

# Unlocking Loyalty beyond Connectivity: A Customer-Centric Approach through B2B Customer Experience Management in the Digital Telco Company

Shafira Karamina Alifah<sup>1</sup>, Nila Armelia Windasari<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>(School of Business Management, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia)

<sup>2</sup>(School of Business Management, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia)

\*Corresponding Author: Shafira Karamina Alifah<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** The telecommunications sector faces challenges related to low customer satisfaction and high customer churn, which can negatively impact business profitability. Maintaining an excellent customer experience is a challenge to keep a long-lasting relationship and extend customer's length of stay. This research aims to investigate the pain points and customer needs in correlation to the B2B CX Management to design the right satisfaction and loyalty improvement strategy for SME customers in the digital telco company. Qualitative research analysis is used to identify the root cause of the problem by interviewing 9 SMEs with a diverse representation of professional roles and industries in Indonesia. Furthermore, this research explores two different user personas along the Customer Journey to craft an improved Customer Value Proposition. Findings show that SMEs with higher-role customer entities and relatively bigger companies depend upon relational partnerships and have a necessity for customized products and services. In general, customers need responsive touchpoints to ensure effective communication, stability in service across journeys, and technology adaption to evolve with the dynamics of customer experiences.

**KEYWORDS** – Customer Experience Management, Customer Value Proposition, Customer Journey, B2B Strategy, Customer Loyalty

## I. INTRODUCTION

Many customer-centered industries, particularly mobile telecoms where acquiring new customers is expensive, have a serious issue of churn [1]. Customer churn denotes the decision of a customer to terminate or leave business with a service company [2]. Customer retention is crucial when it comes to clients with a reasonably high lifetime value (LTV), or those who have the potential to generate high revenue for the business [1]. Companies need to understand the variables that impact customers' decisions to switch operators in order to take proactive actions to solve them [2]. It is found that having a positive customer experience greatly lowers the chance of customers switch to competitors [2]. [3] stated that there are differences between business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), and customer-to-business (C2B) relationships by considering the relationship between individuals and businesses.

Customer loyalty is crucial in a service marketing, as it can give a variety of benefits, from short-term gains like higher sales and profit margins to long-term, sustainable advantages like customers' willingness to pay higher prices, resistance to promotions from competitors, and positive word-of-mouth effects [4]. According to the literature, innovation is crucial for retaining and satisfying customers in a dynamic global marketplace where buyers are always looking for better deals [5]. An understanding of customers and their value-creating processes in the digitalized world is indeed critical for a company's success [6].

In the previous literature, there are theoretical discussions about customer experience management (CXM) in the telecommunication industry among Internet Service Providers (ISP). However, a focus on Business to Business practices and qualitative study that digs into the root cause is lacking. For example, the CXM literature in the field of telecommunication (e.g. [3], [1], [2]), but the focus in this literature has been on bundled products on mobile telecommunication that targets the Business to Consumer market in retail context, not on the B2B market. Close to this, there is also a research about the B2B CXM in general industries [7]. Although earlier studies have provided insightful information about the effects of positive customer experience, there are still gaps in the knowledge regarding how it may be used in certain industries. The disconnect here is that while the research is regarded as a major guiding force for B2B CXM, the focus has been more on theoretical framework of B2B CXM to pinpoint the challenges and implications in every relationship expectation and actors interaction than on how value creation may evolve as a result of the implications itself, specifically in a particular industry.

In this regard, qualitative study is needed to understand SMEs experiences because it can provide more practical insights for professionals who work in the sector. Understanding customer experience management in the B2B sector using qualitative analysis is a highly relevant yet under-researched paradox. Hence, the primary objective of this study is to identify consumer behavior in the context of B2B broadband services by examining customer needs and pain points that affect. The findings add to the theory by strengthening it with the customer value proposition, expanding the application into telecommunications sector and suggesting a CXM model as well as business strategy to better attract SME customers in the B2B telco products context so it can better compete in the future.

