

# Customer Loyalty among Subscribers in Metropolitan Kano: The Predicting Power of Gender, Age, Income Level and Education

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## Abstract

With the realization that the traditional marketing Ps can no longer provide the competitive edge that is so much needed in today's fast changing business landscape, being characterized by creativity and innovation, business leaders have started shifting their focus to those customer relationship tactics which they assume will earn them the ability to attract different customer segments while at the same time retaining them to advance organizational profitability. This paper investigates the concept of customer loyalty among the subscribers of Mobile telecommunication in Nigeria. It x-rays the predicting power of Gender, Age Group, Income level and Education on the tendency of subscribers to remain loyal to their mobile phone service providers. Making use three hundred and ninety (390) respondents who are conveniently selected from eight geographical clusters, of Kano metropolitan areas, responses were generated from the subscribers of four major telecommunication company in Nigeria through close ended and structured questionnaire. Furthermore, the independent T-test of difference and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed as statistical test while the results obtained indicated that all the demographical characteristics considered does not have any significant predicting power on customer loyalty. In other words, a significant difference does not exist in customer loyalty among the subscribers according to their demographic characteristics: Gender, Age group, Income level and education. In the light of these findings, it was recommended that telecom companies should ensure that their customer loyalty campaigns and resources are extended to all customer groups regardless of these critical demographic characteristics in that such action will result in an optimum customer loyalty, more prudent use of marketing resources, and an unnecessary wastage of these resources.

**Keywords:** Customer Loyalty, Gender, Age Group, Income Level, Education.

## 1.1 Introduction

The concept of customer Loyalty has become an issue un-debatable in the enhancement of organizational sales and profitability. For instance Reichheld (1996) confirmed that a 5% improvement in company's customer attrition rate can push company's profits 75% higher. while it is in the opinion of Jahazeb, Fatima & Khan (2011) that those customer who exhibit loyalty not only reduce the marketing costs of doing business, but also, tend to lessen the need to incur cost on new customer acquisition. In an earlier argument by Zhang & Feng (2009) customer loyalty is the ultimate goal of every relationship marketing particularly in the mobile telecommunication industry where the switching rate among subscribers is deemed to be one of the highest across industries. As such, researchers and industry players strive to have a clearer understanding of the concept with the intent of uncovering its relevant antecedents.

Many studies on customer loyalty have focused on these antecedents from the perspective of organizational related attributes. For instance Jahazeb, Fatima & Khan (2011) examined the concept by focusing on the predicting power of service quality, Trust, Staff loyalty and switching cost while Adekiya (2014) uncovered a positive and significant relationship between the combination of customer satisfaction, brand image, trust on one side and customer loyalty on the other side. This is to indicate that the combination of these attributes can be used as a precursor to the loyalty and commitment of customers in organizational settings.

However, to the knowledge of the researcher, no study has made attempt to examine the concept by focusing on customers related characteristics even though; these people are the ultimate buyers of organizational products and services. In order words, the empirical evidence on the influence of consumer demographics factors on customer loyalty particularly among the subscribers of mobile telecom service in the Nigerian telecommunication industry is weak, despite the fact that these factors are of immense importance in the field of consumer purchase behavior: which, in the opinion of Gilbert & Churchil (1999) deals with the way consumers behave and prefer product/services). Empirical evidences indicate that the market place has become diverse in lifestyle, want, income and age. For instance the spending power of females have increased over the years and in many cases, they have become head of their respective household, setting them as major decision makers in contrary to what used to be previously obtained. As opined by Javalgi & Thomas (2000) the 65 and over years segment is growing at twice the rate of the general population hence it is important to understand this particular segment from the perceptive of customer loyalty. They equally shed more light on the importance of gender in regards to customer loyalty by concluding that by 2030, the females will represent over 2/3 of the over sixty five year segment. In addition, the submission by Demmarrias (2002) indicated that more than 38% of the adult

population is over 50 thereby making it critical to have a deep knowledge of this people in regard to customer loyalty.

