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A study on Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction and Brand Switching amongst prepaid telecom users of India

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ABSTRACT:

Brand switching behaviour among consumers is affected by various factors, which often vary depending on the nature of the industry. In the telecom sector, poor service quality often emerges as a major driver. The purpose of this study is to detect factors affecting brand switching behaviour among prepaid telecom users. Data was collected from 250 telecom service users in Gujarat. Conclusions show that customers' satisfaction, service quality, pricing and customer loyalty affect the brand switching behaviour. However, the brand image and the trust do not appear to have a direct effect.

Given these insight, telecom service providers should prefer to increase brand image and adopt more deep approach to understand the reasons behind the customer's misuse. Strengthening the brand image and addressing the shortcomings of service can help increase customers' satisfaction and reduce consumers from one mobile network operator to another.

Key words: -consumer satisfaction, brand switching, price, trust, consumer delight, telecom service provider, consumer behaviour, prepaid mobile users.

INTRODUCTION

Brand switching behaviour has attracted significant attention in recent years due to a company's profitability and ability to reduce overall performance. It refers to the tendency of consumers to release a product or service in favour of a competitive offering. For example, customers can move their money from one bank to another if they are dissatisfied with the service provided by the former. This type of consumer behaviour pose a constant threat to businesses - if the satisfaction of the customers is not maintained, the competitors stand to achieve directly. Many factors affect consumers' decisions to switch brands. Evidence suggests that the alleged brand image, pricing, belief, customer loyalty, quality of service and customer satisfaction are among the most influential determinants of brand switching behaviour.

In the telecom sector, the switching cost is relatively low, making it easier for consumers to transfer from one service provider to another that provides better pricing or better service quality. Negative customer experiences, often as a result of poor service or product quality, are the major triggers of such behaviour.

The purpose of this paper is to seriously examine the major factors that motivate consumers to switch telecommunications service providers and provide insights on how companies can reduce churning in highly competitive market

Problem statement

In recent years, telecom service users in India have increased the desire to switch to service providers in search of better service quality, pricing and price -added features. Although various studies have attempted to measure customer switching behaviour using quantitative methods, but there is a gap in understanding the inherent psychological and practical factors affecting this trend - especially in the context of India's prepaid telecommunication market. In addition, specific strategies can work to maintain telecommunication provider customers and do not widely discover through qualitative research to discourage brand switching.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to check out major factors that affect brand switching behaviour among prepaid mobile telecom users in India This focuses on understanding the relationship between customer behaviour and variables such as service quality, price structure, belief and social impact. Unlike prior studies that use mainly quantitative approaches, this research adopts a qualitative functioning to achieve deep insights into consumer perceptions, approaches and motivations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is directed by the following objectives:

1. To detect psychological and practical factors affecting brand switching behaviour in the telecom sector.
2. Checking the relationship between switching behavior and major service-related variables such as pricing, service quality and colleague effects.
3. To identify the primary causes that drive users to switch from one telecom operator to another.
4. To provide practical recommendations for telecom providers to improve customer retention and satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Czinkota et al.,(2001)explains that modern marketing practice is to understand and understand the origin of practices to answer the values and needs of consumers by maintaining long -term relationship with a customer which is one of the fundamental factors that determines the value providing the customer to companies and reduce churn out of high average revenue per user by building long term relationships with existing customers.

Ahmed et al. (2015), consumer switching behavior is considered to be a constant effects between brands and where consumers choose to change their current brands with alternative option termed as brand switching which can be reaction to consumer unhappiness with their current telecom operators and hence brand, attraction of recently launched brands, or their need for diversity is of utmost important which can be switching encouraged by campaigning of rival companies. Factors like churn in, churn out, marketing schemes, behaviour of sales and service staff can be used better and impact relationships can be done to better understand CRM and customer loyalty.

