

Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty in Mobile Telecommunication

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Abstract

Purpose: This research has been conducted to discuss customer loyalty in mobile telecommunication. Study measures different features of service assortment, price satisfaction, quality, employee service and satisfaction to check which attribute influence the loyalty more in mobile telecommunication. **Design/methodology/approach:** A survey was conducted in university of Sargodha. For this purpose the questionnaires were filled from the students of different departments of the university who were the customers of any one of the mobile network operators from the five main mobile networks in Pakistan named as Ufone, Telenor, Warid, Zong and Mobilink. The five-point Likert scale was used (where 1 equals strongly disagree and 5 equals strongly agree). **Finding:** Research found that Price satisfaction, quality, employee service, service assortment and satisfaction positively related to the customer loyalty. Research also found that Service assortment highly affects the customer loyalty among the all independent variables. **Limitations:** This research includes a limitation that the people under consideration of sample are highly educated and young people. **Originality/value:** Regardless of the development of new products and services, only some studies have examined customer satisfaction and loyalty in the mobile telecom sector.

INTRODUCTION

This research has been conducted in order to check the impact of relationship marketing in mobile network operators of telecom sector of Pakistan and to find out the loyalty of customers for these mobile network operators. Telecommunication is highly competitive and challenging industry in all over the world. This industry experience significant changes in last few decades. Many telecommunication companies are fighting for customers. Telecommunication services became cheaper due to increase in competitors. Today internet, land line phone and mobile services are available with very reasonable prices due to which numbers of mobile users are increasing day by day.

Mobile operators generally use modern methods of promotion e.g. T.V Ads, Newspaper Ads, Radio Ads and Online promotion. Mobile services are convenience by type. People use mobile services frequently and not significant planning is required for its usage. People generally make little comparison while getting a connection. People prefer those networks who offer good quality with minimum price while adults and teenagers mostly prefer those networks that provide variety of package (sms bundles, late night packages, friends and family packages).

Regardless of the development of new products and services, only some studies have examined customer satisfaction and loyalty in the mobile telecom sector. Satisfaction of mobile network operators is very important because it involve highly word of mouth promotion. A satisfied customer suggests his mobile network operators to friends and family members.

According to telecommunication authority of Pakistan, there are 98 million mobile users in Pakistan and growth rate is also increasing rapidly. In April 2010 growth rate was 0.50% while in May 2010 growth rate was 0.72%. According to analysis there is still market place 7-14 crores exist in Pakistan.

According to PTA, there are five international mobile network operator companies in Pakistan e.g. Ufone, Mobilink, Warid, Zong and Telenor. The following order exists between these companies with respect to the number of users in Pakistan;

- (1) Moblink (2) Ufone (3) Warid (4) Telenor (5) Zong

Zong introduced later in Pakistan therefore having least number of users, but Zong is at the top of the world with respect to number of users. Zong is growing rapidly in Pakistan

UAE is the biggest investor in the telecommunication sector in world wide, while USA and Norway are the second and third larger investors respectively. Moblink is a USA company, Ufone is a Pakistani company, Warid is a UAE company, Telenor is a Norway company and Zong is a china mobile company.

Research involves all the important variables e.g. price satisfaction, quality, service assortment, employee services, satisfaction and loyalty of customers. Research tries to draw influence of price satisfaction, quality, service assortment, and customer services on customer satisfaction and loyalty. All these variables help in the buying behavior of customers. Research shows that all these variables highly affect the buying behavior of customers in different field.

This research includes a limitation that the people under consideration of sample are highly educated and young people. We assume that percentage of specific mobile users in sample not effect on the relation between the variables. Research also includes statistical inferences. Finally conclusion and implementation for further studies are also mention in this research paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

PRICE SATISFACTION:

Price satisfaction is the degree of positive behavior towards price. (Matzler et al, 2006) study in the retail banking industry shows that Price transparency, Price-quality ratio, Relative price, Price confidence, Price reliability, and Price fairness is positively influence by satisfaction. Similarly In another study it is found that positive perceived fairness of price is directly related to customer satisfaction (e.g. Bei and Chiao, 2001).