It is against these background that this study will investigate the influence of demographic variables on the tendency of mobile phone subscribers in the Nigerian telecom industry to exhibit the characteristics of a loyal customer and vice versa. It will fill the gap in knowledge about the effect of demographics on consumer behavior, and will also be of help to marketers and consumer psychologist regarding a better understanding of this behavior.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to determine the predicting power of demographic factors on the loyalty among subscribers in the Nigerian mobile telecom industry. Specifically, it will compare brand loyalty of customers in relation to gender, income level, age and educational level in an attempt to shed light on the existence of differences in the loyalty exhibited by these subscribers according to the categories in each demographic profile.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Customer Loyalty

According to Kuo-Ming (2009) customer loyalty is a positive attitude and behavior related to the level of future re-purchasing commitment among customers. Similarly, McIlroy & Barnett (2000) defined the concept as the commitment of customers to do dealing with a particular firm, buy their product and services and refer it to colleagues. In the opinion of Egan (2004) Loyalty is defined as an unspecified number of repeat purchases from the same supplier over a specified period. In an attempt to shed more light from the perspective of consumer psychology, Rauyruen and Miller (2007) identified two major component of consumer loyalty: attitudinal loyalty (emotional attachments and advocacy of customers toward the company), and behavioral loyalty (willingness of customer to repurchase from and continue relationships with the company).

According to Akrofi, Akrofi & Wellbeck (2013) customer loyalty is the most important goal of implementing relationship marketing activities by organizations. As posited by Lin & Wang (2006) the concept has been shown to be a main feature in getting competitive advantage among corporate organizations. In the opinion of Pan, Sheng & Xie (2011) a firm can develop long lasting and jointly profitable associations with customers by developing customer loyalty while Lin & Wang (2006) also maintained that the success of company sales are ensured by customer loyalty and this would go a long way to determine the market competitiveness of the organization. The theory of consumer behavior indicates that the consumer decision-making process does not occur in a vacuum. On the contrary, underlying cultural, social, individual, and psychological factors strongly influence the decision process. In other words, the prediction of consumer's repurchase behavior might not be conclusive if done in isolation of consumer demographic characteristics. This was confirmed by Negi & Singh (2012) who maintained that an analysis and deep understanding of prospective customers, based on their demographic characteristics and geographical regions is important in order to offer the right products/services. Consequently, this research will focus on the four demographic characteristics of consumers: gender, income level, age group and education which have been proposed by the literature as critical determinants of customer loyalty.

#### 2.1.1 Customer Loyalty and Gender

Evidences from several studies have indicated that there is a relationship between consumer's gender characteristics, and their tendency to be brand loyal. However, there seems to be lot of inconsistencies as regards the nature of this relationship. For instance it is in the opinion of Lee & Cunningham (2001) that perception of female customer based on demographics affects their judgment of brands and in turn impacts brand loyalty. As argued by Fournier (1998) the famine nature associated with women is closely linked to more and stronger interpersonal capabilities which in turn translate to more brand relationships among them than their male counterpart. According to Satish & Sri (2004) the average loyalty across products is 86% for men and 88% for women. Saad, Ishak, & Johari (2013) pointed that females are known to generally place higher value on long-term relationships and have a more famine orientation than their male counterpart. Empirically, the research by Alrubaiee & Al-Nazeer (2010) among bank customers in Jordan clearly indicated that gender has a significant role in the prediction of customer loyalty from the perspective of relationship marketing tactics. In order words, while relationship marketing tactics was found to have a positive and significant relationship with customer loyalty, such relationship was however moderated by gender in that it is stronger and more significant among the female respondents in the study. In contrary, Zulkifli & Tahir (2012) concluded in their study that customers' perceptions of customer relationship practices among banks are similar regardless of gender, age group, education level, employment, and that these demographic factors have no relationship whatsoever to customer loyalty. These are findings from other industries and environment. Thus it is not clear as to what the situation will be in the mobile telecom sector particularly among the mobile phone subscribers in Nigeria hence to confirm or disrepute this earlier investigations, this null hypothesis is formulated.

H1 There is no significant difference in customer loyalty among the subscribers of mobile telecom operators in Kano in relation to gender.

