

THE INFLUENCE OF ELECTRONIC SERVICE QUALITY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF ELECTRONIC CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (e-CRM) IN JORDANIAN TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Customer relationship management is a strategy that can help companies to build long lasting relationships with their customers. Nowadays, the penetration of the internet has dramatically changed the situation because the internet is suitable for the incorporation of CRM applications. Thus, it has changed into electronic e-CRM or e-CRM. Electronic Customer relationship management performance E-CRM is a comprehensive business and marketing strategy that integrates people, process, technology and all business activities for attracting and retaining customers over the internet and mobile phone to reduce costs and increase profitability by consolidation the principles of customer loyalty. Therefore, the results of e-CRM performance are repeat purchase, word of mouth, retention, cross buying, brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. The keen competitive in the communication and mobile phone service market place and the increasing numbers of mobile phone users all over the world has influence the researchers to investigate factors that contribute to e-CRM performance. This study investigates the influence of electronic service quality on electronic customer relationship management performance in mobile phone services industry. Out of 850, 488 questionnaires have returned and analyzed. The analysis shows that electronic service quality was positively related to e-CRM performance. The limitations and recommendations for future research were also included in this study.

Keywords: Customer relationship management; e-customer relationship management performance (e-CRM); mobile phone services; electronic service quality.

INTRODUCTION

In today's very competitive environment and constantly changing telecommunications market, various factors such as mergers of companies and organizations, fast development of various technologies, and demand and supply services have contribute to the significant changes in the telecommunication sector (Xevelonakis, 2005). Undeniably, at the moment, mobile phone is becoming so popular that people are leave landline to rely completely on mobile phones primarily because of mobility, safety, price and privacy (DeBaillon & Rockwell, 2005). It has become the nerve of the life. In particular, mobile phone service industry is gaining popularity and importance all around the world and as mobile usage is growing rapidly, telecommunication marketers are developing new strategies to take advantage of the potential customers. Mobile phone is the most promising and high growth area of telecommunication, with more than 1.7 billion global subscribers and about 80% of the world's population covered by mobile networks (Price Water House Coopers, 2006)

Usage of mobile phones has now extended from voice communications to the internet. An increase in extension of mobile internet technology and much development of m-commerce applications has opened great opportunity for mobile service users. However, surveys on US consumers' perceptions of mobile service show that the level of satisfaction is much lower for mobile service carriers compared to other service sectors (Consumer Report, 2005; McKinsey Quarterly, 2004). Mobile service carriers need to be aware of drivers of customer satisfaction and loyalty in order to build effective business strategies for customer retention (Lim, Widdows, & Park, 2006).

The objective of service companies that offer communication services is to develop services to satisfy the customers. In due time, satisfied customers will be those that will be loyal and help the company to sustain business. It should be observed that retention of existing customers is much cheaper than acquiring a new customer; therefore, companies including communication companies are putting much more emphasis on customer relationship management (CRM) as a tool for managing customer relationship and to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has become the main strategy to retain customers for companies regardless of its size. A company's customer care strategy and its CRM software go hand in hand (Baumeister, 2002). The reason for this is that it costs up to five times more to acquire a new customer than to get an existing customer to make a new purchase (Silverstein, 2000). According to Connelly and Yoger (2001), the damage caused by a dissatisfied customer can be expanded exponentially. Dissatisfied customers are more likely to defect to competition and more likely to convince others to switch service provider. Nowadays, it is not a surprise that customer relationship management is a significant issue for discussion in the academic and business arena. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) within businesses has increased dramatically over the last years, and will continue to do so in the future. The relationship between customer and service provider will become more challenging and competitive. As a result, as the number of customers increases, service provider will have to focus more on their services and software to manage the critical relationships with their subscribers.

