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Analysis of Customer Switching Intention in Telecommunication

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Abstract

Consumers are very valuable for any organization as they are the ultimate users of any product and services thus every organization's success depend on their consumer satisfaction level. If consumers are not satisfied they can easily switch to another company. India has become the fastest growing mobile market. With the advancement in the technology like GSM, CDMA, 3G&4G technologies and increasing number of service providers have made the market an intensive competitive market. This research focuses on identifying the factors that influences the consumers to switch to another brand in telecommunication industry. To conduct the research a survey of 300 respondents across Delhi, NCR was taken. After the examination of the questionnaire it revealed that best value added services and effective pricing strategies can help telecom companies to retain their customers. Telecom companies should focus on improving these factors in order to make customers loyal and increase their retention period with their company.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Telecommunication industry, Customer Switching

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1. Introduction

It issaid that it is easy to retain existing customer than attracting the new customers. The concept of brand switching becomes the important aspect in the telecommunication sector because of increasing the availability of more players in this sector. In today's globalised market, quality, productivity and satisfaction of customers is the most important challenge for the survival and growth of all firms. These growth and survival further depends upon to meet the needs and wants of customers and retaining loyal customers.

Telecom industry of India is one of the fastest growing sectorin India. The flexible Government policies and regulatory framework helps TRAI(Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) to controlled and implement the policies and regulations and provided the helpful environment to the service providers. This has made sector more competitive as well as increase the accessibility of telecommunication services at a affordable tariffs for the consumers. Telecommunication industry plays very important role in developing our economy. Along with the government owned telecom units, the Indian telecom market has also attract many private players to enter in this market. The Indian telecom industry has grown a lot during the past few years. There has been a lot of technological advancement in this industry. Entry of 4G, Wireless technology, MNP etc. is some of the examples of the diversification in industry.

1.1 Various telecom corporations:

- **Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL):** On 1st April 1986 government established MTNL. MTNL was established to control the telecommunication services in two metropolitan cities of Delhi, Mumbai.

- **Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL):** In 1986 the government of India established VSNL. The VSNL was established for the international telecommunication services.

- **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI):** In 1997 the government set up regulatory authority to control the telecom sector known as TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority Of India). TRAI was set up to provide a comprehensive telecom service in the country.

- **Bharath Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL):** After the approval of various financial and HRD factors, the service providing functions of Department of Telecom Services (DTS) and DTO were transferred to the newly created company BSNL. BSNL with effect from year 2000 performed all the work of Department of telecom operations and Department of telecom services.

1.2CURRENT SCENARIO

Since 2003 in telecom industry there has been a tremendous growth and diversification in this industry. A 'phone' which was called a "luxury" has now become a "necessity". Earlier this sector was only bound to increase tele density, i.e telephones but now the idea has evolved and they have changed themselves from fixed line/ wireline phones to mobile/wireless phones that helps the customers by connecting with people

everywhere and anywhere. Now a days many other services like Internet services, radio paging services, Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSATs), Public Mobile Radio Trunk Service (PMRTS) and Global Mobile Personal Communication by Satellite (GMPCS) are being offered by the telecommunication companies.

According to IBEF (India Brand Equity Foundation) India is currently known the second largest telecommunication market

Fig. 1.1

Source:https://www.ibef.org/uploads/industry/telecommunications-oct-2018.jpg

Customer switching refers when one customer changes the one company to another company. Switching costs are spend by ending the relationship with one company and starting new relationship with another company (Porter (1980)). One of the important aspects that influence the customer for switching is the introduction of MNP (mobile number portability). It is now possible for the customers to change their operator easily without changing their number. Due to the high competition in the market there is diverse tariff rates which are being offer by the companies to the consumer and influence them to switch their service provider. Now a days companies are not mainly focusing on Tariff rates but also focusing that how they improve their network problems so that it will help them to maintain long term relationship and satisfy their needs and wants of customers by providing best services to them in the way of customer care centers. It is clear that companies are not only draw attention on attracting new customers but are also trying to retain and maintain the relationship with the old ones too. The current research paper is going to highlight that what are the main factors in telecommunication sector that influences consumers to switch their brand.