### **2.1.2 Customer Loyalty and Age Group**

According to Patrickson & Hartman (1997) older people tend to be more resistance to change and less motivated by new technology. The implication of this is that older consumers might be more unwilling to leave their product/service provider and switch to a more innovation oriented companies. To complement this view, Koco (2001) maintained that older citizens tend to make purchase decision based on their experience and wisdom and thus, more inclined to critically analyze any new producers before making switch. This equally indicates that in the face of a consistent and long term favorable relationship, older people will tend to be more loyal to their present brand.

Cole, Drolet, Gutches, Pandrand, Norton, & Peter (2008) are of the view that there exists a higher brand loyalty among older age groups because of deeper relationships with brands over a period of time. Munat, Shaheen, Hussain, Kamrani & Vohra (2009) uncovered an empirically supported evidence that younger Pakistani consumer between the age of 18 – 21 tend to exhibit a higher loyalty than those who are between the ages of 22 – 24 reason given being the tendency of younger adults getting more influenced by situational factors such as peer groups and family member than their middle age counterpart. Also, it is the opinion of Saad, Ishak & Johari (2013) that older consumers are more conservative and thus, less willing to try new brands. In a related view by Lumpkin & Hunt (1989) reduced mobility in later life restricts brand choice and thus, fosters brand loyalty among older consumers. However, Clark (2006) contradicts all these by claiming that younger consumers are less committed to brands than older consumers while Uncles & Ehrenberg (1990) submitted that there is no significant difference between younger and older consumers of fast moving consumer goods in the United States of America. Also, Chi, Gursoy & Qu. (2009) maintained that loyalty is not influenced by age but rather by number of years of experience with a brand. This implies that younger customers who have more years of positive experience with their firm might likely exhibit a higher level of loyalty than an older customer with less years of experience.

In addition, the research by Mishra & Prasad (2014) generated empirically supported results which indicated a weak significant relationship between the age group of respondents and their loyalty in regards to a single brand categories with no significant relationship found for the seven other brand categories considered in the study. Similarly, the research by Priscilla, Edward and Theresa (2008) among financial services users, which examined the moderating impact of some selected demographic factors on the relationship between relationship marketing on one side and customer loyalty on the other side, uncovered that there is no significant difference among the individual in the study according to their respective age groups. In order words, though a significant positive relationship was found between all the dimension of relationship marketing considered and customer loyalty however, such relationship is not determined by the age group of the respondents. Clearly all the studies highlighted are conflicting in nature and thus unclear as to what result will be produced by this particular environment hence it is hypothesized that

H2: There is no significant difference in customer loyalty among the subscribers of mobile telecom operators in Kano in relation to age groups.

### **2.1.3 Customer Loyalty and Education**

According to Saad Izhak & Johari (2013) People who function in higher status occupations have characteristic personalities, motives and values that set them apart from those in less prestigious positions. They further submitted that the values, attitudes and motives that arise from greater levels of occupational self direction underlie behavior beyond the workplace, extending to all phases of existence, including buying behavior. Thus since it is assumed that education play a major role in determining occupational status in any society, one can thus reason that those with higher educational level will tend to exhibit a significant different buying behavior including loyalty, from their counterpart of lower educational status.

As posited by Filoto, Tanzi & Saita, (1997) the customer segment that is most likely attracted to the technology based financial institutions appears to those who are more educated. This is to indicate that educated customers are more technological savvy, well versed in the intricacies involved in product/services offerings and will tend to stick to their financial services provider despite innovative technological changes from such provider than their less educated counterparts.

Divergently, in the research by Alrubaiee & Al-Nazeer (2010) with a view to determine the impact of relationship marketing tactics on customer loyalty among Jordanian bank customers, where such demographic variables: sex, education and income level were introduced into the model to determine their respective moderating impact, uncovered that a significant positive relationship exist between the two concepts of relationship marketing and customer loyalty. However, such relationship is not moderated by the educational qualification of respondents in that individual respondents, belonging to different educational status did not exhibit a significance difference in the relationship marketing customer loyalty relationship. In a similar vein evidences from the research by Nsour (2013) suggested that there is no significance difference in loyalty across

educational level of the 500 customers of telecommunication companies surveyed. Hence to compare these results with what might be obtained in this specific environment and industry, it is hypothesized that

H:3 There is no significant difference in customer loyalty among the subscribers of mobile telecom operators in Kano in relation to educational status.

