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HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

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CONSUMER SWITCHING BEHAVIOR IN CELLULAR SERVICE PROVIDER IN NORTH GUJARAT REGION

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ABSTRACT

It's been very tough competition among the various mobile service providers in all over the world. The Indian mobile market continues to be dominated by prepaid subscribers. There has been a massive growth rate of subscribers. Indian mobile market is one of the fastest growing markets and is forecasted to reach 868.47 million users by 2013. The availability of a number of subscriber options for consumers and varied tariff rates of each player, lead the consumers to switch between service providers. Everyday number competitors come with new and attractive promotional schemes and or services that has made possible to reduce the tariff rates at all time low, which directly or indirectly affect the consumers and it encourages customers to change the mobile service providers. With this reference the proposed study is designed to know the existing subscribers, their switching behaviour and most important factors contributing to their switching behaviour with the sample size of 400 customers in the region of north Gujarat.

KEYWORDS
Switching Behaviour, Cellular service provider.

INTRODUCTION

The growing competition in the global market is showing that it is becoming increasingly important for companies to retain their existing customers. Gaining knowledge about customers' switching behavior is substantively important which can only be examined by analyzing the role of various factors affecting switching processes. The mobile communication plays a major role in telecommunication industry. Indian telecommunication sector is prosperous as Indian economies are considerably good. Mobile network comes under the service sector, which is experiencing a rapid development which in turn is supporting the growth in Indian economy, provides ample chances employment and self employment generation. The telecom industry is one of the fastest growing industries in India. India has about 960.9 million (May 2012) telephone subscribers making it the third largest network in the world after China and USA, and 929.37 million mobile phone users. With a growth rate of 45 per cent, Indian telecom industry has the highest growth rate in the world (www.telecommunications.com). "The Indian telecom sector, seen as providing the most affordable services in the world, has grown by leaps and bounds in the last decade. This remarkable journey to 100 million consumers is a testament to the vision and commitment of a company that benchmarks itself with the best in the world," Sunil Bharti Mittal, chairman and group chief executive officer of Bharti Enterprises said. (Times of India May 2009).

Switching behaviour is a consumer behaviour where the behaviour of the consumers differs based on the satisfactory level of the consumers with the service providers or companies. Switching behaviour can be articulated as the process of switching from one service provider to another service provider, due to dissatisfaction or any other problems. Service switching is defined as the act of replacing and exchanging the current service provider with another that is available to the consumer in the market (Bansal, 1997). Normally customer satisfaction is found to be the most common factor impinging upon switching intentions (Fernandes and Santos, 2007).Even if a consumer is loyal to a particular brand, if the brand does not satisfy his/her needs, the consumers switch to a competitor brand. There are different factors and determinants which affect the consumers in switching their service from one service to another. The cost which is incurred during the switching process is called switching cost. Consumer loyalty can be defined as "the degree to which a Consumer exhibits repeat purchasing behaviour from a service provider, possesses a positive attitudinal disposition toward the provider, and considers using only this provider when a need for this service arises" (Gremler and Brown, 1996, p. 173). Losing a consumer is a serious issue for the firm in terms of its present and future earnings. In addition to losing the benefits discussed above, the firm needs to invest resources in attracting new consumers to replace the ones it has lost (advertising, promotion, initial discounts). Peters (1987) shows that it can cost five times more to acquire a new consumer than to retain an old one. Consequently, retaining the current consumer base is much more attractive and viable than searching for new consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mohammed Sohel Islam (2008), in his study examined the relationship between switching cost, corporate image, trust and Customer loyalty. The research finds that although all the independent variables, switching cost, corporate image, and trust have certain degree of relationship with the dependent variable, Customer loyalty, only trust has the strongest relationship with Customer loyalty.

Jeong and Park (2003) examined the difference of subscribers' switching intention before and after the introduction of MNP in Korea. He reported that brand image, price and service were major factors of MNP. This research focused on price, perceived commitment, and outcome quality and anger incident as predicting variable to explain switching intentions. Previously, Anto´n et al., (2007) analyzed the predicting qualities of these variables in Spanish environment and found that poor quality, a perception of low organization commitment or interest, perceived unfair price and an anger incident can help in explaining the consumers' intention to switch. To retain customers, organizations have to satisfy them particularly in service industry (Oyeniyi and Abiodun, 2010). If customers are satisfied with the service, this not only enhances repurchase intentions (Hellier et al., 2003) but also addresses the switching intentions (Fernandes and Santos, 2007). Switching and switching intentions are considered as the most important variable in service sector. Affordability is a measure of cost related to the amount that a purchaser is able to pay. Kollmann (2000) states that Price plays a vital role in telecommunication market especially for the mobile telecommunication service providers.

