Building Customer Loyalty towardthe Service Industry – An overview

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ABSTRACT: *Building customer loyalty towards the organization, brand and specific service provider is critical and crucial to the objective of survival and growth of business organizations. Therefore, this field of science has gained a wide range of researchers' interest and those who are interested in business. This paper aims to analyze the major requirements that lead to customer loyalty. Furthermore, the paper seeks to develop a comprehensive model of the major important variables and factors related to building customer loyalty in the sector of service industries. Reviewing and summarizing previous literature related to customer loyalty in the service industries sector will be used to achieve the objectives. The classifications of customer loyalty variables, the backgrounds of customer loyalty and the relationship with some demographic, organizational, and environmental factors will be discussed. The findings show that there is a strong relationship between a number of variables and building customer loyalty in the service industries sector. In addition, the analysis of results confirmed that obtaining the true and high customer loyalty requires the adoption of a comprehensive set of variables and factors simultaneously. A set of recommendations related to future studies were included.*
KEYWORDS: *Customer loyalty, Comprehensive model, loyalty variables, and service industry.*

I. INTRUDCTION

Customer loyalty is an important scientific field for study and research by academics and those interested in business. According to (Oliver, 1999: Zammit, 2001: Smith, 2003: Allen, 2004) customer loyalty has taken on the importance of the organization's performance from its close association with important indicators such as profitability, survival, and competition. For example, many studies have indicated that the cost of searching for a new customer is five times more than that of retention for a long period of time. Therefore, many studies have been conducted related to loyalty variables and building loyalty to the brand in various industries. As a result of the increasing importance and the significant development in the service industries sector, marketing scholars and practitioners recognized the importance of customer loyalty as a strategic objective.

Since the 1990s, there has been a noticeable development inthestudy of customer loyalty. Authors have dealt with this issue chronologically from the study of principles and concepts, the causes and effects and then analyzing the dimensions of loyalty and its variables; finally, they study the comprehensive perspective to build customer loyalty and loyalty programs. (Oliver, 1997: Bowen & Chen, 2001: Smith, 2003: Chun & Davies, 2006: Ledhari& Leclerc, 2014: Han & Hyun, 2018).Most of the researchers focused on studying customer loyalty in the product industry and after the great development in the service industry, there was a great interest in studying customer loyalty towards services and service organizations. So this paper attempt to highlight separately the variables that are related to customer loyalty, overall requirements of building the customer loyalty, and the relations with the demographical, organizational, environmental differences to construct the comprehensive model of customer loyalty for the sector of service industries.

II. SERVICE INDUSRURY

The scope of service industry or service marketing is huge; some of the specialist reports referred that 50% of customers' expense get back to this sector, and more than 80% of jobs (non-agricultural jobs), are in the sector of service industry. The service industry is experiencing wide growth and extreme competition due to the effects of advanced technology as well as the continuous growth in the knowledge and power of customers. This sector includes all parties and components engaged in the manufacture and provides the intangible products. Similarly, it is based on the same well-known marketing activities and principles as target market analysis, appropriate marketing mix design, and choice of optimal marketing alternatives to sale the service with the best

way (Itzel, Walker & Stanton, 2006). With the significant progress in modern marketing practices, the service industry has become increasingly in need of modern marketing tools that simultaneously conduct to achieve customer satisfaction and to implement the organization's goals and strategies (Alkhateeb&Alkhateeb, 2013).

III. THE CONCEPT OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Authors, researchers and those interested in marketing differed on the concept of customer loyalty. Thus, there is no specific definition of customer loyalty in psychological and marketing literature. Therefore, they addressed the concept of customer loyalty through their different views based on different times and environmental situations. (Day, 1969; Stewart, 1996; Hallowell, 1996; Oliver, 1997) mentioned and assumed that loyalty could be described sufficiently by patterns of repeat purchasing from specific provider for a long time. While many authors and researchers expanded the concept of customer loyalty to include customer attitudes towards the organization and the positive word of mouth (Oliver, 1997; O'Brien &Manross, 2002;Jaishankar, Arnold, & Kristy, 2000; Sirdeshmukh et al. 2002; Ganyu et al. 2012). In addition, (Oliver, 1999) distinguished between cognitive loyalty related to the customer's beliefs and information and effective loyalty associated with attitudes and feeling satisfied. According to (Dick&Basu, 1994; Walter et al. 2017) repeating a patronage for specific provider service by the customer is sufficient to describe the concept of customer loyalty. And by depending on both the relative attitude and the repeat patronage, they classified four situations of customer loyalty which starts with true loyalty when the customer has a strong positive attitude and a great ability to distinguish between alternatives, latent loyalty, spurious customer loyalty, and the last classificationis no loyalty which related to negative act when the customer has not a positive attitude toward the specific service provider and there isn't any purchase behavior no loyalty.