#### **2.1.4 Customer Loyalty and Income Level**

Url, Roman & Paulson (1970) admitted that people in higher income categories are more innovative and likely to adopt new technology, products and services than lower income people. This is to indicate that customers with a higher level of income are more likely to switch brand, product/services at a higher rate than their lower income level counterpart in any industry that is characterized by inter-company creativity and innovation like the Nigerian Telecommunication industry. In a similar vein, Schaninger & Sciglimpaglia (1981) examined the impact of socio economic factors on customer loyalty and discovered that people with a higher level of socio economic status tend to process more information and examine more attributes and alternatives before making purchase decision, than their counterparts in the lower socio economic status. This is to imply that those people with more education and income level might likely be less loyal than their counterparts and will switch to other products and services which are deemed to be more favorable at a point in time.

More light was however shed on this by East, Harris, Willson & Hammond (1995) who admitted that though past studies have indicated no significant relationship between income level and customer loyalty and that it is however possible that if age is brought into the equation, the result might likely reveal a different scenario. In other words, younger people, with busier work, larger income and family schedules may be inclined to always purchase from a single brand due to time constraints while those who are older, does not belong to the working age, and less busy may have to use more stores to reduce costs. Thus, income level would tend to be a predictor of customer loyalty if considered from the perspective of customer age group.

Divergently, empirical evidences from the work of Priscilla, Edward and Theresa (2008) demonstrated that the significant positive relationship uncovered between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty cut across all income group categories and there exists no significant impact of income level on such relationship. In other words regardless of income level, companies willing to influence customer loyalty can acquire such feat from the perspective of customer satisfaction. On the basis of these, it is hypothesize that:

H: 4 there is no significant difference in customer loyalty among the subscribers of mobile telecom operators in Kano in relation to income groups.

### **3 Methodology of the Paper**

The population of this study is the subscribers to mobile phone services offered by the major telecommunication companies operating within Kano metropolis in Nigeria: (MTN, Globacom, Airtel, and Etisalat). The multistage sampling was adopted as a sampling technique. First the cluster sampling method was used to divide the area in focus into eight clusters: Kano municipal, Ungongo, Tarauni, Dala, Fagge, Kumbotzo, Gwale and Nassarawa. Second, the proportionate sampling technique was adopted in picking research respondents from each cluster based on the population strength of these clusters. Finally, the convenience sampling technique was used in picking a total of four hundred (400) respondents as our primary sampling unit. A self administered structured questionnaire from the original work of Lam, Shanker, Eramilli & Murphy (2004); Morgan and Hunt (1994); and Zethaml (1988), was used in eliciting responses from the respondents in focus after being subjected to a pilot study involving 20 subjects in a neighboring local government, and restructured to accommodate the suggestions from these pilot subjects. Out of the four hundred questionnaires distributed, a total of three hundred and ninety four were retrieved, four were discarded for improper completion and omissions. The remaining three hundred and ninety (390) were found valid and consequently used for analysis thus indicating a response rate of 98.3%. A reliability testing was performed on all eight items involved, and a Cronbach alpha of 0.858 which is well above the 0.70 threshold as suggested by Sekaran (2008) was obtained thereby indicating a high reliability. Furthermore, the independent t-test and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed as instrument of statistical test in determining if significance difference exists among the respondents according to all the demographic characteristics in focus: gender, age group, income level, and education. All data were processed by the Statistical package for Social Sciences, (SPSS) 20<sup>th</sup> edition.

#### **4.1 Results**

The demographic characteristics of respondents were classified based on gender, age group, income level, educational level, occupation and marital status. Based on the analysis conducted, it was found that 204 or 52.3% of the respondents were male while 186 or 47.7% of the respondents were female. In addition, 177 or 45.4% of respondents are single, 210 or 53.8% are married, while 3 or 0.8% are divorced. Also, 94 or 24.1% of the respondents are between 15-25 years, 202 or 51.8% are between 26-36 years, 66 or 16.9% are between 37-47 years while 28 or 7.2% are 48 years and above. Furthermore, 173 or 44.4% of the respondents are civil servants, 13 or 3.3% of the respondents are self employed, 108 or 27.7% are students. Furthermore, 84 or 21.5% are

employed by the private sector while 12 or 3.1% are unemployed. As regards educational qualification, 50 or 12.8% of the respondents have the Senior School Certificate (SSCE qualification), 77 or 19.7% have the Ordinary National Diploma (OND certificate), 172 or 44.1% have the Higher National Diploma or Bachelor Degree, while 91 or 23.3% have post graduate qualifications. Finally, 99 or 25.4% earns less than N15,000, 89 or 22.8% earns between N16,000-N31,000, 55 or 14.1% earns between N32,000-N47,000, while 147 or 37.7% earns N48,000 and above.

