ BACHELOR DEGREE	87	38.0	38.0	72.4
	MASTES DEGREE AND ABOVE	63	27.6	27.6	100.0
	Total	229	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data, 2022

As revealed in table 4, 26 respondents of total respondents had WAEC/GCE result representing 11.2% of the total respondents. 53 of the respondents had DIP/OND/NCE qualification representing 23.2% of the total respondents. 87 of the respondents had either HND or B.Sc. qualification, thus, representing 38.0% of the total respondents. This means that a large number of the respondents are educated.

Table 5

Distribution of the Respondents by Category of Staffs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Management staff	49	21.6	21.6	21.6
	Senior staff	79	34.6	34.0	55.6
	Junior staff	57	25.2	25.2	80.8
	Casual staff	44	19.2	19.2	100
	Total	229	100.0	100	

Source: Field data, 2022

As highlighted in table 5, 49 respondents are managements staff and this represents 21.6% of the total respondents. 79 of the respondents fall into the category of senior staff. Thus representing 34%. 57 and 44 respondents fall into the category of junior staff and casual staff respectively. This represents 25.2% and 19.2% of the total respondents respectively. Thus, management and senior staff represent the larger respondents.

Table 6

Distribution of the Respondents by Religion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Christian	177	77.2	77.2	77.2
	Muslim	22	9.6	9.6	86.8
	African traditional Religion	30	13.2	13.2	100.0
	Total	229	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data, 2022

As indicated in table 6, 177 respondents are Christian that represent 77. 2% of the total respondents. Muslims have 22 respondents and African traditional worshipers have 30 respondents, representing 13.2% of the total respondents. Thus, the Christian (which is of the highest population) constituted larger respondents.

Table 7

Distribution of the Respondents by year of Residence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	1-10	55	24.0	24.0	24.0
	11-20	137	60.0	60.0	84.0
	21 and above	37	16.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	229	100.0	100	

Source: Field data 2022

As indicated in table 7, 55 respondents have lived in Benin between 1 to 10 years, this represents 24% of the total respondents, 137 respondents have lived in Benin between 11 to 20 years this represents 60% while 37 of the respondents live in Benin for 40 years and above representing 16%. Thus most of the respondents have lived in Benin between 11 to 20 years.

4.2 Analysis of Core Issue of Investigation

Table 8

Service quality of MTN has not improved considerably in response to government policies and directives.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Strongly agree	188	82.0	82.0	82.0
	Agree	41	18	18	100.0
	Not sure	0	0	0	
	Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0.0	
	Disagree	0	0.0	0.0	
	Total	229	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data, 2022

As indicated in table 8 above 82 percent of the respondents strongly agree that service quality of MTN has not improved considerably in response to government policies and directives, while 18 percent agreed that service quality of MTN has not improved considerably in response to government policies and directives. No respondent disagreed or strongly disagree in Benin. This also affirms the objective that while there are improvements in service quality of MTN in response to government policies and directives, it is yet to reach the optimum level of customers' satisfaction.

Table 9

Regulatory policy directives have helped to curb cases of unjust charges for telecommunication network products and services

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Strongly agree	137	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Agree	73	32.0	32.0	92
	Not sure	0	0	0	92
	Disagree	13	5.6	5.6	97.6
	Strongly disagree	6	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	229	100.0	100.0	

Source: Data, 2022

From the table above, 60 percent of respondent strongly agree that regulatory policy directives have helped to curb cases of unjust charges for telecommunication network products and services. 32 percent also agreed that regulatory policy directives have helped to curb cases of unjust charges for telecommunication network products and services. However, about 5.6 percent of the respondents disagreed to the statement that regulatory policy directives have helped to curb cases of unjust charges for telecommunication network products and services, while 2.4 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed to the view that regulatory policy directives have helped to curb cases of unjust charges for telecommunication network products and services.

Table 10

There is a significant positive relationship between government policies and mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Strongly agree	13	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Agree	15	6.4	6.4	12.0
	Not sure	5	2.0	2.0	14.0
	Strongly disagree	109	48.0	48.0	62.0
	Disagree	87	38.0	38.0	100.0
	Total	229	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data, 2022

From the table above, 5.6 percent respondents strongly agree that there is a significant positive relationship between government policies and mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021. 6.4 percent also agree to the assertion. Meanwhile, 2.0. percent of the respondents are not sure if there is a significant positive relationship between government policies and mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021. 48 percent disagreed and 38 percent of the total respondents strongly disagreed to the assertion that there is a significant positive relationship between government policies and mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

4.3 Test of Hypothesis

H₀: Government policies has no relationship with mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

H₁: Government policies has a relationship with mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

H₀: Government regulations has no relationship with mobile telecommunication service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

H₁: Government regulations has a relationship with mobile telecommunication service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

To test the hypotheses, we used data frequency in table 4.8. The results of the chi- square test are presented below:

Table 11

Frequencies for Chi-square Test (Hypotheses)

		Observed	Expected N	Residential
Valid	Strongly agree	188	82.0	82.0
	Agree	41	18	18
	Not sure	0	0	0
	Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0.0
	Disagree	0	0.0	0.0
	Total	229	100.0	100.0

Table 12

Test statistics

	Government policies has no relationship with mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.
Chi-Square of ASYMP Sif	16.1956 4 .003

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 50.0.6.

b. 0 cells (0. %) have expected cell frequency is 50.0. the minimum expected cell frequency is 50.0.

The table 12 shows the chi-square result for hypotheses 1. Therefore, the chi-square results presented above revealed that the P value (ASYMP Sig= .003) is significant at 5% level of significance. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that government policies have a relationship with mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.

Hypothesis Two

4.4 Frequencies for Chi-Square Test (Hypothesis)

Table 13

Test Statistics

	Government regulations have no relationship with mobile telecommunication service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021.
Chi-Square of ASYMP Sig	1.488 ^a 4 .096

a. 0 cells (0%) have expected ingredients less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 50.0

b. 0 cells (0%) have expected ingredients less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is the minimum expected cell frequency is 50.0

Table 13 shows the chi-square results for hypothesis 2. In the table above, the null hypothesis that government regulations have no relationship with mobile telecommunication service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021 is accepted at 9.6% based on the P value of .096 (as indicated in the chi-square table above).

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

From the empirical results in chapter four, we arrived at the following findings;

- Government policies have a relationship with mobile telecommunication service quality in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021; $\chi^2(4, n=250) = 16.20, P = 0.3$.
- Government regulations have no relationship with mobile telecommunication service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021; $\chi^2(4, n=250) = 1.49, P = .096$

5.2 Conclusion

The study investigated mobile telecommunication policy and service delivery in Edo state, Nigeria, from 2005 to 2021, with MTN Benin Head office as a study. The need for the study was premised on the fact that service delivery, in terms of quality and speed have remained a present day challenge in the telecommunication industry in Nigeria despite huge network penetration and the fact that close to 90 percent of Nigerians have access to telecommunication services be it call network or internet availability. In addition, government have put up various regulatory frameworks to reduce customers' dissatisfaction and complaints from network providers. Therefore, public outcry for better services will continue if government does not live up to its responsibilities in terms of policy directive, regulatory and legal frameworks. To address this, the study recommends the following

5.3 Recommendations

In view of the foregoing, it is recommended that:

- Government should ensure strict compliance with policy and regulatory directives issued to see to its effective implementation by mobile telecommunication operators in the country.
- In the course of enforcement of policy regulations, stiff penalties should be meted to defaulters in the form of sanctions to serve as a deterrent to other players in the industry.

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