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Influencing Factors of Customer Satisfaction in Malaysia's Mobile Telecom Sector

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Abstract

The prosperity of any given commercial enterprise is directly proportional to the level of contentment experienced by its clientele. Customers are always "first" on the priority list, followed by profits, whenever a new enterprise is launched. Those businesses will continue to hold the leading position in the market if they completely satisfy their patrons' needs. The modern business enterprise is well aware that the level of satisfaction experienced by customers is the most critical factor in determining the company's success and that it also plays an essential part in increasing the value of the market. The primary objective of this research is to investigate the factors that influence the level of customer satisfaction within the mobile telecommunications sector in Malaysia. This study will investigate the various factors, such as price, service quality, and brand image, that influence or have the potential to influence the level of satisfaction experienced by consumers. The descriptive analysis is adopted. The study participants were mobile telecommunication company customers in various age brackets. The information for this study was obtained through a method known as "simple random sampling." The data were analyzed using "Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA)" and "Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA)." 'The Satisfaction of the customers, 'Price,' and 'Quality of mobile services have a significant 'Overall impact on customer satisfaction.' However, for the variable - 'Brand Image' with a p-value above 0.05. Hence it has no significant impact on the overall effect of customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Telecommunication, Brand Image, Price, Quality, and Malaysia.

1. Introduction

A company's ability to maintain a healthy relationship with its clientele is necessary for its continued success. If a customer is satisfied with a service or product and has positive thoughts about it after using it, then it is likely that they will make a subsequent purchase and attempt to expand their product line, as stated by Wells and Prensky (1996). It is because satisfied customers are more likely to spend more money. Increasing customer satisfaction is essential for an organization, as satisfied customers may bring many benefits, such as sharing positive recommendations through positive word of mouth. Consequently, increasing the level of customer satisfaction is essential for an organization. In addition, satisfied customers could cultivate a long-term relationship with the company's brand that would benefit both parties. In order to realize exceptional levels of financial success, it is essential for modern communication networks to keep their customers satisfied and to work hard to win their continued allegiance. According to the findings presented by Kheng et al. (2010), service providers' success depends on maintaining long-term relationships with customers. These relationships, in turn, are determined by the level of satisfaction and loyalty that customers feel toward the service provider. Numerous studies on customer satisfaction in mobile telecommunications have been conducted in several countries, including Malaysia (Strenitzerova & Gana, 2018; El-Borsaly & Hassan, 2020; Saroha & Diwan, 2020; Bello et al., 2021; Abd-Elrahman et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2020; Rejman et al., 2022; Al Debei et al., 2022; Hajar et al., 2022; Abd-Elrahman, 2022; Twum et al., 2023; Naz et al., 2023; Musammem, 2023; Nurysh et al., 2019).

According to Dawar (2013), over the past few decades, one of the most important theoretical and practical considerations for the vast majority of marketers and consumer researchers has been the level of satisfaction experienced by customers. The needs of consumers are the primary focus of research because satisfying those needs will create markets for a company's goods and services (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020).

The level of satisfaction that a customer has with a product or service they are currently receiving can be strongly influenced by various factors. It is essential for businesses providing services to consider their customers' history and personality. They need to consider tactics to help them maintain and increase their market share. They will find a way to modify their rule of offering occasionally, depending on the time of year, special occasions, or holidays. The level of satisfaction that a company's clients report with the goods or services they purchase is becoming an increasingly important metric for businesses to track to evaluate the quality of their offerings. According to Hansemark and Albans (2004), the issue of customer satisfaction has become an essential indicator in the marketing field. This indicator represents the condition of any service and manufacturing company operating in a highly competitive market.

For the company to accurately evaluate the quality of its goods or services, it has begun to place an increasingly high priority on the level of satisfaction experienced by its clientele. According to Chen et al. (2011), customer satisfaction can be defined as a customer's evaluation of their purchases and consumption experience with a product or service to determine whether or not the product or service satisfies the customer's needs. The regard or esteem in which a seller is held is the image projected of that seller in the marketplace. The seller may have a positive or negative reputation. According to Cabral (2000), consumer's perceptions of the quality of products sold by a particular vendor are influenced by the vendor's reputation because of how that reputation is generalized, called "transfer of meaning."