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics of Customer Loyalty**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.858	9

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Customer Loyalty**

Construct	N	Mean	Std Deviation
<b>A:</b> I will continue to do business with this service Provider for a long time.	390	3.7333	.98088
<b>B:</b> My service provider is the best in the industry.	390	3.5872	1.09514
<b>C:</b> Even if the price charges of another operator is Lower I will go on using this provider	390	3.2667	1.23807
<b>D:</b> Even if there are more attractive promotional Offerings from rival companies i will choose To continue using this provider	390	3.2872	1.18021
<b>E:</b> I am willing to say positive things about my main Telecom service provider to other people.	390	3.6410	1.00863
<b>F:</b> I have said positive things about the company to Other colleague	390	3.7179	.94987
<b>G:</b> I have encouraged others to patronize the company.	390	3.6590	1.02619
<b>H:</b> No matter what happened. I am willing to continue Using this provider.	390	3.3590	1.15812
<b>Mean Average: 3.5314125</b>			

The reliability statistics and descriptive statistics of the items for customer loyalty are presented in table 1 and 2 respectively. As indicated by table 2, the mean average score of the customer loyalty exhibited by respondents is 3.5314125, the minimum mean score is 3.2667, while the maximum mean score is 3.7333. This is a high mean score, hence it can be concluded that the respondents in this study are high in loyalty to their respective telecom service provider

**Table 3: Statistics for Skewness and Kurtosis of Customer loyalty**

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
CUSTOMER LOYALTY	390	-.511	.124	.389	.247
Valid N (listwise)	390				

Table 3 above shows the statistics for skewness and Kurtosis. As indicated by the table, the skewness is -.511 and the Kurtosis value is .389 hence the assumption of normality is satisfied to a great extent.



**Table 4a: T- test of Statistical Difference between Male and Female in Customer Loyalty**

	Leven test for equality of variance		t test for equality of means	
	F	Sig	t	df
Equal variances Assumed	22	.881	-0.634	388
Equal variances Not assumed			-0.633	380.222

---According to table 4a above the Leven test of equality in variance shows a statistic value of .881 which is greater than 0.05 and not significant hence it can be assumed that the groups have equal variances and not significantly different in variances.

**Table 4b: T- test of Statistical Difference between Male and Female in Customer Loyalty**

Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std Error Difference	95% Confidence interval of the Difference	
			Lower	Upper
.526	-.41651	.65663	-1.70751	.87449
.527	-.41651	.65817	-1.71061	.87759

In table 4b above it is shown that the significant value is .526 and greater than the 0.05 confidence level, which is adopted as a threshold in this study. Hence we can thus conclude that there is no significant difference between the mean of the two independent groups of male and females, in customer loyalty. In order words, the average of .41651 in customer loyalty that is exhibited by the male in this study is insignificant and due to chance occurrence.

**Table 5: one way ANOVA a Test of Statistical Independence between Gender and Customer Loyalty**

	Sum of square	df	mean square	F	sig
Between groups	16.878	1	16.878	402	.526
Within groups	16276.119	388	41.949		
Total	16292.997	389			

According to table (5) above, the result of the test of hypothesis was a mean square 16.878, df=1, F= 402 (at P > 0.05). Since the significance value of the F test in the ANOVA table (.526) is much greater than the 0.05 significant level, we must accept the null hypothesis that a significant difference does not exist in customer loyalty across gender groups. In order words, a significant relationship does not exist between gender and customer loyalty.