MAJOR PLAYERS

- Airtel
- Vodafone

- Idea
- BSNL
- Reliance communication
- Aircel
- Tata indicom
- MTNL

New Entrant to the telecommunication market

- Reliance JIO
- Tikona Digital Network

Service Provider	Subscriber base (millions)			Rate of Growth (%)	Market Share in QE Dec-17 (%)	Market Share in QE Mar-18 (%)
	Dec-17	Mar-18	Net Additions			
Bharti	294.03	308.12	14.10	4.79	24.69	25.54
Vodafone	212.73	222.92	10.19	4.79	17.87	18.48
IDEA	196.50	211.21	14.71	7.49	16.50	17.51
Reliance Com.	34.30	1.11	-33.19	-96.77	2.88	0.09
Tata	38.55	33.07	-5.49	-14.24	3.24	2.74
Aircel	85.00	74.15	-10.85	-12.76	7.14	6.15
Quadrant	0.25	0.24	-0.01	-2.62	0.02	0.02
Telenor	41.91	37.98	-3.93	-9.37	3.52	3.15
Reliance Jio	160.09	186.56	26.47	16.53	13.45	15.47
BSNL	120.35	123.95	3.60	2.99	10.11	10.28
MTNL	6.96	6.90	-0.06	-0.82	0.58	0.57
Total	**1,190.67**	**1,206.22**	**15.55**	**1.31**	**100**	**100**

Fig 1.2 – Service Provider wise Growth / Decline in subscriber Base

Source:https://main.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/PIReport27062018_0.pdf

2. Literature review

2.1 CRMstrategies implemented in telecommunication industry

Telecom companies need to implement the CRM (customer relationship management) model because there are more number of competitors available in the market due to which there are more chances of churn in the customers. Customer relationship management not only helps in enhancing the market share but also helps in retaining the customers for the long term. It

isclearthat companies spend most of the time on acquiring new customers than retaining the old customers. Today Indian telecom companies need to opt CRM because of the "number portability". Thus companies need to develop database and retain their customers for long term and maintain the relationship with them. For e.g. AIRTEL has oracle as it CRM model which helps the companyby providing services from anywhere and at any time which is resulted as better value added services being provided to the customers. (**Y. Krishna Mohan Naidu (2015)**)

Maher Fadhil Mohammed (2013)according to their research the researcher highlight that every telecommunication company was losing 24% of its customers every year. The reason for this is churn the various additional services provided by the other telecom service providers. According to their research CRM is a software which plays the important role for the telecom companies to increase their revenue, productivity, & customer satisfaction by managing and coordinating with their clients. This research also explores in other field by checking the significance of relationship that is taking by Airtel and Zain as an example of their study.The researcher came with the conclusion that Airtel have more customer data base as compared to Zain. Airtel & Zain are seem as the most important networkfor the customers they came up with CRM and E-CRM projects. It was seen that after the implementation of these projects they were able to satisfy the needs of customers more effectively and also able to provide them varied services that leads to the better customer satisfaction.

2.2 Customer Satisfaction

Moon-Koo Kim et. Al (2004) according to their research customer satisfaction can be defined as the customer's reaction or attitude towards the product or service. They also concluded that customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are correlated to each other. Customer satisfaction reduces the customer churn and thus increases the customer loyalty.

2.3 Customer Switching

Haddenet. Al (2005) their study exposed that customer switching is a phrase that express the decreasing the number of customers due to several reasons. According to their research customer switching means recognizing those customers who are ready to leave the company and uses the service of another service provider due to various reasons.

Muhammad Rizwanet. Al (2013) this research resolved that there is important relationship between the perceived quality and switching intention. Their study also derived that pricing is

not only the reason for switching of customers from one company to another but quality is the biggest reasonthat affect the customer switching intension. Their research also state that price, core service failure and customer satisfaction are the major factors that primes to customer switching intension. This research shows there is also a negative effect of trust on customer switching intensions. Regression statistical tool was used in this research paper which concludes that all the variables plays the significant relationship with the switching.

