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**THE IMPACT OF SWITCHING COST TOWARDS CUSTOMER LOYALTY: A
STUDY ON TELECOMMUNICATION SECTOR, UK**

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the School of Business
and Law, University of East London for the degree of **[MSC in International business
management]**

[MAY 2016

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Research Project

**THE IMPACT OF SWITCHING COST TOWARDS
CUSTOMER LOYALTY: A STUDY ON
TELECOMMUNICATION SECTOR, UK**

Abstract:

The topic of concerns deal with the study related to the impact of switching costs towards the loyalty among customers. This study mainly concerns with different types of switching costs in telecommunication sector in the UK and demonstrates its impact on the customer loyalty. This study also includes which types of risks are affecting the telecommunication of the UK most and demonstrates the impact of those risks on the customer satisfaction strategy and customer loyalty. It is seen that with the rapid growth of the technology, customer's perceived value has also changed. It is seen that telecommunication require huge installation charge, which makes customer reluctant to switch over other brand. Telecommunication sector of the UK is losing their customers because of bad quality services and very less focus on the technological advancements and customer retention strategy.

In order to conduct this research, the researcher has gathered mainly secondary qualitative data. Secondary research is very much effective to gain huge theoretical perspectives about the topic of the research. For conducting this research, the researcher selects positivism philosophy, deductive approach and descriptive research design. Throughout the research, the researcher mainly identifies different problems related to switching costs of the telecommunication sector and recommends some strategy in order to resolve these problems.

From the collected data, it is seen that the telecommunication of the UK is unable to provide effective services to their customers. They are unable to implement effective switching costs to their organisation for which they are losing their customers. Recently, telecommunication sector is failed to adopt the appropriate route of the innovation, which makes them incapable to extract the value from the assets of the network and they are unable to understand the actual value of the customers.

The main strength of this research is to investigate the importance of implement appropriate switching costs, so customers can get loyal customers for their organisation. In different

previous research, there was enough research about the implementation of the appropriate switching costs. However, during conduction of the research, the researcher has faced different types of difficulties. The main problem that is faced by the researcher is related to the data collection method. As the researcher is novice and secondary data require huge cost to access secondary data so the researcher faced different level of difficulties.

Acknowledgement:

In order to conduct this research, I have described different aspects on the selected topic named “Impact of switching costs towards the customer loyalty: A study of the telecommunication sector, UK”. I hereby declared the fact that the entire study is based on my own perceived knowledge about the switching costs and customer loyalty. I want to thank my guide and mentor to provide effective guidance to me for completion of this entire study.

I am also thankful to my parents, supervisor and my classmates to provide enormous support to me, which helps me to complete this study with effectiveness. I would like to thank the librarian who has guided me by providing sufficient and effective study materials during the data collection method.

Thanks you all,

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction:

From the last few years, marketing strategy and technique has experienced a significant change to attract and retain customer with more effectiveness. Different market practitioners have come to realise that an effective focus on the long-term relational bond with the key stakeholders group both the internal and external any organisation may positively impact the ultimate bottom line of finance of any organisation. As per the viewpoint of Wang *et al.* (2011, p.350), customer are the heart of any business and customer loyalty plays an important role in the performances of any organization. Amongst the arguments for why a loyal customers became so important for the organisational success is that keeping old customers incurs less cost than to attract a new customers because attracting new customers for organisation require advertisements related costs. A plenty of study describe that in order to increase the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty moderating switching costs are very important. Switching costs are those costs that the buyer faced, when they terminate the transactional relationship with the existing organisation from, which they have buy products earlier and initiating a new relationship. As stated by Liu *et al.* (2011, p.75), switching costs can be defined as the psychological, economic, and physical costs that a customer face when change a supplier.

In the telecommunication industry, there is a plenty of cost when the customer switch their brand to another brand. Those costs include the costs to inform others about the change, cost to acquire new connection or lines, cost related to break long and standing relationship with the service provider's, cost to find new service providers that provide same level or higher degree of services and costs to learn new procedures to deal with the new service providers. Apart from these there are also uncertainty related to time and psychological effort from the clients end. Therefore, from the above discussion it can be clearly understood that switching costs are more pronounced in the telecommunication industry because of industry require high level of costs to install a new system (Yen, 2010, p.212). This is same for any organisation, it is seen that it costs more to acquire new customer than to prevent them from any defect.

This research mainly aimed to describe the impact of switching costs on the customer loyalty on the telecommunication industry of UK. This research also investigates different types of switching costs associated with the industry. It is seen that the presence of switching costs can dissatisfy the loyal customers but do not defect because of the high level of switching costs. Therefore, the level of switching cost can moderate the link between the customer satisfaction and loyalty.

1.1 Background of the research:

From the previous studies, it has been proved that telecommunication industry plays a significant role to develop the economical condition of the economy, it is seen that doubling of the mobile data usage provide an effective growth in the GDP per capita growth rate of 0.5% (www.deloitte.com, 2016). This industry is running very much effectively, and generates a positive image of the country in front of the world. However, recently telecommunication industry of the UK is facing different challenges for which they are unable to attract new customers. They are facing problems to attract new customers and existing customers of other telecommunication organisation due to huge amount of switching costs. Recently British telecommunication is facing different types of problem related to failure to adopt new way to facilitate innovation, failure they understand the value of customers, lack of data integrity, lack of regulatory certainty on the new market structures, etc. (Wang, 2010, p. 254). They are facing problems to attract new customers also due to these huge initial investments. Due to those problems, British telecom sector is failed to gain the pre-determined revenue. However, the switching cost issues help them to retain their customers but it dissatisfies their customers. In order to gain loyal customers they need to improve their services.

1.2 Background of the industry:

Telecom sector of the UK is one of the largest telecommunication sectors in the world, which is characterised by the competition in the broadband sector and mobile sector. The telecommunication industry of the UK is the most innovative broadcast sector that has pioneered by different types of business model to distribute the digital content in the UK. For this consequence, mobile and broadband penetration is comfortably ahead in the Europe, whereas, the digital TV penetration in the UK has reached the 90% of the populations (www.budde.com.au, 2016). The prices of the customer across the board have

fallen steadily due to this consequence. On the other hand, the network capabilities have been effectively expanded by several recent investments by the Virgin media and British telecom in the next generations. In the recent time telecommunication sector in the UK generates incremental revenue of £1.65 bn (stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk, 2016). British telecom has different types of telephones that are providing them effective even, those types of telephones are fixed telephone, numbering and mobile telephones. British telecom sector has different types of mobile phone networks like first generation network, second-generation network, third generation network and fourth generation network.

British telecom sector has different organisations like O2, Vodafone, British telecom, Virgin Mobile, EE etc. In order to attract customer different telecommunication organisation facilitates different types of key development. Huawei and BT make a trial to implement 3 Tbs channel over the existing fibre. Ofcom offers an opening of BT's dark fibres to different competitors (Hexus.net, 2016). After that, Ofcom prepares for the WLR and LLU charges and new arctic cable to connect UK with Japan.

1.3 Rationale of the research:

What is the research issue?

In case of marketing, switching cost can be referred as the sum of physical, psychological and economic costs that is involved switching other organisation from one organisation. Switching costs are the money, effort and time investments of any customers that make the switching difficult to the customers. Therefore, if any organisation will be able to address the issues faced by the customers for, which they are switching the organisation then they may achieve a set of loyal customer base. Therefore, it can be said that failure to provide effective service can be an effective reason behind the switching intention of the customers. As opined by Evanschitzky *et al.* (2012, p. 630), in order to provide effective service delivery to the customers proper understanding about the needs and wants of customer is actually required. However, in recent times, telecommunication industry of the UK is incapable to assess the actual needs of the customers. They are failing to adopt new routes to adapt the innovation, they are incapable to extract the value from the network assets, they are failing to understand the actual value of the customers; they are continuously ignoring the new imperatives in security and privacy. Along with that lack of regulatory certainty in different new market structures, lack of data integrity to drive the efficiency and growth and failure to improve the agility of the organization is the issues related to

telecommunication industry that creates the intention behind switching other organisation. Every telecommunication organisation is facing the above mentioned problems more or less, but customers think that other organisation provide better services than their present organisation (Edward and Sahadev, 2011, p.330). However, they do not change their existing organisation because of the huge investments at the initial time.

Why it is an issue?

Due to the different types of issues faced by the telecommunication sector they are losing their customers. Due to the high amount of investment and installation costs customers are reluctant to change their organisation but bad network services and less attention to the value of customers make them irritated to their service providers, which make them change their service providers. They are changing their service providers, going towards the Foreign Service provides and internet based tools where they get more effective services than their present organisation.

Why it is an issue now?

Telecommunication sector of the UK is continuously facing challenges due to their less amount of focus on the technological development. Therefore, in this digital era they are facing increasing amount of challenges (Wang and Wu, 2012, p.70). Other communication tools that are based on the internet like Twitter, Facebook, Weibo and Weixin is taking the advantages of this situations. They are providing more effective services like call facilities, chat facilities, file sharing opportunities to the customers so customers are started utilising those services than the mobile, land line etc. Moreover, different foreign telecom sector is taking the advantages of this condition they are providing customers of the UK more effective service facilities like 4G facilities. In the recent times, different operators from China like China Mobile, China Unicom, China telecom is taking the advantages of this unstable telecom sector and they are providing different effective opportunities to the customers like providing facilities of 4G at the rate of 3G. Those foreign mobile operators also provide their service at very nominal initial costs. Therefore, telecommunication industry of UK facing problem to generate adequate revenue and they are unable to fulfil their yearly target (Edward *et al.* 2010, p. 160).

What could the research shed lights on?

The researcher shed lights on those areas, which is important to investigate the impact of switching cost of the telecommunication area of the UK. This research will help both the organisation and the researcher to investigate the role of switching costs on the loyalty of the customers.

1.4 Aim of the research:

The main aim of this research is to evaluate the impact of switching cost towards the customer loyalty for the telecommunication industry of UK.

1.5 Objective of the research:

Every research should have some appropriate research objective based on which the research is conducted. The main objective of the research is as follows:

- To evaluate the impact of switching costs and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty
- To understand different types of switching costs associate with the telecommunication industry of UK
- To understand different loopholes related to switching costs and customer loyalty on the telecommunication industry
- To recommend some appropriate strategies to resolve those loopholes

1.6 Research questions:

The questions of the research are as follows:

- What is the impact of switching costs and customer satisfaction on the customer loyalty?
- How can the impact of switching cost be moderated in the telecommunication industry of UK?
- What are the loopholes related to switching costs and customer loyalty in telecommunication industry in the UK?
- What is the appropriate strategy by which the loopholes can be resolved?

1.7 Significance of research

Researcher has gone through different research related issues and has recognised the requirements to conduct the research under these situations. This research has tried to understand the impact of switching costs on the customer loyalty in case of telecommunication sector of the UK. Oyeniyi and Abiodun (2010, p.112) argued that the switching costs is related to those costs that the customer faces when they switched to

another operators from one operators. It is seen that customer face huge investments when they switch to another operators, this scenario of telecom sector reduces the rate of switching over another organisation but that does not mean that customers are very much satisfied with the services by that particular telecommunication organisation. However, maximum telecommunication organisation is successful to retain their organisation but customer can be dissatisfied with bad services provided by the organisation. In telecommunication sector, customers do not switch to another organisation until they receive very bad services from the organization (Tsai *et al.* 2010, p.730).