Customer relationship management (CRM) is replacing the traditional 'four Ps' of marketing - product, price, place and promotion. Long-term relationships with customers are the key to stability in an increasingly dynamic market (Wu & Wu, 2005). Later, the introduction of the internet changed the situation because it is appropriate for the integration of CRM solutions, thus CRM became electronic CRM or e-CRM. E-CRM emerges from the internet and web technology to facilitate the implementation of CRM. It focuses on internet- or web-based interaction between customer and service provider (Chang, Liao, & Hsiao, 2005). E-CRM according to Blery & Michalakopoulos (2000) refers marketing activities, tools and techniques delivered over the internet (using technologies such as web sites and e-mail, data capture, ware housing and mining) with specific aim to locate, build and improve long term customer relationship to enhance their individual potential. Beside using internet, electronic CRM can use alternative channels such as e-mails, websites, wrap sites, voice mail, SMS, MMS, product information online, 1-800 telephone, call back button, chat, electronic bulletin board and links (Feinberg et al., 2002)

Looking into the scenario in Jordan, with the continued growth in service sector, the mobile phone service industry has enormous potential for growth. Lately, technological change has shifted competition from price and core service to value-added services (e-CRM) (Aydin & Ozer, 2005). Therefore, operators should differentiate their services and guaranteed their service quality because of this shift in competition. Due to the many alternatives available to customers, they can easily switch service providers. The telecommunication industry has one of the highest customer churn rates in the business world, often exceeding 40 percent annually (Fluss, 2009). Furthermore, mobile phone service providers are losing 2-4 percent of their subscribers monthly; disloyal customers can amount to millions of lost revenue and profit. Aydin and Ozer (2005) noted that increasing customer retention (or customer loyalty) by 5 percent could lead to 25-75 percent profit growth (Chan et al., 2001, p. 5). In addition, Reichheld (1996) has documented that a 5% rise in customer retention resulted in an increase in average customer lifetime value of between 35 % and 95 %, leading to significant improvements in company profitability.

The standards of professionalism in e-CRM performance and mobile phone service should be raised in response to the shift in customer's needs and preference. Accordingly, managing customer's expectations, needs and desires has become a major concern of service providers due to various factors such as keen business competition, liberalization of the industry to Foreign Service providers, ease of switching service provider to competitors and increasing customer preference and needs. To remain competitive in the market place, the mobile phone service

providers have to create new business models and produce innovative content and applications that would attract and retain consumers. Therefore, by implementing e-CRM and focus on customer satisfaction and loyalty, they can provide services based on customer need and expectations (Gurau, 2003). However, despite the importance of CRM to the success of the organization, empirical studies on e-CRM performance particularly in the Jordanian context have been less than encouraging. Furthermore, the majority of works on e-CRM performance conducted in the Western countries have focused on e-CRM performance from the firms and employees' perspectives (Chang et al., 2005; Wang et al., 2004). Due to that, Khalifa and Shin (2005) recommended that scholars extend the research to consider the e-CRM performance from the customers' perspective as e-CRM mainly relies on internet or web-based interaction between companies and their customers. Therefore, the problem that this research seeks to address is what are the underling factors influencing electronic customer relationship management in mobile phone service industry. Basically, the objective of this research is to examine the influence of electronic service quality on e-CRM performance. Justifications on the selection of this variable will be discussed in the section below.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Relationship Management

Customer relationship management (CRM) is a new concept within businesses that has increased its importance dramatically over the last few years, and will continue to do so in the future. CRM exists to replace the traditional 'four Ps' of marketing i-e. product, price, place and promotion (Wu & Wu, 2005). A number of authors propose that the 4Ps of marketing mix is no longer the dominant marketing logic and that RM may be a more appropriate new paradigm for marketing thought, theory and practice (Dwyer et al., 1987; Kotler, 1992). CRM was born from relationship marketing and is simply the practical application of long standing relationship marketing principles that have existed since the dawn of business itself (Gummesson, 2004).

Implementing CRM successfully can bring several benefits and profits to the companies and help to get mutual benefits from both parties. Chen (2001) indicated that CRM could bring many benefits for companies to enhance their ability in the competitive market, increase profits and profit rate, reduce costs, upgrade concentration of the market, reduce cycle times of implementation of new sales activities, increase times of small-sized target marketing and increase knowledge. Whereas, Fjermested and Romano (2003) indicate that several benefits might be derived from CRM, namely: increase customer loyalty, more effective marketing, improve customer service and support, and greater efficiency and cost reduction.