The study aims to ascertain the aspects of the Malaysian telecommunications industry that significantly impact customer satisfaction. The laboratory can offer a perceived quality knowledge on new solutions by predicting the customer's perceptions of the product's quality, allowing them to offer a perceived quality knowledge. In today's highly competitive market, the services provided by the same commercial enterprises get incremental. It is why service industries differentiate the delivery of their services and create product positioning through various communication channels (Spector & McCarthy, 2012). After a prosperous start with a diverse organizational makeup, the businesses in the field of telecommunications evolved into an openly claimed industry that is monopolized by a single company and is not subject to any form of competition. It is necessary to establish a critical research agenda in order to understand how satisfied customers are with their services and the factors that affect their decision to select a particular telecommunications provider in light of the significance of customer satisfaction in the telecommunications industry as well as the recent developments in the cellular phone industry. There is an urgent requirement for the centralization of services, mainly the marketing services offered in various other regions and countries (Lim, 2023). As a result of the fact that residents of the nation or potential customers ought to be able to access the marketing process and procedures, there ought to be some degree of control over it. Therefore, this study aims to determine the aspects of the Malaysian telecommunications industry that significantly impact customer satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Customer Satisfaction

The ability to provide excellent service to one's clientele is widely regarded as one of the most critical factors in commercial success. According to Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, and Bryant (1996), customer satisfaction is an overall evaluation of the total purchase and consumption experience with the good or service over time. When it comes to marketing, customer satisfaction is an inherent part of the process, and this means that it determines the customer's expectations regarding how the companies provide the products and services in question. According to Oliver (1999), one of the most important outcomes is information that can be put into action to increase the level of satisfaction experienced by customers.

The level of satisfaction a company gets from its customers is dynamic and relative. Only the concept of being "customer-centric" can assist businesses in increasing customer satisfaction and maintaining customers for the long term. On the other hand, if competitors improve customer satisfaction, those businesses risk losing corporate customers. While working to improve customer satisfaction, it is essential to consider customers' expectations. The quality of the service, the quality of the products offered, and the amount of value received for the price all directly and positively influence customer satisfaction. Before focusing on satisfying customers, focusing first on delighting employees is critical. If employees are a positive influence on customers, then they have the potential to play a significant role in raising the overall level of customer satisfaction. The state of being satisfied is not a static or unchanging goal; instead, it can change over time and is impacted by a wide range of different elements. It is especially true when the experience of using a product or receiving a service takes place over some time that one's level of satisfaction can be highly variable depending on which point in the cycle of usage or experience is being focused on (Lovelock & Wright, 2007).

According to Zeithal et al. (2006), a customer's emotional responses, attitudes, and perception of equity can all play a role in the level of satisfaction they experience. An increase in the level of customer satisfaction can bring several benefits to the company, including an increase in customer loyalty, a lengthening of the customer's life cycle, an expansion of the amount of time that merchandise the customer has purchased, and an increase in the amount of positive word of mouth communication from customers. When a customer is happy with a product or service that a company provides, it increases the likelihood that the customer will continue to do business with the company and also recommend its products or services to others who may become customers. According to Tao (2014), a business organization can only develop if the company pays attention to or cares about the requirements of its customers.

2.2 Price

The service provider faces increased difficulty in attempting to win the market due to the intense competition within the market, where there are a relatively small number of potential customers and many potential competitors. The competition is not only related to the satisfaction of customers, which will lead to various benefits but also to the role that price plays in their products and services. According to (Cakici et al., 2019), customers place significant importance on pricing when making decisions (Konuk, 2019). The customers' priorities and the nature of their problems will factor into their decisions. According to Hassan and

Shamsudin (2019), the customer will consider the price as part of the list of factors subject to evaluation and comparison before deciding on a course of action. According to Konuk (2019), it is imperative to have a solid understanding of the appropriate role of pricing from both the perspective of service providers and customers.