1.8 Structure of the research:



Figure 1: Structure of the research

(Source: Created by author)

1.9 Summary:

From the above discussion, it can be said that UK telecommunication industry plays a significant role to develop economy of the UK. However, it is seen that in the recent times, UK telecommunication sector is facing problem due to bad customer services and lack of attention towards the innovation. Due to those problems, telecommunication sector is losing their customers and switches to different foreign player in this industry. Therefore, in order to resolve the current issues and regain the loyal customer base effective strategy

need to be implemented like more attention to customer value, research and development and technological advancements.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.0 Introduction:

In this chapter, the researcher need to evaluated and analysed different types of concepts and theories significant with the research. The assessment and the identification of different concepts and theories related to the particular research oriented issues helps the researcher to achieve effective and appropriate information that is relevant to the research and effective to resolve the research oriented issues. On the other hand, the researcher incorporates different theories, models and concepts to enhance the quality of the literature review. In this section, the researcher has provides high quality secondary data related to research topic so intended outcome can be achieved from the research. This chapter describe different types of theories and models related to impact of switching costs on the customer loyalty. This chapter also demonstrates some appropriate and effective concepts, theories and models related to different dependent variables of the research. This section also describe some previous research works done by other researcher and compare those research with these research works in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the research.

2.1 Concept of switching cost:

As opined by Woisetschlaeger *et al.* (2011, p.805), switching costs can be defined as those fixed costs that is incurred by any buyer when customer change their supplier because the specification of the product, purchasing cycle, and the production equipment is closely tied with the products and operations of the supplier. As mentioned by Kaur, Sharma and Mahajan (2012, p.289), Switching cost is proportional to the customer loyalty because higher switching costs always make it difficult to the customers to switch in another organisation. Examples of switching costs mainly include different effort required to inform relatives and friends about a new telephone number after the switch of the operators. As described by Liu, Guo and Lee (2011, p.121), there are different types of switching costs that are related to exit fees, learning costs, searching costs, equipment costs, cognitive costs, installation costs, psychological risks, social risks and financial risks.

Among them, the main types of switching costs are transaction costs, contractual costs and learning costs. As opined by Mohsan *et al.* (2011, p.80), transaction costs are those costs that happen during the installation of any new services with new service providers. Learning costs are costs that are required by any customers for achieving the equal stage of comfort of the familiarity, which is acquired during starting use of any new items for the consumptions. Contractual costs are related to the firm-induced costs for regulating to penalise the switching by the customers. This type of costs mainly associated repeat purchase, rewards or discounts. As stated by Makwana, Sharma and Arora (2014, p.9), this type of costs is also generated when any customers signs undertaking to be the loyal for any given time.

Therefore, switching costs can be defined as the own assessment of the customers about their personal loss or the sacrifice related to the effort, time, and money when they facilitate shifting from one service providers to other service providers. As suggested by Cater and Cater (2010, p. 1330), switching cost is the important factor among other different factors that influence the relationship between the customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. Customers may turn loyal if they faced lack of real substitute or high switching barriers. Another important factors related to the switching cost is it operates with the forerunner of the loyalty in terms of business-to-business and business to customer transactions.

2.2 Concept of customer loyalty:

As stated by Alrubaiee and Al-Nazer (2010, p.155), due to involvement of the relational logic in the marketing, the concept of loyalty among customers has gained the effective attention among the marketers and the practitioners over the last few decades. The concept of customer loyalty is very much appealing because it assumes that loyalty can have greater value to any organization as well as the customers. As per the viewpoint of Dagger and David (2012, p.450), customer loyalty can be defined as the belief of the customers that the products or the services offering to them are the best option. This is because, those products or the services has the capability to fulfil all of the value propositions of the customers. Customer loyalty is both the behavioural and attitudinal tendency of the customer to favour any brand over all the brands known to the particular customer. Customer loyalty generally encourages customers to buy more, spend a greater share of the wallet from any particular organisation, and feel positively related to the experience related to shopping. Customer loyalty is the key objective of relationship management with the

customers and it describe that loyalty is mainly established among customers, products, brands or persons (Pan *et al.* 2012, p.150). There are mainly four reasons for which loyalty should be promoted that are economical, psychological, contractual and technical. However, loyalty is not just behaviour of any customer; it is erroneous belief of any marketers to assume that customer is loyal because they want to buy from the particular organisation. There are several reasons for, which customers are generally facilitates repeat purchase from any organisation that are related to price differentiation strategy of the organisation, huge amount of switching costs, contractual arrangement with the organization, effective customer services strategy etc.

According to Fuentes-Blasco *et al.* (2010, p. 1840), loyal customers are generally believed that product or services purchased from the supplier are very much effective to them. Therefore, it can be said that they are the customers who view the interactions as more than the transactional. Loyal customers generally believe that there is a relationship between the organisation and them, which is bigger than the services and products they buy. Therefore, measuring the strength of the relationship between the seller and buyer can facilitate measurement of the customer loyalty. However, measuring the customer loyalty based on the strength of the relationship is not so easy so marketers measure the loyalty of the customers by number of purchase made by a particular customer. In order to maintain sustainability of any organisation share-of-wallet and the share-of heart is important for the organisation. This is because it help organisation to make their customers buy from their organisation continuously even when different situation factors make the repeat purchase difficult like influence of alternative providers, stock outage etc.

The loyalty among customers it is important to customers in different segments like loyal, vulnerable and neutral. As opined by Hur *et al.* (2010, p.2298), this loyalty segmentation strategy of the customers helps the organisation to recognise their uniqueness and identify different types of special challenges of any organisation or any business in which the business organisations competing. It is important for the marketers to judge the number or percent of customers present in the loyal segment and they must be concerned about how number or percent of customers in this segment can be increased while decreasing those, who are belonging to the vulnerable category of the loyalty segment. In order to decrease the number or percent of the customers in the vulnerability segment organisation must employ some loyalty programs that will reward the vulnerable customers in order to facilitate repeat buying behaviour by them.

2.3 Theories and models of customer loyalty:

There are different types of model that is used in strategic management in which resources of any organisation are employed so loyalty among customers can be increased. They are Aaker model of brand loyalty, Behavioural theory of brand loyalty and brand conversion pyramid model etc.

2.3.1 Aaker model of brand loyalty:

As mentioned by Yoo and Bai (2013, p.170), in order to gain loyal factor from the customers, it is important for the management to implement effective planning related to a specific products or brands. This model describe that there are mainly 5 segments of customers, which will be discussed in this model are as follows:

Switchers:

As stated by Kumar *et al.* (2011, p.160), these types of customers are not the loyal customers and they have the tendency to switch from a service providers to others for better outcome. They are those types of customers who always find something new and effective in case of a particular products or services. Several factors like pricing or better substitute product influence these types of customers. Therefore, in order to increase customer base these types of customers are always target of the marketers. In order to attract this type of customers, it is important for the marketers to develop better quality and features in the product. Through this approach, management can develop loyalty among the customers.

Satisfied or the habitual buyer:

These types of customers are generally prefers the loyalty in order to get extra advantage from their service providers because they think that watching over other products or services always incurs some extra costs that is associated with the installation or implementation of the system. These types of customers are generally associated with those brands that require huge start up costs. Therefore, in order to maintain the loyal customer base it is important for the management to provide proper focus over those customers to match the product with the behavioural patterns of those customers. Any huge issues related to products or services for a long time may results in switching to other brands in spite of being loyal to the brand.

Satisfied buyer with the involvement of switching costs:

This segment of buyer is generally impacted by the pricing structure of the products or brands. Therefore, economic along with the financial condition plays an important role on the buyer (Islam, 2010, p.135). Such customers are generally like to be loyal with a

particular brand, they always like to remain motivated towards a brand but substitute product with better features and benefits, financial crisis may influence and change their perception towards a product and they can be shifted to other service providers. Therefore, in order to keep this kind of customer's loyalty, product development and changing pricing structure frequently to provide better services to those customers is required by the management.

Customers who like to try different brand:

This type of customers can be segmented by the enthusiasts of the brand and their preferences a generally changed with the time. Different factors affected these kinds of customers like innovation, effective quality, price differentiation strategy of the organisation, etc. Zhou *et al.* (2010, p. 936) stated that, it is very much important for the management to facilitate innovation in the product segmentation strategy in order to attract this type of customers. Therefore, necessary planning is required to attract this kind of customers so they can prefer the product from a particular organisation. There is a fact that is if the management of any organisation become incapable to provide effective product quality and pricing then this kind of customer may take effective stage to shift to another service provider (Clemes *et al.* 2010, p.520).

Committed buyer to the brand:

This kind of customers mainly develops an emotional bonding with a particular brand and be very committed with that particular brand. Therefore, every organisation must have enough focus to achieve this kind of customers because there are several advantages to have this kind of customers. That is, this type of customers is generally not affected by other brand even in the time of out of stock of the product. This kind of customers also influences the buying decision of another customer by stating the advantages of the brand that they are using.

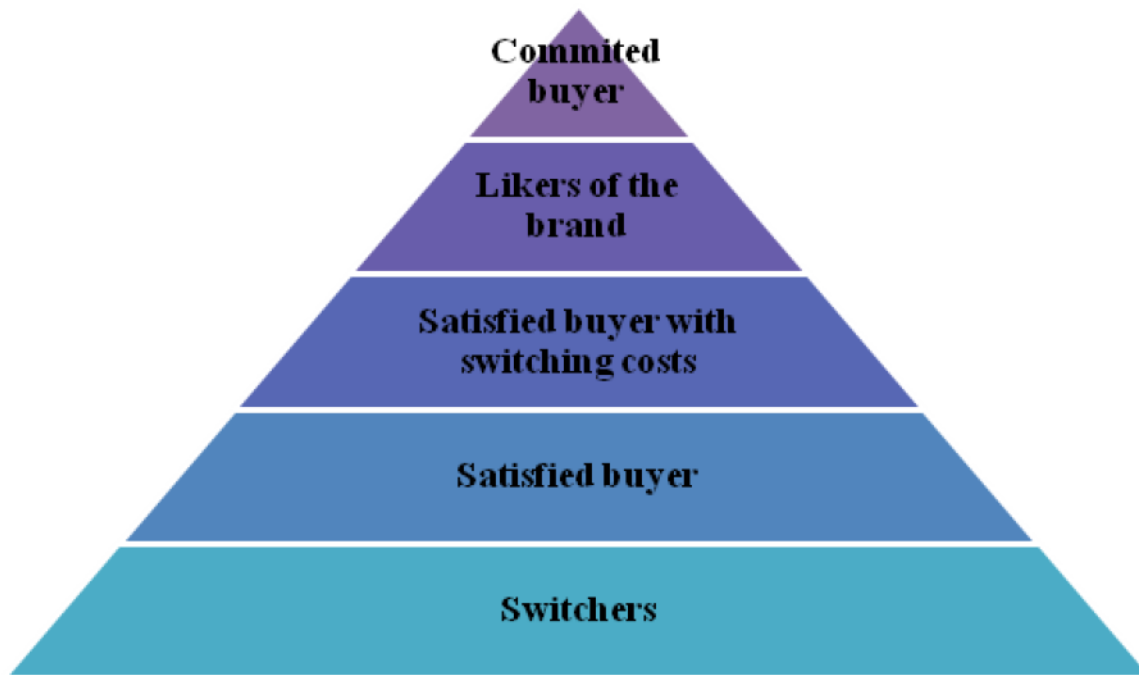


Figure 2: Aaker model of brand loyalty

(Source: Coelho and Henseler, 2012, p.334)

2.3.2 Behavioural theory of brand loyalty:

As opined by Lee *et al.* (2011, p.120), behavioural brand loyalty mainly focuses on the development of the dimensions and tendency of behaviour. Therefore, it can be said that this theory of the brand loyalty mainly reflects the effective planning along with the development progress over the development of the behavioural outcome and the approaches towards a product. As mentioned by Flint *et al.* (2011, p.221), it is very much important for management of any organisation to develop a clear understanding about the approaches of the customer. It is also important for the management to have a clear knowledge about the emotional quotient and different related factors.

