

IMPACT OF THE DIMENSIONS OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN TELENOR TELECOM COMPANY, PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT: *Customer loyalty is considered a foundation of competitive advantage in favor of the organizations in modern business environment. Organizations are more concerned to make their customers satisfied with their services/products and are formulating the policies regarding customer loyalty. In current research the impact of customer relationship management (CRM) dimensions (customer involvement and information sharing) on customer loyalty is under consideration. This research is being conducted on Telenor Telecom Pakistan in Asian culture. Primary data to conduct research was collected with the help of structured questionnaires from customers and employees of the Telenor. Sample size for the customers is 150 and data is collected with the help of questionnaire. The qualitative data is collected from 8 employees of the Telenor through telephonic interview. Quantitative data is analyzed statistically with the help of SPSS. Findings of the study highlight that there is noteworthy relationship among customer involvement on customer loyalty but the relationship of information sharing with customer loyalty is insignificant in Telenor Pakistan.*

Key Words: Customer Relationship Management, Customer Involvement, Information Sharing, Customer Loyalty, Telenor, Pakistan

1. INTRODUCTION

The total population of Pakistan is more than 164 million with the growth rate of 1.8 % (1). Pakistan is among those countries which are having the largest young generation in the world. In 2006, the 54 million populations consisted of the age group of 10-25 years [2]. The level of per capita income also enhanced to \$1,085 in 2007-2008 [3]. This increasing level of per capita income also leads to the instant increase in consumer spending during couple of previous years [4]. The telecom industry of Pakistan is one of those sectors which have seen rapid growth. 85 million of the total population was the mobile subscribers in 2008 [5]. A huge amount of 2.7 million mobile users are added every month (6). Telecom industry of Pakistan has shown the growth of 120% in 2007 [7].

Telenor got the license for offering GSM services in Pakistan in April, 2004. They then provided the services in major cities of Pakistan; Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Karachi. The first call center of Telenor started to operate on January 2008 in Lahore. Now Telenor is considered as the second largest GSM services provider in Pakistan after Mobilink with 3.53 million subscribers [8]. Telenor Pakistan is hundred percent possessed by the Telenor Group, and multinational service provider of good quality voice and GSM services in eleven countries consisting of Asia and Europe. Telenor International is one of the largest cellular services providers in the world. It has 140 million customers overall the world who have subscribed to Telenor and having the human resource of more than 30,000 [9].

In this research, the relationship of CRM dimensions investigates on customer loyalty in the Telenor Pakistan. In previous research, the relationship of customer loyalty and CRM is not explored in telecommunication industry [10]. Moreover, at micro level previous research did not examine the relationship of customer loyalty with the dimensions of the CRM (information sharing, joint problem solving, customer involvement and technological CRM) especially in Asian culture. That's why this study will explore in detail information and impact of the CRM dimensions individually on customer loyalty.

1.1. Aim of the Research:

Aim of this research is to verify the nature of effect on the dimensions of CRM on Customer Loyalty in Telenor Telecom Company of Pakistan.

1.2. Objectives of the Research:

1. To profile the effect of Information sharing on Customer Loyalty.
2. To explore the effect of Customer Involvement on Customer Loyalty.

2.1. Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is regarded as when customers purchase a certain product or service of a brand for a specific time period repeatedly [11]. Oliver has greatly focused the conditional affect which may be the fourth element of loyalty i.e. responses or actions featured through devotion, commitment and consistent behavior in spite of the uncertain nature of the purchasing behavior of customers [12]. He also described loyalty as the inner devotion of customer to buy again and again, make continuous purchasing of particular goods or service and the repeated purchasing of particular brand or set of product brands without considering the conditional affects and other kinds of market efforts. In other words customer loyalty leads to purchase a product or service with little thinking and searching. Oliver also did not clear the differences among the proactive and situation base loyalty of customers which is computed by the number of purchases. Customer is randomly purchasing the product which he has experienced many times.

Usually customer loyalty is positively associated with the profit of the organization. Reichheld and Sasser conclude that it is more profitable to retain 5% of your existing customers as compare to add 25% new customers because loyal customers will make purchases again and again [13]. This research attains the interest of academics and practitioners for enhancing the level of loyalty of customers. More researchers are giving more attention to enhancing the current level of customer loyalty. In a follow up study, Gould has proved the views of Reichheld and Sasser's results [14].