According to Shamsudin et al. (2020), businesses that provide services are perpetually faced with a conundrum regarding the determination of prices. The service providers can determine the price that customers pay in several ways. Still, the most important things are the results that will lead to mutual acceptance by customers as an exchange within the products and the cost paid (Konuk, 2019). According to Kaura et al. (2015), an excessively high price will ultimately decrease sales. In the same breath, if set too low, it would result in a loss of business (Minbashrazgah et al., 2017). In the economy that was being referenced, academics advocated for either an increase in the price of services or an expansion in the number of customers purchasing those services. According to Shafei and Tabaa (2016), the number of customers will decrease if the price is high. However, the number of customers will increase if the service provider lowers the price, even though the margin will be reduced. It was stated by (Shamsudin, et al., 2020) that price is among the simplest things in business but the most complex in decision-making as it impacts the sustainability of the business organizations.

The service provider is responsible for ensuring that the pricing strategy can influence the customers' perceptions of the product based on the sensitivity and elasticity of the market. According to the findings of Shamsudin et al. (2020), consumers may only be concerned about the price of a product if it is on their list of desired consumption items. Hassan and Shamsudin (2019) believe this could be because the customer needs extreme product preferences or brand loyalty. Customers may also not be sensitive to the price if they do not fall into the category of target markets due to their ability to pay (Abd Razaka et al., 2020). Customers may not fall into target markets if they cannot pay for the product or service.

Regarding luxury items, one's perceptions of prices may not be relevant at all. Compared to a staple good, the demand will be the opposite of what someone expects. When customers have access to information that allows them to compare and review the prices of various competitors, service providers have a greater responsibility to emphasize pricing.

2.3 Brand Image

Brand image research has been acknowledged as the central focus of marketing and advertising study. According to one definition (Keller, 1993), "brand image" refers to customers' perceptions of a company, as demonstrated by the brand associations retained in that company's memory. The client's reactions to the brand name, sign, or impression also contributed to forming the brand image, symbolizing the product's superiority. The brand image consisted of a collection of assets and liabilities, and it had a connection with the brand name and sign. The assets and liabilities could either increase or decrease the value of the brand by providing products or services to customers (Tu & Chih, 2013; Maqid et al., 2006). The purchasing decision-making process is heavily influenced by a consumer's perception of a company's brand.

A higher brand image indicated that the product quality had increased past a particular threshold. Nevertheless, a poorer brand image or the absence of the brand altogether indicated that customers needed more confidence in the products (Hsieh et al., 2018). The products and services offered by the company provided they consistently maintained a positive image in the eyes of the community, would positively contribute to the achievement of a better condition in the business, a sustainable competitive advantage, and an improvement in market share or performance. Additionally, a positive brand image would cause customers to experience an increase in their satisfaction level ((Saeed et al., 2013; Semadi & Ariyanti, 2018).

2.4 Quality of Mobile Services

According to Crosby (1996), the primary consideration in making a purchase decision is the product or service's overall level of quality. According to Kang (2006), quality is the difference between the performance that customers perceive and the expected performance of any product or service. According to Yoo and Park (2007), there is a strong correlation between the satisfaction of the customer and their perception of the quality of the company's services. Consequently, the quality of service that telecommunications companies provide can vary from one business to the next. According to the findings of the research, the satisfaction of customers is intimately connected to the caliber of the services provided. According to Venetis and Ghauri (2004), the level of customer loyalty that a customer has towards a specific company is directly proportional to the quality of the service that the company offers to its customers. According to Zeithaml et al. (2006), providing customers with high-quality services can improve their positive behavioral plans while simultaneously reducing the customers' unfavorable propositions. Therefore, companies in the telecommunications industry that provide high-quality services are believed to satisfy and retain more customers. Zeithaml et al. (2006) proposed a conceptual model in which they present the relationships between providing quality service, ensuring customer satisfaction, and cultivating customer loyalty. Jahanzeb, Tasneem, and Khan (2011) investigate the various aspects of telecommunication services by looking at them through the lens of the following overarching categories: value-added services, communication ensure, innovation advancement, and resolution administration. The phrase "settlement of administration" refers to prompt and accurate billing that improves customer satisfaction and fosters greater brand loyalty. The level of satisfaction experienced by a company's customers may vary widely, depending on the value-added services offered by that business.