In another study (Andaleeb et al, 2006) found that if negative deviation in price perception occurs then it leads towards dissatisfaction. Because when price is higher then perceived value, the people then not likely to buy the product and become dissatisfied. Similarly (Cater et al, 2009) found that price and satisfaction are negatively related to each other. (Iglesias et al, 2004) found that perceived price does not effect satisfaction. Once the restaurant selected by the customer or a customer become loyal to the restaurant then satisfaction only depends upon quality and perceived price does not affect the satisfaction. On the basis of all these evidences we propose hypothesis that:

H1: There is a positive relationship between Price Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty.

QUALITY:

Quality can be defined as the measure of satisfaction. (Sivadas et al, 2000) study reveals that quality increases the level of satisfaction with department store. Research determines the relation between service and satisfaction on the bases of word-of-mouth, site revisit, and purchase intentions. (Mehra et al, 2008) study also found that total quality management is positively related to the satisfaction. (Iglesias et al, 2004) study also found that Perceived quality increases the level of satisfaction but perceived price has no effect on satisfaction.(Jayawardhena et al, 2011) in their study found that Service quality has direct relation on perceived value and value leads toward satisfaction. Researchers determine the relation between service orientation e.g. service quality, service value and behavioral intentions. On the basis all these common views we propose hypothesis that:

H2: There is a positive relationship between Quality and Customer Loyalty.

EMPLOYEE SERVICE:

People work within organization to serve customers is known as employee service. (Yoon et al. 2001) found that the supportive management and service atmosphere have significantly positive effect on employee job satisfaction and negative effect on customers' perceptions of employee service quality. (Schneider et al, 1993) study reveals that by providing the atmosphere that is according to desire of employee will results in higher level of positive customer experiences and that leads towards customer satisfaction. According to front-line employee service recovery model it is proved that empowerment satisfy the employee job as well as customer of organization. (Robinson et al, 2011). On the basis of all this evidence we propose hypothesis that:

H3: There is a positive relationship between Employee Service and Customer Loyalty.

SERVICE ASSORTMENT:

Service assortment is the variety of services offer by organization. In 1994, Dawar and Parker found relation between culture and its influence on satisfaction and loyalty. Culture highly effects the consumers' assessment of product quality. Research shows that y generation highly effect by the assortment. Now people generally interested to adopt those product and service which offer wide variety of product and service. Wide range of service affects the purchase behavior of customers and help to attract customer.

(Zhuang et al, 2006) found that Assortment effect purchase intention in food items as well as in non food items. Assortment and intention have positive impact on shopping of non food products proved in UK and US. Similarly (Korgaonkar et al, 2006) found that Merchandise assortments have strong impact on the purchase behavior and satisfaction in e- business. Findings shows that online buyers attracted towards those e-tailers which offer wide range of brands , minimum line of product, modern styles and wide selection. In another study it was found that food customers attract towards those trade outlets which offers high quality, freshness and wide range of assortment (Gutkowska and Ozimek, 2005). On the basis all these common views we propose hypothesis that:

H4: There is a positive relationship between Employee Service and Customer Loyalty.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

The degree to which customer expectations of a product or service are met is known as customer satisfaction. (Cater et al, 2009) found that satisfaction is positively related to the behavioral as well as attitudinal loyalty. Satisfaction is measured on the bases of core offering (price, quality, and service). In another study (Kandampull et al, 2000) found that Customer satisfaction leads towards loyalty. Similarly (Flavianns et al, 2008) found that positive interaction leads toward satisfaction with the bank website and satisfaction leads towards loyalty and

positive WOM.

Satisfaction and loyalty is positively related when a customer identify that their perception is no more helpful in understanding of instrumental. In contrary, the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty is negative when employee service is helpful to consumers in acquiring their values and when they experience a positive atmosphere (Ruyter et al, 1999). In another study satisfaction is not directly related to the loyalty. Satisfaction influences the repurchase, relative attitude, and recommendation and all these have influence on loyalty (Sivadas et al, 2000). On the basis all these views we propose hypothesis that:

H5: There is a positive relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty.

