

Customer Satisfaction And Customer Loyalty: A Case Study Of Airtel Uganda: Customers In Kawempe

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Abstract

The study aimed at investigating the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited. To achieve this general objective, the study was guided by the following specific objectives; To investigate the relationship between communication and customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited, to assess the relationship between Service reliability and customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited and to examine the relationship between service responsiveness and customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited. The study used simple-random sampling to select the contract center agents and Twenty-four Customer service representatives to participate in the study. Simple random sampling was used for this category of respondents because their population is expected to be too big and thus each individual was chosen entirely by chance and each had an equal chance of being included in the sample. Findings shown that more respondents (79%) concurred that customer service representatives provide accurate information compared to 7% who opposed and 13% who were not sure. In addition, more respondents (74%) concurred that when Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) promised to do something by a certain time, they would do it compared to 2% who opposed and 24% who were not sure. Furthermore, more respondents (65%) concurred that Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) communicates when there is a service breakdown compared to 8% who opposed and 27% who were not sure. Maintaining and enhancing service reliability is crucial for sustaining positive customer perceptions. Ongoing efforts to monitor and optimize service accessibility at all touchpoints are recommended. Addressing concerns related to specific touchpoints or experiences is vital for ensuring a consistently positive customer experience.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Airtel Uganda and Customers

Background of the study

The concepts forming this study were customer service and loyalty. The importance of customer service varies widely from company to company (Nelson, Christopher, Teddy, et al., 2022). A customer is someone for whom you satisfy a need and who you please with respect to their wishes (Tasha et al., 2023), while service is defined as acts, processes and performances (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). Services were considered to be intangible products i.e. those that Airtel Uganda Limited experienced but could not be seen or directly touched such as healthcare or

financial services (Cartwright, 2015). Customer service is a service provided to support a company's core products (Emmanuel et al., 2023). This often includes answering questions, taking orders, resolving billing issues, handling complaints, and scheduling maintenance or repairs.

Based on (N. Faridah et al., 2023), customer service is a series of activities designed to increase the level of customer satisfaction—that is, the feeling that a product or service has met the customer's expectations (Racheal, Kazaara, et al., 2023). Customer service can

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be provided by a person (eg a sales and service representative) or by automated means called self-service, such as websites. Customer service is one of the most important components of the marketing mix of products and services, i.e. customer satisfaction (Racheal, Kazaara, et al., 2023). High quality customer service helps create customer loyalty. Based on the survey, he stated that today's customers are not interested in the product that is offered to them, but in all the additional elements of service that they receive from the greeting they receive when they enter a retail store, to the refund and assistance that they receive, when they have a complaint about a defective product they paid for. If a customer feels valued, they are more likely to not only stay with you, but to recommend you to others, and no retail company should ever underestimate the importance of word of mouth referrals when it comes to increasing your sales and customers. It's the service that customers remember.

Customer loyalty, on the other hand, is defined as “a deep-rooted commitment to consistently repurchase or repatriate a preferred product/service in the future, resulting in repeat purchases of the same brand or set of brands” (Oliver, 2014). Despite this, situational influences and marketing efforts have the potential to cause behavior change” (Oliver, 2014). There are many benefits that companies derive from customer loyalty. Loyal customers are more profitable for the company (Cartwright, 2015). This profitability is believed to be due to lower service costs, less price sensitivity, increased spending and favorable referrals from loyal buyers to other potential customers. In the same way (Racheal, Enock, et al., 2023) it was added that it costs much more to attract a new customer to do

business with you than to get an existing one to make a repeat purchase (K. Faridah, Kazaara, et al., 2023) and the strategy of gaining and maintaining loyalty appears to be a source of sustainable competitive advantage. Loyal customers essentially build businesses by purchasing more, paying premium prices, and providing new referrals over time through positive word of mouth (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023).

Loyalty to a company or product can be thought of as continued patronage over time. The degree of loyalty can be measured by tracking customer accounts over defined periods of time and recording the degree of continuity of patronage (Yi & Jeon, 2013). Over the past decade, the communications services sector has undergone drastic changes, resulting in a market characterized by intense competition, little growth in primary demand, and increased deregulation (Chaudhuri & Halbrook, 2016). The dimensions of customer loyalty include a behavioral perspective, an attitudinal perspective and a composite perspective (Polycarp et al., 2023). A study conducted by Bow Chen (2011) supported the claim that there is a positive correlation between loyal customers and organizational profitability. First, the behavioral perspective focuses on repeat purchase behavior based on a customer's purchase history.

