CONSUMER BEHAVIOR TOWARDS INCONVENIENCE FELT AT SERVICE CENTERS/PROVIDERS

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Abstract: - The purpose of the study is to find out the consumers behavior towards the inconvenience they felt by the service centers / providers and the actions they intend to put onto action. This study has been done on the different service providers in telecommunications in the city. The main aim is to find out how the customers behave to show their inconvenience they have experienced at the service center/provider. Will they still looking to get serviced from the same service center/ provider intern of their loyalty or will they take any social or legal action against them or will they stop getting served from the service center. Are they looking for any shift in getting serviced by another service center/ provider? And to find out the steps or actions what they have taken and motivated others to not go for taking service from the service centre. And what are the steps that are taken by the service providers or centers to make or keep happy and to satisfy their customers, such that they can retain them for a long time, by providing a quality service, with more than what the customer is expecting, within a nominal price tags.

INTRODUCTION:

We all know that the customer or the consumer is the king/God of the market or business, since the business or the organizations can't survive in the market without the customer/consumer. To keep them happy or satisfied the organizations are putting a lot of efforts, else there will be no place for the business or organizations in the market place. It is very important to the service providers when compared to product or goods provider. Since, the service providers need to take or more conscious in this matter as the customers will take each and everything into consideration when they go for deciding on making a sale or purchase any service from the service provider. A service is the service providers need to identify these differences and need an intangible product with different characteristics or properties to build marketing approach and strategy in order to successfully market the products or services. Products are essentially tangible and they can be touched, felt, smelled, tasted and heard, but whereas the service products can be just felt by the consumer and can decide the level of satisfaction of the service when compared to product. As there are many alternatives or service providers in the market from where a customer can fulfill his needs, now it has become a big challenge to the service providers/ centers to make or feel happy and convenient. The word of the Marketing philosophers has come true that the customer or consumer is the king of the market or customer/ consumer is god. However, the service providers cannot expect any profit from the market if they fail to meet the customers' requirement or expectations. And more over the consumers' expectations has been increased and expecting a lot from the service centers, else they have number of alternatives in the market from where they can get required service.

The impact of switching cost will be very high on the service center or providers. For services the consumers' behavior for switching will be different when compared to goods or products. Goods or products and services can be differentiated as tangible and intangible. The tangible products/ goods are those that can be seen & touched that can be differentiated from that of services with five different features: tangibility, separability, variability, heterogeneity, and ownership whereas the services can be differentiated with that of goods with same six different features: intangibility, inseparability, variability, heterogeneity, perishes ability and lack of ownership.

Now it is the tough time to the service providers that how to match their marketing strategies with the consumer or customer requirements. For this the retailers and the service providers are practicing and taking initiatives around the world in trying a variety of service techniques to compete with other competitors and to be the best among existing competitors.

The various techniques that have been adopted by the service providers are varied from one service provider to the other. As and when the consumers enter into a retailers' outlet the consumer should feel a variety of atmosphere and

should be able to spend a lot of time in the store and able to purchase more than what he has expected to purchase. In this regard there is a method adopted by the outlet service provider / service centers that, they greet a consumer by blowing fresh cool fragranced air at the entrance, such that the consumer who enters into the store should feel very relaxed from all the tensions that are been carried by them though out the day. The next technique that the store mangers' applying at the stores is by arranging green and fresh vegetables at the entrance of the store, which has a great visual and mental impact on the consumer eyes and mind and makes him feel pleasant in the store. And in some stores the store keepers has introduced play areas with all the playing essentials in the stores such that the parents can leave their children in that and can go for their shopping without any kind of disturbance for doing there shopping. This ideology has great impact on the consumers purchase behavior, because the child may create an inconvenience to their parent in going for purchasing by their uneasy behavior in the store. The above mentioned practices are been used at the store where the storekeepers are providing the tangible or physical products. But when it comes to the point of intangible products i.e. services the strategy may be different from the one service provider to other. Some of the strategies that are been practiced by the service centers or providers are as follows. If we seen in Banking sector the corporate customers are been treated or provided with great significance or preference as they are valuable customers they have been given or provided with a different name called as HNI (High Network individuals) and a separate service section is been provided for them such that when they come to a branch they need not to wait for long time to get served and if they have to wait for some time in the branch then the waiting place will be very luxury. Apart from this the HNI has a special facility for cheque pickup and DD creation. If we take a hotel industry here we can find a special treatment that is been given to the customers. If we consider in a telecommunication sector we can find the words such as privileged prepaid customers. And if we see in any service sector the importance or prominence that is been given to a customer has been increased. These are the some words that are been heard for a customer or consumer. But the difference is been seen clearly only in private sector but not in public sector. But when the customer or consumer feel inconvenient or dissatisfied with the service provided by the service providers / centers then they react very fast on it and this may be to that level where the loyal customer /consumer may turn to switch for the other service provider / center. And, these loyal consumers in turn may provoke other friends or neighbor consumer of the locality to stop getting served from the service provider / center.