OBJECTIVES

- To find the most preferred service provider.
- To identify responsible factor for the preferred service provider.
- To find the likeliness of switching the service provider with demographic variables
- To identify the factors that affects most to the consumers into switching the service provider.

SCOPE

- The present study can be extended to other geographical areas.
- It can be extended to study the usage of mobile services of different age groups and accordingly new plans can be formulated.
- This study can be extended to understand the switching behaviour of a particular cellular service provider.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study descriptive research design was used. The tool used was structured questionnaire. The method of obtaining responses was personal interview with convenience sampling of non-probability sampling method. The responses obtained were then further analyzed using statistical software.

ANALYSIS

Ho: There is no significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and gender of the respondents
H1: There is significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and gender of the respondents
To test the hypothesis likeliness to switch mobile service provider and gender of the respondents have been cross tabulated as follow.

TABLE – 1: CROSS TABULATION OF GENDER AND LIKELINESS TO SWITCH

		Likeliness to switch					Total
		Very likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very unlikely	
Gender	Male	74	122	38	6	2	**242**
	Female	22	52	40	22	22	**158**
Total		96	174	78	28	24	**400**

From the table we can say that more of male are likely or very likely to switch mobile service provider and female are more unlikely and very unlikely to switch the mobile service provider. To test the same Chi-Square test was used and following results were obtained.

TABLE – 2: CHI-SQUARE TESTS

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	67.526[a]	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	70.213	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	63.252	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	400		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.48.
From the above table we can say that the null hypothesis is rejected as the Asymp. Sig. is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. It indicates that gender is an influencing factor in understanding the mobile switching behavior of the respondents.
Ho: There is no significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and age of the respondents
H1: There is significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and age of the respondents
The above mentioned hypothesis is again tested using cross tabulation between age and likeliness to switch, shown in the following table.

TABLE – 3: CROSS TABULATION OF AGE AND LIKELINESS TO SWITCH

		Likeliness to switch					Total
		Very likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very unlikely	
Age	15 to 24 years	58	86	2	6	8	**160**
	25 to 34 years	22	44	32	2	4	**104**
	35 to 44 years	16	30	30	2	2	**80**
	Above 45 years	0	14	14	18	10	**56**
Total		96	174	78	28	24	**400**

From Table -3 we see that the respondents having age between 15 years to 24 years and 25 years to 34 years are very likely and likely to switch other service provider. Whereas respondents having age between 35 years to 44 years and more are interested in same mobile service provider or don't like to change the mobile service provider. So we can say that as the age increases likeliness to switch the service provider is decreases. To test this Chi-Square test was used and following results were obtained.

TABLE – 4: CHI-SQUARE TESTS

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.565E2[a]	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	160.309	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	69.840	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	400		

a. 3 cells (15.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.36.
From the above table we see that the null hypothesis is rejected as the Asymp. Sig. is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. It indicates that age is an influencing factor in understanding the mobile switching behavior of the respondents.
Ho: There is no significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and Education of the respondents
H1: There is significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and Education of the respondents
The above mentioned hypothesis is tested using cross tabulation between education and likeliness to switch, shown in the following table.

TABLE- 5: CROSS TABULATION OF EDUCATION AND LIKELINESS TO SWITCH

		Likeliness to switch					Total
		Very likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very unlikely	
Education	High school	24	30	0	16	6	76
	Undergraduate	36	46	2	0	10	94
	Graduate	12	20	10	2	6	50
	Post graduate	18	58	22	2	0	100
	Doctorate	2	16	26	2	2	48
	others	4	4	18	6	0	32
Total		96	174	78	28	24	400

According to Table – 5 respondents having higher the education they are more unlikely, very unlikely and neutral to switch the service provider, where as the respondents having less education they are more very likely and likely to switch the service provider. To test this Chi-Square test was used and following results were obtained.

TABLE- 6: CHI-SQUARE TESTS

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.706E2[a]	20	.000
Likelihood Ratio	188.327	20	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.577	1	.006
N of Valid Cases	400		

a. 7 cells (23.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.92.

Using Chi-square test we found the Asymp. Sig. value is .000 which is less than .05, so the null hypothesis will be rejected and it can be concluded that there is a significance relationship between education and likeliness to switch mobile service provider.