Based on Ehrenberg, (1988), this approach assumes that the structure of customer preferences is reflected in customer behavior as it is actualized (Ehrenberg, 2017). In contrast, an attitudinal perspective allows for additional understanding of loyalty behavior (Zins, 2011). Attitude refers to the extent to which the customer's attitude toward the service is favorably inclined (Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022b). Some

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examples of attitudinal operational measures are preference, purchase intention, supplier preference, and willingness to recommend (K. Faridah, Kazaara, et al., 2023). Customer satisfaction and service with reference to the gap model (Zeithaml, 2000) are conceptualized to include communication, reliability and responsiveness, while customer loyalty with reference to behavioral and attitudinal models is conceptualized to include churn rate, length of service and culture through service.

The world of telecommunications has moved from analog to digital as well as smart technologies, narrowband to broadband, and access to information and communication technologies continues to grow at a high rate (ITU, 2014). Statistics show that the 14% of the world's population that lives in these countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Great Britain and the USA, as well as African countries, ie South Africa and Nigeria) represents 34% of the world's population. the total number of mobile users (ITU, 2014) these statistics showed that the telecommunications industry did not (K. Faridah, Jacob, et al., 2023).

According to an ITU publication in 2016, it said that the telecommunications industry is undergoing a radical change that is creating new opportunities and challenges for infrastructure and service providers. With the rise of mobile device production and services as an international market, according to the triple play of telecommunications, entertainment and IT convergence, the global telecommunications market has grown and changed (Turyatamba et al., 2022). In 2010, the number of mobile phone users worldwide increased to 5.6 billion. Telecom Industry body, the

GSM Association, has announced that by 2010, Airtel Uganda Limited's mobile networks will cover 90% of the world's population. Governments have earned over \$6 billion from the telecommunications industry (ITU Publications, 2006). The total number of mobile connections then corresponded to almost a third of the estimated world population of 6.5 billion (ITU Publications, 2016). In Uganda, the Telecommunications (Licensing) Regulations (2005) outlined the importance of service quality parameters to adopt a consumer-oriented approach that focuses on providing quality services to consumer satisfaction, and to facilitate the introduction of new, modern services as well as the extension of existing customers to modern and innovative quality services delivered to customer satisfaction (Christopher, Komunda et al., 2022). Operator licenses oblige telecommunication companies to improve the quality of service to the satisfaction of consumers.

Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) is a mobile communications and information technology service provider in Uganda. The company also offers mobile fund transfer and banking services known as airtel payments bank. Airtel Uganda limited is a subsidiary of Airtel Africa PLC. Airtel Uganda is a branch of a UK-based multinational company that provides telecommunications and mobile money services in 14 countries in Africa. Airtel Africa is majority owned by the Indian telecommunications company Bharti Airtel. Airtel Africa offers mobile voice and data services as well as mobile money services nationally and internationally (Racheal, Enock, et al., 2023). Airtel launched mobile telecommunication services in Uganda on 10 March 2009 as the fifth mobile operator

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after Zain Uganda, MTN, Uganda Telecom Ltd (UTL) and Warid Telecom entered the fast-paced and highly competitive business environment. Thus, a customer service strategy supports an organization's competitive scope and its concept of quality through selection and positioning based on the core dimensions of quality on which it wants to compete (e.g., responsiveness, reliability, communication).

Airtel entered the Ugandan market on 8 June 2010 when Bharti Airtel acquired 16 Zain Africa branches. In 2013, Airtel fully purchased Warid Telecom Uganda in the country's first ever acquisition in the telecommunications sector. Airtel thus further cemented its position as the second largest mobile operator in Uganda with a combined customer base of over 7.4 million and a market share of over 39%, cementing its position as the number two mobile phone network behind market leader MTN Uganda. In 2018, Airtel reached the 10 million customer mark. This milestone cemented Airtel's position as the fastest growing telecommunications operator in Uganda. In January 2019, Airtel Uganda achieved 100% 4G LTE across all its branches in Uganda, making the national

broadband policy a reality. The telco owns over 2,000 masts in Uganda as of April 2020.