As per the viewpoint of Chuang (2011, p.134), behavioural and loyalty theory mainly focuses over the inclusion of the relationship marketing process, which guides the management of any organisation related to the development of the effective communication with the customers along with the interaction level of the customers. Therefore, better relationship process is utilised to develop the perception with the positive outcome that can guide the management of the organization regarding the maintenance of effective customer engagement in order to develop the brand loyalty.

Therefore, it can be said that, through the utilisation of the services or the products, customers are generally develop a perception that they utilise when they facilitate a future purchase. Therefore, the first time experience with a brand or product has an effective importance on the repetitive buying behaviour because customers mainly buy those products that suit them most (Han *et al.* 2011, p.623).

Therefore, different factors that can be included within the brand loyalty theory are the values related to product that has the features to satisfy the requirements of the customers along with the demand (Han, Kim and Hyun, 2011, p. 623). It is very much important for the management to develop a positive perception about their products and brands among customers so an effective relationship can be developed to gain the loyalty among customers.

2.3.3 Brand conversion pyramid model:

As opined by Hsin Chang and Wang (2011, p. 346), organisation must provide enough focus on the development of several strategies so customer loyalty can be gained for any particular product or services. Therefore, based on the pyramid brand conversion model, customers generally pass through all of the below mentioned steps that help any organisation to gain brand loyalty. Different stages involved in this model are as follows:

Create awareness:

For generating brand loyalty, it is very much important to have a proper planning to create awareness about product in the mind of customers. Generating awareness in the mind of customers attract customers towards a product by demonstrating different specification about the products and services (Komunda and Osarenkhoe, 2012, p.100). To promote any product or services this attraction is very much important because it helps organisation to penetrate in the market by following different penetration strategy.

Considerations:

After generating awareness in the mind of customers, it is important to develop a brief demonstration about the features of the product so the customers made a consideration to buy the product or services. As mentioned by Flint *et al.* (2011, p.221), this step involves judgement of the particular products and services with the alternative product to understand its extraordinary benefits.

Trial:

After considering the product for purchase, customers generally prefer to try the product so they can understand the specification and utilisation of the product or services (Zhang *et al.* 2012, p184). Therefore, through providing the product to the customers to try, management of any organisation must attract the customers.

Repeat purchase:

Based on the experience that the customers have gained by trying the product from the manufacturer or the service provider's, they make different kinds of decision about whether they would buy the product for the second time or not. The first experience of the customers must be good. As stated by Chebat *et al.* (2011, p.825), in order to facilitate repeat purchase behaviour of the customers, it is important for the management to maintain effective service or product quality, effective pricing strategy. This is essential to attract customers and develop a positive and effective perception in the mind of customers so they can take the decision of repeat purchase of the product. However, attraction does not always create repeat purchase, customer generally attracted towards the repeat purchase only then when they realise they need of the product.

Loyalty among customers:

At this level, customers generally feel comfortable to buy any product for so many times and they feel satisfied to utilise the product or the services. Customer loyalty cannot be achieved very easily; in order to develop loyal customers for any organization; creation of the emotional attachment is very important (Hsin Chang and Wang, 2011, p. 345). Therefore, this stage is associated with the development of the loyal customer base so organisation can retain and generate competitive advantage in their near future.

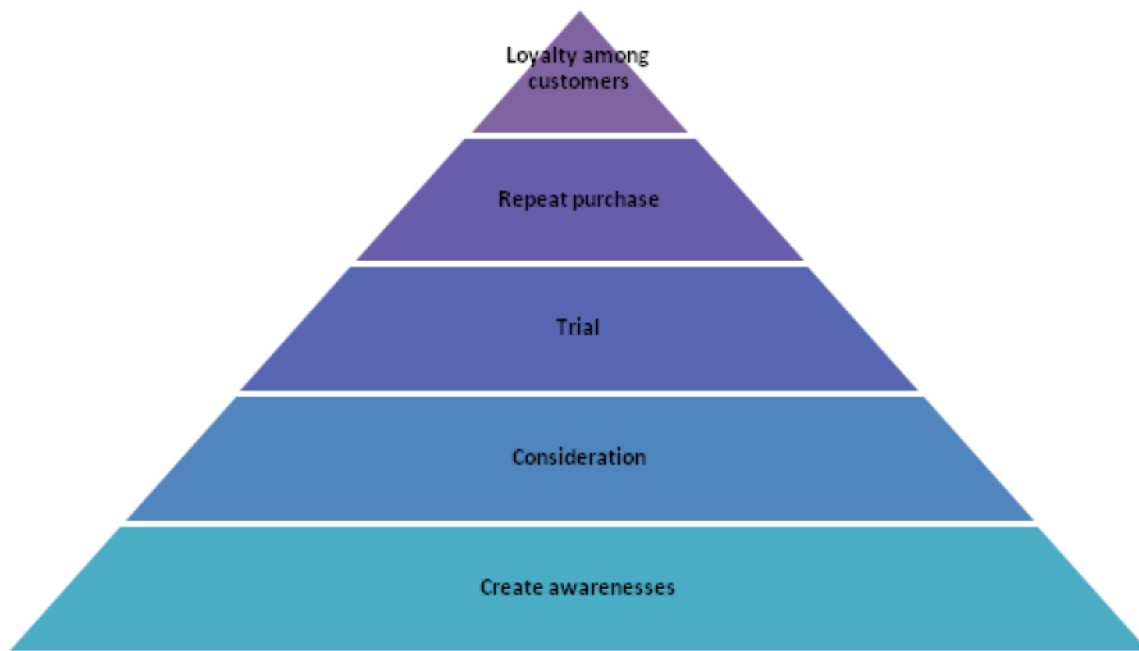


Figure 3: Brand conversion pyramid model

(Source: Ganguli and Roy, 2011, p.180)

2.4 Theories and models of switching cost:

2.4.1 Two-period switching cost model:

Due to effective value of the market share, there is always some competition for it. Two periods switching cost model describes that, consumers do not have to face any switching costs in the first period but develop some switching costs as the result of their first period purchases. Therefore, it can be said that organisation has some kind of market power in their second period. As stated by Kaur *et al.* (2012, p.285), this two period model can be solved by applying organisations optimal behaviour for second period and then profit for the second period, for the provided first period market share. Since it can be said that the first period market share of any organisation can be determined by switching costs associated with those customers who have buy some products or services from any other firm in the second period. At first, any customer faces different types of switching costs that are financial switching costs, procedural switching costs and the relational switching costs. Among those types of switching costs, financial switching costs are associated with the costs that involve the loss of some financial resources like monetary loss related costs and benefit loss related costs (Park and Ryoo, 2013, p.163). Procedural switching costs are

those costs that are associated with the expenditure of the effort and the time and mainly consists the learning costs, setup costs and the economical risk associated with the switching. On the other hand, relational costs are those emotional and psychological discomforts due to lack of brand relationships and personal relationships as well as the loss of identity.

2.5 Different factors influencing customer loyalty:

There are mainly four major factors that affect the customer loyalty are as follows:

Core offering by the organisation:

In order to make loyal customer, clear understanding about the needs and wants of customer is required and according to those, organisation must deliver products or services to their customers (Ryu and Han, 2010, p.315). There are several elements of core offering that are required to establish the loyalty of customers are services, location or premises, and product or services.

Satisfaction:

As stated by Hsin Chang and Wang (2011, p.335), In order to make loyal customer, the most important factor is customer satisfaction because it has proportional relationships with the customer loyalty. This is because, customers generally expects satisfaction as part of their general deal with their service provider or manufacturer. Therefore, the fact that they are satisfied with a particular manufacturer or service providers help organisation to get competitive advantage.

Level of elasticity:

Elasticity generally expresses the weight and importance of any purchasing decisions. This is mainly applied to business and customers. As described by Grunewald and Torriti (2013, p.423), customer involvement is one of the factor of elasticity that describe the more trouble that the customer will face to end business with any manufacturer or service provider the more they will be loyal to the organisation. Therefore, more effective services is important to generate more effective elasticity with the customers. Along with that, ambivalence is one of the factors that affect the level of elasticity.

The marketplace:

Marketplace is one of the key factors to develop the loyalty among customers. The elements that are mostly associated with the marketplaces are the inertia loyalty and the opportunity to switch. If in any market, the number of supplier is high, require very little

effort, and cost to switch then switch are more frequent in those marketplace. As argued by Giannarakis and Litinas (2011, p.81), if any market require more cost and effort to switch then switch are not frequent in those marketplaces. Inertia loyalty is very much opposite of the ease of switching.

2.6 Impact of switching costs on customer loyalty:

Over the last few years, customer satisfaction has gained huge attention of the markets because different dissatisfaction factors make a customer switches to other organisation. Therefore, in order to maintain an effective long-term relationship with the customer, enhancement of the customer satisfaction is the most important because only a effective customer satisfaction generates effective customer loyalty (Ganguli and Roy, 2011, p.170). However, it is not effective to provide only focus on the generation of satisfaction because customers are generally switched over other organisation due to lack of product or service quality, and high pricing strategy. Therefore, more focus on the relation making strategies along with good quality and effective pricing strategy is mostly important.

As per Park and Ryoo (2013, p.165), this attitude of the customer is very important because it influences the intention of the customers through negative or positive decisions to buy. However, it is seen that switching costs has played a significant role to gain the customer loyalty because it is seen that the service that require high installation charge, the user of those services are generally maintain loyalty with their service providers. This is because, it is seen that the process of switching to other service providers requires high installation charge, and learning charge this might discourage the switching decision of customers generating loyalty for the existing brand. However, based on inappropriate quality of services over a long-time, the customer become irritated, which makes them select other organisation to switch (Ryu and Han, 2010, p.315). Therefore, service providers of this kind of service must have some effective quality and performance in their services so they can retain their existing customer base with efficiency in services.

In case of switching costs, **customers' perceived value** plays an important role, which is described by the differences between the evaluations of the customers related to benefits and the costs of a products during the comparison between the products with another product. Therefore, from the definition it can be said that if any customer understand that the benefit they get from the product is higher than the costs then they will not switch their

brand and if they will perceive that the costs is higher than another same services then there is huge possibility that they will switch their brand.

As opined by Augusto de Matos *et al.* (2013, p.528), For retain loyal customer for the organization, it is important for any industry or sector to implement high switching costs so customer cannot be easily shifted to other service providers. However, along with this it is also important to provide effective service quality to the customers so they do not have to shift to other service providers belonging from the same industry. Along with these factors, pricing strategy also plays an important role in switching. When a customer encountered that the service they are currently using can get the same service from other service providers in very much less costs, then it is very much obvious that they will go towards those low costs service providers (Kumar and Srivastava, 2013, p.95). Therefore, in order to satisfy customers and make them loyal, different effective strategy like effective pricing strategy, product quality needs to be followed.

