

A Survey on Important Attributes of Customer Satisfaction in Telecom Industry

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ABSTRACT

Customer satisfaction has been acknowledged as critical success factors in any organization. Recent developments in telecom sector shows that communication services providers (CSPs) are engaged in various marketing and survey activities to discover the satisfaction level of their customers. The aim of this paper is to conduct a survey based study to identify and highlight major attributes that effect customer's satisfaction which will eventually help telecom services providers to improve their customer experience management index. Consequently, this paper examines the factors that have resilient or fragile influence on customer satisfaction. Based on the contemporary research six attributes i.e. network coverage, voice call quality, drop call rate, SMS delivery, internet service and call setup duration have been considered and tested in this research to find the customer satisfaction. For this purpose of study, 200 respondents of a CSP are selected from Islamabad, Pakistan. A telephonic survey is conducted to rate each of the factor and their overall satisfaction. The results reveal that network coverage, voice call quality and internet service have the higher impact on the level of customer satisfaction.

KEYWORDS: Customer Satisfaction, Communication Services Providers, voice call quality, drop call rate, SMS delivery, internet service, call setup duration,

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years telecom sector is a vital contributor in the economic growth of all the economies. In Pakistan since independence this sector was controlled and operated by the government. It was the need of time to privatize this sector in order to grow and compete with rest of the world. The comparison of telecom industry of Pakistan with other developing countries shows that Pakistan is far behind from the rest. In 2000, deregulation policy is developed which leads toward the development of telecom as a sector. The government made a body Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to monitor the telecom sector. In 2005 telecom sector was recognized as an industry. In recent five cellular operators, Warid, Telenor, Mobil ink, Ufone, and Zong are providing cellular network services in Pakistan.

Mobil ink GSM, starts operating in 1994 and having 36 million subscribers around the Pakistan. Ufone is growing day by day and its subscribers reached to 23 million. Telenor is operating since 2005. It has 30 million subscribers. Warid has started operating in 2005 and have almost 12 million subscribers. Zong has started in 2007 and now having subscribers more than 25.6 million. At present the telecom sector in Pakistan is developing very fast. Service quality and delivery channels are attaining more importance in telecom. Subscribers have options to switch the CSP in case of dissatisfaction or frustration. So as the CSPs are increasing the competition to attain and retain the customers has also been amplified. Now CSPs are more concerned about customer satisfaction.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Customer Satisfaction:

Previous researches have provided significant importance to customer satisfaction. Satisfaction can be defined as a features or characteristics that can full the either a need or want of a consumer in better way than competitors. Although this satisfaction explained by various researchers in many different ways. If a company produces a product according to the requirements of their consumers it will lead the satisfaction of those consumers.

The higher or lower satisfaction of a consumer will be based upon the quality of brand characteristics that offered by a company. This is the consumer satisfaction which contributes for the future money making for a company. For the retention of consumer, it is significant to satisfied consumers. The unsatisfied consumers of a company do not take time to switch that brand. Low quality services can also leads to dissatisfaction. A low quality service is such type of service which does not fulfil the requirements of consumer. However it's all based upon that which segments a company is targeting and what are their expectations for that product.

In the study, customer satisfaction is the key factor which is utilized to measure the company internal and external performances and assigning funds to each and every activity. Service is a key factor for consumer satisfaction although this is not the only factor which is responsible discuss in their study that customer satisfaction has positive relationship on loyalty. There are strong relations between satisfaction and loyalty. There is a affiliation exist between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Also examine that there is certain relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. As stated that customer satisfaction leads customer loyalty. The customer satisfaction is a significant indicator for the customer loyalty.

“In business you get what you want by giving other people what they want”. The comprehend contradiction among former expectations and the actual performance of the product can be defined as customer satisfaction. In marketing the marrow thought is customer satisfaction because it indicates the loyalty of customer towards any service or product. The Company can generate maximum profit through customer satisfaction. Thus customer satisfaction is momentous in present world to run the business perfectly. “Customer satisfaction is worthless. Customer loyalty is priceless”. The basic component of business success is customer satisfaction.

B. Customer Service:

Customers don't expect you to be perfect. They do expect you to fix things when they go wrong. The duties of the customer service staff is to clearly communicate with customers, to manage their problems regarding product or service, to transfer the appropriate information, for analyze the customer need and wants, to inform about new offerings, and to manage the length of the call. Handling customer-complaint effectively leads to customer satisfaction. “Customer services always a successful indicator in business”. Customer service is a momentous factor of marketing mix for any product or service. To generate customer loyalty the company should provide high quality customer services.

C. Price Fairness:

Price is a significant variable that defines the company's profit. For having the benefits and usage of any service or product the customer will pay an amount of money which is known as price. Price is also determined by what a buyer is willing to pay, a seller is willing to accept and the competition is allowing to be charged. Price is the key element for customer satisfaction. A good price is the major contributor for satisfaction. Because the monetary cost is the price and in making customer value monetary aspect play a most vital role.