In the same case, Airtel Uganda is one of the leading telecommunications service providers in Uganda offering communication products and services; 2G, 3G and 4G wireless voice, data services and mobile trading through Airtel Money. As of March 2021, the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) estimated the number of Airtel Uganda subscribers at 10 million out of 28.3 million mobile network subscribers in the country. This means a 35.3% market share. Based on the researcher, Airtel is one of the fastest mobile internet availability in Uganda as it commands several market shares across the country with more than 70% market shares (<http://www.independent.co.ug/business/business-news>). Therefore, Airtel Uganda Limited also offers some of the best tariffs in the market for both data and voice with a unique national flat rate per second or per minute for voice and SMS, an attractive range of international tariffs and is still the only operator to offer an exclusive free callback service. Airtel offers the best service quality to its customers (Racheal, Enock, et al., 2023).

Problem Statement

The telecommunications industry in Uganda includes similar services that differ in price and after sales services to keep customers loyal. Over the past 5 years, Airtel Uganda Limited has sought to improve its customer service systems through training, with a total of over 200 training sessions for customer service representatives (Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022a). Airtel Uganda Limited introduced a USSD data recovery method by retrieving airtime and converting it to data in June 2014 (Airtel Uganda Limited Marketing report, 2018) to reduce the number of people visiting stores as well as introducing data transmission. a service that will allow customers with unused data to use it when renewing data packages after expiration. Airtel Uganda went further forward to bring services closer to the people by opening more stores across the country from 2014 to 2023 totaling over 100 stores (Christopher, Moses et al., 2022b). Airtel Uganda has been working to increase the presence of 4G+ network coverage and now from 2022 to 2023 5G network coverage in most Ugandan cities. However, these systems did not seem to be noticed by customers in the number of customers who did not renew their internet packages. Out of 28.3 million mobile subscribers in Uganda, 10 million airtel customers subscribed to Internet Everywhere service (modems) since June 2010 and acquired 16 Zain Africa operations. In 2013, airtel fully bought Warid to increase its internet services (Tasha et al., 2023).

Out of 10 million airtel customers, unknown customers have not renewed their internet packages (Airtel Uganda limited customer retention and loyalty data renewal report, 2020). This resulted in a 52.6% non-renewal rate, indicating a low level of customer loyalty, yet the company only expected a 2% churn rate. This referred to the proportion of contract customers or subscribers who leave within a given time period of 6 months (Nelson, Christopher, Teddy, et al., 2022). Therefore, there is a need to understand customer loyalty and identify customer service levels in terms of communication, reliability and responsiveness by Airtel Uganda Limited employees. If this area is not explored, there is likely to be a low level of customer loyalty, which in turn would lead to low profitability for Airtel Uganda. To partially fill this knowledge gap, this study will examine the relationship between customer service and customer loyalty in Airtel Uganda Ltd.

General Objective

The general objective of the study is to investigate the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited. To achieve this general objective, the study was guided by the following specific objectives;

Specific Objectives;

1. To investigate the relationship between communication and customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited.
2. To assess the relationship between Service reliability and customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited
3. To examine the relationship between service responsiveness and customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited.

Methodology

The study used a case study research design, which was cross sectional in nature. A case study was adopted because according to Amin (2005), it allows the researcher to focus on one unit of the study, which in this study was Airtel Uganda Limited, to enable an in-depth study of issues to be investigated. This study used a cross sectional survey because according to Amin (2005), with this survey, a large group of respondents can be targeted to obtain the required

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information without making a follow up of the respondents once information from them is obtained. The study also adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches, which was triangulated. Quantitative approach was used to quantify incidences in order to describe current conditions and to investigate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables based on the information gathered from the questionnaire.

The population was heterogeneous in nature comprising of both Male and Female respondents. Total population at the point of study was 110 people (Airtel Uganda Limited Human Resource Manual, 2023). These included staff of Airtel Uganda Limited in Kampala District like contact centre agents, contact centre supervisors, customer service managers, customer service representatives to be met face to face interactions with the customers and other managers related to the study.

A sample is a subset of population (Senkaran, 2003). Ninety (90) out of 110 employees representing 81.8% was selected. The key informants were purposively selected. Using purposive sampling technique, the researcher was chosen informants that are expected to have the desired information with respect to the objectives of the study. As noted by Serakan (2003), a sample is selected using a scientific approach by considering the population and a sampling error of $\pm 5\%$. These included top managers, supervisors, department heads and marketing staff related to the study by virtue of their designation and experience. Using snowball sampling, the researcher considered key informants to name other people who was contacted to give better understanding of aspects in this study.