With the great development in the world of technology and business, there has been a development in the concept of loyalty of customers where many researchers and interested people discuss the philosophy of electronic loyalty to the customer or what is known as online loyalty. Researchers note that the customer's repeated request for online service from a specific supplier is based on trust, security, website, and technology that facilitate easy access to the service (Gommans, Krishnan, &Scheffold, 2001; Harris &Goodse, 2004; Pereira et al. 2016).

3.1 The Concept of Service Loyalty

Service loyalty was defined as a degree to which a customer exhibits repeat purchasing behavior from a service provider, possesses a positive attitudinal disposition toward the provider, and considers using only this provider when a need for this service arises (Gremler& Brown, 1998). Whereas, (Ladhari et al. 2011) conceptualized loyalty as a customer's continued patronage of a particular service provider. In addition (Rai&Medba, 2013) defined the service loyalty as "a psychological character formed by the sustained satisfaction of the customer coupled with emotional attachment formed with the service provider that leads to a state of willingly and consistently being in the relationship with preference, patronage, and premium".

Briefly, regarding the service industries market, it is clear that repeated patronage for a specific service, on the basis of what is mentioned above, for a long time by the customer falls within the behavioral loyalty. Whereas, whenever customers desire to broadcast positive recommendations and take the personal defense of the service provider (positive word of mouth) because of vulnerability to some positive attitudes falls within attitudinal loyalty for both offline and online activities.

IV. REVIEW OF LITIRTURE

Many studies have been conducted on the important requirements that affect customer loyalty towards the products and services provided by companies operating in the two sectors. It is noted those studies, either focused on independently investigating the relationship of each variable with customer loyalty or investigated the comprehensive variable model, led to building customer loyalty. In accordance with the objectives of this article, the paper seeks to highlight the most important variables associated with the customer loyalty; especially, in the sector of the service industries.

4.1 Services Quality (SQ)

According to (Hateemnujod, 2007; Almutairi, 2010; Haluz&aldhamur, 2012; Rai&Medba, 2013; Quach et al. 2016) the characteristic of service and availability of high quality is a positive sign that is directly related to customer loyalty. (Fogli, 2008) described service quality as "a global judgment or attitude relating to a particular service; the customer's overall impression of the relative inferiority or the superiority of the organization and its services. Service quality is a cognitive judgment". (Khinget al.2010) reported that there is a deep relationship between quality of service and the loyalty of the customer through the use of SERVQUAL tool based on measuring the dimensions of the service quality such as tangible, responsiveness, empathy, and assurance.

4.2 Trust (T)

In the marketing views, trust is a belief or expectation a positive exchange of partner's trustworthiness that results from the partner's expertise or reliability. Trust has been regarded as a behavioral intention that reflects a reliance on a specific partner (Moorman, Deshpande, &Zaltman 1993). In addition, the trust that is gained by the customer in dealing with the service provider is a fundamental and decisive indicator of both behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty (kassim& Abdullah, 2010; Pan, Sheng & T. Xie, 2012;Minarti, Ningsih&Segoro, 2014; Marakanon&Panjakajornsak, 2017).According to (Rai&Srivastava, 2012) the main component of customer trust is Integrity, credibility, and degree of assurance in the performance of transactions granted by the organization to its customers.

4.3 Corporate Image (CI)

The corporate image expresses its reputation and its name in the market and reflects its position against other competitors. Further, (Barich& Kotler, 1991) described that corporate image as "an overall impression of a company on the minds of the business environment". (Chiang Line, 2005; Giovanis, Zondiros&Tomaras, 2014; Sang Cho et al. 2014; Chang &Yeh, 2017) point out that the corporate image plays an important role in the customer's mind and has a direct impact on customer loyalty and is considered one of the most important motives of customer loyalty. In the same context, (Chiang Lin, 2005; Chun & Davies, 2006) considers the type of services, attractiveness of services, the method of work in a company, imagination, innovation, reliability, and market leadership as the main elements of a construct of the corporate image.