3. Research Methodology

The present research provides descriptive details. This study determines the relationships between the previously identified variables in the relevant research. In the beginning, 385 respondents were asked to take part in the study, but only 335 of them responded. Additionally, 50 questionnaires were deemed invalid because of unengaged respondents or incomplete responses. In the end, we looked at 335 responses to conduct data analysis. The study participants were mobile telecommunication company customers in various age brackets. The purpose of the research was to determine the factors that influence customer satisfaction with mobile telecommunication companies. The information for this study was obtained through a method known as "simple random sampling." The data were analyzed using "Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA)" and "Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA)."

4. Findings

4.1 Profile of Respondents

The primary survey conducted in Malaysia had a sample size of 335 people to represent the entire country. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, and the total number of questions was 38. The first five questions inquired about the respondent's history and were the only mandatory ones in that section. Tabular form 1 contains the answers to these five questions. Two options are available for the Gender category and the number of respondents who chose 1. Male, and 2. Females were 215 and 120, respectively. Based on these findings, more women than men participated. Age divides people into five distinct groups. The number of respondents who selected 1. 18-30, 2. 31-40, 3. 41-50, 4. 51-60, and 5. 61 above was 87, 113, 57, 45, and 33, respectively. Those aged 31–40 had a relatively large ratio, but respondents from various other age classes also participated in the primary survey. There are two options for marital status, and the respondents selected either 1 = Single (including the widow, divorced) or 2 = Married. Two hundred twenty-two respondents were married, while 113 were single, suggesting that married people comprise most of the population. There are five different options available for respondents to select when it comes to their ethnicity. The number of respondents who selected Bumiputera, Malays, Chinese, Indians, and Others was 77, 123, 116, 9, and 0, respectively. Therefore, the Malay category had the highest rate among the other categories. Non-Tertiary Education, High School/SPM, College, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and Ph.D. are the six options under Education, and the number of respondents who selected each of these was 5, 57, 94, 115, 40, and 24, respectively. It indicates that the majority of respondents have a Bachelor's Degree. There are four options for service providers, and the number of respondents who chose Celocm, Digi, U Mobile, and Maxis was 89, 74, 54, and 115, respectively. The majority of respondents went with Maxis as their carrier of choice.

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Q1	**Gender**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Male	120	34%
2	Female	215	64%
	Total	335	100%
	Age	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	18-30	87	26%
2	31-40	113	34%
3	41-50	57	17%
4	51-60	45	13%
5	Above 61	33	10%
	Total	335	100%
Q2	**Marital Status**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Single	113	34%
2	Married	222	66%
	Total	335	100%
Q3	**Ethnicity**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Bumiputera	77	23%
2	Malays	123	36.71%
3	Chinese	116	34.62%
4	Indians	19	5.67%
5	Others	0	0%
	Total	335	100%
Q4	**Education**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Non-Tertiary	5	2%
2	High school/SPM	57	17%
3	College	94	28%
4	Bachelor	115	34%
5	Master	40	12%
6	PhD	24	7%
	Total	335	100%
Q5	**Service Provider**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Celcom	89	26.56%

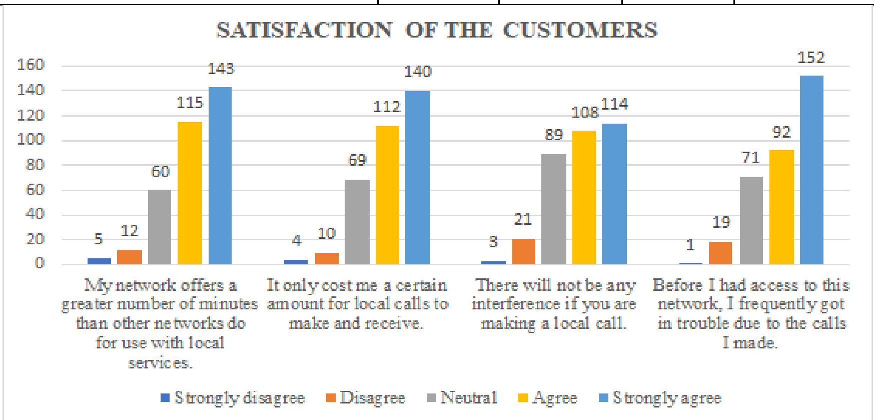
2	Digi	77	23%
3	U Mobile	54	16%
4	Maxis	115	34.34%
	Total	335	100%