Asal (2002) has redefined brand switching as means of originally transferring loyalty from one brand to another competing brand for some lucrative offerings

Al-KVD Ahmed,2015 have cited reasons for brand sweating behaviour for non attractiveness in current mobile operators a qualitative research approach

Anderson and Sullivan (1993) states that when the consumer switches to another brand, it is because a developed strategy is not able to maintain or motivate existing consumers

Min and Wan (2009) identified consumer dissatisfaction as one of the major switching factors for brands based on past literature reviews and which can be explained by a common saying that customers compares his expectations with real product performances and if consumers are not satisfied they will seek other options including switching on competitive brands and hence a new imperative for brands is that lack of satisfaction of customers inspires the customer to change the brand. Therefore telecom companies needs to keep checking the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand switching.

Chen and Huang (2013) explained the definition of faith which is assuming that the information obtained is accurate, transparent and reliable.

Sores, Pinho and Nobre (2012) were focusing more factors responsible for developing trust between telecom service providers and customers thru hope, confidence and relationship building too.

Andrasson and Sullivan, (1993) explained that dissatisfied level of customers are more like to affect and discover the satisfied ones and also be a negative word of mouth in publicity and motivate in churning out the satisfied base of customers too there by affecting companies revenue and growth parameters.

Concept

Based on the above theoretical relationship between the study variables, this research proposed the following four hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. In the first stage of this study, many components of open customer switching intent are significantly associated with customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2. Customer satisfaction is significantly associated with customer switching behavior.

Hypothesis 3. Customer satisfaction is significantly associated with customer switching behavior.

Conceptual Framework

Depending on the concept, theory, and thinking results, an analysis between the ideological structure, price, brand image, service quality, family, friends and relatives is a development from the previous study on the analysis of the factors of the business used in this study, which is for the

satisfaction of the customer's telecommunications industry for the satisfaction of customers. We can get a quick observation of witch behavior to overall customers with the help of the following Figure 1.

These five measures were considered for the purpose of this study to understand the parameters of customer switching behavior. Three theoretical methods that define the loyalty of the customer in this research are seen from an abstract point of view.

Research Methodology

The research methodology adopts partly descriptive, partly exploratory and also casual.

It is based on the review of literature also including the published research. The data has been collected with the help of Magazines, Newspapers, Research articles, Research Journals, Books, and Research E-journals.

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4. To provide practical recommendations for telecom providers to improve customer retention and satisfaction.

Significance of the study:

- This study will be a great help to marketing professionals by making them understand their customers better and come up with some effective strategies to deal with them.
- It will also be of great help to other researchers willing to further the study of this concept.
- This study will provide valuable insights to understand why consumers behave the way they do.

Suggestions

- **CREATE BRAND IMAGE BY PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING:**
Social media marketing of skincare companies must be powerful. This will create a good brand image of the company and will boost up the sale of products.
- **SHARE EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE IN ADVERTISEMENTS RATHER THAN ENDORSING CELEBRITIES:**
Firms must focus on sharing experiences of people after using the products in advertisements rather than endorsing celebrities. This will be beneficial in long-run and also it will cost less than endorsing a celebrity.
- **REFERRAL INCENTIVES MUST BE GIVEN TO LOYAL CUSTOMERS TO CREATE BRAND EQUITY:**
Companies must give referral incentives to its loyal customers for referring their brands to their reference groups. Friends play a vital role in purchase decisions so the customers must be motivated through referral incentives when they suggest their product to their friends and other reference groups.
- **WINDOW SHELF-DISPLAYS ATTRACT CUSTOMERS TO MAKE A PURCHASE:**
Companies must keep motivating retail outlets to increase their window shelf-displays so that customers get attracted to buy products.
- **CUSTOMERS ARE INFLUENCED BY PRICE DISCOUNTS:**
Price discounts are one of the sales promotion strategies which influence the most for making the purchase. So companies must keep on bringing some offers for its customer base in order to make them purchase their products.
- **FOCUS ON SHOWING REALISTIC ADVERTISEMENTS:**
Telecom companies must try to show advertisements that are realistic.

Conclusion

Conclusion is being summarized as under:

- Telecom companies must use normal people in their advertising roll outs to have a greater connect with the customers
- When companies launch a new product they must motivate customers to take free trial also promotional incentives should be given to a base of loyal customers and also Friends play a vital role in influencing customers and hence referral incentives should be given to customers who are referring the products to their peer group and friends

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