CRM performance is defined as the success of creating value for customers by increasing retention, repurchase sales and word of mouth marketing for customers to achieve and improve relationship quality between the company and the customers (Wang et al., 2004). When CRM works properly, it helps to solve the problems by engaging everyone together and focusing the whole organization on the customer. In other words, CRM requires commitment and understanding throughout the company. It adds to a sense of expectation and loyalty being instilled within the consumer and the development of a relationship between company and customer. If such relationship is strong, the competitors will find it difficult to break the strong relation (Suresh, 2002).

Electronic Customer Relationship Management (e-CRM)

Nevertheless, as the market becomes full of product and service options, many companies are racing to re-establish their connections to new as well as existing customers to boost long-term customer loyalty. Some companies are competing effectively and winning this race through the implementation of relationship marketing principles using strategic and technology-based CRM applications. Additionally, Goldenberg (2000) stated that CRM is not only technology applications for marketing, sales and service, but also when fully and successfully implemented, it's a cross-functional, customer-driven, technology-integrated business process management strategy that maximizes relationships and encompasses the entire organization. After the advent of internet and new technology, CRM has been converted to e-CRM. E-CRM is a combination

of hardware, software, process, applications and management commitment to improve customer service, retain customer, and provide analytical capabilities (Romano & Fjermested, 2002). Many companies have spent large amounts of money pursuing the development of a comprehensive e-CRM strategy in an attempt to implement e-CRM. However, despite the large investment made on e-CRM, many companies are dissatisfied with e-CRM implementations, because e-CRM projects are not creating measurable income on investment (Goldberg, 2000).

It should be noted that e-CRM has its roots in relationship marketing, which is aimed at improving long run profitability by shifting from transaction-based marketing, with its emphasis on winning new customers, to customer retention through effective management of customer relationships (Christopher et al., 1991). Therefore, e-CRM is a more complex and sophisticated application that mines customer data that has been collected from all customer touch points, creating a single and comprehensive view of a customer while uncovering profiles of key customers and predicting their purchasing patterns. Technology that tracks and analyzes customer behaviour allows companies to easily identify the best customers, focus marketing effort and reward those who are likely to buy more. Acquiring a better understanding of existing customers allows companies to interact, respond, and communicate more effectively to improve retention rates significantly.

A review of work in the area of e-CRM performance indicates that a few studies have examined the antecedents of e-CRM performance. The previous researches on the antecedents of e-CRM performance come from organizational factors such as, company policy, business process and strategies.

Many researchers have studied influential factors of customer satisfaction and loyalty in e-commerce (e-CRM). Choi et al. (2008) reorganized the factors proposed by the previous studies into eight factors according to their sub-factors such as convenience, transaction process, website reliability, information, site design, customer service, price, and security/privacy. Furthermore, they indicated that it has five influential factors extracted from analysis "transaction process", "content reliability", "perceived price level", "customer service", and "availability", which are employed as customer satisfaction antecedents.

Lutz (2007) conducted a study to determine the factors that influence the behaviour of customer service workers during customer interactions. Customer service workers behaviour is important because the behaviour exhibited by a service representative will affect a customer's relationship with the firm, and consequently affect CRM performance. He found that person-to-person interactions between customers and employees greatly affect a customer's overall relationship with a company. Hurley and Hult (1998) found that the knowledge towards innovating new products and services would affect the CRM performance. Similarly, research by Chen and Kazman (2007) found that CRM employee knowledge, employee business knowledge and CRM training are among the employee factors that have a positive relationship on CRM performance.

A literature regarding to the success of CRM implementation conclude that the top management support is an important in CRM. Kotorov (2003) stress that without involvement and commitment of the members of the senior executive team, CRM projects fail. The implementation of e-CRM in the organizations must received involvement from all levels of management. Without receiving a full support from all parties, it is impossible the e-CRM practice to achieve goals (Bull, 2003). This argument stress that the success of e-CRM must received highly response and support from all unit or department in the organization and only the top management itself can observe the integrations (Parvatiyar & Seth, 2001). It is clear that management have a significant role in creating absorptive capacity among the employees for implementing e-CRM successfully.

e-Service Quality and e-CRM Performance

As we understand, the main purpose of e-CRM activities is to create customer retention and customer value. Therefore, whatever antecedents come from business strategies are relevant to

influence e-CRM performance. As discussed earlier, the influencing factors of e-CRM can be divided into customers, process and technological factors. This is inline with suggestion by Avlonitis and Panagopoulos, (2005) and Chen and Popovich, (2003) which stated these three components as main pillars of CRM success. However, the present research focuses only on process factor that may influence e-CRM performance.