4.2 Factors Affecting Customers Satisfaction

A multitude of researchers have put forward a variety of hypotheses regarding customer satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to collect data on the opinions of individuals regarding the quality of the services provided by telecommunications service providers, determine the extent to which brand image and customer satisfaction are related, and, as a final step, estimate the cost of the product, which is also connected to the level of satisfaction experienced by buyers.

Table 2: Satisfaction of The Customers

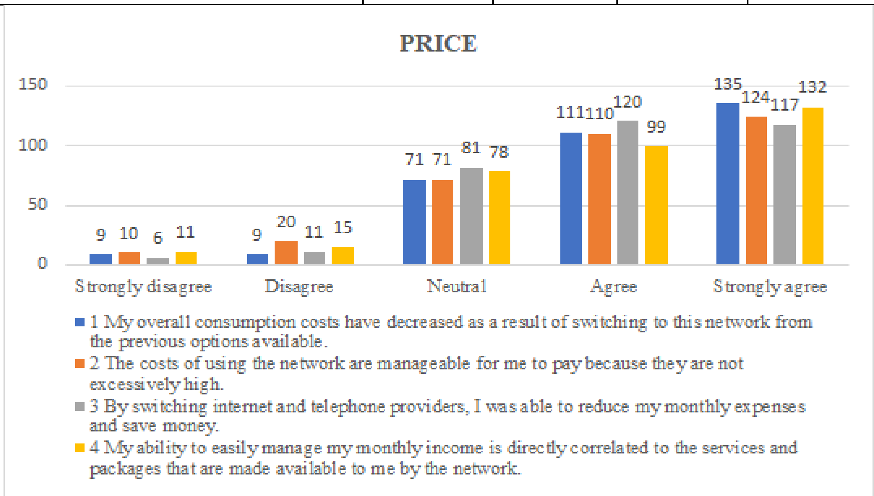
S.no	Description	Strongly disagre e	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	My network offers a more significant number of minutes than other networks do for use with local services.	5	12	60	115	143
2	It only costs me a certain amount for local calls to make and receive.	4	10	69	112	140
3	There will not be any interference if you are making a local call.	3	21	89	108	114
4	Before I had access to this network, I frequently got in trouble due to the calls I made.	1	19	71	92	152



Customer gratification is the most critical factor in the successful operation of any business in the telecommunications industry. In general, a customer's level of satisfaction can be defined as their attitude or evaluation of the goods or services they have purchased. Regarding customer satisfaction, we have created four statements; among them, the highest value is "Before I had access to this network, I frequently got in trouble due to the calls I made," which was selected by the respondents.

Table 3: Price

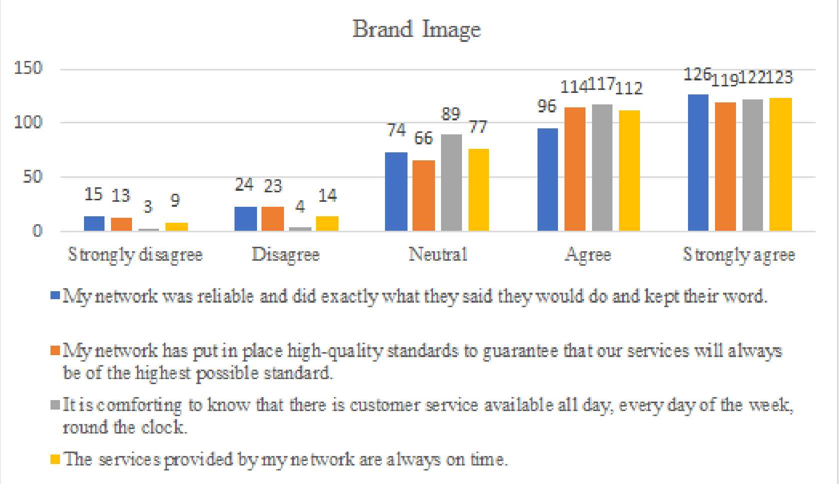
S.no	Description	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	My overall consumption costs have decreased due to switching to this network from the previous options available.	9	9	71	111	135
2	The network costs are manageable for me because they are not excessively high.	10	20	71	110	124
3	I could reduce my monthly expenses and save money by switching internet and telephone providers.	6	11	81	120	117
4	My ability to easily manage my monthly income is directly correlated to the services and packages made available to me by the network.	11	15	78	99	132