Table 1. Respondents by category and sample

Category	Population	Sample size	Sampling method
Contact centre agents	65	56	Simple random sampling
Customer service representatives	25	24	Simple random sampling
Customer service managers	10	10	Purposive sampling
Marketing staff	10	10	Inconveniencing sampling
Total	110	90	-

Source: Adopted and modified from Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table for determining a sample size in a given population cited in Amin (2005).

The study used simple-random sampling to select the contract center agents and Twenty-four Customer service representatives to participate in the study. Simple random sampling was used for this category of respondents because their population is expected to be too big and thus each individual was chosen entirely by chance and each had an equal chance of being included in the sample. This helped to avoid bias in their selection given that every contract center agent has the same chance of selection. Marketing staff and customer service managers was selected by purposive sampling. This was selected because it only includes people of interest and excluded those who do not suit the purpose.

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Two types of data collection methods were used in the study. These included quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The quantitative and qualitative data collection methods relied on structured data collection instruments and these mainly constituted survey and face-to-face interviews, which are briefly explained in the following subsections:

Self-administered questionnaires (SAQs) were used to collect quantitative data from the agents, customer service representatives and marketing staff at Airtel Uganda Limited. SAQs was used for these categories of respondents to save on time given that they are expected to be many and thus would not be interviewed and because they would read and write in English and thus fill in the questionnaires by themselves without any assistance.

Questionnaires was administrated in different ways depending on the amount of contact with the respondents. In this study, 90 questionnaires to be administered. The questionnaire was self-administered and contained closes-ended questions. In other words, the questionnaire contained a list of all possible alternatives from which respondents selected answers that best suits the situation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

The study used the likert scale in the questionnaire (1 - Strongly agree, 2 - Agree, 3 - Not sure, 4 - Disagree, 5 - Strongly disagree) to evaluate the study variables. Triangulation technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification of more than two sources was employed. The purpose of triangulation in both quantitative and qualitative data was increased credibility and validity of results.

Raw data was collected, sorted, coded, edited and condensed into systematically comparable data. Data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), which help to summarize the coded data and this facilitated quick interpretation of the results (Nelson, Christopher, & Milton, 2022). Descriptive statistics was presented using frequency tables and include frequencies and percentages.

The study adopted Spearman correlation analysis to establish the relationships between two or more variables or sets of variables (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). In this study, bivariate correlations were used to establish significance, direction, and magnitude of the relationship in the variables. A correlation coefficient of +1 indicates that two variables are perfectly related in a positive linear sense, a correlation coefficient of -1 indicates that two variables are perfectly related in a negative linear sense and a coefficient of 0 indicates that there is no linear relationship between the two variables. In addition, to the correlation coefficient, a coefficient of determination was computed where the cause effect was required, that is hypothesis 2 and 3. In qualitative data, an objective coding scheme was applied to data in the process commonly known as Content Analysis. Potential themes, categories, and patterns was closely examined to see how they actually emerge from the data in relation to the objectives of the study. Qualitative data analysis utilized words to make narrative statements on how categories or themes of data related. Once the themes, categories and patterns are established, data was evaluated and analyzed to determine the adequacy, credibility, usefulness and consistency of the information.

Results

Table 2. Distribution of respondents on items about communication

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Items about communication	Concurred	Not sure	Opposed	Total
Customer service representatives provide accurate information	71 (79%)	12 (13%)	6 (7%)	89 (100%)
When Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) promises to do something by a certain time, they do it	66 (74%)	21 (24%)	2 (2%)	89 (100%)
Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) communicates when there's a service breakdown	58 (65%)	24 (27%)	7 (8%)	89 (100%)
Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) conducts market survey to determine what customers require	46 (51%)	31 (35%)	12 (14%)	89 (100%)
We receive warming SMS before disconnection	44 (49%)	35 (39%)	10 (11%)	89 (100%)

Source: Field Data, 2023

To analyze the findings, respondents who strongly agreed and those who agreed were combined into one category of respondents who “concurred” with the items. In addition, respondents who strongly disagreed and those who disagreed were combined into another category of respondents who “opposed” the items. Thus, three categories of respondents were compared, that is “respondents who concurred with the items”, respondents who were not sure about the items” and respondents who opposed the items (Musaibah et al., 2023). The proportions of these categories were compared to for interpretation.