In relation to process factors, e-service quality is one of the components in the process factor that has been found related to e-CRM performance. During the 1980s, service quality received a great deal of attention as a key strategic process factor for product differentiation to increase market share and boost profits (Buzzell & Gale, 1987; Phillips, Chang & Buzzell 1983). Thus, researchers focused on the process in which consumers evaluate service quality to enhance customer satisfaction and firms' profitability.

E-service quality is a new process factor that started in 2002. Zeithaml et al., (2002) introduced the concept of electronic service quality (*e-SQ*), which is defined as "the extent to which a website facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing and delivery of products and services". Furthermore, service quality can be defined also as the difference between customer expectation for service performance prior to the service encounter and their perceptions of the service received (Asubonteng, Mcclery and Swan 1996).

The term SQ has been defined in various ways and the literature with lack of formal service quality definition. Zeithaml et al. (2002) provided the first formal definition of e-SQ. They define service quality as "the extent to which a website facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing and delivery of products and services" (Zeithaml et al., 2002).

E-SQ is still a novel area of research which has strategic importance for businesses determined to address customer in the electronic market space (Zeithaml, 2002). Current findings in this field highlight the importance of this area and suggest great need for future research (Iliachenko, 2006; Cristobal, Flavia'n & Guinali 2007). Researches concerning the effects of e-service quality and the resulting satisfaction is still at its infancy (Gummerus et al., 2004). In the new world of technology, the technology presence and low price are not simply enough to succeed in e-business markets. The current tendency of e-retailing shows that e-SQ is transformed into a differentiating strategy (Zeithaml, 2002; Zeithaml et al., 2002; Parasuraman, 2004) which focuses the attention on service delivery through electronic channels to achieve customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Previous researches highlight the dimensions that used in the literature to measure e-SQ. The most popular dimensions is proposed by Zeithaml (2002) which include four core dimensions that can be used to measure customers' perceptions of e-SQ. The core dimensions proposed are efficiency, fulfilment, reliability and privacy. These dimensions can be used to measure customer perceptions of SQ because these are the main dimensions that consumers want when shopping on the internet (Zeithaml, 2002).

Website provides information about a company and its products or services and generally offers contact information with different contact channels. Nowadays, many commercial websites are on a transactional level which offer payment functions and online reservation, and help customers choosing product and paying directly on the website. Modern consumers prefer to complete all of their business with the company on the website from information search to buying. Transactional websites have also been found to be more efficient in attracting potential customers by applying the principles of usability, usefulness and ease of use on the websites (Nysveen & Lexhagen, 2001a, b; Iliachenko, 2006).

Generally, service quality is an important factor for profitability, and thereby service providers' success. There are two fundamental processes that explain the contribution of electronic service quality to profitability for customers and service providers. Firstly, service quality is considered as one of the few means for service differentiation and competitive advantage that attracts new customers and contributes to the market share. Secondly, service quality enhances customers'

tendency to use the service more, to use more services, to become less price-sensitive and to tell other friends about favourable and useful services provided (Venetis & Ghauri, 2000).

Researchers developed a dynamic model that draws the way customers figure and update their perception of service quality and then identify the consequences of these perceptions on individual-level behavioural intention variables (Boulding et al., 1993). One of the various behavioural consequences of service quality is customer retention, since it produces a direct impact on the market share of companies (Steenkamp, 1989). The analysis of effects of service quality on profits completed the structure of the service quality process, moving from expectations to financial consequences (Koska, 1990; Rust, Zahorik & Keiningham 1995; Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman 1996).