4.4 Switching barriers (SB)

(Hellier et al. 2003) referred to the customer's assessment of the personal loss or sacrifice in terms of time, effort and money associated with shifting to another service provider as the best expression for switching cost. The issue of customer switching barriers and their relation to customer loyalty has raised the interest of researchers and those interested in the business world. Switching barriers include two main aspects. The first aspect is related to the cost, effort and time the customer incurs as a result of a move to another service provider (Hellier et al. 2003; Oyeniyi&Abiodun, 2010; Su wan et al. 2013). Whereas, the second aspect contains a variety of alternative attractiveness elements that customer will sacrifice due to shifting to other organization (Koo Kim et al. 2016). Many studies regarding switching barriers have indicated a significant impact and direct relationship with customer loyalty at different levels of customers (Burnham, Judy & Vijay, 2003; Mohammadoghli&Hassanzadeh, 2013; Nesset&Helgeson, 2014; Blut et al. 2014).

4.5 Involvement (I)

(Anderson & Norus1990) refer customer involvement as communication activities. And they described customer involvement as "a continually interactive dialogue between the company and its customers". It is a vital meaning for understanding and developing ideas to create familiarity and strengthen relationships. The analysis of (Ndubisi, 2007; Wan Lee et al.2010; Banyte&Dovaliene, 2014; Greve, 2014; Lewin et al. 2014) showed a significant moderating impact of customer involvement on the customer loyalty. They assured that positive relationship between all the activities which the companies present to its customer and obtaining the customer loyalty. While (Thakur, 2016) claimed that customer involvement as arising out of five different customer experiences such as self-connect, intrinsic enjoyment, time-content, utilitarian and monetary evaluation experiences.

4.6 Electronic Services (ES)

E-Service refers to any service provided by electronic means e.g. Internet/website and mobile devices (Rowley, 2006). It has become necessary for the service provider to present some of its services in electronic forms, especially with the great development in the world of technology, communications, and the Internet. Many studies have shown the importance of providing and converting many traditional services to electronic form in order to save time, effort and cost to the customer service. These studies also showed a strong correlation between the availability of services electronically and attitudinal customer loyalty (Srinivasan, Anderson, &Ponnavolu, 2002, Lu, X. L., 2007; Safa& Ismail, 2013; Ladhari& Leclerc, 2013; Hwang et al. 2016; Silva &Goncalves, 2016). While (Pitta, Franzak, Fowler, 2006; Abdulfattah, 2012;Pereira, Salgueiro& Rita, 2016) indicated that importance of some requirements to provide efficient electronic services such as accessibility, adequacy of information, personal security and the attractiveness of e-activities.

4.7 Perceived value (PV)

The perceived value by the customer reflects the real benefit that customer receives from the service after excluding the service costs incurred. Numerous of studies have concluded that there is a direct relationship between a customer's feeling of real value of using a particular service and an increase in his or her long-term

loyalty (Lien Li & Green, 2011; Hasnelly,& Yusuf, 2012; El-Adly&Eid, 2016; Cossio-Silva et al. 2016). On the other hand, motivations, opportunities, utilitarian benefits, and hedonic benefits have been identified as the most important elements needed to achieve actual value in order to obtain customer loyalty (Gruen et al. 2011; Frank et al. 2014; Xu et al. 2015; Purwanto et al. 2015).

4.8 Customer Satisfaction (CS)
Customer Satisfaction was defined as a positive overall condition felt by the customer towards the service provider. A cumulative state of cognitive and affective aspects that affect the strength and level of the relationship between the customer and the organization (Levesque & McDougall, 1996; Giese & Cote, 2000).Researchers have conducted many studies on satisfaction philosophy and its measurement tools over the past 30 years by surveying levels of satisfaction with respondents using statistical tools, interviewing methods and other research tools. They also tried to study customer satisfaction by measuring the interrelationship and mediating effect with some other independent variables such as service quality, trust, and corporate image in the market (Droge, Diane & Robert, 1996; Allen, 2004). Regarding the relationship between satisfaction and customer loyalty to a particular organization or service, Despite, there is considerable debate among researchers about the nature of the relationship between a customer's satisfaction and loyalty towards a specific service or brand, they agree that there is a strong direct relationship or indirect relationship - related to other factors - between customer satisfaction customer loyalty (Rust &Zahorik, 1993; Bowen & Chen, 2001; Market, 2007; Bayrakter, 2011; Baumann & Elliott, 2012; Mei Liu et al. 2014; Diaz, 2016).