## **II. LITERATURE**

### **2.1 B2B Customer Experience Management**

According to [8], customer experience management (CXM) is a resource that consists of cultural mindsets towards customer experience (CX), organizational capabilities to continuously improve CX and strategic directions to design CX, where it aims to achieve and maintain long-term customer loyalty. Companies that have a cultural mindset incorporate customer experience (CX) into the company culture to better understand customers and capture data about customer behavior, attitudes, and sensory reactions patterns [9]. According to [10], marketing academics and practitioners view the customer experience as a strategy for generating value, difference, and a sustainable competitive advantage in the volatile marketplace. Creating and providing consumers with "moments of delight" can significantly improve their service experience [11]. Offerings and the interactions between the actors involved in B2B settings are typically more complicated given the importance of interpersonal interaction in business marketplaces and the long-term focus of many B2B relationships [7]. It is also stated that maintaining customer loyalty in the B2B setting differs significantly from that in the B2C setting due to the rise of additional behavioral and attitudinal drivers that require careful examination [12]. Furthermore, a variety of office employees may be involved in B2B interactions, which makes it more challenging to comprehend customer experience [7]. The development of a thorough framework for B2B CXM is supported by two essential elements of CXM in business markets: managing relationship types and controlling control of touchpoints within a network of actors. Characteristics of the buyer-seller connection, from transactional to relational interactions, will greatly impact the experience of the consumer [7].

### **2.2 User Persona and Customer Journey**

User personas are instruments that can be used to learn about the characteristics of a consumer and therefore maintain the relationship with customers where it aims to provide a detailed description of the user. This tool collects user data, obtains a knowledge of their characteristics, defines hypothetical users (referred to as personas) based on this understanding, and focuses on the company's perspective [13]. [13] mentioned that the define phase is a phase that synthesizes information from the empathize phase to form a user's point of view so that the creation of a solution is defined. Personas and customer journey maps as a method for collating the complexity of human affect in terms of valence and activation [14].

CXM needs to take a customer journey perspective in order to address problems affecting the overall experience [9]. According to [15], the term customer journey describes the ongoing customer experience over the pre-, purchase-, and post-purchase phases of the service cycle. The pre-purchase stage refers to the interactions customers have with a channel when they identify a need, gather information, and weigh their options before making a purchase [16]. The purchase stage refers to any interactions customers may have when making a decision and making a purchase, while the post-purchase stage refers to the moments when customers use the product, build brand communities, co-create, and return [16].

### **2.3 Customer Touchpoints and Customer Support**

The customer journey, which consists of touchpoints (i.e., interactions between customers and the organization) that resemble service encounters, is the foundation for representing and comprehending CX [8]. Customer support service is a crucial touchpoint for business success considering the multichannel and highly competitive market. According to [17], in order to guarantee a better customer experience throughout their journey, customer support services must be integrated with every aspect of the business, allowing the entire organization to operate customer-centric mindset. According to a study, 80 percent of B2B interaction will likely take place digitally by 2025. Digitalization, which is defined as the application of digital technology influencing B2B interactions, organizations, and markets, is causing change in all aspects of business [18].

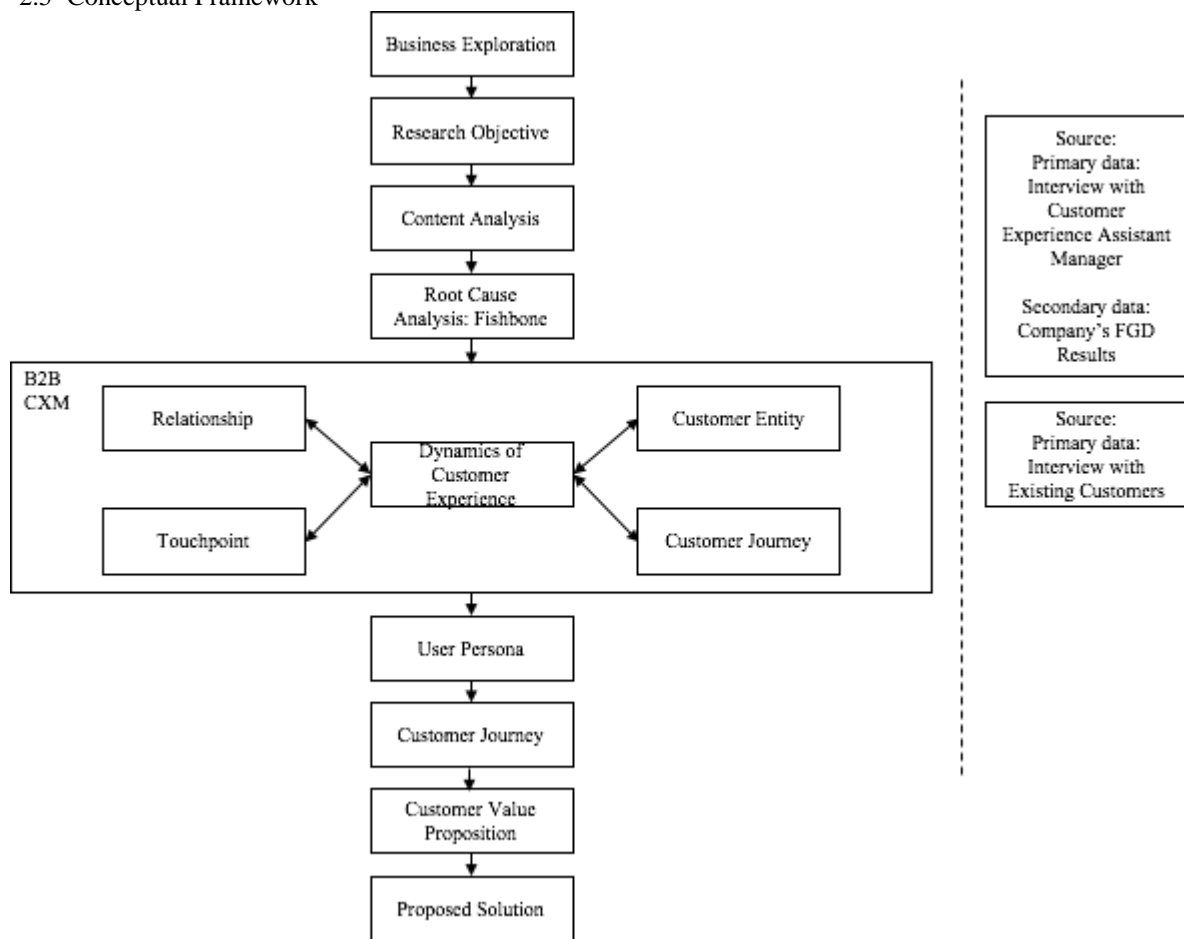
### **2.4 Customer Value proposition and Customer Relationship Management**