Ho: There is no significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and occupation of the respondents

H1: There is significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and occupation of the respondents

The above mentioned hypothesis is tested using cross tabulation between occupation and likeliness to switch, shown in the following table.

TABLE- 7: CROSS TABULATION BETWEEN OCCUPATION AND LIKELINESS TO SWITCH

		Likeliness to switch					Total
		Very likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very unlikely	
Occupation	Student	44	54	4	2	0	104
	Businessman	12	48	26	4	8	98
	Salaried	12	28	24	2	2	68
	Professional	12	32	22	8	0	74
	Retired	4	6	2	12	14	38
	Housewife	12	6	0	0	0	18
Total		96	174	78	28	24	400

From the table we can say that more of students are likely or very likely to switch mobile service provider and Businessman and salaried are more likely and neutral to switch the mobile service provider. Whereas retired respondents are more unlikely and very unlikely to switch the mobile service provider. To test the same Chi-Square test was used and following results were obtained.

TABLE- 8: CHI-SQUARE TESTS

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.010E2[a]	20	.000
Likelihood Ratio	174.444	20	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	28.581	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	400		

a. 9 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.08.

Using Chi-square test we found the Asymp. Sig. value is again .000 which is less than .05, so the null hypothesis will be rejected and it can be concluded that there is a significance relationship between occupation and likeliness to switch mobile service provider.

Ho: There is no significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and income of the respondents

H1: There is significance relationship between likeliness to switch mobile service provider and income of the respondents

The above mentioned hypothesis is tested using cross tabulation between income and likeliness to switch, shown in the following table.

TABLE- 9: CROSS TABULATION BETWEEN INCOME AND LIKELINESS TO SWITCH

		Likeliness to switch					Total
		Very likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Very unlikely	
Income	**Less than Rs.1,00,000**	50	68	8	2	4	**132**
	Rs.1,00,000 - 3,00,000	20	56	24	2	2	**104**
	Rs.3,00,001 - 6,00,000	6	20	22	2	0	**50**
	Rs.6,00,001 - 9,00,000	8	10	20	2	0	**40**
	Rs.9,00,001 - 11,00,000	0	12	0	20	8	**40**
	Above Rs.11,00,001	12	8	4	0	10	**34**
Total		96	174	78	28	24	**400**

From the table we can say that more of respondents having income < Rs. 100000 and Rs. 100000 to Rs. 300000 are very likely or likely to switch mobile service provider and Rs. 300001 to Rs. 600000 and Rs. 600001 to Rs. 900000 are more likely or neutral to switch mobile service provider. The respondents having income more than Rs. 900000 are more unlikely and very unlikely to switch the mobile service provider. To test the same Chi-Square test was used and following results were obtained.

TABLE- 10: CHI-SQUARE TESTS

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.678E2[a]	20	.000
Likelihood Ratio	212.133	20	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	64.742	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	400		

a. 8 cells (26.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.04.

Using Chi-square test we found the Asymp. Sig. value is .000 which is less than .05, so the null hypothesis will be rejected and it indicates that there is a significance relationship between income level of the respondents and likeliness to switch mobile service provider.

CONCLUSION

From the above analysis we came to know that males are more likely to switch service provider as compared to females. Respondents having age between 15 years to 24 years and 25 years to 34 years are very likely and likely to switch other service provider as compared to others. Respondents having higher education are more likely to switch the service providers as compared to others. Even respondents having less income are also more likely to switch the service provides as compared to higher income level.

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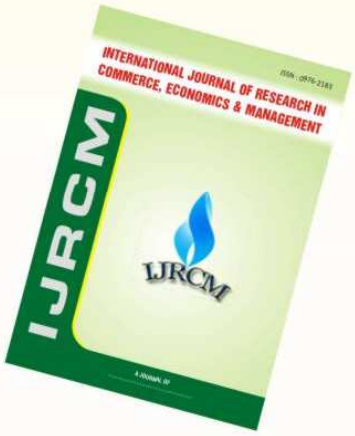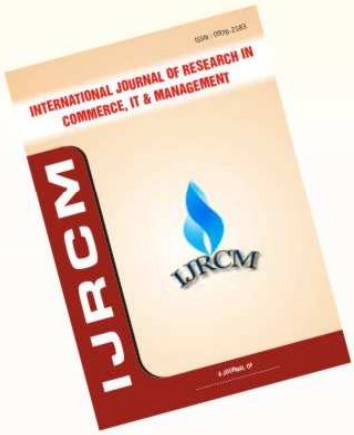
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