KhushbooMakwanaet. Al (2014)their research paper states the effectsof the brand switching behavior in telecom industry and according to their research they recognized that Value added services and effective pricing strategies are two main factors that inspires the consumer behavior switching to another brands in telecom industry. So, by providing them best value, establishing good relationship with customers by competent customer services, itenhances brand loyalty. It alsosimplifies that by keeping the price fairness it will helps to provide telecommunication companies to made thecontrol on consumer brand switching behavior.

Moon-Koon Kim et. Al (2004) this research paper states that telecom companies should pay more attention on service quality and deliver more customers-oriented services in order to gain and retain customer satisfaction. Moreover, the study also said that companies should invest more time in CRM strategies to build thelong-term relationship with the customers. After their research they also found that there wasreduction in customer satisfaction because of the call quality, value added services and customer support. So, in order to retain the customers companies,have to do work on refining their call quality and also efforts should be thru on developing value-added services that helps to increase the convenience for the customers. At the same time interpersonal relationship with the customers also can help the companies inretaining their customers.

Md. ShahnawazAbdinet. Al (2016) according to their research in this clearly stated that in today's time customers are the king of any business. At the same time MNP (Mobile Number Portability) has made consumers more influential. Their research also revealed that if there is any breach of trust it will cost destructive for any organization. In order to develop the loyal customers companies have to change their rate plans and decrease all the hidden charges that will charged by the various telecommunication companies. Telecom service provider need to maintain their network connectivity that will improve their billing systems. According to the researchers customers switch to other brands because of the numerous offers provided by the other brands and there is also a very important point that customer switches only when telecom

companies are failed to meet the requirements of the customers. It is clear that customers also churn because of their doubts that are not solved as per their need and also states that the service providers are failed in handling the complaints of the customers.

Sarawat Afzal et. Al (2013)according to their study they investigated that on the basis of the hypothesis the independent variable service quality, price, trust, and brand loyalty are dependent on the brand switching variable.Their regression analysis states that the service quality is negatively impact on the brand switching. At the same time trust and brand loyalty also have the negative impact on the customer switching but price has a positive impact on the brand switching so this hypothesis was accepted. It is clear that telecommunication companies are require to analyze the need of their customers and formulate strategies according to it and also maintainlong lasting relationship with their customers.

KwaineSimpeOforiet. Al (2015)according to their research they stated that service quality is considered most important factor for customer switching in telecommunication sector. The telecom service provider improves their network and service quality in order to increase their market share and also increase the profitability of telecommunication service providers. Their research also derived that satisfaction and trust plays a very important relationship and loyalty with them. But it was seen through this research that satisfaction didnot lead to switching intention. The cause of switching which resulted by this research was trust and loyalty. Loyal customers be rewarded by the telecom service provider with varied packages and schemes.

Sana Malik et. Al (2014)according to their research perceived usefulness is a major criteria for switching intention in people. The higher the perceived usefulness the higher is the rate of switching in customers. According to their research they also concluded that higher the switching cost higher will be the customer loyalty. As this research was conducted in Bahawalpur so this shows that factors of economics also plays a major role in customer switching.

Simon GyasiNimakoet. Al (2015)this study helps in finding those factors that affect consumer intentions to unswitch the brand. Based on their study it was derived that consumer unswitching intentions can be influenced by the competitor's offering. This implies that former service provider attract the switchers by providing them attractive services, higher service quality& more value benefits to the customers. Some of the strategies which were analyzed in this research were detecting their lost customers, communicating with them, listening to front line people, treating them as valuable customer and being fair that will not let the customers leave the telecom service provider. Thus at last their finding states that telecommunication service providers mainly focus

on improving their marketing strategies in order to attract the customers and bring the unsatisfied customers to them.

Dr. Rosemond Booheneet. Al (2011)their findings states that service quality has play a positive relationship with the customer loyalty. Telecommunication providers should provide quality service to retain their customers with their brand. These quality measures are determined in the SERVQUAL framework which consist variables such as courtesy, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, competence, communication and security among others. Thus, in order to make customers loyal towards the telecom companies are more focuses on sales points, wide coverage , convenient office location as well as being responsive to the requests of their customers. The research also concluded that in telecom industry there is no tangible product thus their service quality is measured by maintaining the relationship with customers. Telecom companies should more focus on the staff skills and knowledge and they should be able to fulfill the needs of the customers efficiently and effectively.