Nowadays, top level marketing managers are giving more importance to updating knowledge for the development of loyalty in customers. This will reduce the cost on marketing

efforts enhancing the current sale of the organization and also reduces the cost of operations. There is low turnover of loyal customers as compared to the customers who are not loyal [15]. Currently most of the organizations of the world are facing huge competition [16]. Moreover, Singh & Sirdeshmukh proposed that the loyalty of the customers is now considered as, “the market cash of the twenty first century” [17]. This view is also considered by many academicians [18, 19,20, 21] they propose that for getting more profit, organizations must focus its attention on the customers more.

Anderson and Narus concluded that the retention of customer is a very efficient strategy of trading [22]. Companies can make better policies for formulating good strategies to attain the potential customers in regular intervals of time by replacing the old ineffective customers. Due to customer loyalty, customers can buy the products of the company again and again and they do not change their behavior regarding the services and products of the company [23]. For generating loyal customers organizations must spend money and time on relationship building with target customers [24]. Hence the literature finds out that the loyalty of customer towards an organization is considered as the foundation of competitive advantage [25].

So organizations are formulating policies to enhance the level of customer loyalty. In this research customer loyalty is the dependent variable and impact of CRM dimensions are investigated on it. The impact of CRM will be checked on customer loyalty in the context of Pakistani culture i.e. Telenor Telecom Company, Pakistan.

2.2. Customer Relationship Management

CRM is the complete approach and procedure of capturing, involving and sustaining particular consumers to generate higher value for the organization as well as for customers [26]. Researchers like Ling & Yen have defined CRM as Customer relationship management “CRM” is based on the combination of procedures and helps to develop effective policies in order to make long lasting and beneficial interconnection with some particular kind of customers [27]. On the basis of consumer database and information technological sources, the effective kind of CRM can be developed. Furthermore, the increasing advancement of Internet and other relevant technologies has really enhanced the options for businesses and has also changed the management sources of link among the organizations and its customers [28]. However CRM is becoming a crucial approach for business, there is no broadly acceptable definition of it [29].

CRM is elaborated as the approach to know and affect the customer actions by making effective interactions with respect to enhance customer purchase, concentration, loyalty and to increase profit ratio from customers[30]. Other researcher also found results about the processes of CRM like Kincaid argued that CRM is the tactical utilization of information, procedures, and human resource to manipulate consumers interconnections with the organization beyond the complete consumer life cycle [31]. This is based on the combination of consumer services, sales, marketing and functions of supply chain of the firm to get high level of efficiencies and efficacy in the provision of consumer values.

CRM structure can be categorized in analytical and functional dimensions [32; 33]. The operational or functional CRM means the mechanization of organizational procedures. On the other hand analytical CRM means to investigate the consumer features and actions which help the organizations to make policies of customer support. The analytical CRM can be helpful to identify the highly beneficial customer group and then the organization will be deal with high resources to that particular customer group. Such as in recent years CRM has become the most effective technique to enhance the organizational profitability through the recognition of particular customers and to make them satisfied by fulfilling their requirements to improve loyalty level of customers [34]. There is an argument that to capture new consumers for the products is more than two to twenty times costly than sustaining its current customers [35]. This argument shows the importance of CRM for a business. There were some other researchers who argued that the organizational success in the long run is based on practices applied to make the customer loyal with the organization [36; 37; 38; 39]. Through the development of consumer loyalty, gradually the sales targets can be easily matched over the period of customer relations with the organization [40].

2.3. Dimensions of CRM

The research emphasizes on the outside based CRM program in which there are five dimensions are involved which are following.

- Information sharing
- Customer involvement
- Long Term partnership
- Joint problem solving
- Technological CRM

2.3.1 Information sharing

“Information sharing means the exchange and distribution of necessary and selective information with interactions among producers and customers” [41; 42]. Information which is general shared among the customer and organization involves the demand at market, preferences of customers, advertisement and introduction of new developments of products [43]. The efficient management of information sharing channels and programs has a great optimistic effect on the organizational prosperity that not only supports organization internally but also externally.