2.7 Conceptual framework:

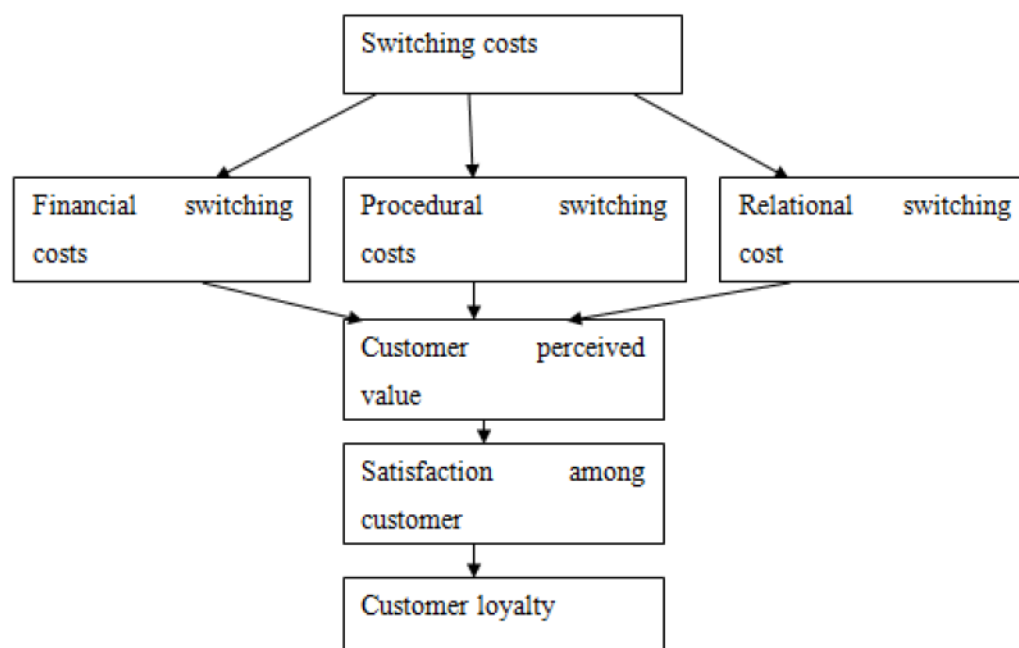


Figure 4: Conceptual framework

(Source: Created by author)

2.8 Gap of literature and comparison between present and previous research works:

It is seen that previous research works describe importance of the switching costs on the development of customer loyalty. Previous research works also describe different types of switching costs' role in case of achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Those previous research works also describe the impact of switching costs to retain customer in the technology standard competition market. However, in those previous research works there is not any mention about the design of effective switching costs so organisation can retain their old customer. The present research works covers this fact and describes that with the effective and carefully selected switching costs, effective service quality, and following effective pricing strategy need to be followed.

There is also some gaps associated with the research works that are related to lack of implementation of different and effective amount of theoretical model. It is seen that, different hypothetical model that has been discussed over literature review does not match the contemporary method of marketing that is used in the present days. Therefore, in order to resolve these problems further and detailed study is required.

2.9 Summary:

Literature review section mainly describes different types of theories and models related to the concern topic of previous researcher. This section also describes effective theories and models related to topic. It is seen from the above discussion, that switching cost has a huge impact on the customer loyalty. This is because, when a customer switches from one service provider to other service provider, then huge costing is required to install a new system for new service providers. Therefore, due to this cost maximum customers do not want to switch their service providers if they are not facing any major issues. In order to clear this fact this section describe different theories and models like two period switching cost model, brand conversion pyramid model, behavioural theory of brand loyalty, and Aaker model of brand loyalty.

Chapter 3: Research methodology:

3.0 Chapter overview:

This chapter mainly describe the literature review of the overall research. This chapter mainly describe the procedure or strategy by which this research will be completed. The objective of this research is to evaluate the impact of switching costs on customer loyalty, to understand various types of switching costs that are associated with the UK telecommunication sector, to understand different loopholes related to the switching costs and loyalty among customers in telecommunication sector of the UK, and to recommend some strategy to resolve those issues. Therefore, to satisfy those objectives, the researcher set an appropriate methodology so the research can be conducted successfully.

3.1 Research methodology:

VanderStoep and Johnston (2011, p.22) stated that, research methodology can be described as the procedure that is utilised to gather different types of data and information in order to make different business related decisions. Research methodology generally consists of different surveys, surveillance, interviews, research publication and different types of other research related strategy or techniques. Research methodology includes the hypothetical analysis of different principles of the research that is associated with the bunch of methods and knowledge. As opined by Somekh and Lewin (2011, p.86), research methodology generally offers theoretical underpinning for understanding the appropriate techniques or methods or a set of methods in order to conduct a research effectively. Sekaran and Bougie (2010, p.84) believe that, in order to conduct a research effectively research onion is very much effective because research onion provides a good progressions through which a research methodology can be used and design in an effective ways. Research onion is consists of 6 folds that are research philosophy, research approaches, research strategies, research design, time horizons and data collection method (Saunders *et al.* 2010, p.52).

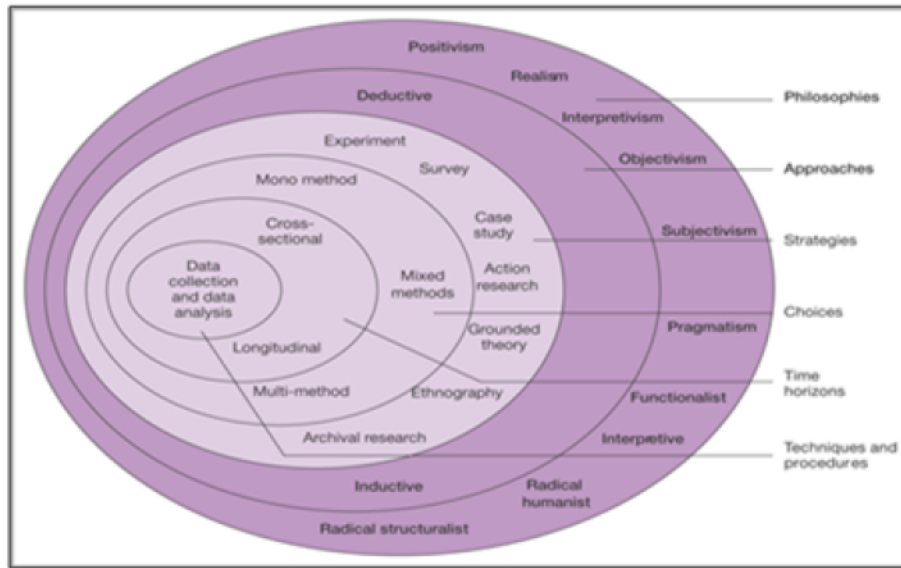


Figure 5: Research onion

(Source: Saunders *et al.* 2009, p.52)

3.2 Research philosophy:

Research philosophy can be defined as the set of beliefs that concerns the nature of reality, which is intended to being investigated. As opined by Roger (2012, p. 33), research methodology can be differed with the goals of the research and based on the best paths, which can be used to achieve those pre-determined goals. Mainly three different types of research philosophies are there such as interpretivist, realism and positivism. Positivism describes that the reality exists but independently from the factors that are studied (Lodico, and Spaulding, 2010, p.98). On the other hand, interpretivist can be defined as the approach to the social science, which opposes the positivist philosophy of the social science. As contrary to this philosophy, realism philosophy mainly described as the belief that is ontologically independent upon perception, conceptual schemes, belief etc. of some and different aspects of the reality.

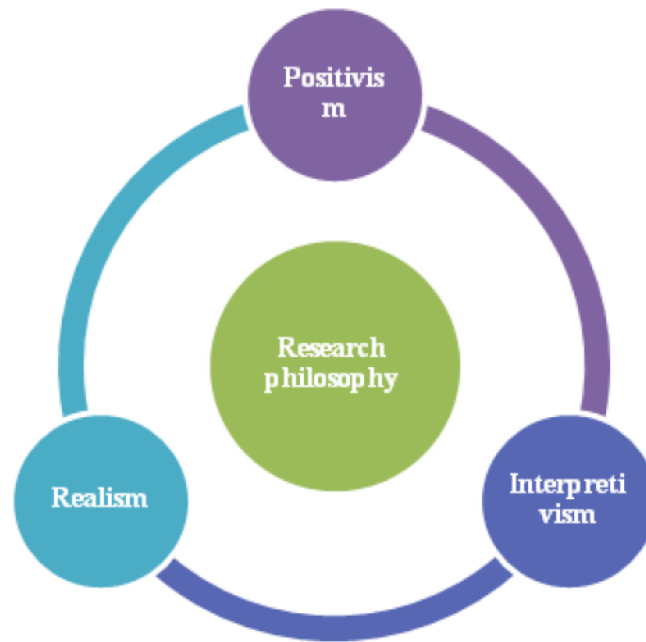


Figure 6: Research philosophy

(Source: Roger, 2012, p.33)

3.2.1 Justification for choosing interpretivism philosophy:

In this research, the researcher selects the interpretivism philosophy because this research involves an impact analysis so the researcher cannot take statistical analysis to justify the impact. In order to conduct this research, perception, belief and conceptual schemes of other individual is required, interpretivism philosophy can help the researcher to conduct this research in that way. Moreover, this research is very much applicable to conduct qualitative data analysis and not appropriate for quantitative analysis. Therefore, selecting interpretivism philosophy is appropriate philosophy for this research. For conducting this research, the researcher did not select positivism and realism because those philosophy involve statistical analysis of the data.

3.3 Research approach:

In order to conduct any research effectively research approach is very much necessary. As described by Serrant-Green (2011, p.5), there are mainly two types of research approaches that are deductive and inductive. Among these two research approaches, deductive research approach is mainly associated with the development of the hypothesis based upon different

existing theories and then the research approach test the existing research related data with the pre-determined theory in order to understand the validity of the data. This approach is mainly appropriate in those contexts when a research project is concerned with the investigation process to test whether the observed phenomena fit the expectation of the research or not. This research based on the impact of switching cost on customer loyalty is completely secondary research so in order to conduct this, deductive research approach will be effective.

On the other hand, inductive research approach is mainly associated with the development of the new theory (Toloie-Eshlaghy *et al.* 2011, p.110). In this research approach, the observations are the starting point for the researcher and different patterns are looked for in those data.

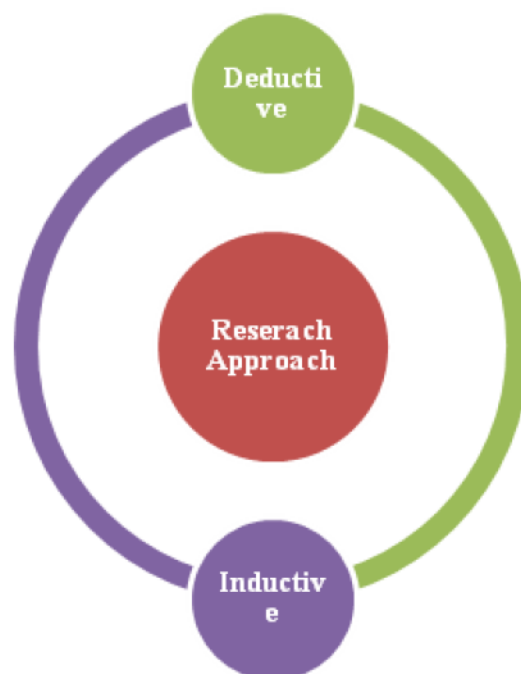


Figure 7: Research approach

(Source: Serrant-Green, 2011, p.)