Service marketing has long explored the idea of creating value for customers. Apart from acknowledging the differences between the customer's perceived value outcomes and the value creation process, the discussion has also focused on the respective roles of the service provider and customer in business

processes [6]. A growing number of B2B businesses are offering specialized products and services that depend on personalized customer value propositions (CVPs) to customers [19]. A CVP represents “a strategic tool facilitating communication of an organization’s ability to share resources and offer a superior value package to targeted customers” [20]. In B2B context, diverse people of customers in organization frequently have various expectations for the same precise solution. Therefore, salespeople need to be agile in order to articulate their CVPs while pitching complex products or services [19].

Building a great customer experience is seen as an essential way to foster customer loyalty and it’s seen as the fundamental component in customer relationship management [10]. CRM, or customer relationship management, is a management technique that seeks to create, develop, and enhance relationships with particular customers in order to optimize business profitability and customer value [21]. A study in Jordan mentioned that telecommunications businesses should focus on e-CRM strategies in order to maintain relationships with customers and increase profits in the long term while improving Technology as an important aspect for ISP [3].

**2.5 Conceptual Framework**



**Fig 1. Conceptual Framework Flowchart**

Conceptual framework of this research consists of a set of analysis to determine the most practical customer experience strategy to retain SME customers in a digital telecommunication company. The framework that will be used in this research is the B2B CXM dimensions in relationship to the Customer Value Proposition. All of the insights from these analyses are essential to determine the best possible strategies to build a good customer experience and retain existing customers through different touch points across the journey.

**III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this particular research, qualitative research is conducted through deep interviews with relevant respondents. The data sources used in this research are primary data sources taken directly by researchers where respondents are selected based on criterion sampling and convenience sampling method. Respondents consist of existing SME customers who have experienced service failure or request for support and stayed as customers for less than 12 months, more than 12 months or previous SME customers who choose to un-subscribe to the service. The deep interviews which lasted about 30 minutes – 60 minutes and the qualitative framework content

analysis using Nvivo Software was conducted in June 2024 to explain SMEs needs and pain points about ISP services as well as the solutions expected for SME customers.

Respondent	Professional Role	Years of Experience	Industry	Area	Company Size	Length of Stay
P1	Operational Manager	10-15	Food Beverage	Urban area	Small	0-12 months
P2	Relationship Manager	10-15	Finance	Urban area	Medium	>12 months
P3	Finance Manager	>15	Finance	Urban area	Medium	0-12 months
P4	Finance Staff	<5	Distributor	Suburban area	Small	>12 months
P5	Owner	<5	Property	Suburban area	Medium	Terminate
P6	Finance Staff	10-15	Distributor	Urban area	Small	Terminate
P7	Staff	5-10	Medical	Urban area	Small	Terminate
P8	Owner	10-15	Medical	Suburban area	Medium	>12 months
P9	Head IT	10-15	Education	Suburban area	Medium	0-12 months