Different investigators have recognized different elements which can support or affect the information sharing activities which includes, trust factor, networks, culture and also technology [44]. There are some elements also recognized which motivate the information sharing activities like the culture, the devotion of employees and the incentives for employees [45]. For instance, research in information sharing has focused on the mediums, targets, context and features of information and these sources of information sharing has been seen the main factors for sharing of inner information [46]. Information sharing with the customers is one of the important factors in new product development to understand the needs of the customers. “The unique capacity of informal and generally face-to-face communication is to facilitate transfer of complex, ambiguous and novel information and to provide the possibility to capitalize on surprising and

unexpected answers” [47].

2.3.2. Customer involvement

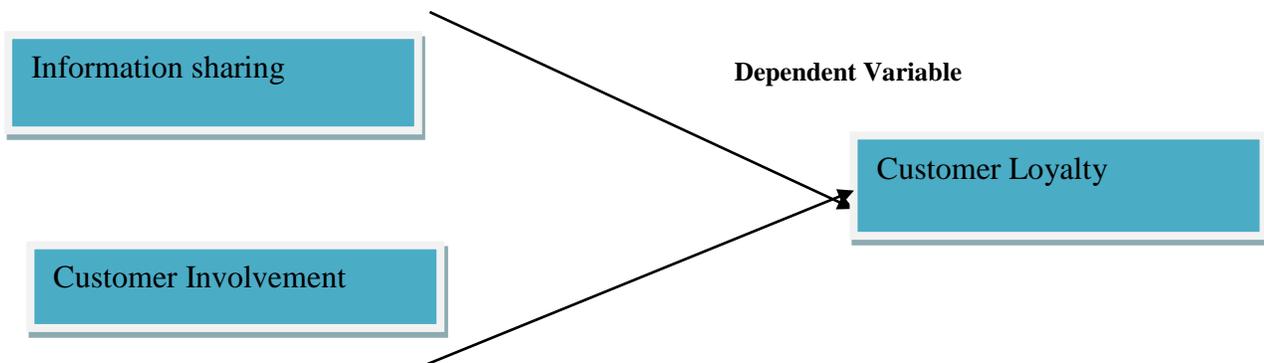
Customer involvement means the direct contribution of the customers in the process of development of new products and other kinds of activities of an organization. It involves the consumer contribution in new developments; meetings related to technical aspects, supply chain related gatherings and other marketing evaluation meetings. In this respect customers generally give suggestions about the current trends of markets and other needed technical helps for the procedure that will be able to lead the organization for better forecasting about the demands of customers in future [48]. Other is the outside or external interaction with main customers, which has been considered an important element for the completion of new product development activities [49; 50; 51; 52]. For instance Allen conducted a research in which data was collected by 19 engineers from different sectors and prove that external interaction with the customers is significant factor for developing new products [53]. Katz and Tushman also conducted the research from different departments of Engineering and Research and Development orgnaizations and found out that external involvement of customers is a major part of developing new products [54].

By seeing it rationally, this factor has improved the information quantity and variety, which has consequently enhanced the quality of development procedures [55]. The direct customer interaction can be very beneficial and

3. Hypothesized Research Model

Independent variable

Customer Relationship Management



The impact of CRM and customer involvement was already checked in previous studies and there is positive relationship between them [61]. This research was conducted in IT center and there was significant relationship between customer loyalty and CRM but there are lack of research in literature which show the bond flanked by the CRM dimensions and customer loyalty especially in Asian cultural context. CRM is elaborated as the approach to know and affect the customer actions by making effective interactions with respect to enhance customer purchase, concentration, loyalty and to increase profit ratio from customers [62]. There were some other researchers who argued that the organizational success in the long run is based on practices applied to make the customer loyal with the organization [63; 64; 65; 66].

From above discussion this study has proposed the following two hypotheses

H01: The effect of Information sharing on Customer

considered as the significant way of interaction. Other advantages of direct interaction that are involved in the comfortable communication and face to face interactions are the sharing of unclear, difficult and novel kinds of information which make clear to the complex questions of the customers [56]. There are also some other critical factors of customer engagement with relevant to marketing strategies [57]. The manufacturers are required to understand how they can be able to fulfill the requirements of their customers with the innovative features of the products. To meet the needs of customers it is considered and argued the crucial one element of the organization and it shows how well marketing strategies are implemented.