3.3.1 Reason for choosing deductive approach:

For this research, the researcher selects the deductive research approach because this research approach is utilised in the qualitative research techniques. However, in those cases the expectations are based on the pre-existing research that is formulated differently than the testing of the hypothesis. Due to secondary nature of the research, there is not any scope

to develop any new theory so selecting deductive approach is completely justified. However, inductive research approach is appropriate to develop qualitative research but this approach is associated with the development of the new theory. It is seen from the research; that there is not any scope to develop new theory to conduct this research.

3.4 Research design:

Truscott *et al.* (2010, p.317) described that, research design can be described as the description by which any research can be conducted. Research design can be described as the framework by which effective research methodologies are adopted and the collected data are analysed. Mainly three types of research designs are there that are explanatory, exploratory and descriptive. Among different types of research design, exploratory research design focuses on the characteristics of the social phenomenon and populations. On the other hand, exploratory research design is based on the exploration of the issue, which is taking place before enough is known for conducting a research approach (Harrison and Reilly, 2011, p.9). Descriptive research design is closely related to the ethnographic framework, which is intended to fill the gaps between different types of research related process and it also extends the understanding about the research study.



Figure 8: Research design

(Source: Harrison and Reilly, 2011, p.9)

3.4.1 Justification for picking the descriptive research design:

For conducting this research in an effective manner, the researcher selects descriptive research design because descriptive research design relates the reflection of the experiences of the respondents. Descriptive research design can help the researcher to collect more research related data in order to evaluate effective outcomes from the research. As this research is secondary in nature and require the collection of more secondary information and describe the impact of switching cost on customer loyalty, then descriptive research design is effective.

Descriptive research design also helps the researcher to bridge the gap between different types of research process and it helps the researcher to extend the understanding of the research. Therefore, the selection of descriptive research design is completely justified.

3.5 Data collection:

As per the viewpoint of Johnson *et al.* (2012, p.112), data collection is the most important part in any research because data collection helps the researcher to gather information from different valued resources. Data collection is mainly dependent on the methodological approaches and the pressure associated at this stage mainly contributes to the overall validity and the reliability of the research study. Any successful research, researcher need to gather data from effective and appropriate resources is the data can be valid and updated. Collection of the data from ineffective resources may possess as the reason for complete failure of the research (Knox, 2011, p.120). According to the nature of the research, the researcher conducts this research as secondary research, gathers all secondary information and scrutinises those information in order to gain in-depth understanding about the topic of the research. As stated by Toloie-Eshlaghy *et al.* (2011, p.110), in order to conduct a secondary research and conduct an impact analysis detailed understanding about a topic is required. Therefore, in order to conduct this research, the researcher must require an in-detailed analysis of the data so huge information is required from different resources.

In order to conduct any research, there are mainly two kinds of data collection that are primary and secondary data collection. As described by Truscott *et al.* (2010, p.319), secondary data collection strategy is used to gather secondary data and it is derived from the opinions or work of another researcher. On the other hand, primary data is collected from the first hand sources. Here data for the primary research can be collected from the respondents through a survey or interview on them (Magilvy and Thomas, 2012, p.299).

The sources of secondary data can be different existing and published sources because this kind of data collection techniques generally collects information from previous work of different researcher. Therefore, the sources of secondary data can be journal, newspaper, books and other published media. However, in order to collect secondary information for the research, there is always an extent to which data can be defined by its utilisation, rather than the inherent structure of the data. According to Morgan (2013, p.56), secondary data provides a better understanding about the topic of the research because this data collection technique helps researcher to collect the theoretical information and analyse it with betterment. As the researcher has gathered the secondary information from different published sources, there is huge chance that the researcher will not face any hurdles to conduct this research (Serrant-Green, 2011, p.6). To collect secondary data for this research, the researcher can use the annual report of the organisation. Researcher can utilise the annual report of the telecommunication industry.

As mentioned by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2012, p.380), there are different types of advantages and disadvantages of secondary data collection techniques. Among them the first advantage is related to consume very less amount of time because in order to collect the data, the researcher gathers the data from different published sources so sample respondents is not required here. Involvement of sample respondent always incurs huge time, as this research is not required any sample respondents so consumption of time is very less here. Other advantages are related to less amount of risk associated with the accessibility of the data. Secondary data is published in some media so there are very less amount of risks associated with the access of the data. In spite of some advantages, secondary research also has some disadvantages that are related to collection of inappropriate data in research and lack of control in the research (Riege, 2013, p.76).

3.6 Analysis of the data:

Brannen (2011, p.9) described that, the data analysis is one of the several steps, which should be completed during the conduction of research. Data from different sources are collected, analysed and reviewed to fetch the effective findings or the conclusions. Data analysis may have different types of approaches our strategies and it encompasses variety of technique or method under a variety of names in different types of domains. In the data analysis procedure of any research, first raw information to conduct a research is gathered and then it is analysed and processed to make the dataset error free and appropriate for the

research. After doing all this, the researcher makes comparison between the new dataset and different existing models and theories. After making this comparison, a visualised report is generated from it.

According to Bryman (2010, p.100), there are mainly two kinds of data analysis procedure are qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Among those data analysis techniques quantitative data collection technique generally holds some accepted statistical standards to validate the data and establish effective data. The qualitative data analysis technique is utilised to solve different types of problems by generating numeric data. Qualitative data analysis is very important to understand some underlying motivations, opinions and options (Cameron, 2012, p.145). Qualitative data analysis is also important to provide a deep understanding about the research related data and help any researcher to evaluate some hypotheses or ideas so the research related problems can be resolved. This data analysis technique is also important to provide some recent trends about opinions. Therefore, in order to conduct this research, the researcher has selected qualitative data collection technique because qualitative data analysis provides a detailed analysis of the data gathered from different sources. As the research is secondary in nature, therefore statistical analysis of the data is not required so the researcher has selected qualitative data analysis technique to conduct this research.

3.7 Research related ethical considerations:

Ethics can be stated as the methods, perspectives or the procedures to take decisions about how to act or analyse in a critical issues and difficulties (Ellis and Levy, 2013, p.325). Any research following some ethics is very important to avoid some unethical problem of the research. Freshwater (2014, p.135) stated that, there are mainly three basic ethical principles that should be followed by researcher is related to beneficence, respect for individuals and justice. However, this particular research is not involving any human being because of its secondary nature, the ethical risk associated with it is very negligible. In spite of that, researcher must maintain some ethics related to secondary research so the researcher does not have to face any minor or major ethical issues.

As this research is secondary in nature, so the researcher must have the permission before accessing any journal or book from library .To avoid any ethical issues related to unauthorised download, the researcher must buy books or journals from the internet. In this research, the researcher may face problem related to utilisation of the proper references in

the research works of previous researcher. Therefore, the researcher must utilise some proper references in the literature review section to avoid any kind of ethical issues. Also researcher should not use any sensitive data. If it is required by the researcher to utilise sensitive data, the researcher should have the permission from the concerned authorities related to utilisation of sensitive data.

3.8 Time table of the research:

Refer to appendix 1.

3.9 Summary:

This chapter is intended to describe different types of suitable methods and strategy for conducting this research in an effective manner. In this chapter, the researcher describe the way by which the research can be completed from first to last. The researcher also describes a brief understanding about the data collection method. This chapter also analyse those data that the researcher collected from different sources.

Chapter 4: Research findings and analysis

4.0 Introduction:

In order to conduct the research effectively, the researcher represented here different types of themes and findings from different types of previous research. The researcher here represented different types of data that are contemporary in nature and the researcher has retrieved those data from the telecommunication sector of the UK. This research is based on qualitative analysis so it is prepared on the base of the object-oriented conclusion of the research.

4.1 Thematic analysis:

4.1.1: Availability of telecommunication services in UK

As stated by Tuttlebee (2012, p.55), telecommunication sector of the UK has different types of communication services like fixed broadband, fixed telephony and mobile in case of both the data and voice. Each of the communication services available in the UK is under the consideration of different history with different types of legacy. After collecting different secondary data from different existing sources like journal, books it is seen that among those available services in the UK, fixed telephony is available across all over the UK and it's subject to US that ensure a very basic services to all of the citizen with different universal service provides like KCom, Hull, and BT. As opined by Welfens *et al.* (2012, p.56), the services from the USO always can be getting at affordable costs for the end user and this cost is same in all over the UK. Customer's generally get USO services through a fixed telephone line that support the fax, internet access and the voice access to the household. Under the USO, different service providers have set a fixed and standard pricing strategy to provide services to the customers unless it incurs the unreasonable cost that is currently set by BT at £3,400. BT generally charges 0.25% fewer than the other service providers but extra charge may incur to the customers if they request extra services (Hader, Hader and Kuhne, 2012, p.112).

There are mainly two kinds of broadbands available in the UK that are standard and superfast. It is seen from the recent report that at least 2 Mbit/s download speeds are

available in almost everywhere in the UK. The standard broadband facilities of the UK have the download speed of 2Mbit/s and this kind of broadband is delivered by utilising the asymmetric digital subscriber line technologies (stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk, 2016). The speed that are provided by the standard broadband services is the minimum speed for streaming any video and it is the consistent speed defined by the UK government. In case of superfast broadband, the download speed is at least 30 Mbit/s and the fibre optic cable in the form of FTTP and FTTC provides this kind of broadband (stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk, 2016).

	All	Urban	Semi-urban	Rural
UK	95.3	98.3	96.9	80.1
England	95.8	98.5	97.1	80.6
Northern Ireland	87.4	96.0	95.6	66.5
Scotland	95.3	98.0	96.8	85.9
Wales	91.9	96.4	95.2	77.0
East Midlands	94.5	98.5	97.4	76.1
East of England	94.0	97.6	96.9	79.0
Greater London	99.2	99.3	100	87.4
North East England	95.1	97.4	96.1	80.5
North West England	96.3	98.1	97.3	79.0
South East England	95.7	97.1	97.6	85.3
South West England	94.7	98.5	97.9	81.4
West Midlands	96.1	98.8	97.1	79.6
Yorkshire & the Humber	94.5	96.9	95.8	78.9

Figure 9: Standard availability of the broadband in the UK

(Source: stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk, 2016)



Figure 10: Availability of the superfast broadband in the UK

(Source: stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk, 2016)

It is seen from the introductory chapter that, in the UK in order to transfer voice and data in the form of telephone calls and text message, the service provider utilises 2G technologies. However, it is possible to access the internet by utilising the 2G technologies but 3G technologies are required to provide effective quality to provide services in terms of internet (Eliassen *et al.* 2013, p.85). Therefore, 2G can be considered to provide voice coverage and 3G can be considered to provide data coverage. The areas that have huge economical and geographical challenges tend to be covered by two or three operators. On the other hand, the areas with advantages of economical and geographical facilities provide customers the opportunity to select services from all of the mobile operators.