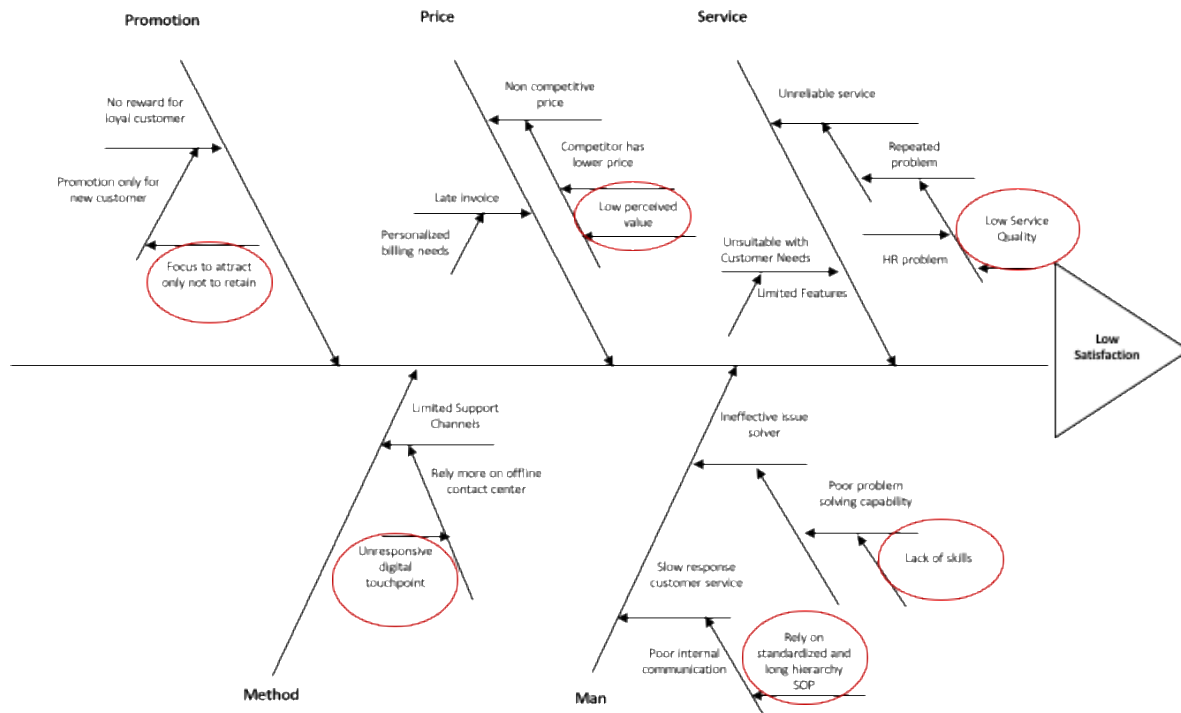
**Table 1: Respondents' Demographic**

#### **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

##### **4.1 Root Cause Analysis**

Fig 2 illustrates the causes of high churn rate and dissatisfaction in B2B ISP products, mentioned by the respondents. The five categories of service, price, promotion, man, and method are assigned to these causes. The Product/Service category refers to the good, service, or experience offered to customers. The service is considered inconsistent and cannot be counted on. One possible reason for the inconsistent service could be a persistent issue that keeps occurring even after several attempts to fix it. The root causes of this problem may be caused by the outdated equipment or lack of corrective action techniques and the lack of qualified technicians to solve problems and poor communication between different departments within the service provider. Besides, the service does not correspond with the specific needs of the customers either. Many respondents believed that the service only offers a small selection of products where it lacks features or functionalities that are crucial for the SMEs business operations. The Price category focuses on the amount customers pay to acquire the service. The service's pricing is perceived not competitive compared to similar offerings in the market. Hence the root cause of this condition is customers may find better deals for the same or even better service from other providers. In the Promotion category encompasses the activities to convey the value that is offered to customers. The reward program is poorly designed for customers who have consistently repeated orders and spend more than new customers. The company might be focusing on acquiring new customers to increase new sales. The company's tendency to prioritize short-term profits and neglects long-term benefits could be the root cause of this condition.

The Man category focuses on the internal resources aspect involved in the process. It is discovered that he operator struggles to resolve customer problems effectively, they usually follow rigid scripts instead of adapting to particular problems. They offer generic solutions that neglect the root cause of the problem and are unable to assess the situation and identify the underlying cause of the problem. The primary reason is because the representative may not have technical and communication skills needed to handle customer inquiries effectively. Lastly in the Method category examines the way the task or process is actually carried out. There are just a few options available for clients to get in touch with customer support. The company is relying solely on phone lines which may not be convenient for everyone. It is found that many customers never heard of digital channels such as email, live chat, or social media options.