Many previous researches have found a significant relationship between e-SQ and behavioural intention (Hackman et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2004; Wu & Liu 2007). Perceived service quality is an overall judgment of a service that contributes to customer satisfaction, purchase intentions, and firm performance (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Many studies have been conducted to investigate the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction. The significance of service quality as an antecedent of customer satisfaction and eventually customer loyalty has been approved (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Rust et al., 1995). For example, Anderson, Fornell and Lehmann (1994) found that service quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction and company's profitability. Wang et al. (2004) iterated that customer satisfaction contributes to e-CRM performance. Besides, Jones, Mothersbaugh, and Beatty (2002) have pointed out that there is a positive relationship between service quality and repurchase intention, recommendation, and resistance to better alternatives. Therefore, any variable that has possible impact on customer satisfaction, repurchase intention and recommendation will have an impact on e-CRM performance as these factors are part of e-CRM performance dimensions. Evidently, based on the earlier discussion, it is clear that e-service quality is a very important factor in influencing customer attitude toward e-service. This research proposes e-service quality as one of the antecedents for e-CRM performance. Therefore, we expect that electronic service quality affect e-CRM performance. Therefore, this study hypothesized the following:

Hypothesis 1: Electronic service quality is positively related to the performance of electronic customer relationship management (e-CRM).

METHOD

Data were collected by self-report questionnaires from university students in Jordan. Many previous studies have employed university students as subjects (e.g. Gefen, 2000; DeBaillon & Rockwell, 2005). University students belong to a specific population that typically has more internet/mobile phone experience, better skills, and higher education levels than "normal" people (Li & Zhang, 2005). Furthermore, DeBaillon and Rockwell (2005) stated that university students were the heaviest users of mobile phone followed by high school students and non-student adults. In addition to that, another study conducted in Taiwan found that the students share similar characteristics, economic ability, and consumption behaviour.

In this research, students were chosen as the study samples for several reasons. Firstly, using university students for this study was appropriate because this group is an important target market for mobile phone services providers (Shermach, 2005). The students represent professional users who handle typical mobile phone service activity such as SMS, chatting, games and other services (Li & Zhang, 2005). Furthermore, in a recent study of mobile phone usage, consumers in the 18-24 year age group used mobile phones 71% more than the average for all age groups (Telephia, 2006). Additionally, Wang and Head (2007) chose university students in their study on e-retailing research because they can use the internet for communication and commercial transactions and are a representative appropriate sample for such studies. Secondly, university students are involved in a challenging modern education like m-learning, e-learning and distance learning. They are qualified in using the services. Thirdly, the nature of work that students do in universities requires the use of mobile phone service. For example, it is common for university staff and students to use the mobile phone for

communication or to conduct research and contact their friends and lecturers when discussing some academic issues. Fourthly, university students typically have considerable experience with different types of e-commerce, e-services and websites. Students are very active users of internet applications and participants in e-services activities (Li et al., 2007). Respondents' experience is critical to determine the level of the services in mobile phone service industry. Many previous studies have employed university students as subjects (e.g. Gefen, 2000; DeBaillon & Rockwell, 2005).

For data collection purposes, 850 questionnaires were distributed. Out of this number, 667 were returned, 95 of which were excluded because they did not subscribe to any mobile phone service and 84 questionnaires were incomplete (missing responses). Thus, a total of 488 responses were usable and used for subsequent analysis, giving a response rate of 57.41 percent. It was with tremendous effort, hard work and extra financial cost that this response rate was obtained. The sample size appears to be sufficient and response rate obtained was comparable to several studies using mobile phone service as the study sample such as 43.6% (Aydin & Ozer, 2004) and 65% (Lee et al., 2006).

There are twenty-two universities recognized by the Jordanian government (Jordan Higher Education Statistical Summary, 2008). Out of these numbers, only Jordan University was chosen for this study. Only one university was selected as chosen sample since previous studies have shown that the characteristics of university students are homogeneous (Debaillon & Rockwell, 2005) and the students share similar characteristics, economic ability and consumption behaviour (Li & Zhang, 2005). This is similar method being done by Chen, et al., (2007); Li, Browne & Wetherbe, (2007).