D. Sales Promotion:

Sales promotion has a significant impact on consumer's brand choice, purchase time, and purchase quantity decision. It can be defined as to offer some incentives that can maximize consumer demand

or to improve the quality of the product. Sales promotion changes and contributions indeed can be identified much easily as compared to traditional advertising and quantified with figures and data. Sales promotion can affect the consumers' buying decision such as brand choice and brand switching. In other words, organizations utilize sales promotion as a tool that can convince customer to purchase any product or service. The purpose of sales promotion is to maximize the cellular subscribers therefore cellular companies offer extra free minutes, limited offer to get double balance, free VAS, MMS at low rate etc.

E. Coverage:

As Communication is all about to get coverage and to stay connected throughout the world therefore in Pakistan almost 1900 cell sites have been mounted by five cellular companies in various urban and rural areas. As in urban areas mobile phone coverage is better than rural areas but still some cellular companies cannot produce mobile coverage in some areas. If particular cellular company fail to provide coverage where customer need then it will lead to lack of satisfaction.

F. Signal Strength:

An element that can affect the customer satisfaction is signal strength. The mobile phone is connected with its network through mobile phone signal. The consumer cannot be able to make a call without signal from the particular network. The bad signal can cause voice distortion, call hanging etc.

G. Promotion:

One of the major elements of marketing mix is promotion. Media plays key role to promote a product in various areas. Sometimes company offer discount packages to increase the sale of any particular product. Promotion is defined as to indicate the "right" product to the target market or other distribution channels. It cannot be effective unless it catches the attention of people.

III. PROPOSED SYSTEM

Based on survey, six attributes are found important that have direct impact on the customer satisfaction.

The six attributes for the subscriber of cellular network service while using the mobile operators

- Network Coverage
- Voice Call Quality
- Dropped call rate.
- SMS(in time delivery with delivery acknowledgement)
- Internet Service
- Voice calls setup duration.

Population:

The survey sample (population) consists of subscribers of a renowned cellular network service provider (CSP) living in Islamabad, Federal capital of Pakistan. These targeted audiences are those subscribers whose CDRs data has been provided by CSP. All of them were connected with a single Mobile Switching Centre (MSC) and six different Base Station Controllers (BSCs).

Procedure:

A telephonic survey was conducted from 235 subscribers residing in Islamabad and using same cellular network services provider. Subscriber's contact details and demographic data were also

obtained by the CSP. We made a phone call to each respondent, after clear and concise introduction and importance of survey, we informed them the length of survey in minutes and confidentiality assurance then we started asking the survey questions. The responses of subscribers were recorded carefully. Out of 235 targeted audiences, we got refusal from 35. At the end of this exercise of telephonic survey we had the responses from 200 subscribers for analysis.

IV. RESULTS & ANALYSIS

The analysis of data and attributes is carried out using collected data from 200 users. We provide analysis in two forms i.e. data analysis and statistical analysis.

The data collect from all 200 surveys is summarized for further data analysis. Table-1 shows the distribution of data with respect to completeness of survey for all 6 attributes.

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Perce	N	Percent
Overall Satisfaction rate of existing mobile service * Network Coverage	200	100.0%	0	0.0%	200	100.0%
Overall Satisfaction rate of existing mobile service * Voice Call Quality	199	99.5%	1	0.5%	200	100.0%
Overall Satisfaction rate of existing mobile service * Dropped Calls	199	99.5%	1	0.5%	200	100.0%
Overall Satisfaction rate of existing mobile service * SMS Delievery	199	99.5%	1	0.5%	200	100.0%
Overall Satisfaction rate of existing mobile service * Internet Service	200	100.0%	0	0.0%	200	100.0%
Overall Satisfaction rate of existing mobile service * Call Setup Duration	199	99.5%	1	0.5%	200	100.0%

The graph in figure 2 given below shows the importance of all six attributes from the subscriber's perspective. Data shows that internet service, network coverage and voice call quality are the most important attributes for the subscribers.