**Table 6: one way ANOVA, a Test of Statistical Independence between Age groups and Customer Loyalty**

	Sum of square	df	mean square	F	Sig
Between groups	22.350	3	7.450	.177	.912
Within groups	16270.647	386	42.152		
Total	16292.997	389			

According to the table above, the result of the test for hypothesis was a mean square 7.450, df3,  $F=.177(P > 0.05)$ . Since the significance value of the F test in the ANOVA table (.912) is greater than 0.05 we must equally accept the null hypothesis which stated that a significant difference does not exist in customer loyalty across the age groups of the respondents in this study. i.e there is no significant relationship between respondents age groups and customer loyalty.

**Table 7: one way ANOVA, a Test of Statistical Independence between Respondent's Educational level and Customer Loyalty**

	Sum of square	df	mean square	F	Sig
Between groups	24.234	3	8.078	.192	.902
Within groups	162683	386			
Total	16292.997	389			

According to the table above, the result of the test for hypothesis was a mean square 8.078, df3,  $F=.192(P > 0.05)$  since the significance value of the F test in the ANOVA table (.902) is greater than 0.05 then we must also accept the null hypothesis which stated that a significant difference does not exist in customer loyalty among respondents across different educational level. This is to indicate that there is no significant relationship between respondent's educational qualification and their scores in customer loyalty.

**Table 8: One way ANOVA, a Test of Statistical Independence between Respondent's Income level and Customer Loyalty**

	Sum of squares	df	mean square	F	Sig
Between groups	39.235	3	13.078	.311	.818
Within groups	16253.762	386	42.108		
Total	16292	389			

According to the table above, the result of the test for hypothesis was a mean square 13.078, df 3,  $F=.311(P > 0.05)$ . Thus since the significance value of the F test in the ANOVA table (.818) is greater than 0.05 and not significant we must accept the null hypothesis which stated that a significant difference in customer loyalty, does not exist across income group categories among the respondents in this study.

#### 4.2 Discussion and Conclusion

The present research investigated the impact of demographic factors on customer loyalty among the subscribers of mobile telecom companies in Nigeria specifically, Kano metropolitan areas. The study has been successful in answering a number of critical questions that were raised through the literature review and theoretical framework of the study. From the review of existing literature, four null hypotheses were formulated with results indicating

an acceptance of the four hypotheses.

Hypothesis one which stated that there is no significant difference in customer loyalty between male and female subscribers was accepted thereby indicating that gender is not a factor of relevance in the prediction of customer loyalty among them. Both the result of the independent t-test and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were presented in table 4a and 4b respectively. The leven test of equality in the t-test shows that there is no significance difference in variance in customer loyalty between the males and females in this study with a significant value of .881 which is greater than the 0.05 threshold. Equally the t-test for equality of means reveals that there exist no significant difference in the mean score of males and females in customer loyalty with significant statistics of .526 which is much greater than the 0.05 threshold that is adopted for this study. Finally, the analysis of variance result in table 5 indicated that both the male and females in this study are dependent in their score and that gender is independent of customer loyalty. This is to indicate that telecom companies must start looking beyond the concept of gender difference when segmenting on the basis of customer loyalty. This result is in contrast with the position of Saad, Ishak, & Johari (2013) which maintained that women have more famine orientation than men and thus, tend to place more value on long term relationship thereby making them to be more loyal than the men. Our finding in this particular study might not be unconnected to the fact that the predominant culture in the environment from where respondents were picked is collectivist in nature. Hence this might make the behavior of group members for instance husband and wife to take the same pattern. In such atmosphere, a female loyal customer who is committed to a particular brand might easily influence her husband or other male associates to become a loyal customer of the same brand.

Second, it was considered appropriate to determine the effect of age on customer loyalty. Hence hypothesis (2) which stated that there is no significant difference in customer loyalty among subscribers according to their age group was tested with results from the analysis of variance (ANOVA) in table (6) indicating that the customer loyalty of respondents is independent of age. Hence an acceptance of the hypothesis. In other words, regardless of age group category, subscribers will tend to exhibit the same level of customer loyalty all things being equal. This however contradicts the opinion of Cole, Drolet, Gutches, Pandrand, Norton, & Peter (2008) who are of the view that there exists a higher brand loyalty among older age groups because of deeper relationships with brands over a period of time. It nonetheless agrees with the position of Chi, Gursoy & Qu (2009) who submitted that loyalty is not influenced by age but rather by number of years of experience with a brand. Thus younger customers who have more years of positive experience with their telecom service provider might likely exhibit a higher level of loyalty than an older customer with less years of experience with the same company. Thus, since most of the respondents in this study have been with their respective service provider for a long period of time, it is therefore assumed that they must have developed such familiarity that translated into loyalty for the provider regardless of their age group categories.