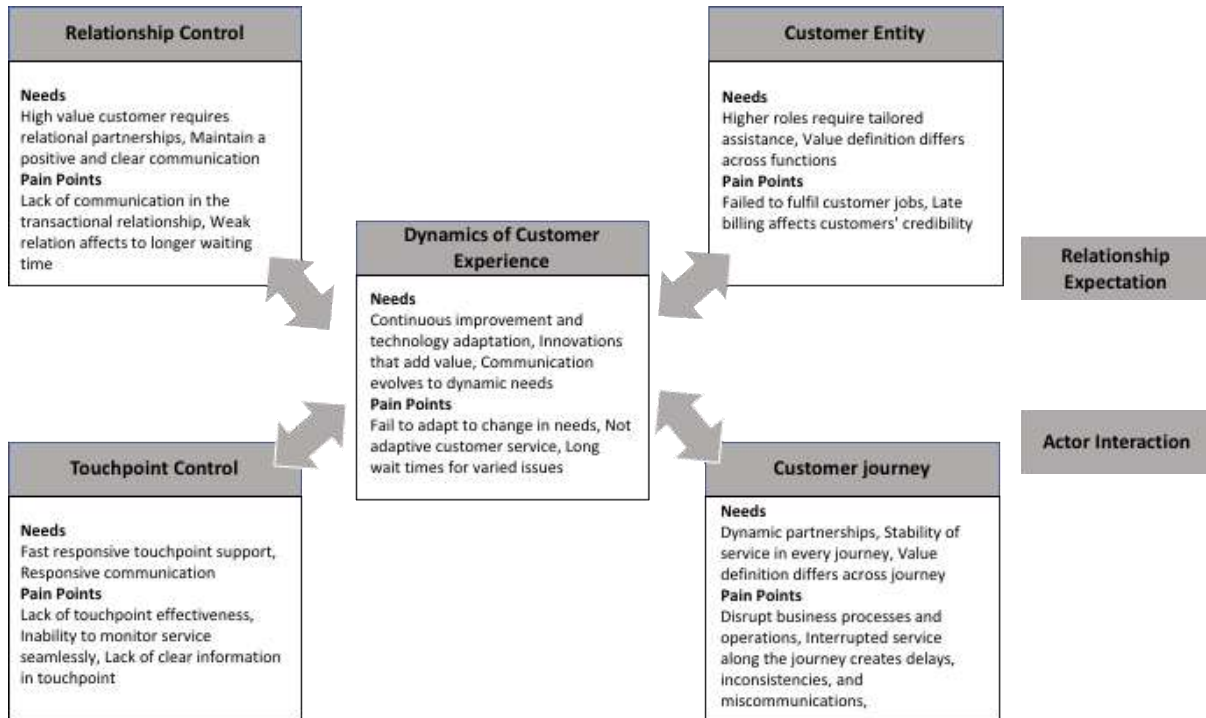


**Fig 2. Fishbone Diagram of High Churn Rate on B2B ISP**

#### 4.2 CEM Dimensions Based on Customer Needs and Pain Points

Fig 3 outlines the dynamics of customer experience management in B2B ISP services where each dimension plays an important role in crafting customer experience. By addressing the specific needs and pain points in each dimension, businesses can create a positive and dynamic customer experience. In the Relationship Control dimension, high-value SME customers demand strong relational partnerships with clear and positive communication. However, when businesses are unable to provide personalized assistance to these customers, the weak relation in the transactional partnerships lead to a complex business process experience for them. Corresponding to that, the customer entity dimension highlights that perceived value can vary across different jobs within an organization and emphasizes the necessity for customized support for customers in higher levels. Failure to fulfill customer jobs and issues such as personalized billing affects credibility which causes dissatisfaction for customers. To mitigate these issues, businesses must offer specialized help and guarantee effective service delivery to SMEs.