H6: Price Satisfaction, Quality, Employee Service, Service Assortment and customer Satisfaction explain the variance in Customer Loyalty

METHODOLOGY

This research has been conducted in order to check the influence of relationship marketing in mobile network operators of telecom sector of Pakistan and to find out the loyalty of customers for these mobile network operators. For this purpose a sample of 130 questionnaires was filled from the University of Sargodha, Sargodha which is one of the well renowned universities of Pakistan. The Questions adapted from Bettencourt (1977); Bloemer and DeRuyter (1998); Maddox (1977); de Wulf et al. (2001) The questionnaires were filled from the students of different departments of the university who were the customers of any one of the mobile network operators from the five main mobile networks in Pakistan named as Ufone, Telenor, Warid, Zong and Mobilink. From a total of 130 questionnaires, 120 completely filled questionnaires were returned, 10 questionnaires were lost during the process.

For conducting this study the data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The questionnaires were filled in the month of March, 2011. The questionnaire consisted of the total 26 questions which were classified according to the variables of this study, the first 3 questions were related to the price satisfaction, next 4 were related to the quality, next 4 were related to the employee service, next 4 were related to the service assortment, next 4 were related to the customer satisfaction and the last 7 were related to the customer loyalty. Three additional questions were used, from which 1 question was about the name of the mobile network operator used by the respondents, 1 was about the age of respondents and 1 was about the gender of the respondents. **Table 1.1** showed that the following questionnaires were filled from 70 female and 50 male respondents. Similarly **Table 1.2** showed that nearly 29.2 percent respondents were between the ages of 17-19 years. Roughly, 60 percent were between the ages of 20-22 years, and about 10.8 percent were 23 years old and above. The five-point Likert scale was used (where 1 equals strongly disagree and 5 equals strongly agree). From a total of 120 filled questionnaires, maximum numbers of respondents were of Ufone (34.2%) and minimum numbers of respondents were of Warid (13.3%) as mentioned in the **Table 1.3**. Pie charts also showing the respondents of genders, age and mobile network operators.

Table 1.1

What is your gender?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	50	41.7	41.7	41.7
Female	70	58.3	58.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.2

Your age group in years?

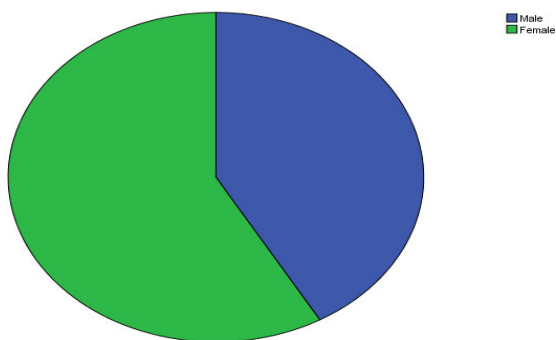
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 17 – 19 years	35	29.2	29.2	29.2
20 - 22 years	72	60.0	60.0	89.2
23 years and above	13	10.8	10.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.3

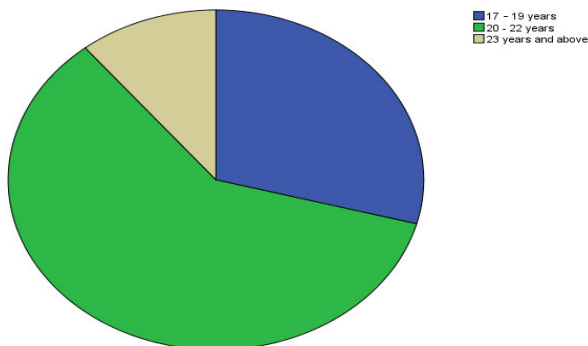
Respondent Mobile Network Operator

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ufone	41	34.2	34.2	34.2
	Telenor	23	19.2	19.2	53.3
	Warid	16	13.3	13.3	66.7
	Mobilink	18	15.0	15.0	81.7
	Zong	22	18.3	18.3	100.0
	Total		120	100.0	100.0

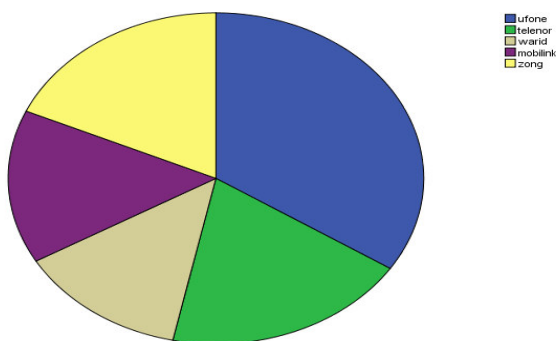
What is your gender?