As there is a saying in the marketing that WOM (Word of Mouth) has a great impact on the customers as it spreads into the market as a virus. This not only spreads about the good but also any bad information related to the product. A single unsatisfied customer can send away more business than 10 satisfied customers can introduce one new customer to a store but anything bad about the product it can influence ten customers. As there are about 90% of the people just trust on their friends and family for their recommendations on a product or service. There are only 10% of people who trust in the brand loyalty. The aim of the service providers or the centers is to keep their customers happy and satisfied with their service facilities and retain them with the store for a long run such that they can influence their surroundings. If they fail to meet the customer requirement then the loyal customer can turn into annoyed customer and can switch to another service provider for the required service or influence the other customers from buying from the store. The organizations need to build their image or reputation by being respectful to their customers and treating them in precise manner.

The aim of the paper is to find out the service quality which has a great impact on the customer loyalty, consumer sales, consumer satisfaction and retention of the consumer with the same service center.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Consumer behavior towards their inconvenience at the service centers or by the providers is linked with that of the personal behavior. As many of the consumers may not show/take any action towards the inconvenience they felt at the service center but there are few customers who will react to the inconvenience and take the action on that in any form. Customers may change the service centers / the service providers not only for the inconvenience but also for dissatisfaction or service quality, service failure and for price that is been charged by them when compared by the competitor. To overcome this issues the service providers need to have a keen observation on the customers movements in the store and try to identify the problems that are been faced by the customers and rectify them as early as possible. If these are been neglected by the ignorance of the service provider then they need to be prepared for facing the outcomes of the negligence.

As satisfaction is that what the consumer receives from the service provider is more than that of his expectation. The customer who enters a service center for a service should be

treated with friendly employees, should be very courteous and helpful employees in the center with sufficient knowledge about the products or service served at the center.

Customer satisfaction has a prominent place in the corporate business, because there is no business in the market without a satisfied and loyal customer. A single unsatisfied customer can send away more business than 10 satisfied customers.

In the real world the unsatisfied customers tend to convey their unhappiness / the inconvenience their negative impression in a negative word of mouth advertisement. This will have a great impact on the business and can make a huge loss to the organization.

The factors that have been identified as the reasons for dissatisfaction or cost of switching of the consumer are: the inconvenience, service failure and the price of the service. These factors may vary accordance to the type of the service, the consumer seeking from the service center/provider.

Apart from this the consumer may feel inconvenience / unhappy towards the service center/ provider in terms of the service what they have received from them with respect to what they have expected. If the consumer received the higher than what he has expected then he is delighted, and if he receives average / moderate then he is pleased and when he receives less than what he has expected then the consumer may turn into aggressive or annoyed and may turn to any action such as stop getting served or motivate others not to go for that service center or may take any legal action against them.