V. ANTECEDENTS OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY- INTEGRATED CONCEPT
The antecedents of customer loyalty reflect a more in-depth approach to the relationships that correlate customer loyalty requirements with each other and with the idea of building customer loyalty. Many of the previous literature dealt with the idea of building customer loyalty toward a specific service provider. These works have analyzed the holistic and integrated independent variables as a function of customer loyalty in the service industries sector. By reviewing the previous literature, three main trends can be categorized in a way that the priorities of customer loyalty have been studied. First, (Zammit, 2001; Smith, 2003; Donelly, 2009; alnasoor, 2010; Santouridis&Trivellas, 2010; Kumar & Srivastava, 2012; Pan & et al. 2012; Rai&Medba, 2013; Hoang-Tung & Kubota, 2014) have presented an overall view about the direct relationship between customer loyalty variables and customer loyalty such as service quality, corporate image, trust, commitment, switching cost, preserved value and customer satisfaction. While, (Sohrabi& Akmar,2013) added the electronic services variable or what is known as online loyalty as a prerequisite for the comprehensive concept of customer loyalty building for a particular organization. Second, (Yavas et al. 2004; Akbar &Parvez, 2009; Sharma, 2011; Pena et al. 2013; Abu Hassan et al. 2013; Othman, 2013; Han & Hyun, 2018) have attempted to discuss the interrelationship between a number of independent variables and their direct or indirect relationship with customer loyalty Such as the interrelationship between service quality, trust, commitment, and corporate image and the resulting direct or indirect impact on customer loyalty, the interrelationship between customer satisfaction, service quality, perceived value and the likelihood that this will affect customer loyalty in long-term. Third, (Costabil, 2000; Churchill & Halpern, 2001; Chaudhuri& Holbrook, 2001;Gendall, et al. 2005; Kuusik, 2007; McMullan & Gilmore, 2008; Liang, Wang, & Farquhar, 2009; Khan, 2009; Elliot & Burton, 2012; Pan, Sheng, T.Xie, 2012; Bagram& Khan, 2012; Bobalca, 2013; Nesset&Helgeson, 2014; Tung & Kubota, 2014; Ansari &Riasi, 2016;Berjoyo, Moreno & Castro, 2016) have deeply analyzed the customer loyalty, customer loyalty dimensions, and customer loyalty models.They tried to use different research methods at the same time such as a cross-sectional survey, simple interviews, and in-depth interviews, a two-part study, and a comparative study. In addition, those studies have used the several levels of statistical analysis tools such as simple and more complex statistical methods, using one scale, and multi-scale. They concluded that behavioral loyalty and emotional loyalty are the most important dimensions of customer loyalty. The results revealed different cases and grades of the customer loyalty based on many factors and circumstances. The results of these studies provided integrated models of important loyalty derivatives in the service industry sector.

VI. OTHER FACTORS
Seeking to collect an integrated perspective to build customer loyalty in the sector of service industries, more than one study has shown a significant difference due to some of the demographic factors, organizational factors, and environmental factors. The factors like Age, gender, and educational status have had a clear impact on the customer's appreciation of the service quality, the company's reputation, and the nature of his sense of satisfaction. The impact of the same factors on the ability of managers of business organizations to understand the modern marketing philosophy as well as the obvious influence of some other regulatory factors such as the existence of CRM. According to (Hoang-Tung & Kubota 2014; Melnyk, 2014;Blascoa, Velazquezb&Saura, 2014; Nyadzayo&Khajehzadeh, 2016) there is a significant difference related to some factors namely, age,

gender, level of education, marital status, experience, duration of relationship with the service provider, deep of relationship, and the existence of department of customer relationship management in the organizations in the sector of service industries. In addition, (Martinez & Bosque, 2013; Abdul Rashid, Khalid, & Rahman, 2015) referred to the importance of some environmental factors like the factor of (CSR) to increase the customer loyalty.