	All	Urban	Semi-urban	Rural
UK	99.7	99.9	99.5	99.1
England	99.8	99.9	99.7	99.6
Northern Ireland	98.7	99.5	98.2	97.8
Scotland	99.2	99.7	99.2	97.9
Wales	99.2	99.8	99.1	98.1
East Midlands	99.8	99.9	99.8	99.8
East of England	99.8	99.8	99.7	99.6
Greater London	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
North East England	99.6	99.8	99.3	99.3
North West England	99.9	99.8	99.8	99.6
South East England	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9
South West England	99.5	99.7	99.3	99.3
West Midlands	99.9	99.9	99.7	99.6
Yorkshire & the Humber	99.8	99.9	99.7	99.2

Figure 11: 2G mobile coverage in the UK

(Source: stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk, 2016)

	All	Urban	Semi-urban	Rural
UK	99.1	99.7	98.5	96.6
England	99.7	99.9	99.5	99.2
Northern Ireland	88.3	96.4	81.7	78.5
Scotland	97.0	98.9	97.0	91.7
Wales	97.6	99.5	97.4	94.2
East Midlands	99.9	99.9	99.8	99.8
East of England	99.7	99.8	99.5	99.4
Greater London	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
North East England	99.4	99.7	99.0	98.3
North West England	99.8	99.9	99.5	99.0
South East England	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
South West England	99.2	99.6	99.0	98.6
West Midlands	99.7	99.9	99.4	99.2
Yorkshire & the Humber	99.6	99.8	99.5	98.5

Figure 12: 3G mobile coverage in the UK

(Source: stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk, 2016)

4.1.2: Factors related to brand switching in UK telecommunication sector

As opined by Townsend *et al.* (2013, p.586), there are different types of factors that affect the brand switching of UK telecommunication sectors are related to switching costs, price, trust and the service qualities. From the literature review it is seen that, switching costs is the cost that the customer faces when they switches from one brand to another. Switching cost does not applicable on the customers immediately after they perform switching because it is the procedural costs. Switching costs not only included the installation costs but it also includes other types of costs like learning costs, perceived risks, acquiring costs, search related costs etc. Switching costs can be defined as the factor to prevent the switching behaviour of the customers because by combining all of the costs related to switch generally create huge amount of costs that generally de-motivate the customer to switch over other brand. It is revealed that switching over other telecommunication organisation generally incurs huge costs in the UK (Angelova and Zekiri, 2011, p.232). In spite of the high switching costs customer can switch to another brand if they perceive that they are getting low level of facilities from their present organisations.

As per the viewpoint of Kim (2012, p.145), price in other factors also influence the brand switching in telecommunication sector in the UK. Among the available services in the UK, fixed telephony is available across all over the UK and it is subjected to US that ensure very basic services to the entire citizen. Different service providers have set a fixed and standard pricing strategy to provide services to the customers unless it incurs the unreasonable cost that is currently set by BT at £3,400. Among different types of service providers, BUT generally charges 0.25% fewer than the other service providers but they also charge extra may if customers request for extra services (Hader, Hader and Kuhne, 2012, p.112). Therefore, it can be said from the above discussion that some services provide charge less and some service providers charge extra but there is one fixed charge that must be maintained by all of the service providers but they can set the charges for extra services by their own. If customers see that they are charging extra for the same services that they might get at less price from another service provider, then they may switch to other service providers that provide them extra services.

Fig. 2. Average price-per-minute in mobile communications in EU countries, euro

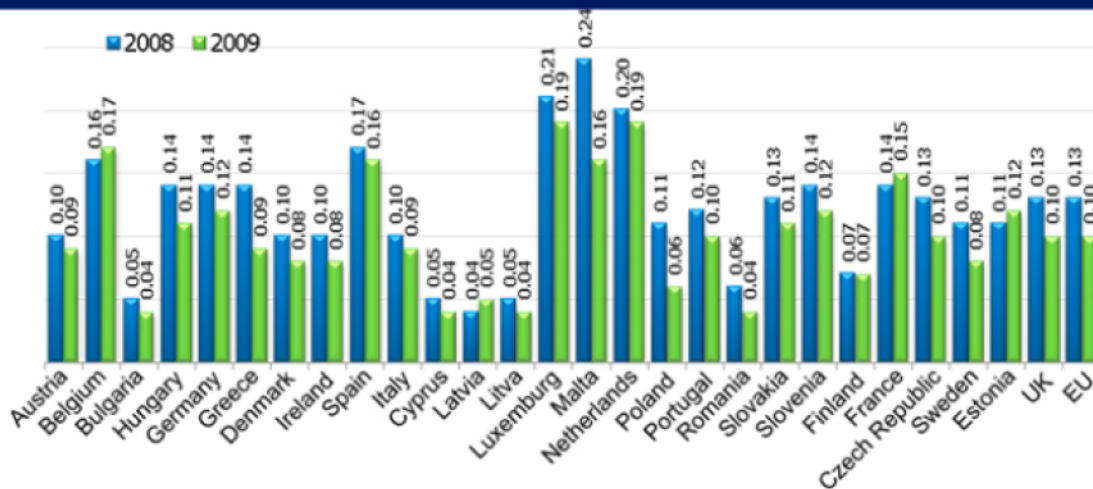


Figure 13: Average price per minute in UK telecommunication sector

(Source: json.tv, 2016)

Service quality is another reason for which, customers generally switches to other brand. However, in case of UK telecommunication sector all of the service providers provide same type of services because all of the service providers utilized 2G network to provide connection to their customers. Therefore, the case of brand switching is very much less in UK telecommunication sector (Renda, 2010, p.26). It is seen from the introductory chapter, UK telecommunication sector is unable to provide effective services to their customers because they have very much less focus on understanding their customer value. Moreover, they do not have any effective strategy by which they can facilitate more technological advancements in their organisation. After collecting data as per the suitable research methodology, it is seen that, in order to provide effective services, UK telecommunication sector must effectively satisfy five dimensions of service qualities that are reliability, empathy, assurance, tangibility and the responsiveness.

Trust is everything to satisfy any customer and only a satisfied customer can be loyal customer to any organisation. According to Birke and Swann (2010, p.156), in order to create a trust with the customers, service providers must build a strong relationship with the customer. In order to build trust with the customer's, organisation should provide effective services to their customers and along with that they should implement relationship-building strategy. However, in case of UK telecommunication sector it is seen that they are unable to create trust in the mind of the customer because of their consistent bad quality services and lack of importance in the technological advancements.

4.1.3: Analysis of switching rate of mobile service provider in UK

As stated by Shin, Kim and Lee (2011, p.3526), there are mainly two types of switching that is permanent and temporary. Temporary switching occurs when any customer faces difficulties to get their intended product from any particular organisation. In that case, customers go to other brand that sell similar product to buy their product. It is seen from the literature review that, after buying the product from another brand, if customers perceive that the quality of the product or services are better than their previous organisation then they buy that kind of product from the alternative sources. This kind of switching can be defined as the permanent switching. There are different factors that play a significant role in brand switching. Advertisements are one of the crucial factor that plays the most significant role in brand switching. As mentioned by Ganotakis and Love (2010,p.27), different organisation utilises different types of tactics to attract their customers because the main motto of any advertisement is influence the buying behaviour of customers and influence them to switch their brand.

On the other hand, different promotional campaign had a huge impact on brand switching because those campaign provides trial product and describe all of its characteristics and benefits that can influence any customer to switch their brand and buy product from those manufacturer or service providers.

However, this brand switching behaviour is different in case of telecommunication industry rather than other brand. There are several industry that are characterised by high rate of brand switching on the other hand brand switching rate is low for the other types industry. As mentioned by Ganotakis and Love (2010, p.27), Telecommunication sector can be characterised as the lower brand switching industry. It is seen from the introductory chapter that, there are a huge number of service providers who provide different range of facilities to their customers. In spite of that fact, the customer-switching rate is very low. There are mainly four service providers in the UK, telecommunication markets that are Telefonica, Everything everywhere, Vodafone and Three. As mentioned by Ganotakis and Love (2010, p.27), customer-switching rate is very low in that sector because of different factors like huge installation charge, learning cost and other costs to adapt the system. After collecting data as per the research methodology it is seen that, customer switching rate is very much low because of the huge switching costs. Other factors related to brand switching are same type of services. Uk telecommunication sector is still using 2G networks, while the other country is utilising 4G networks. According to Birke and Swann (2010, p.156), in spite of the fact, UK telecommunication sector is estimated a growth and they have gained £40.7

bn by the end of 2011, the main reason behind this is growing range of customers are now using broadband and fixed line telephone and they are not using mobile phone because of bad connectivity. In order to call someone, customers are mainly using different calling apps by using broadband. Therefore, customer-switching rate is lower but maximum customers are reluctant to use the services related to mobile phones. However, telecommunication service providers utilise 2G to provide broadband services to their but the minimum download speed in their 2G network is 2 mbps and due to the rule of their government they are liable to provide that services at very much lower costs.

4.1.4: Measures taken by telecommunication companies for delivering better service to get more loyal customers

As stated by Bruce, Cunard and Director (2014, p.52), there is a long list of threats to which the telecommunication sector of the UK is exposed like physical, failure related to the system or logic, failure related to software, Loss of the key inputs and the electronic interference. From the first chapter it is seen that, in order to resolve those issues related to the telecommunications sector of the UK many preventive measures have been taken by the telecommunication organisations. However, any network can show continuous or discontinuous performances, especially those that are associated with the public telephone network. In order to resolve the physical threats associated with the telecommunication sector some buildings are hardened physically and CCTV monitoring are fitted in those buildings (Verbeke *et al.* 2012, p.215). Security reson, The access of the building is controlled by the door entry that records those persons who have entered in the building. Moreover, perimeter security and the cellular security is also used to avoid physical threats. After collecting the secondary data from various sources according to research methodology it is seen that in order to avoid the problem associated with the loss of key inputs all of the equipment's are secured from the loss of the electricity by facilitating a battery backup facility. Moreover, it is also associated with along diesel generator is also designed to provide supply of the electricity during the electric mains fail in the telecommunication organisation. Al-Debei and Avison (2011, p.87) stated that, in case of landline phone, domestic electricity is not required because most of the domestic telephones are taking charge from the telephone line. Along with that, all time access of the equipment related to provide continuous services is required. It is also required to have the equipment in stock all time so it can be accessed in the time of crisis.

In order to reduce the problem associated with the software failure, appropriate equipment's are required to install in the system so it can detect the defective software that

is not working properly and restart the problematic sub-system of the software. The exchange software should be designed in that way so it can be automatically restart if all of the software system fails. As per Uddin, Luva and Hossain (2013, p.63), some companies use mainly two types of equipment's to protect their network from some common mode failures.

Organisation can give effective services by minimising traffic overload. Traffic overloads can be occurred during some special occasion because none of the system does not has the capacity to cope with the increasing level of calls more than its actual capacity. In order to avoid the traffic overloads over the telephone network some traffic management techniques need to be utilised like call gapping that is an effective technique to reduce the loads on the system and safely manage the whole system (Grunewald and Torriti, 2013, p.424). Sometimes, telecommunication organisation also provides priority access to ensure that only appropriate authority can continue functioning over the network.