Meanwhile, the customer journey focuses more on the importance of dynamic partnerships and stable service throughout the journey. Service disruptions in each journey may result in delays and interruptions to overall SMEs business operations. Not only will it make SMEs more frustrated, but so will their clients. To overcome these challenges, businesses must focus on maintaining uninterrupted and consistent service, ensuring clear and effective communication throughout the customer journey. Touchpoint Control dimension highlights the need for fast, responsive support and clear communication at every touchpoint with the customer. Ineffective touchpoint management, inability to monitor service seamlessly, and lack of clear information are significant pain points that can hinder the customer experience. Therefore, businesses must be agile, continuously seeking improvements and adapting to new technologies to meet and exceed customer expectations. At last all of these dimensions encapsulate the dynamic of customer experience where continuous improvement and technology adaptation are needed. Failing to adapt to evolving customer needs can affect service reliability and credibility, which can negatively impact the overall customer experience. Businesses may create a positive, smooth, and dynamic customer experience by addressing the specific needs and pain points within each dimension and focusing on continuous improvement and adaptability.



**Fig 3. B2B CEM Dimensions Based on Customer Needs and Pain Points**

### 4.3 User Personas

Based on the pain points and needs throughout the B2B CEM, we can classify SME customers into two different user personas. This comparison highlights the unique needs of each group that enables B2B ISPs to tailor their services effectively. Group 1 is portrayed as senior managers with more than 10 years of experience who work in a medium-sized company with solid IT infrastructure. It shows the group of customers with the highest ARPU (average revenue per user) and perceived as the high value customers (HVC). The main challenges include service disruptions that impact business operations and difficulties in managing multiple services. They require customized business solutions, dedicated account assistance, and seamless IT operations across multiple offices. They value stable connections, quick support, and strong relationships. Group 2 is portrayed as young office staff with 5-10 years of experience who work in small-sized companies. The majority of customers fall into this category and are perceived as the regular customers with an average ARPU. Their primary pain points are frequent slowdowns and inadequate technical support. They need continuous and reliable internet connectivity, easy-to-use solutions, affordable service and accessible support.

User Persona		Group 1	Group 2
	Occupation	Senior Manager	Office Administrator
	Experience	>10 years in managerial role	5-10 years as administration staff
Company Background	Company Size	Medium	Small
	IT Infrastructure	Well-established	Basic, limited resources
User Environment	Location	Owned Building	Rent Building
	Decision Making Power	High influence	Moderate influence, consult with owner for decision
	Psychographic	Goal oriented, focus on productivity, relationship driven, value strong partnership	Comfortable with technology, seek for cost effectiveness, value good customer service & support
Scenarios	Pain Points	Service trouble affects the operations, difficult managing multiple services, need for tailored business requirement	Frequent slowdowns, frustrated with ineffective support, limited access to consumer support
	Need & Wants	Reliable & high speed internet, smooth and uninterrupted IT operations for operational work in every branch offices	Ensure continuous and reliable connectivity, prefer easy to use solutions, need easy to access support
	Value Drivers	Stable connection, quick support, customized solutions, strong relationship	Simplified administration process, quick to access support, reliable internet
	Churn Drivers	Unreliable service, limited features, poor support, un-effective communication	Complicated management process, complex process in customer support

**Table 2: User Persona in Different Groups**

4.4 Customer Journey Map

The customer journey of the existing customers in a B2B ISP environment encompasses several critical stages: Activate, Use, Pay, Get Support, and Repurchase. The two figures show that user personas 1 and 2 have distinct different service expectations and experiences. HVC, as seen in the first figure, requires a more personalized and proactive response at each stage of their journey. In the Activate phase, HVC needs personalized consultation and clear communication about service offerings and installation schedules. Both groups of customers expect a fast installation service and reliable connection. In the Use phase, regular customers are able to directly utilize the internet service for daily work whereas HVC needs to integrate it with its internal IT infrastructure. The Pay phase highlights that HVC needs proactive engagement from account assistance to help them with the customized billing procedures, contrasting with the regular customers who face standard billing, focusing more on the affordable and stable price. In the Get Support phase, both HVC and regular customers encounter unresponsive and less skilled support, which results in longer resolution times towards service trouble. However, given their higher value positions, the HVC will need to be given priority and a better level of service guarantee. In the Repurchase phase, both HVC and regular customers seek for some promotional offers.

Overall, HVC needs a more personalized and tailored service whereas regular customers receive more generalized support throughout their journey.