Your age group in years?



respondent mobile network operator



Descriptive statistics and the comparison of mean have been used to study the response of the sample. The Cronbach's Alpha revealed the result of reliability. Correlation analysis was used to study the relationship between variables. Such that these analysis studied the positive relation of all the independent variables (price

satisfaction, quality, employee service, service assortment and customer satisfaction) with the dependent variable (customer loyalty). Regression analysis was used in order to test the hypothesis for this research.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Mean:

Table 2.1

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Price satisfaction	120	3.6778	.77776
Quality	120	3.4729	.78910
Employee Service	120	3.6729	.73034
Service Assortment	120	3.8125	.65164
Customer Satisfaction	120	3.7687	.72193
Customer Loyalty	120	3.6536	.64864
Valid N (list wise)	120		

The results in the **Table 2.1** showed that quality has the lowest mean (3.4729) and service assortment has the highest mean (3.8125). So among the all independent variables service assortment highly affects the customer loyalty.

Comparison of Mean

Table 3.1

Customer Loyalty * What is your gender?

Customer Loyalty

What is your gender?	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Male	3.5800	50	.67465
Female	3.7061	70	.62903
Total	3.6536	120	.64864

The results in the **Table 3.1** showed that the mean of female (3.7061) is greater than the mean of male (3.5800). So we can say that the female respondents are more loyal customers than the male respondents.

Table 3.2

Customer Loyalty * Your age group in years?

Customer Loyalty

Your age group in years?	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
17 – 19 years	3.6980	35	.72245
20 - 22 years	3.6687	72	.61308
23 years and above	3.4505	13	.64641
Total	3.6536	120	.64864

The results in the **Table 3.2** showed that the respondents who were between the ages of 17-19 years have highest mean (3.6980), so they were more loyal customers than those who have the ages above 19 years.

Table 3.3
Customer Loyalty * respondent mobile network operator

Customer Loyalty

Respondent Mobile Network Operator	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Ufone	3.6132	41	.59526
Telenor	3.5776	23	.74290
Warid	4.0982	16	.53381
Mobilink	3.8095	18	.40108
Zong	3.3571	22	.72408
Total	3.6536	120	.64864

The results in the **Table 3.3** showed that customer of Warid telecom are more loyal to their network because its mean value (4.0982) is relatively more than the other mobile networks.

INFRENTIAL STATISTICS

Cronbach's Alpha

Table 4.1

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.904	26

The results in the **Table 4.1** showed that the data we have collected of 26 no. of items was highly reliable because the value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.904 which showed that the data collected in the study was highly reliable.

Table 5

Correlations

		Customer Loyalty	Price satisfaction	Quality	Employee service	Service Assortment	Customer satisfaction
Customer Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.462**	.625**	.478**	.359**	.705**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120
Price satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.462**	1	.447**	.396**	.387**	.651**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120
Quality	Pearson Correlation	.625**	.447**	1	.384**	.291**	.702**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.001	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120
Employee Service	Pearson Correlation	.478**	.396**	.384**	1	.373**	.412**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120
Service Assortment	Pearson Correlation	.359**	.387**	.291**	.373**	1	.404**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001	.000		.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.705**	.651**	.702**	.412**	.404**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

H1: There is a significant, positive correlation between Price Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty.

The results in the **Table 5** shows that there is a positive correlation (R: 0.462) between Price Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty which is also significant at 0.000 level. Therefore we accept H1.

H2: There is a significant, positive correlation between Quality and Customer Loyalty.