Pricing can be conceptualized as the ratio between two items that are being exchanged for one another. This definition comes from the field of economics. Price is determined by several factors, such as the buyer's willingness to pay, the buyer's ability to accept the price, the buyer's expenses, the seller's markup, the legal environment, the power of competition, the price of replacement items, and so on. Regarding the price, we have developed four statements. Among them, the highest value is "My overall consumption costs have decreased due to switching to this network from the previous options available."

Table 4: Brand Image

S.no	Description	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	My network was reliable, did exactly what they said they would do and kept their word.	15	24	74	96	126
2	My network has established high-quality standards to guarantee that our services will always be of the highest possible standard.	13	23	66	114	119
3	It is comforting to know that customer service is available all day, every day of the week, round the clock.	3	4	89	117	122
4	The services provided by my network are always on time.	9	14	77	112	123

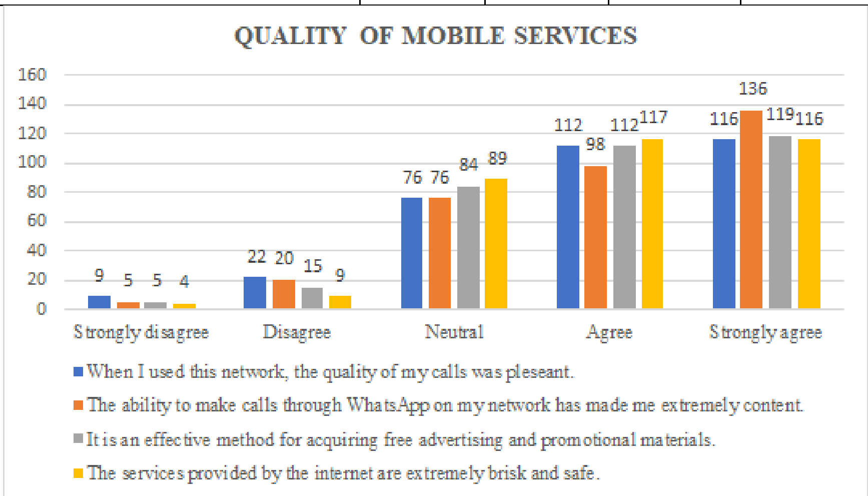


"Brand image" refers to how audiences perceive the brand and how customers feel about their experiences. The consumer's opinion is influenced by various factors, including the quality of the products offered by your brand, the impression created by your marketing efforts, and the degree of service provided to customers. Regarding the brand image, we have created four statements. Among them, the highest value is "My network was reliable, did exactly what they said they would do, and kept their word."

Table 5: Quality of Mobile Services

S.no	Description	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	When I used this network, the quality of my calls was pleasant.	9	22	76	112	116

2	The ability to make calls through WhatsApp on my network has made me highly content.	5	20	76	98	136
3	It is an effective method for acquiring free advertising and promotional materials.	5	15	84	112	119
4	The services provided by the internet are incredibly brisk and safe.	4	9	89	117	116



The primary factor determining one option over another is the product or service's overall level of quality. It has been determined that quality can be defined as the differences between how customers perceive a product or service and how they expect it to perform. There is a strong correlation between the satisfaction of the customer and the customer's perception of the quality of the services that the company provides. Regarding the quality of mobile services, there are four statements. Among them, the highest value goes to “The ability to make calls through WhatsApp on my network has made me highly content.”