Logic or the system failure is the issue associated with the overall designs of the system. Therefore, this kind of failure must be resolved from the starting point. For instance, each of the concentrator may have some diverse routine for the local exchange. In that case, each of the local exchange must be connected with the trunk exchange and that trunk exchange should be connected with each other. However, the Internet in the UK has not been planned as the single logical entity that has both the weaknesses and strength. As stated by Abdulai Mahmoud and Hinson (2012, p.43), the strength of this system is Internet can reconfigure itself in the time of outage or traffic overload. The weakness is many part of the Internet is relied on some buildings where Internet providers make connection with another and implement their equipment with other.

4.1.5: Bundling as a way of switching in UK telecommunication sector

As described in the research methodology chapter, the researcher has seen after collecting the secondary data that product bundling can be defined as the series of practices that is employed by any organisation to facilitate the sale of a number of goods to the single customer. As defined by Mahmoud and Hinson (2012, p.43), bundling is the sales of two product with each other, where there are also two existing market for two consecutive product. Bundling can be utilised as one of the competitive tool that asserts the dominance in different types of markets, otherwise it can be utilised to provide different types of incentive to the customers to change their buying behaviour.

From the literature review chapter, it can be easily evaluated that, customers generally face switching costs, when they switch thei from one supplier to another supplier for a particular

product or services. Switching costs are generally incurred on the customers because prior to buy and consume any product or services, customers spend their resources along with the price of purchase that are related to searching related costs, learning costs etc. Customers spend resources in addition to the purchase price, during the consumption of any services or products but when they change their service providers they cannot recover those resources, these additional costs can be defined as the sunk costs. From the first chapter it is already seen that, switching costs are generally prevalent with the relationship between supplier and consumer that are characterised by different types of frequent interactions like the repeat purchase behaviour (Angelova and Zekiri, 2011, p.235).

On the other hand, bundling is one of the practice that are employed by any organisations with the restricted examples of the natural occurrence, whereas, switching costs can be occurred naturally. As per the viewpoint of Ganotakis and Love (2010, p.30), To make loyal customer product bundling is effective. The example of product bundling can be Vodafone is providing facilities for their mobile users with free internet facilities. Where the customers always want more from their service providers and loyal to their customers because of huge switching costs. UK telecommunication sector is expecting a huge growth by implementing telecom service bundling. It is expected that by the end of 2019, most of the (79%) household in the UK will be signed up for multiply bundle of services and will buy two or more services (like broadband, mobile, telephone etc.) from one service provider (Abidin, Beattie and Goodacre, 2010, p.200). This result is mainly obtained from the research of a famous research firm that is CCS insight. It is seen from the report that 2016 year is set as the pivotal year for the telecommunication sector of the UK. Significant demand and the competitive pressure from the customers for different types of services presents an effective opportunity for the pay-TV market, which is expecting a boost within the year of 2016 and 2017.

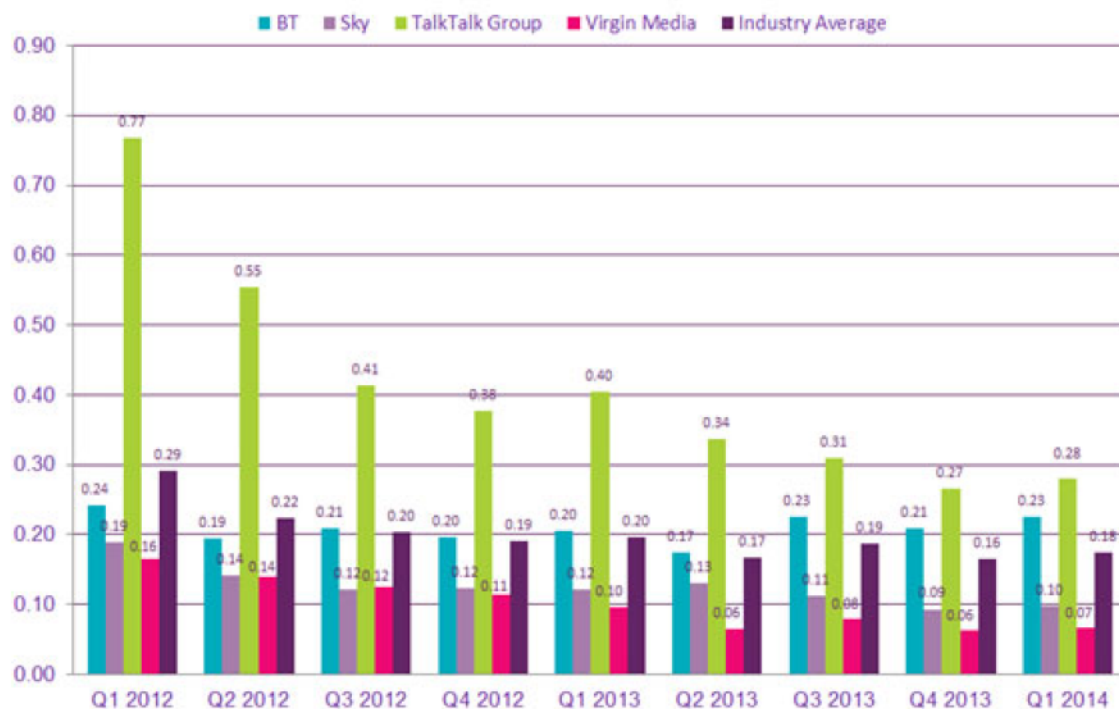


Figure 14: Latest Telecom and pay-TV complaint

(Source: media.ofcom.org.uk, 2016)

Main example of this product bundling is BT. It is seen that in the recent times, the organisation has improved their condition in the multiply market due to their pay TV channel. They have gained huge amount of customers by forecasting different types of recent event like UEFA championship league that differentiated them than their competitor. It is seen that in the recent times, huge range of customers are becoming interested to buy a package of broadband and TV from TalkTalk for around £8 p/m, which is their before line rental (stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk, 2016). However, it is seen that after implementing different bundling strategy UK telecom sector is facing problems related bad services.

4.1.6: Different types of risk faced by the telecommunication industry of UK that impact the customer loyalty:

It is seen from the research methodology that, the researcher collected the secondary data from different secondary sources. It is seen from the secondary sources that due to radical changes in the global telecom sector in 2013, the output is increasing at a faster pace. According to Giannarakis and Litinas (2011, p.76), reduction of the macroeconomic uncertainty creates increased level of competition among the top players of the telecommunication operators. However, in Europe operators are facing a mix of difficulties

and competition to replicate the services across the borders. One of the main impacts of this constraint in the UK is due to adaption of 2G network, they are slipped behind the other developed countries that have implemented 4G networks. Therefore, in the recent times they are facing difficulties to provide effective network to their customers that the customers wants from them (Yu, 2011, p.1080). Telecommunication industry of the UK is also facing difficulties due to the global financial crisis that de-motivates the investors to invest in UK that makes the consumer of the UK confused about which telecommunication providers they should choose. It is seen from the literature review, sometimes customers also want to shift their service providers to get better services but due to high installation charges, they became reluctant to shift their service providers. Different types of foreign telecommunication sector take this opportunity to enter in telecommunication of the UK. They are offering customers a very nominal charge to install their system and provides good and high speed networks. Different types of risks are faced by the telecommunication sector of the UK that is as follows:

As per the viewpoint of Martinez-Caro and Gabriel Cegarra-Navarro (2010, p.489), the main risks among those risks are failure to realise the new role to evolve the ecosystem of the industry. From the first chapter it is seen that the telecommunication sector is facing this problem because new growth opportunities needed new positioning strategy for the value chain but the telecommunication sector of the UK is unable to perform that. This is because, this kind of development require to open some opportunity and in order to do that effective audit on the market is required but due to the lack of intention of service providers, it is very difficult to achieve. Another reason of this failure is sharing the ownership of the customer with different disruptive players.

Another risk associated with the telecommunication sector of the UK is failed to understand the value of the customers. Telecommunication sector requires huge installation charge so if they apply some effective strategy like provide good quality services to the customers then they can easily get loyal customer (Giannarakis, Karagiannidis and Garefalakis, 2011, p.33). However, telecommunication sector of the UK is unable to understand the value of the customers. The main reason behind this risk is confusion of the customers restricting the new services. Another reason behind it is balance between the flexibility and the simplicity in the proposition.

The most crucial risk associated with the telecommunication sector of the UK is their failure to adopt different paths to facilitate innovation. However, due to lack of intention

of the shareholders to invest more amount of money on research and development they are unable to attract and retain talent to facilitate the innovations.

Okundamiya, Emagbetere and Gujor (2014, p.50) stated that, UK telecommunication industry does not have any effective performance measurement strategy by which they can evaluate their performance to facilitate better execution of their planned strategy. Therefore, in order to resolve the problem telecommunication sector of the UK require unlocking new matrix so they can measure their performances with effectiveness.

Telecommunication sector of the UK is unable to extract the value from the network assets. In an increasingly competitive market, competitors are shifting the focus of the customers from their services to their organisational infrastructure (Cricelli, Grimaldi and Ghiron, 2011, p.26). Therefore, in order to provide reliable and effective services it is important for telecommunication sector to manage an effective mix of technologies.

4.2 Overall findings from the research:

It is seen from all of the themes that are discussed above that telecommunication industry of the UK is facing different types of challenges that make their customers reluctant to receive services from them. However, telecommunication of the UK provides effective 2G speed and different types of telecommunication services to their customers but they are facing different types of challenges because their less focus in the further development in the telecom sector. They are intended to install 3G or 4G services in their organisation that makes their customers goes towards other foreign player in the market. It is seen that nearly 23% area of the UK has no 3G-network coverage, so it is important to install 3G in those area so network facilities could be improved at those place (www.theguardian.com, 2016). However, telecommunication sector charge an affordable charge (it is seen that for a package of TV and broadband TalkTalk service providers charge £8 pm) from their customers and they provide effective broadband services to their customers but they are facing challenges because they are reluctant to implement further development.

4.3 Summary:

The entire chapter is mainly focused on the thematic analysis of the secondary data. The information that is obtained from different sources are compared with the objective of the research in order to see whether the data is valid or not. The information that the researcher

collected from different sources, help the researcher to obtain future outcome of the research.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

5.0 Conclusion:

This study mainly contributed to identify the switching barriers that influence the retention strategy of any organisation and also affect the relationships between the customer retention and satisfaction among customers. It is seen from the study that marketers can utilise the switching costs to identify the customer buying behaviours in the telecommunication sector, which helps them to implement the best strategy to satisfy their customers. On the other hand, customer satisfaction has the positive influence on the customer retention, which in turns provide loyal customer to the organisation. Over the last few decades, customer loyalty became the prima focus of the markets involve in service sector. The main reason behind this is, it has been recognised by the markets that loyal customers contribute to the long-term profitability of the organisation. It is seen that the perceived service qualities and the organisation image hold by the service providers have a strong relationship with the customer loyalty. Therefore, from the total discussion it is clear that effective service qualities and better organisational images is required to achieve loyalty from the customer's end.