The results in the **Table 5** shows that there is a positive correlation (R: 0.625) between Quality and Customer Loyalty which is also significant at 0.000 level. Therefore we accept H2.

H3: There is a significant, positive correlation between Employee Service and Customer Loyalty.

The results in the **Table 5** shows that there is a positive correlation (R: 0.478) between Employee Service and Customer Loyalty which is also significant at 0.000 level. Therefore we accept H3

H4: There is a significant, positive correlation between Employee Service and Customer Loyalty.

The results in the **Table 5** shows that there is a positive correlation (R: 0.359) between Service Assortment and Customer Loyalty which is also significant at 0.000 level. Therefore we accept H4.

H5: There is a significant, positive correlation between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty.

The results in the **Table 5** shows that there is a positive correlation (R: 0.705) between Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty which is also significant at 0.000 level. Therefore we accept H5.

Regression:

H6: Price Satisfaction, Quality, Employee Service, Service Assortment and customer Satisfaction significantly explain the variance in Customer Loyalty

Table 6.1

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.752 ^a	.565	.546	.43694	2.081

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer satisfaction, Service Assortment, Employee Service, Price Satisfaction, Quality

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

Table 6.2

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.303	5	5.661	29.650	.000 ^a
	Residual	21.765	114	.191		
	Total	50.068	119			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Satisfaction, Service Assortment, Employee Service, Price satisfaction, Quality

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

The results in Table 6.1 shows that the Independent Variables (Price Satisfaction, Quality, Employee Service, Service Assortment and customer Satisfaction) significantly explain the variance (R: 0.546) in Dependent Variable i.e. Customer Loyalty. The value of Durbin-Watson statistic (2.081) also falls within the acceptance range therefore indicating that there is no autocorrelation among the variables being studied. Similarly the **ANOVA table** shows that the F-statistic value of 29.650 is also significant at 0.000 level. Therefore we accept H6.

Table 6.3

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.724	.286		2.534	.013
	Price satisfaction	-.036	.070	-.043	-.517	.606
	Quality	.179	.072	.218	2.478	.015
	Employee Service	.175	.064	.197	2.757	.007
	Service Assortment	.044	.070	.045	.634	.528
	Customer Satisfaction	.432	.093	.481	4.631	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

Table 6.3 indicates the Beta values for Price satisfaction (-0.43), Quality (0.218), Employee Service (0.197), Service Assortment (0.45) and Customer Satisfaction (0.481). It can be observed that among the all independent variables being studied the variable Customer Satisfaction has a greater impact on customer loyalty as it has the highest Standardized Beta Coefficient ($\beta=0.481$) which is also significant at 0.000 level.

DISCUSSION

Research was conducted in order to measure the relation between independent variables (Price Satisfaction, Quality, Employee Service, Service Assortment) and dependant variable i.e. customer loyalty. Research showed

that all the independent variables positively influenced loyalty. Research results are quiet similar to the research conducted by (Huddleston et al, 2009).

In interpretation of the results of this study, we found that service assortment highly affects customer loyalty because its mean (3.8125) is highest among all the independent variables (price satisfaction, quality, employee service, customer satisfaction). Price satisfaction is the second most important variable which highly affects the customer loyalty. Customer Satisfaction has a greater impact on customer loyalty as it has the highest Standardized Beta Coefficient ($\beta=0.481$) which is also significant at 0.000 level.

Research results showed that today, Customers gives more value to assortment therefore; Mobile Network Operators should offer large variety of packages according to choice of their customers. Research results also showed that customers may compromise on quality up to some extent if customer is satisfied with the prices and variety of packages offered by their network.

The result in table 3.3 shows that customers of Warid telecom are more loyal to their network as compare to the customers of other networks. So other Mobile Network Operators should follow the strategies of Warid telecom to make their customers loyal. In order to increase the loyalty, Mobile Network Operators should provide their services manually, so that customers can adopt the service according to their choice and should also offer the services at minimum price to make them satisfied.

This research includes a limitation that the people under consideration of sample are highly educated and young people mostly 20-22 years old (table 1.2), while there is reasonable quantity of uneducated mobile users.

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