VII.RESULTS AND CONCLOSION

By reviewing the previous literature in the field of marketing, customer relationship management (CRM), and customer loyalty, it is possible for this study to summarize the main results through a comprehensive model that explains the most important variables related to the customer loyalty function in the services industries, as explained in the figure1:
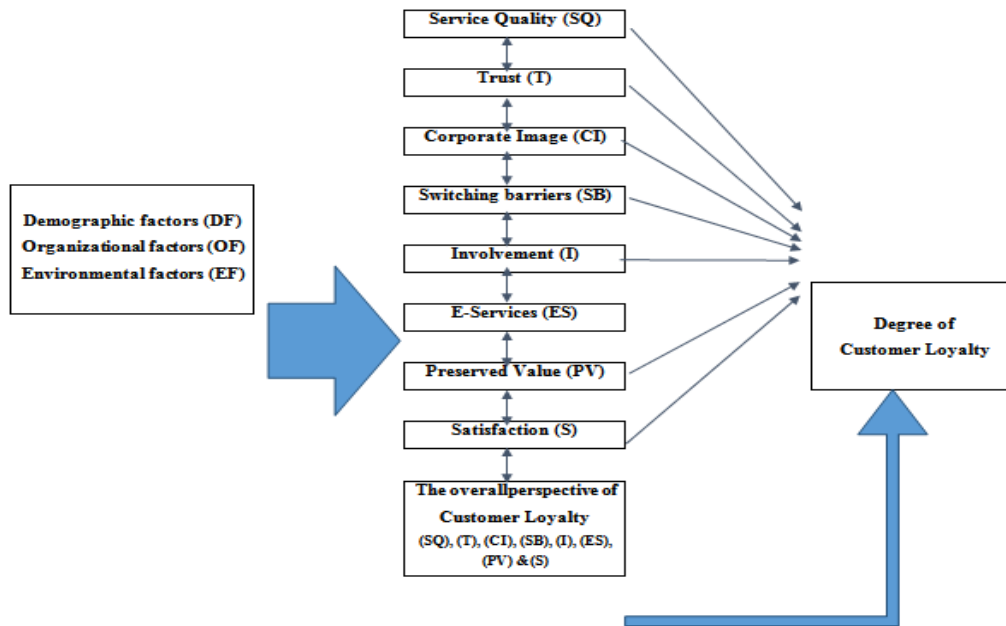

Figure 1: Comprehensive model of customer loyalty, Developed by the researcher.

By looking at the overall model of customer loyalty in Figure (1) it can be summarized in three outcomes. First, it is shown that there is a set of independent variables which led to achieving customer loyalty in the services market. These variables have an effect and a direct or indirect relationship with the customer loyalty. Moreover, customer loyalty can be achieved with any of these factors independently; for example, the service quality may be the sole responsibility of customer loyalty, or the satisfaction factor may be sufficient to achieve customer loyalty and so on. However, this does not adequately reflect the long-term strategic perspective in building relationships with the customer. This requires strong relationships to create strong, real, non-temporary loyalty based on an integrated range of activities and events. Second, more broadly, it is clear that there are a number of interrelated variables that are actually causing customer loyalty in the service industry. The most important of these integrative variables can be identified by service quality, trust, switch barriers, involvement, e-services, perceived value, and customer satisfaction. It is noted that these variables are affected with each other which leads to achieving customer loyalty over a long time, for example, it shows that the service quality interacts with both the involvement and trust, which leads to the customer loyalty. The corporate image may also affect the perceived value and level of satisfaction, causing customer loyalty and so on. In general, an objective of obtaining the superior loyalty is linked to the availability of all these variables with the same service provider. Third, there is a significant effect and strong correlation between some demographic, organizational and environmental factors and building customer loyalty toward the service organizations namely, age, gender, income level, educational level, length and depth of relationship with a service provider, availability of department of CRM and the adoption of CSR. That result supports and helps to achieve a comprehensive understanding and true practice of the concept of customer loyalty towards a specific service provider or service organization. Furthermore, the overall interactions and relationships can be clarified through the following functional relationship:

CL= f (SQ, T, CI, SB, I, ES, PV, S)

CL= A+W_1 (SQ) W_2 (T)+ W_3(CI)+W_4(SB)+W_5(I)+W_6(ES)+W_7(PV)+W_8(S)

CL = f (PF, OF, EF)

Where (A) is a constant and (w) represents the relative weights of the factors contributing in the customer loyalty formation as the previous studies suggest that each of those determinants exerts a relative influence over improvement of customer loyalty toward specific service provider. Those formulas can use to test the interrelationships between the requirements of customer loyalty and may help the future research work as a theoretical base to conduct the field work.

VIII.   FURTHER RESEARCH

For future studies, the overall model of customer loyalty should be subject to more empirical and field research to cover the perspectives of the managers and the degree of practice by them toward the concept of customer loyalty in the sector of service industries as well as to measure the attitude of customer concerning the services they obtain in order to make a comparison between the two perspectives. In addition, there should be more researches and tests of customer loyalty variables, demographic, organizational and environmental factors in order to study and analyze relative relationships and measure the degree of significance of each variable relative to the other variable. According to (Rai and Srivastava, 2012) it is necessary to cover the variable of service recovery to prevent service failure in future research due to its high impact on customer loyalty and may ad this variable with the model of customer loyalty to formulating and testing of hypotheses. Interviews, random field surveys, and some marketing research should be conducted in the future researches.

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