SobiaShujaatet. Al (2015)they stated that factors like price, brand image, network quality, value added services and promotional schemes plays aimportant role in attracting consumers towards switching of their telecom operator. Their first result that came into account from this research is that by providing technological advancement by the telecom companies can retain the customers. The second result which came out of their research is that price, value added services, service quality and promotional schemes are the main factors that lead to customer switching. Their study shows that if their current telecom service provider does not provide better services to them then it will result to the negative for their customers and influence them switching to another company. They revealed that if the customers are paying money then they want value for that money.

Ketan B. Baiset. Al (2015)according to their research they shows that on the basis of their questionnaire they found that those factors which lead customers to switch their operator are price and value added services. So, by keeping the price fair and best quality services into the account will lead to enhance the customer loyalty and lead to maintaining the long term relationship with the customers. Also their research stated that customers got to know about MNP through advertisements and relatives thus companies should provide more offers and discounts to motivate them to have MNP.

Zahra Zahid et. Al (2015) their research study shows that SMS, value added services, special offer and service quality have the direct relationship with the customer switching.

Nowadayscustomers are using dual SIM because they want low call rate. The company which providing low call rate lead to retain the customers else they maylose their profitable customers. If telecom service provider gives good quality services to their customers then it will help to generatethe emotional bonding with their telecom service operator. Thus, it will lead to customer commitment. Their research also derives that network quality also affects the customers preference. If the company is not able to provide good network then it may lead to switching of their customers. Thus, the last result was, if the company wants to be successful then they need to keep their customers satisfied.

Research objectives

1. To understand the concept of customer satisfaction in telecommunication industry.
2. To find out the various factors that leads to customer switching in telecommunication industry.

3. Research design and methodology

It is a descriptive study. The paper studies existing characteristics in telecom industry called as customer switching in telecommunication sector. In the present study the data is collected from both primary as well as secondary sources. In order to test the hypothesis, convenience sampling technique is used. The data is collected through questionnaire which includes 200 respondents from Delhi/NCR. A scale was developed to measure the responses related to the study. Dependent variable (customer switching) and independent variables (price, value added services, trust, customer service quality) has been measured through questionnaire. Questionnaire consists of 18 different questions on a 5 point Likert scale (1= strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree). SPSS has been used for data analysis.

4. Data interpretation

Reliability test Using Cronbach's Alpha:

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a.   List-wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 4.1

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.771	17

Table 4.2

The above analysis interpretate the reliability of the scale that measures the dependent variable (customer switching) and the independent variable (customer service quality, tariff, value added services, trust). This table also shows that the Cronbach's Alpha value is .771 which indicates that the items which are measured are reliable and this alsostates that the survey has been conducted properly and proper response has been given by the respondents.

Correlation

Correlations

		Avg_CS	Avg_Cus_Ser	Avg_Tariff	Avg_VAS	Avg_Trust
Avg_CS	Pearson Correlation	1	.616**	.632**	.501**	.061
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.388
	N	200	200	200	200	200
Avg_Cus_Ser	Pearson Correlation	.616**	1	.663**	.594**	.112
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.114
	N	200	200	200	200	200
Avg_Tariff	Pearson Correlation	.632**	.663**	1	.635**	-.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.933
	N	200	200	200	200	200
Avg_VAS	Pearson Correlation	.501**	.594**	.635**	1	.113
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.110
	N	200	200	200	200	200
Avg_Trust	Pearson Correlation	.061	.112	-.006	.113	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.388	.114	.933	.110	
	N	200	200	200	200	200

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

Table 4.3

Level of significance:0.05

Ho: There is no significant relationship between customer service and customer switching

H1: There is significant relationship between customer service and customer switching

In the above table significance value is **.000<.05** so, the null hypothesis is rejected which means that we accept alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between customer service and customer switching. Also from the above table it is clear that there is a **61.6%** correlation between customer service and customer switching.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Tariff and customer switching

H2: There is significant relationship between Tariff and customer switching

In the above table significance level is .**000<.05** so we reject the null hypothesis which means that the alternate hypothesis is accepted which states that there is a significant relation between Tariff and switching. Also from the above table it is clearly state that there is a correlation of **63.2%** which means there is a high relationship between Tariff and customer switching.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Value Added Services and customer switching