Third, it was equally considered imperative to determine the effect of educational level on customer loyalty. Hence hypothesis (3) was tested while the results uncovered an insignificant relationship between customer loyalty and their income level. i.e the significant F score in table (7) is 0.192 and greater than 0.05 indicating that there is no relationship between respondents educational level and their tendency to exhibit the characteristics of a loyal customer. In other words, subscribers will tend to exhibit the characteristics of loyal or disloyal customers regardless of their educational level. This is in coherence with the findings of Alrubaiee & Al-Nazeer (2010) where it was discovered that a significant relationship does not exist between the educational level of Jordanian Bank customers and their tendency to be loyal to a particular Banking institution. It also shares similar view with Nsour (2013) where empirical evidences indicated that there is no significance difference in loyalty across educational level of the 500 customers of telecommunication companies in Iran.

Finally, hypothesis (4) was also tested while results indicate that a significant relationship does not exist between income level and customer loyalty among respondents hence the rejection of this hypothesis. In other words, an insignificant difference in customer loyalty was found between respondents of different income groups. Thus, respondents in this study seem to be exhibiting a high or low level of commitment to their respective telecom service provider regardless of their income level. This is in contrast with the empirical findings of Schaninger & Sciglimpaglia (1981) where it was discovered that people with a higher level of socio economic status tend to process more information and examine more attributes and alternatives before making purchase decision and are thus more likely to switch brand at a faster rate than their counterparts in the lower socio economic status. It is however in support of the findings by Priscilla, Edward and Theresa (2008) where it was demonstrated that the significant positive relationship uncovered between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty cut across all income group categories and there exists no significant impact of income level on such relationship hence, in the event that the respondents in this particular study are satisfied with the products and services on offer by their service provider, such satisfaction might tend to translate to loyalty regardless of income level. Furthermore, it must be noted that most of the products/services offered by the telecom service providers in Nigeria are standardized and undifferentiated hence subscribes, regardless of their purchasing power or crave for class might find it difficult switching network. Finally the reduced call tariff among providers as a



result of stiff intercompany competition has made telecom services affordable thereby making services charges to be insignificant regardless of the financial status of subscribers.

## 5 Implications/Limitation

The concept of customer loyalty has become critical for organizational survival. It is even suggested by some experts as the main basis for the survival of any organizations. In response to this, most organizations including telecom companies have considered it imperative to channel organizational resources towards the realization of dedicated and committed customer base which will henceforth serve as a catalyst for a long term survival of the organization. Among the major factors of consideration in channeling such organizational resources is the concept of segmentation which will henceforth ensure that resources are properly channeled to intended target and thus ensure a corresponding maximum impact. This study has discovered that such important variables of segmentation: gender, age group, educational level and income group does not play any significant role in the tendency of subscribers to become loyal to their telecom service providers.

Hence, it is suggested that telecom companies must start looking beyond these four demographic characteristics while segmenting for the benefit of executing customer loyalty programs. For instance in the allocation of resources for these programs, telecom companies, especially in the areas under focus in this study must be aware that these demographic characteristics do not serve as important basis of consideration while allocating marketing resources. In other words, the companies must make attempt to extend their customer loyalty programs to all customer categories regardless of their gender, age group, educational level and income group in that any attempt to alienate a customer group on the basis of these aforementioned factors might result into a loss for the company.

Also, companies should ensure that all resources budgeted for the enhancement of customer loyalty must be uniform and balanced with no special consideration on the basis of these demographic characteristics. It is thus anticipated that this might tend to lead to a more desirable outcome, and less wastages of marketing resources.

Finally, this research is limited to the area that encompasses the present day Kano metropolitan areas hence the need to be cautions in generalizing the results to the whole Nigerian telecom industry. Thus effort must be made by future researchers to replicate similar investigation in other environment or states to provide basis of comparison with the results obtained here.

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