The consumer may hear about the inconvenience experienced by anyone in the social class and may be advised not to get serviced from that service center but the consumer may not stop getting served from the center until the consumer faces the same problem from the store as he is a loyal consumer / customer to that store and he has never faced an problem so far. Customers have a kind of attachment towards the service centers called as brand loyalty. As there are some centers that can serve very well in an area when compared to the other in that area. Customer loyalty is that which is created by the service centre or the organization by giving more than that of the expectations of their customers and this in turn will increase the sales of the organization by maintaining or increasing their purchase from the organization.

Once the customer feels happy the customer himself takes the responsibility of campaigning about the service centre / the organization, if the customer is dissatisfied than he turns to his aggressive side and shoe all the anger that he has on the organization.

It is not only important to consider the service quality, the financial aspects, consumer satisfaction, brand loyalty and the service levels delivered at the center for concluding a consumer level satisfaction or dissatisfaction but the service centers or the providers need to keep concentration on the total quality management.

Customer retention is the only mantra in the corporate business to increase the sales of the organization by keeping their customer satisfied. For this the service centers / the organizations are trying a lot of techniques for putting their customers happy by giving more than what they expect from the service centers / organizations. This is the only powerful weapon that keeps the organization or the service centers to survive in the everlasting competitive world. This is the key to build a long-term customer satisfaction and retaining them for reaping the benefits by putting efforts in developing the high quality services and this leads to less switching in the customers and can create a good place in the minds of the customers' as well as in the market place.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study survey methodology is based on primary data collection from 100 respondents by distributing questioners to the service users from the different areas of Hyderabad, in person, post to their e-mails id's and personally requesting the respondent to answer the questions by asking respondents face-to-face interviewing. The questioner was mainly consisting of two parts, where part I comprises of personal information which comprises the demographic data of the respondent like the age group, gender, educational qualification and the income level and part II comprising questions relating to the study with multiple choice and one open ended question for give their suggestions. On the basis of the answers given by the consumers we can come to conclusion that what is the level of the consumers' level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that they have experienced personally then they have approached the service center seeking for service.
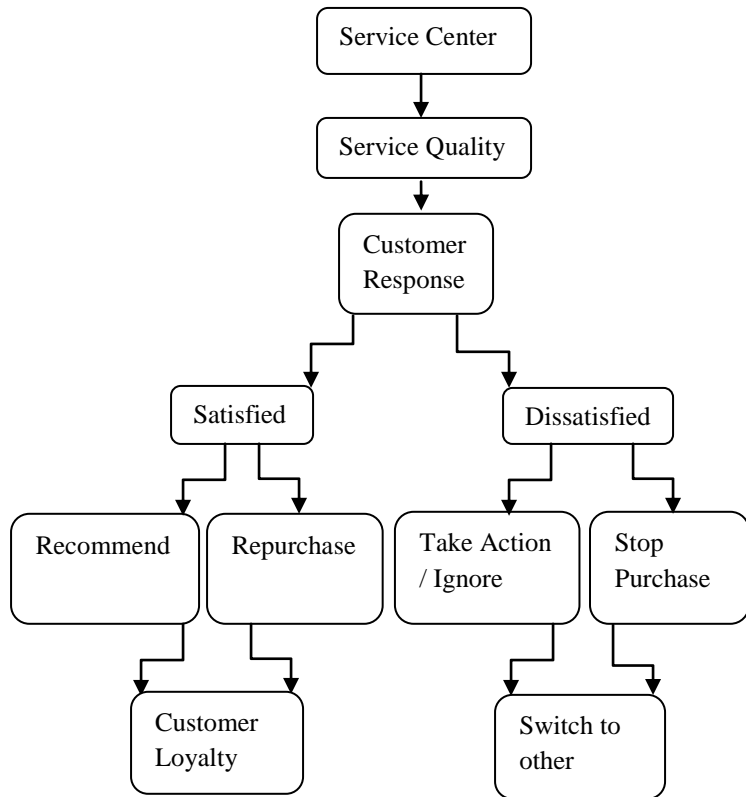
Fig.01

The above Fig.01 explains you about the different stages of that take place at the service center and the behavior of the customer towards them. On the basis of this the questioner is been designed by considering the factors such as: service quality, customer response, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction and customer retention.