H3: There is a significant relationship between Value Added Services and customer switching

From the above table significance value is **.000<.05** so we reject the null hypothesis which means that we accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between Value added services and customer switching. The above table shown that there is a correlation of **50.1%** between Values added services and customer switching.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Trust and customer switching

H4: There is no significant relationship between Trust and customer switching

In the above table significance value is **.388>0.05** so we reject alternate hypothesis and we accept null hypothesis which clears that there is significant relationship between Trust and customer switching. The above table also signifies that there is a correlation of **6%** which means trust has a very low relationship between Trust and customer switching.

Regression:

Variables Entered/Removed[a]

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Avg_Trust, Avg_Tariff, Avg_VAS, Avg_Cus_Ser[b]	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Avg_CS

b. All requested variables entered.

Table 4.4

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.687[a]	.472	.461	.72477

a. Predictors: (Constant), Avg_Trust, Avg_Tariff, Avg_VAS, Avg_Cus_Ser

Table 4.5

The model summary states that how much our model is fit in the sample. According to the above table the R value which means the correlation of the variable is **0.687** which indicates that there is positive relationship between dependent variable (customer switching) and independent variable (customer service quality, Tariff, value added services and Trust).

The value of R square shows that variability in the independent variable. Customer switching is **47.2%** by the variability in the independent variables.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	91.630	4	22.907	43.609	.000^b
	Residual	102.432	195	.525		
	Total	194.062	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Avg_CS

b.   Predictors: (Constant), Avg_Trust, Avg_Tariff, Avg_VAS, Avg_Cus_Ser

Table 4.6

In the above table significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, it concludes that there is an association between the dependent variable (customer switching) and independent variable (customer service quality, tariff, value added service and trust).

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.212	.263		-.808	.420
	Avg_Cus_Ser	.472	.106	.327	4.456	.000
	Avg_Tariff	.440	.091	.373	4.864	.000
	Avg_VAS	.081	.085	.068	.954	.342
	Avg_Trust	.021	.059	.019	.365	.715

a.   Dependent Variable: Avg_CS

Table 4.7

From the above table we can find the predictive value for the customer switching intention in telecom industry.

Regression Equation:

Y= a+bx, where

"Y" stands for dependent variable i.e customer switching in telecom industry

"a" stands for constant

"b" stands for coefficients

"x" stands for interception

Predictive model of average customer switching in telecom industry is:

Average customer switching intention in telecom industry = -0.212 + 0.472(average customer service) + 0.440(average Tariff) + 0.081(average Value Added Services) + 0.021(average Trust)

From the equation table it is clear that if 1 unit of customer service quality increases (independent variable), there will be a 0.472 unit increase in customer switching. As the other independent variable which is Tariff shows that if 1 unit increases in Tariff then 0.440 unit increase will occur in customer switching. The other two independent variables (value added services and trust) also have positive influence on the customer switching.

5. Conclusions

The above study has been conducted to analysis that what are the different factors which influence customers to switch one company to another company. In today's time the customer is the king of any organization. Every business wants that their customer be happy and their needs were fulfilled by hook and crook. In telecom industry the competition is toohigh and retaining the customers is too difficult in this sector because many other players are present in the market. The option of Mobile Number Portability (MNP) has made telecommunication customer more powerful and informed. The telecommunication companies have to retain the existing customers and trying to capture the new customers. The data has been analyzed and hypothesis has been developed. The survey is conducted to analyses the effect of the different independent variables as (customer service quality, Tariff, Value Added Services and Trust) on dependent variable i.e. Customer switching. The different results of correlation and regression analysis derives that H1: customer service quality has made a positive influence on the customer switching. H2: Tariff also made the positive influence on the customer switching. So, the result clearly shows that if the tariff rates increase the customer switching is also increases and if the tariff rates will be less it will lead to customer retention. H3: value added services also havethe positive influence on customer switching. The results also conclude that H4: Trust plays the negative impact on the customer switching.

So telecommunication companies have to be careful regarding the needs, wants and the expectations of the customers has to be analyzed and according to itthe appropriate strategies is to be formed and implemented.

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