It was found that 42.4% respondents were male and 57.6% were female with majority at the age 20-30 years old. With regards to academic status, 7.6% of the respondents were doctoral degree students, 18.2% were masters degree while 74.2% were under graduate students. In this research, proportionate stratify sampling was used by dividing the number of questionnaires to be distributed to each faculty base on the size of the faculty. Although there is no significant difference in the characteristics of the respondents (Debaillon & Rockwell, (2005); Li & Zhang, (2005), this study employed stratify random sampling to choose the respondents in order to get cross-sectional of respondents from different faculty of Jordan university and to be more fair in data collection procedures. To apply random sample procedures effectively, lists of student names from all faculties were obtained from student's affair department and entered in the computer to make the sample truly randomly by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) package version 12. Then we ask the computer to choose the required respondents' numbers from each faculty.

CONSTRUCT MEASUREMENT

The operationalisation of each construct consisted of multi-item scales based on scales used in past studies. Cronbach's alpha is most used to test the reliability of a multi-item scale (Kim & Cha, 2002). The cut off point is 0.6 (Hair et al., 1998). As shown in table 1, all the measures were reliable. To ensure consistency among variables and to avoid confusion, all items were measured using 1-5 point Likert scale (Ackfeldt & Coole, 2003).

There is a common belief that e-CRM performance should be measured in terms of customer behaviours since they are main sources of value of current customers of a firm and have the potential to increase the revenue associated with prospective customers. Because the primary purpose of e-CRM is to increase revenue and customer lifetime value, customer behaviours that might bring revenue become strategically important (Bolton, Lemo & Verhoef, 2002). Electronic customer relationship management performance is operationalized by two dimensions namely tangible and intangible aspects. Tangible aspects refer to customer behaviour-based CRM performance such as customer retention, repurchase, cross buying and word-of-mouth, while the intangible aspect of CRM performance is represented by customer

satisfaction and brand loyalty (Wang et al., 2004). E-CRM performance is operationalized based on nine items adopted from Wang et al. (2004).

E-service quality refers to the utility derived from the perceived quality and expected performance of the product or service from customer perspective. In the present study, the research instrument design is based on five dimensions of e-service quality i.e. user interest and expectations, customer service care/ help, reliability, user security and safety, and selection of appropriate services. Nineteen items were used to measure e-service quality adapted from Yang (2001). Some modifications were made to the items in order to suit the context of mobile phone service. As other measurements, e-service quality was also measured using a five -point Likert scale format, ranging from ‘1’ “strongly disagree” to ‘5’ “strongly agree.”

Table 1 Means, standard deviations and reliabilities of measures (N = 488)

Variable	M	SD	Reliability
e-CRM	4.45	.45	.86
Electronic service quality	3.86	.40	.83

RESULTS

The stated hypothesis regarding the influence of electronic service quality on e-CRM was tested using multiple regression following the guidelines established by Hair et al. (1998). Prior performing the actual hypotheses tests, correlations between the constructs were derived. Table 2 below shows the correlation structure of the data used in this study.

Table 2 Correlation matrix amongst constructs

	e-CRM performance	Electronic service quality
e-CRM performance	1.0	
Electronic service quality	.36**	1.0

** $\rho < 0.01$

As Table 2 shows, positive correlations exist between e-CRM performance and electronic service quality ($r = .36$; $\rho < .01$) suggesting support for the hypothesised relationship. In order to identify the strength of the relationship and to explore the predictive ability of electronic service quality on e-CRM performance, the hypothesis was then tested using a multiple regression prediction model (Hair et al., 1998) with e-CRM performance as the dependent variable. The results obtained as shown in Table 3 reveal that electronic service quality was found to be significant in the prediction model. The results provide support for hypothesis H1 that is a positive relationships between electronic service quality ($\beta = 0.04$; $\rho < .01$) and e-CRM performance.