Consequently, it may be the devotion of both manufacturer and customer in the development of new product. New Product Development is the value generation policy or activity adopted by organizations that is needed to invest in some particular dimensions to add value [58]. The kinds of organizations marketing strategies and intensity of particular amount of investment may be the two major elements which determine whether the customer engagement will be adopted or not, for instance, the organizations marketing strategies have more effect on the intensity of particular investments [59]. In the findings of Chaudhuri and Holbrook, the relationship between the trust and customer involvement with customer loyalty is positive [60].

Loyalty is positive.

H02: There is positive effect of Customer Involvement on Customer Loyalty.

4. Data Collection Method

There are two types of data collection procedure i.e. quantitative and the qualitative. The quantitative data is collected in the form of numbers and it can be further analyzed statistically and the findings are also appeared in numeric forms. To get the valid and measurable findings quantitative primary data is collected because it can be further analyzed easily. Then statistical tests are applied to find out the results. In this research SPSS software is used to analyze the quantitative data. In this research qualitative and quantitative both types of data would be collected and then is investigated for getting the results. Quantitative data was collected with the help of structured questionnaires and the qualitative data was collected through the telephonic

interview, for which qualitative questionnaires were designed.

5. Sampling Methods

There are two main kinds of sampling methods i.e. Probability sampling and non probability sampling. Probability sampling is defined as “when the selection of the sample is purely based on chance”. In this sampling technique researcher has not the power to select the sample. Furthermore each element of the population has the same opportunity to be selected [67]. In non-probability sampling technique there is not any random selection of the respondent but it is defined as “in non-probability sampling the samples are selected in a procedure that does allow the same chance to be selected in the overall target population”[68]. The other kind of non-probability sampling technique is convenience sampling method which can be defined as “the samples are selected because they are accessible to the researcher” [69]. In this research the simple random sampling technique was used to reach the target population or sample size. Researcher have got the list of the all the franchises of the Telenor which are located in city Lahore. Then author and Telenor management selected the 10 franchises with the help of simple random technique. Then supervisor of each franchise provided 18 questionnaires and also advice the supervisors to fill 16 complete questionnaires from their customers.

5.1. Questionnaire Construction

Structured questionnaire is used to carry out the current research. Part I is about the information of the demographics. Part II is consisted upon the items about the variables proposed in this study. Structured questionnaires will be

6. Correlation Analysis

Table 1: Statistics of Correlation

	Customer Involvement	Information Sharing	Customer Loyalty
Customer Involvement	1	-	-
Information Sharing	.445(**)	1	-
Customer Loyalty	.452(**)	.696(**)	1

**At the 0.01 level Correlation is significant.

In this research the value of the r for all of the variables is above 0.35 that is in the category of strong association between the variables. Customer loyalty is positively correlated with all other variables i.e. customer involvement, and information sharing. Customer involvement is positively correlated with customer loyalty, information sharing and customer loyalty is positive.

6.2. Regression Analysis

**Table 2: Regression Analysis:
After applying the test following tables are obtained.**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		T	P-Value
		B	Std. Error	B	
1	(Constant)	1.012	.299	3.383	.001
	Information sharing	-.018	.070	-.263	.793
	Customer Involvement	.430	.065	6.625	.000
	F-Value	52.25			0.000
	R Square	0.579			

Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty

***Significant at the 0.01 level.

* Significant at the 0.10 level. **Significant at the 0.05 level.

distributed to the target population i.e. from 160 customers of Telenor gathering the response with the help of primary data. The valid scales are used in the current study. These scales were used in previous researches. The scale of customer relationship management is consisted upon 19 statements. This scale was previously used in the research of Lin, Chen and Chiu [70]. This study was conducted in Taiwan in computer industry. The scale of customer loyalty is consisted upon 5 statements. This scale was previously used by McMullan and Audrey [71].

5.2. Reliability and Validity of Data Collected

For good calculation and valid results reliability of the data is very important consideration. Commonly to check the reliability of data statistical tool are used. In current study, value of Cronbach alpha has provided the information about reliability of data. Value of Cronbach alpha was calculated with the help of SPSS software. The value of the cronbach alpha is must be greater than 0.50 [72]. Greater the value of the B give us information that data is more reliable.

In current study data is collected from 160 customers of Telenor Pakistan. After collecting the data reliability analysis will be done with the help of SPSS software. Reliability of the data is assessed by the value of the cronbach alpha. If amount of Cronbah alpha is in between 0.70 and 0.80, then it is denoted the good result. Factor analysis is provided the information about validity of scales which are used in the current study. All the statements which has factor loading more than 0.50 can be used for further analysis [73]. Moreover, the statements which have factor values less than 0.50 should be excluded from the final analysis.