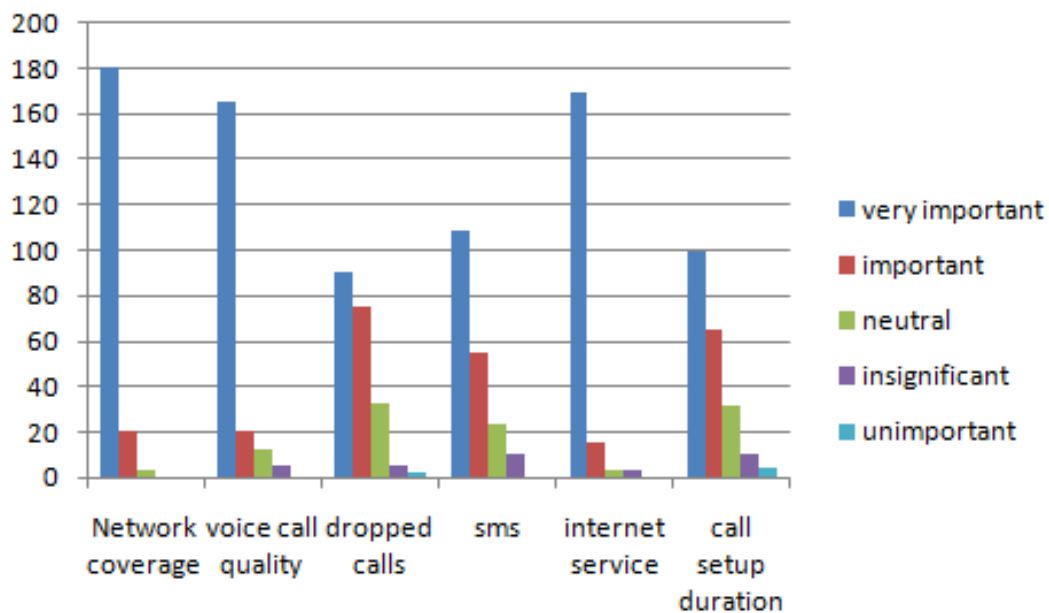


Figure 2. Important attributes from customer’s standpoint

Below mention graph in figure 3 shows that real experience of subscribers is not aligned with their expected level. As network coverage is most important attribute for 85% customers but 50% of the customers are getting expected level of network coverage rest of 35% of customers are not getting the estimated experience. For 92 % of the respondents, internet service is very important for them but only 47 % of the respondents are getting anticipated level of internet service. The rest 45% of the respondents are not getting the expected level of internet service.

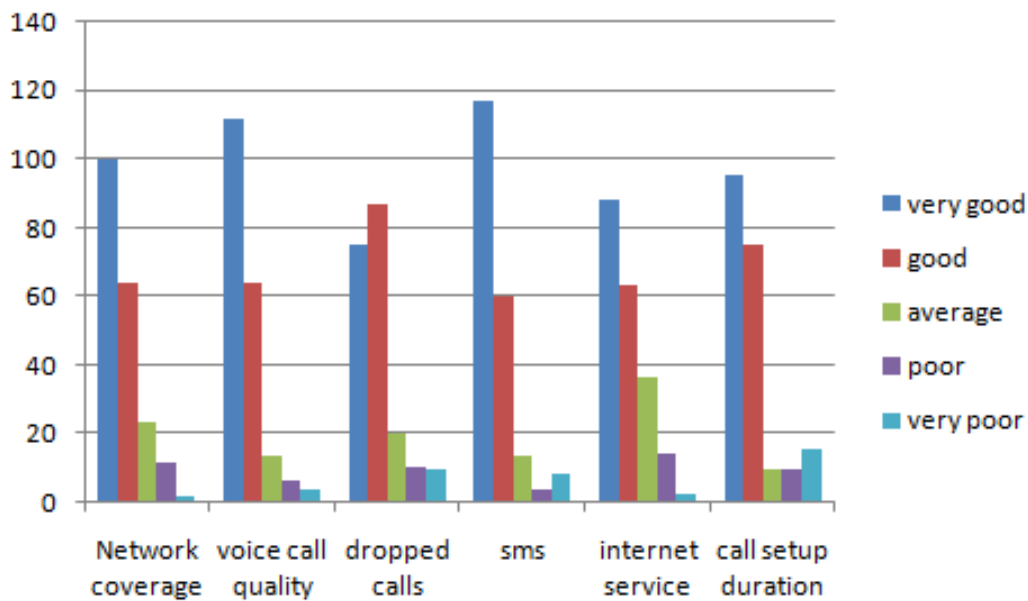


Figure 3. Customer Experience based on Service usage.

V. CONCLUSION

The customer satisfaction in telecom is the actual experience of subscribers while using the cellular network services and it has been gauged from the customers while they are using this service. A survey-based study is carried out to highlight most important attributes, which effect customer experience. Subscribers have graded the services on the bases of their experience. Services highlighted were network coverage, voice call quality, dropped calls, SMS delivery, and internet. The survey results shows that three attributes out of six are the major concerns of subscribers which are Network coverage, Internet Service and voice call quality. While the rest of three attributes (SMS, Call Setup Duration and dropped calls) have less significance. On the basis of these findings, a weighted mathematical model can be created to find customer satisfaction level based on the services he/she is getting. This will eventually help CSP to find overall satisfaction level of customers in a specific Mobile switching center.

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