Table 3 The influence of electronic service quality on e-CRM performance

Independent variable	B	SEB	β
Electronic service quality	0.83	0.91	0.04*

Note: $R^2 = 0.16$; $F = 41.02$; Sig. $F = 0.00$

* $\rho < .05$; B = Unstandardized Beta Coefficients; SEB = Unstandardized Coefficients Standard Error; β = Standardized Beta Coefficients

DISCUSSIONS

There are many challenges that service providers face in terms of increasing their performance. For one, recently customers have many options and alternatives in mobile phone services. Managers and service providers increasingly acknowledge the need to create electronic service quality in order to counter some performance pressures that mobile phone services providers bring to the market place. Therefore, service providers are dedicating vast amount of resources to increase their service quality to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Many researchers have argued that technology presence and low price are not simply enough to succeed in e-business. The current tendency of e-tailing shows that E-SQ is transformed into a differentiating strategy (Parasuraman, 2004; Zeithaml, 2002; Zeithaml et al., 2002) which focused the attention on service delivery through electronic channels to achieve customer satisfaction / loyalty and firms profitability.

This research has found a positive relationship between electronic service quality and e-CRM performance in mobile phone service context. This study attempted to relate service quality to customer intentions to use the service. We found support for the positive link between service quality and behavior intentions. This finding is consistent with the past study by Islam and Yang (2005) who found a positive relationship between e-service quality and e-CRM performance in financial organizations. In addition, Anderson et al. (1994) found that service quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction and company's profitability. Furthermore, Pe' rez, Abad, Carrillo, and Fern'andez (2007), and Zeithaml et al. (1996) found a relationship between perceived service quality and behavioral purchase intentions. Similarly, Wong and Sohal (2003) revealed that service quality is positively associated with customer loyalty. In similar vein, several studies found that specific website e-services quality can positively affect customer satisfaction with website and online purchasing in the long run (Khalifa &Liu 2002, 2003; Khalifa & Shen, 2005).

Telecommunication service providers should improve service quality through enhancing customer service care, providing reliable services, ensure the security, safety and responsiveness in dealing with customers. Jordan telecommunication subscribers seem to be indicating that service should be more rapid and punctual and the staffs should show a greater willingness to help customer and respond to their needs. In addition, service managers need to determine whether service quality activities or employees behaviors exceed or fall below customers' stated expectations to enable them to adjust the service offering or emphasize selected service quality attributes.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study provides an innovative step on the antecedents of e-CRM performance in the context of mobile phone services industry in Jordan. From a methodological point of view, data in this research were obtained from Jordan university students. It would be useful to obtain a broader sample of respondents in the future studies. In addition to the limited sampling framework, another limitation is associated with the use of self-completion survey methods. Even though survey research is the most widely used approach in the world (Neuman, 2003), there are a number of problems associated with this approach. The lack of researcher control in self-completion process necessitates that the resultant data sample will not be fully representative of the population as valid respondents may choose not to complete the survey. In addition, respondents sometimes give expected answers or pattern responses to questions.

The current study has excluded the impact of moderating variable on the relationships between the independent variable and e-CRM performance. As a first attempt to draw an overview of the research area and to control the scope of the study, we focused on the independent variable and its relationship to e-CRM performance. Testing the moderating impact is important and may give the picture richness that requires future investigation. In spite of a few limitations in this study, these limitations provide suggestions for further research. This study is concerned about

the e-CRM performance in mobile phone services in Jordan. Replicating and extending this study in other regions and countries and other services would test the generalizability of the present findings and would provide a basis for an external validation of the framework developed in this research to understand the cultural and geographical variations of customer behaviour.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the study is to investigate the factors that contribute to e-CRM performance. These findings provide additional evidence to the growing body of knowledge concerning the importance of achieving higher levels of e-CRM performance. This study has contributed to the marketing literature by shedding some light on e-CRM issues which have not been widely examined in the literature. In addition, it has contributed to the telecommunications sector literature where little investigation has taken place on issues concerning e-CRM in telecommunications companies. It can be concluded that factors that influencing the performance of e-CRM performance are quite diverse in their nature and origin. The present research suggests the electronic service quality as important factors that can contribute to e-CRM performance. In summary, we believe that the current study provides beneficial implications for both academic research and practitioners based on an insightful review of the existing work on e-CRM performance.

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