Impact of customer involvement and information sharing on customer loyalty

This study is being carried out to check the impact of dimensions of CRM on customer loyalty. For checking this relationship current research has present the two hypotheses impact of customer involvement and information sharing on customer loyalty.

The value of “R square” denotes the type of percentage alteration in criterion (dependent variable) caused by predictors (independent variables). And denotes that either this association is better or not better [74]. This value is in an acceptable range if it is greater than twenty five percent. In this study this value is 57.9 percent. Obviously, this value is greater than desired level i.e. greater than 25%. Value of F test is also an important consideration. In this study, value of F is 52.52. Moreover, its value of p is 0.000. For this test it must be less than 0.01 or 0.10 or 0.05. In the present study its value is less than 0.01. The p value is represented the percentage of actual & unexpectedly relationships. The value of p is 0.05 denotes that there is 5 percent probability that the relation is by chance. Moreover, 95% probability that relationship is actual and real. Above table denotes that customer involvement has the strong impact on customer loyalty. Its value of β is 0.430. This means that it is the strong predictor of customer loyalty. For this relationship value p is less than 0.01. This indicates that if we bring the change in customer involvement up to one unit then it will cause to change the value of customer loyalty at the level of 43 %. From this it is concluded that customer involvement is having positive impact on customer loyalty. As the study conducted by researcher Dahlgren also investigated the relationship of involvement and customer loyalty and there was a strong association between customer involvement and customer loyalty [75].

In this study value of β for the relationship of information sharing with customer loyalty is -0.018. For this relationship value p is 0.793. It is greater than 0.10. From this we conclude that information sharing has not significant impact on customer loyalty. There could be different reasons behind this with respect to information sharing. There is not any established network to collect the information from the customers. Telenor Pakistan is doing its business with the help of wide network of franchises. These franchises are owned by different owners. They hire the not qualified persons for enhancing their profit margin and satisfaction of customers is affected negatively. This hypothesis is rejected.

5. CONCLUSION

Customer loyalty is considered as the main factor behind the growth of the organizations and companies are focusing to formulate the policies to make their customers satisfied with their services or products to make them loyal. The loyal customers are more profitable for the organizations. Singh and Sirdeshmukh concluded that the loyalty of the customers is now considered as, “the market cash of the twenty first century” [76]. A study conducted by the global business consulting organization, Baines and Company concluded that five percent in consumer retention could make the level of profitability up to 75%. Telenor Telecom Pakistan should focus to implement the policies regarding CRM dimensions to improve the level of customer loyalty. In this research the relationship of CRM dimensions is investigated with customer loyalty. The dimensions of CRM concerned in this study are customer involvement and information sharing. In previous research there is positive association linking the customer loyalty and customer relationship management [77]. In this research two hypotheses were designed to conduct the

research The findings of the current study bring to light that there is significant impact of customer involvement but there was not positive relationship of information sharing with customer loyalty.

Telenor Telecom and other organizations of Pakistan can enhance the level of customer loyalty while improving practices of customer involvement the statistical analysis highlights that the information sharing is not significantly related with customer loyalty. There might be various aspects behind it e.g. in Asian culture there is not a developed set up for the customers of information sharing with the organizations.

Recommendations and Future Researches

- In telecom sector customer loyalty is considered as important variable, so organizations must adopt the policies for improving customer loyalty. Customer involvement is most influential variable in this research, so Telenor Pakistan should involve the customer in their business processes to make them loyal.
- In future level of customer loyalty can be enhanced by formulate robust policies regarding the other dimensions of customer relationship management.
- In current study, customer involvement as the dimension of customer relationship management has the stronger positive impact on customer loyalty. Hence, telecom sector must focus on formulating the better policies to incorporate the customer involvement in their organizations. Telenor Pakistan should arrange the events to observe the customer preferences.
- In future research, some predictors of customer loyalty i.e. customer satisfaction, employee characteristics and corporate social responsibility etc. will be considered.
- In future, some consequences of customer loyalty e.g. firm profitability, organizational performance, organizational commitment and organizational growth will also be considered.

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