Persona 1	Activate	Use	Pay	Get Support	Repurchase
Customer Activities	- Sign up for service - Set up internet connectivity	- Integrate with internal IT infrastructure - Monitor usage	- Invoicing, - Payment processing	- Requesting technical support - Seeking solutions	- Install for branch office - Request upgrades
Customer Goal	Establish a reliable and fast internet connection	Ensure uninterrupted IT operations	Simplify billing process	Quick resolution of service problems	Seek for additional features or scalability
Touchpoints	Website, Sales Agent, Call Center	Website, Call Center	Manual billing, Payment point	Website, Call Center, Sosmed, WA	Website, Call Center, WA
Experience	😊	😞	😊	😞	😊
Pain Points	Complex registration, unclear information, slow installation	Difficulty managing multiple services, downtime, slow troubleshooting	Late personalized billing	Long wait times, inadequate technical skills.	Limited service offerings, limited promotion
Solutions	- Clear offerings & estimation time - Personalized consultation & guidance	- Dedicated account guidance - Maintain high quality IT infrastructure	- Clear invoicing - Proactive communication by account support	- Priority with assurance guarantee - Skilled technical teams	- Customized solutions for evolving needs - Loyalty rewards
Business Goal	Establish strong initial partnership	Provide high quality service and satisfaction	Ensure timely payments	Minimize downtime, improve experience	Secure long-term customer loyalty

**Fig 4. Customer Journey on User Persona 1**

Persona 2	Activate	Use	Pay	Get Support	Repurchase
Customer Activities	- Sign up for service - Set up internet connectivity	- Daily use for office - Monitor usage	- Payment processing	- Requesting technical support - Seeking solutions	- Request upgrades
Customer Goal	Get a reliable and cost-effective internet connection	Ensure reliable and fast speed	Ensure cost-effectiveness	Quick resolution of service problems	Renewals and upgrade
Touchpoints	Website, Sales Agent, Call Center	Website, Call Center	Payment point	Website, Call Center, Sosmed, WA	Website, Call Center, WA
Experience	😊	😞	😊	😞	😊
Pain Points	Unclear information	Downtime, slow troubleshooting	No promotion/discount	Unresponsive and limited access to support, inadequate technical skills	Limited promotion
Solutions	- Clear offerings & estimation time - Timely installation	- Maintain high quality IT infrastructure - Proactive assurance	- Stable billing - Improve perceived value	- Improve website user experience - Skilled technical teams	- Tailored upgrade offers - loyalty rewards
Business Goal	Establish strong initial partnership	Provide high quality service and satisfaction	Ensure timely payments	Minimize downtime, improve experience	Secure long-term customer loyalty

**Fig 5. Customer Journey on User Persona 2**

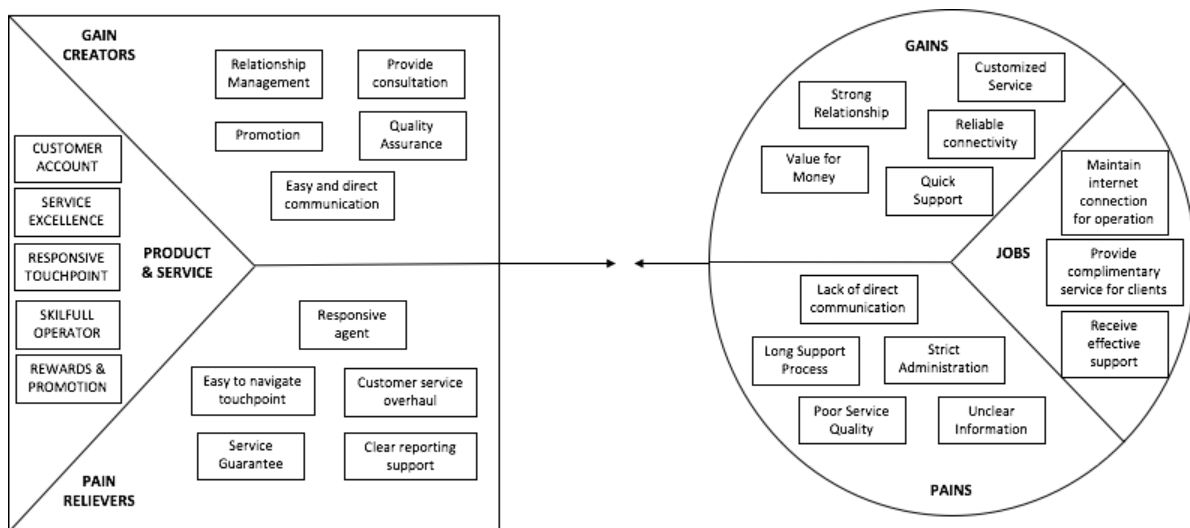
**4.5 Customer Value Proposition**

The Customer Value Proposition (CVP) outlines how ISP's products and services can answer the specific needs, ease the pains, and create gains for their SME customers. Customer jobs represent the tasks and objectives that SMEs seek to achieve by employing ISP. Maintaining a reliable and seamless internet connectivity is essential for SMEs as it supports their business operation activities. Gain creators are the strategies that generate positive outcomes for SME customers. It entails enhancing relationship management through tailored support, offering service quality assurance and effective communication strategies to establish a



clear service information, accommodating consultation to ensure a better understanding of customer needs as well as creating promotions to make customers feel more valued and loyal. Conversely, pain relievers are strategies designed to ease customer challenges. It includes simplifying administrative processes by streamlining customer service procedures, designing user-friendly digital touchpoints to facilitate service accessibility and providing transparent reporting support through these channels to improve clarity and efficiency. Service assurances the responsive agents are important because they help build consumer trust and support time effectiveness.