From the total discussion, it is also clear that by providing effective service qualities, satisfaction from the clients end can be achieved. Therefore, customer satisfaction strategy has the mediating impact between different interactive and external initiatives of marketing and customer loyalty development. It is also clear from the total research that switching costs creates a barrier on the customer while they want to switch their service providers. In service sector, customers generally wants to switch their brand in order to get better services from their new service providers. However, in telecommunication sector the switching costs is very much high due to the installation of the new system. Therefore, this high switching cost makes customer loyalty not because of the reason that they are highly satisfied but the main reason behind this is high switching costs. Therefore, telecommunication industry must take the advantages of this and should provide effective services to their customers so they became satisfied with their existing service providers. Management of telecommunication organisation should provide more focus to increase the switching barrier for customers so they can retain their old customers. In order to make this

happen, the management must implement effective customer satisfaction program so they can retain their customer in this competitive market environment. Along with tight, managers must significantly consider the dimensions of the customer satisfaction strategy and different types of switching barrier while making marketing plan for their organisation. Finally, it can be concluded that switching barriers has the potentiality to make loyal customers but effective customer services is also important to satisfy the service users. Therefore, telecommunication sector must provide effective quality services to their customers and they should provide more focus on their research and development so they can satisfy their customers and make the market penetration difficult for different foreign player of the telecommunication sector of the UK.

5.1 Linking with the objective:

Objective 1: To evaluate the impact of switching costs and customer satisfaction on the customer loyalty

Researcher has described a thematic analysis of the research. The researcher also satisfies the objective by linking the objective with the literature review. It is seen from the literature review that organisation can achieve loyalty from the customers through effective customer satisfaction strategy. In case of telecommunication sector, switching costs is very much high because of the high installation charge. This high installation charge makes the service users reluctant to switch over the other service providers. This high switching barrier in the telecommunication sector helps organisations to retain their customers. This customer retention strategy helps organisation to satisfy their customers because customer retention strategy has direct relationship with the customer satisfaction.

It is seen from the theme 1 and 2 that, service providers of the UK telecommunication sector charge a fixed and standard pricing strategy for providing services to their customers. Different service providers follow differentiable pricing strategy but they provide same speed and network to their customers. Due to same type of service provision and huge installation costs, customers do not want to change their service providers until they face huge problems from their service providers. However, due to some problems in their own infrastructure some organisation faces problems to provide services to the customers. Therefore, by implementing huge switching costs, it is possible to retain customers so this objective is satisfied by the research. However, it is seen from the theme

2 that along with switching cost, effective service quality, trust and good pricing strategy has significant impact on the customer switching behaviour.

Objective 2: To understand different types of switching costs associate with the telecommunication industry of UK

The researcher links the objective with the theme 3 and 5 and literature review of this research. It is seen from the thematic analysis that retail pricing strategy in the UK telecommunication sector is mainly dependent upon the different levels of prices like service related costs, installation costs, elasticity in the demand, competitive pressure on the brand etc. Switching costs is also dependent upon the optimal balancing between the high and low value customers. It is seen from the theme that due to different types of switching costs, the switching rate in UK telecommunication sector is very low and in order to retain and increase customer awareness UK telecommunication sector provides bundle of services like broadband services and pay-tv services etc. Theme 5 also satisfies this objective because it provides effective understanding about product bundling strategy that describes other reason to not switching to other service providers in UK telecommunication sector.

From the literature review it is seen that when any customer switches from one service provider to other service providers then they face different types of costs like procedural switching costs, relational switching costs and the financial switching costs. Among these switching costs, procedural switching costs are associated with time, effort and mainly learning related costs. On the other hand, relational switching costs are the psychological and emotional discomfort that any customer faces when they perform switch from one organisation to other. Financial switching costs associated with the telecommunication sector involves the loss of different financial resources like cost and benefit related costs, financial costs etc.

Objective 3: To understand different loopholes related to switching costs and customer loyalty on the telecommunication industry

The researcher link the objective with the literature review and theme 6 of the research. It is seen from the theme and literature review that in Europe, especially in the UK service users of telecommunication sector are not satisfied because of the lack of attention of telecommunication organisation towards innovation and utilisation of new technology in the telecommunication sector. Where the whole world has shifted towards the 4G networks, there UK is still using 2G networks. Another problem related to the UK telecommunication is they are unable to implement effective switching costs according to

the buying behaviour of the customers so they are losing their valuable customers. On the other hand, telecommunication sector of the UK has very less focus to understand the customer value that makes their customer reluctant to use telecommunication strategy. In the recent times, customers like to utilise different online media to call and send message to their friends and family. Moreover, telecommunication sector of the UK is facing problem to identify new positioning strategy for their customers so they are losing their customers. It is seen from the literature review that only high switching costs is not effective to make loyal customers. Along with the high switching costs good quality services is very much important. However, telecommunication sector of UK is unable to provide effective services to their customers that create barriers to generate loyal customers.

Objective 4: To recommend some appropriate strategy to resolve those loopholes

After discussing the entire segment of the research, the researcher has described some recommendations so the research related problems can be resolved. In order to satisfy the objective, the researcher has linked this segment with the next section of this chapter.

5.2 Recommendations:

Provide better quality services:

In order to make customer loyal only the switching cost is not effective. Along with it, provide better quality of services will be effective. Telecommunication sector of UK is facing problem because they are unable to provide effective services to their customers. Therefore, it is highly recommended to the organisations to provide better quality of services to their customers in order to make them loyal.

Conducting market audit to understand customer buying behaviour:

In order to create loyal customers it is very much important to understand the buying behaviour of those customers. It is important to understand the customer perceived value because understanding customer perceived value helps marketers to identify their present conditions and their position in the mind of customers. In order to identify the customer perceived value, conducting a market audit will be effective. This is important because, if organisation will be able to understand the customer perceived value then they will be able to understand the reason for which they are switching their brand. This strategy will be helpful to the markets to implement better strategy to satisfy their customers.

Provide more attention towards research and development:

In the recent times, UK telecommunication industry is suffering from lack of attention towards research and development. They are facing problems because they are reluctant to facilitate the technological development in their organisation. As a consequence, they are losing the attention of the customers. Therefore, in order to satisfy customer with better quality services and provide them more technological facility, telecommunication sector of UK must provide more attention towards the research and development. In order to facilitate effective research and development, telecommunication sector of the UK must create an effective relationship with good stakeholders.

Implementing effective performance measurement technique in organisation:

Telecommunication sector of the UK is suffering from lack of effective performance measurements technique. Actually they do not have any intention to provide effective and improved services to their customers. Therefore, in order to provide effective customer services, management of telecommunication industry must provide implement an effective performance measurements technique by which they can measure the performance of their employee and their organisation. In order to do this, stakeholders must take effective initiatives to implement an effective performance appraisal strategy for their employee and performance measurement techniques for their organisation. It is highly recommended for the stakeholders that they must invests more money in performance measurement techniques.

Hire advisor to understand the strategy that can satisfy customers:

In order to attract customers and make them loyal to a specific organisation, it is very much important for the each and every telecommunication sector to hire some advisor so they can get an effective consultation to improve their services. In UK, telecommunication is facing problems because they are unaware about the actual needs of the customers. Therefore, hiring an advisor in organisation can help them to get adequate knowledge regarding customer satisfaction.

Invest more money to improve the services:

In the recent times, telecommunication sector is facing problems related to the lack of providing effective services to the customers. Due to ineffective telecommunication services, the whole telecommunication sector is facing problems regarding revenue generation. Therefore, in order to provide more effective services it is highly recommended to the telecommunication sector to implement technological advancements. Therefore, in order to facilitate technological advancements it is important for different

telecommunication organisations to invest more money. In order to install new system huge money is required.

Other considerations’:

Need to follow the customer’s feedback and review.

The purpose of reduce switching cost, management should make researcher committee on customer feedback and review.

Competitors’ activities and changes need to analyse as technology updating every single day.

Need to consider unethical issues. UK telecommunication industry should focus on sustainable development for our planet.

5.3 Research limitations:

While conducting the research, the researcher has faced enormous challenges during the collection of the data. As the concept is very new so the researcher has problems to collect the information in order to conduct a secondary data. On the other hand, the researcher has faced problems related to the budget, due to insufficient budget the researcher cannot buy huge amount of books and journals from the Internet that requires purchase to access those books or journals. In case of secondary research, data must be analysed effectively and in order to facilitate an effective analysis huge time is required. However, the researcher does not have sufficient time to access and analyse those data. The researcher is novice and huge analysis and presentation skills are required to facilitate a secondary research so the researcher faces difficulties due to absence of those skills. Another problem that the researcher has faced is related to collection of data from different existing and published sources. Due to money constraint, the researcher cannot buy different study materials to conduct this research, so the researcher has faced difficulties due to out-dated data because there is enormous possibility that the published data could be obsolete in nature.

5.4 Future scope of the researcher:

This research poses the chance for a further research, as this research is mainly based on the secondary research so incorporations of primary data can enhance the understanding of the research. With the secondary analysis, primary data analysis is also important because it enhance the quality of any research. Secondary research only provides theoretical

experience about the research related topic but the primary analysis increases the practical experience of the researcher. This research is based on secondary qualitative analysis, so there is always a scope for the researcher to extend the research by incorporating both the primary quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data. The researcher conducts this job in the telecommunication industry so the researcher could extend this research on the other types of industry. Therefore, there is a huge scope for the future researcher to extend this research.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1:

Authors	Article/Book	Year	Relevance
Oyeniya, O., and Abiodun, A. J.	<i>Switching cost and customers loyalty in the mobile phone market: The Nigerian experience</i>	2010	This journal mainly describe the switching costs as one of the most discussed factor in the recent times and provides its impact on telco customer behaviour, retention, loyalty and the satisfaction strategy in case of telecommunication market. It is seen from this particular journal that customer satisfaction impact the customer retention positively and it is seen from the above study that switching cost significantly impact the retention of the customers. This research extensively investigate the switching costs and describe its relation with the poor service qualities, customer satisfaction and the reaction to the high price.
Malik, S., Mahmood. S. and Rizwan.M.	<i>Examining Customer Switching Behavior in Cellular Industry</i>	2014	This journal provides a clear understanding about the switching intention among customers due to the adoption of different new technologies. This journal demonstrates that customer defection only happens when any people switch their service providers to get more effective services. This research describes that perceived usefulness of the customer plays an important role to determine the switching intention of the customers and the strategy by which customer loyalty can be enhanced by the switching costs.
Subroto.B. and Rahayu.A.	<i>Research on Impacts of Customer's Satisfaction, Trust, Switching Barriers, and Corporate</i>	2014	With the development of the competition in the market, customer retention strategy in the market is also has changed. This research mainly investigates a model about the impact of trust, satisfaction, switching barrier of the customer toward the loyalty of the customers. In this journal, the researcher has

	<i>Image towards Customer's Loyalty (Case Study: Telkom Flexi)</i>		analysed a tool named Structural EquationModelling. This journal describe that switching costs has huge impact on the customer loyalty in case of telecommunication industry.
Makwana.K., Sharma.N. and Arora.S.	<i>Factors influencing consumer brand switching behavior in telecommunication industry: an empirical study</i>	2014	This study is mainly focuses on the identification of the different factors that can influence any customer switching behaviour in case of telecommunication sector. The study also reveals that by implementing effective pricing strategy and value added services, telecommunication sector can control the brand switching behaviour of the customer and can retain their customers.

Appendix 2:

Main activities	1st -5th week	6th- 10th week	11th -15th week	16th - 20th week	21th- 24th week
Topic selection					
Gathering information from different secondary resources	❖	•	❖		
Conduction of literature review		❖	❖		
Formation of research plan			❖		
Reviewing the collected information			❖	❖	
Research findings				❖	
Conclusion and recommendations				❖	
Formation of the draft					❖
Submission of final work					❖

Table 1: Gantt chart

(Source: Created by author)