The responses of the different respondents /customer has been analyzed on the basis of the different influencing factors that have made them to repurchase or loyal, introducing new customer and the reasons that have made them to stop purchasing or not seeking any more service form the service provider or switching to another service provider have been tabulated in the below empirical findings and data analysis. And the suggestions that have been made by the respondents have been added in the conclusion.

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Profile of Respondents			
Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	58	58
	Female	42	42
Age	18-28	42	0.42
	28-38	36	0.36
	38-48	22	0.22
Income	<10,000/-	42	0.42
	20,000/- 30,000/-	36	0.36
	30,000/- 40,000/-	22	0.22
Education	Inter	28	0.28
	Bachelor Degree	58	0.58
	Master Degree	14	0.14
Status	Student	52	0.52
	Employee	32	0.32
	Businessman	12	0.12
	House-wife	04	0.04

Influencing factors:

There are 5 questions that have been posed to the customers on the attributes of the service representative which are very important for any service provider to maintain them.

On the attribute of the Responsiveness of the service representative the customer's responses are follows:

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
----	45%	25%	15%	15%

On the attribute of the Professionalism of the service representative the customer's responses are follows:

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
----	50%	30%	08%	12%

On the attribute of the Politeness/ Manner of handling of the service representative the customer's responses are follows:

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
20%	40%	25%	10%	05%

On the attribute of the Knowledge of the problem of the service representative the customer's responses are follows:

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
05%	55%	25%	05%	10%

On the attribute of Efficiency in solving the problem of the service representative the customer's responses are follows:

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
10%	45%	20%	15%	10%

When the customers, are asked about the reason why they are switching from one service provider to other the responses of the customers are as follows:

Better quality of service	Service is easier to use	Better access to service	Better customer service	Better price & payment plan
15%	10%	30%	---	45%

When the customers are asked about the satisfaction level of the resolution of their problem, the responses of the customers are as follows:

Satisfied	Not Satisfied
45%	55%

When the customers posed with question about complete the sentence of "The service":

was better than expected	matched my expectations	was worse than expected
20%	55%	25%

When the customers asked to rate their service/ product on the attributes, the response of the customers are as follows:

Professionalism	Quality of products/services	Sales staff	Price
15%	50%	10%	25%

When the customers asked about their opinion on the five individual factors such as their loyalty, retention, satisfaction, recommendations and switching for the service/ product the answers obtained from them are as follows:

Loyalty	Retention	Satisfaction	Recommendation	Switching
15%	20%	25%	15%	25%

CONCLUSION:

The findings of the survey are been given in the data analysis and it has found that:

i. From all the above empirical analysis it is clear that the consumers / customers are very mean in selecting a service / product and they are very cautious in spending money on any service / product. And it is found that the customers are very choosy while selecting a service in respect of the service quality, access of service, service support, and price & payment.

ii. Apart from this it is been found that the customers are very less intended to go for recommending the service provider.

iii. Customers are very cautious about how they have been treated by the service representative when they approach them for resolving their problem.

iv. The customers are keenly observing the service representatives knowledge about the service/ product and recommending their friends or relatives to opt he service from the service provider.

v. The customers are very much anxious after selecting the service provider that will they meet in fulfilling the customer expectations or not.

vi. It is found that most of the customers are willing to switch from one service provider to other on the basis of three factors: service quality, service representative attitude and price & payment.

vii. It has been advised by many of the customers that

   a) The service providers need to improve their service quality in terms of providing good signal frequency. This is the not only he problem faced by the common man, but also the Prime Minister of India has also faced this kind of problem while he was in communication with a citizen in the Prime Ministers program "Man Ki Bath" and ordered the service providers to provide good signal frequency such that no man should any kind of inconvenience in the communication i.e. there should not be any line disconnection in between the communication. As the service providers say that provide good network coverage, they should try to keep the promise that they have made.

   b) Timely service responses from the service representatives to the customer without any waiting time for getting served ,

   c) Coming up with attractive data/ service cost / tariff plans ,
   customers call.

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