4.3 Reliability Test Results

Table 6: Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach’s alpha
Customer Satisfaction	0.890
Price	0.870
Quality of Mobile Services	0.869
Brand Image	0.887

The purpose of the tests used to determine the reliability of a scale is to establish whether or not the components have a strong relationship with one another. According to Malhotra and Peterson (2006), testing reliability aims to determine the degree to which a scale generates reliable results, assuming frequent measurements are devoid of random variation.

The value of Cronbach's Alpha Researchers frequently uses alpha values when attempting to ascertain the level of reliability. According to Malhotra (2007), the range from 0 to 1 is what Cronbach's alpha coefficient represents. When accurately determining constructions, the items' precision increases directly to the coefficient's value. According to research conducted by Hair et al. (2010), the minimum level of dependability required is 0.6. In this investigation, an alpha value of 0.869 is the lowest one. As a result, the responses provided by the respondents can be trusted.

4.4 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

EFA is used to understand the data structure, correlation among it, ems, and data reduction. EFA makes data-specific ng questionnaire items into constructs (Field, 2017). EFA is typically used earlier in scale development and construct validation (Brown, 2006).

Table 7: KMO and Bartlett's Test

“Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy”		.882
“Bartlett's Test of Sphericity”	“Approx. Chi-Square”	2295.901
	“df”	153
	“Sig.”	.000

The value for the "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy" found is .882, which is above the required value of 0.6; hence it approves the adequacy of the sample for performing the EFA (Kaiser & Rice, 1974).

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 8: Model Summary

“Model”	**“R”**	**“R Square”**	**“Adjusted R Square”**	**“Std. The error of the Estimate.”**
1	.789[a]	.623	.616	.56194
a. Predictors: (Constant), the satisfaction of the customers, Parenting, Price, Brand Image, and Quality of mobile services				

In Multiple Regression analysis, the value of the Adjusted R square is 0.616 with 62% variation.

Table 9: ANOVAa

“Model”		**“Sum of Squares”**	**“df”**	**“Mean Square”**	**“F”**	**“Sig.”**
1	“Regression”	112.833	4	28.208	89.330	.000[b]
	Residual	68.208	216	.316		
	Total	181.041	220			

DV: Customer Satisfaction
b. Predictors: (Constant), the satisfaction of the customers, Price, Brand Image, and Quality of mobile services

The table above shows that the significance value is less than 0.05, which reflects that one or more of the IDVs significantly influences the DV.”

Table 10: Coefficients

“Model”	“Unstandardized Coefficients”		“Standardized Coefficients”	“t”	“Sig.”
	“B”	“Std. Error”	“Beta”		
(Constant)	3.638	.038		96.243	.000
The satisfaction of the customers	.126	.038	.139	3.327	.001
Price	.084	.038	.093	2.227	.027
Brand Image	.001	.038	.001	.018	.986
Quality of mobile services	.700	.038	.772	18.474	.000
DV: Customer Satisfaction					

Table 10 shows that the factors, namely ‘The Satisfaction of the customers, ‘Price,’ and ‘Quality of mobile services, have a significant ‘Overall impact on customer satisfaction .'However, for the variable - ‘Brand Image’ with a p-value above 0.05. Hence it has no significant impact on the overall effect of customer satisfaction.

5. Conclusion and suggestions

Businesses have a responsibility to take into account a wider variety of factors that could affect the level of satisfaction experienced by customers. Rates and bundles businesses offer must be modified regularly to accommodate a wide range of clients and remain competitive. In order to increase customer share, internet package speeds and prices need to be made as affordable as possible. A new study's ability to formulate more significant findings for potential researchers can be assisted by a good sample size combined with sufficient justification, ultimately resulting in a more substantial addition to the marketing literature. However, because time is one of the most critical factors in any successful study, any future research should be carried out over a more extended period to obtain accurate data by using a questionnaire that has been carefully designed and adjusted. The time limit for conducting a survey must be extended so that the researchers can distribute the survey and collect responses from many respondents. A poll should be conducted in multiple languages, including English, Arabic, Malay, and Chinese, to eliminate any potential for bias in the research. Respondents needing help comprehending the entire English version of the survey can improve their comprehension level by administering it in various dialects. As a direct consequence, they would be more than capable of comprehending the research questions that lead to the accuracy of the conclusion.

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