To address these needs and pains, the ISP may provide products and services including special customer account programs, service excellence program, responsive touchpoint, up-skill programs for internal resources and loyalty programs. Customer accounts may offer exclusive assistance to high-value customers that ensures a more convenient communication, faster response times and special access to new products. This program is therefore in accordance with the loyalty program. Service Excellence focuses to give a higher perceived value and exceed customer expectations at every customer journey. Responsive Touchpoint provides various channels for customers to interact with the company and ensure fast response feedback. Competent operators can guarantee that ESP customers receive best practices. By implementing these product/service designs, the ISP will be able to establish strong, long-lasting relationships with their SME clients and it will foster the growth and success in the competitive business environment.



**Fig 6. Value Proposition Canvas of B2B ISP's Customer**

## V. CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Practical Implication

According to these results, B2B ISPS must continue to provide their customers with positive experiences that exceeds their customers expectation by answering customer pain points and needs in both user personas. [1] stated that customer retention is crucial when it comes to clients with a reasonably high lifetime value (LTV), or those who have the potential to generate high revenue for the business. Operators should take care of their customers and cultivate personal, long-term connections with them by offering personalized offers, rewarding loyalty and tracking customer satisfaction to prevent customers from leaving [1]. Priority and loyalty program will answer the customer needs on relational partnerships for bigger companies who require customized assistance including customized billing systems or private relations. Thus, this research suggest that ISPs can maximize High Value Customer, whose business will significantly impact a company's performance value, by developing longer-lasting relationships and tailor products and services based on their needs to generate more revenue. In accordance to this, [17] offers a model that shows how businesses can customize services to meet the demands of customers at every stage of the customer journey by including customer support into their overall business strategy. It can consider creating tiered loyalty programs for SME customers who can be categorized in different levels based on their purchasing characteristics. Tiered loyalty programs involve levels of membership that offer increasing rewards and benefits based on customer spending or length of stay. The higher the level, the more offers and rewards loyal customers will get such as special treatment services, network assurance and guarantee, exclusive promotions from business partners, special offers from additional features, etc. Another important suggestion provided in this study includes strategy for improving quality of service excellence as it is the most painful experience for all respondents in particular.

## 5.2 Limitation

This study has some noteworthy limitations, despite its important findings. Initially, the study's conclusions are based on a limited sample of SMEs customers in telecommunication industry. Consequently, there is limited generalizability due to the scope and representativeness of participants. We advise to acquire a bigger sample that represents all customers based on the size of the company, customer entity roles and elevate into a broader context of industries. While our research proposed different characteristics of SME customers and briefly discussed the relationships to B2B CXM, we advise researchers to develop larger characteristics of business customers including micro and large companies to further observe. In that event, we suggest that the future study consider examining all provided touchpoints to support customer-value creation especially through their digital touchpoint.

## 5.3 Conclusion

This study provides an original contribution to the literature on B2B CXM in telecommunication sector. It highlights that connectivity has become an important aspect in SMEs business operation process where understanding customers' needs and pain points are essential for managers to improve their CXM strategies. Interpersonal skills such as building relationship, responsiveness and communication skills is considered as the most important things to customers. In contrast, the main problem in pain points focuses on the perceived quality of service such as slow connection, slow problem solving and complex customer service system. By addressing the specific needs and pain points in the B2B CX dimensions namely relationship, customer entity, customer journey, and touchpoints, businesses can create a positive and dynamic customer experience. One important thing the company needs to do beside enhancing connectivity quality is to build good communication and give a clear information so customers can have a better understanding and expectations. This finding goes along with the previous study where [2] stated that service quality, satisfaction, and customer experience have become the pillars of decision-making in the initial selection of ISP and in the decision to stay, loyalty, and fostering word of mouth. In addition, the insights give professionals the opportunity to reevaluate CXM implementation in B2B context.

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**\*Corresponding Author: Shafira Karamina Alifah**

**<sup>1</sup>(School of Business Management, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia)**