Findings show that more respondents (79%) concurred that customer service representatives provide accurate information compared to 7% who opposed and 13% who were not sure. In addition, more respondents (74%) concurred that when Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) promised to do something by a certain time, they would do it compared to 2% who opposed and 24% who were not sure. Furthermore, more respondents (65%) concurred that Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) communicates when there is a service breakdown compared to 8% who opposed and 27% who were not sure. Findings also show that more respondents (51%) concurred that Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) conducts market survey to determine what customers required compared to 14% who opposed and 35% who were not sure. Lastly, more respondents (49%) concurred that they received warming SMS before disconnection compared to 11% who opposed and 39% who were not sure.

Apart from the findings from the questionnaire, the following findings were from the interviews when interviewees were asked whether staff were regularly trained on customer service management. In response, one Customer Service Manager had this to say:

“Services are heavily people-based, requiring various interactions with the customers. In addition, since provision and consumption of services are taking place at the same time, little or no possibility of supervision exists before the

service delivery. Due to those unique characteristics of services, training in of staff in communicating with customers has central in Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL)” Interviews from the Customer Service Manager and three Marketing staff expressed similar negative views about communication at Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL).

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on items about customer loyalty

Items about customer loyalty	Concurred	Not sure	Opposed	Total
Most of the Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) customers have spent a short time using the company’s services	71 (79%)	12 (13%)	6 (7%)	89 (100%)
Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) has lost many customers to competing companies	68 (76%)	11 (12%)	10 (11%)	89 (100%)
Most Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) customers spend little time on its network	71 (79%)	15 (17%)	3 (3%)	89 (100%)
Most customers are likely to repurchase Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) services	3 (3%)	14 (16%)	72 (81%)	89 (100%)

Source: Field Data, 2023

Findings revealed that more respondents (79%) concurred that most of the Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) customers have spent a short time using the company’s services compared to 7% who opposed and 13% who were not sure. Furthermore, more respondents (76%) concurred that Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) had lost many customers to competing companies compared to 11% who opposed and 12% who were not sure. In addition, more respondents (79%) concurred that most Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) customers spent little time on the network compared to 3% who opposed and 17% who were not sure. Lastly, few respondents (3%) concurred that most customers were likely to repurchase Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) services compared to 81% who opposed and 16% who were not sure. The following was obtained from the interview with a third Customer Service Manager when asked what he had to say about customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) responded thus;

Table 4: Distribution of respondents on items about service reliability

Items about service reliability	Concurred	Not sure	Opposed	Total
Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) provides fast internet speeds	83 (93%)	6 (7%)	0 (0%)	89 (100%)
Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) network is reliable	87 (98%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	89 (100%)
Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) has ability to offer assured data services	65 (73%)	24 (27%)	0 (0%)	89 (100%)

Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) is honest and trustworthy	69 (78%)	19 (21%)	1 (1%)	89 (100%)
We are accessible at all touch points	46 (51%)	23 (26%)	20 (22%)	89 (100%)

Source: *Field Data*, 2023

Table 4 shows that more respondents (93%) concurred that Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) provides fast internet speeds compared to 0% who opposed and 7% who were not sure. In addition, more respondents (98%) concurred that Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) network was reliable compared to 0% who opposed and 2% who were not sure. Furthermore, more respondents (73%) concurred that Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) has ability to offer assured data services compared to 0% who opposed and 27% who were not sure. Findings also shown that more respondents (78%) concurred that Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) was honest and trustworthy compared to 1% who opposed and 21% who were not sure. Lastly, more respondents (51%) concurred that they were accessible at all touch points compared to 22% who opposed and 26% who were not sure.

Thus, from the findings, it revealed that more respondents had a positive opinion about all items related to service reliability. The implication of these findings was that although in most cases there was service reliability, there were few instances where it was compromised. Having established service reliability at Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL), the next step was to determine whether it influenced customer loyalty. Findings are presented in the following sub section.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on items about service responsiveness

Items about service responsiveness	Concurred	Not sure	Opposed	Total
When customers have problems, customer service representatives are sympathetic and reassuring	68 (76%)	11 (12%)	10 (11%)	89 (100%)
Employees are always willing to help customers	71 (80%)	15 (17%)	3 (3%)	89 (100%)
Employees of Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) are too busy to respond to customer requests promptly	3 (3%)	14 (16%)	72 (81%)	89 (100%)
Customers are provided with timely feedback	68 (76%)	15 (17%)	6 (6%)	89 (100%)

Source: *Field Data*, 2023

Findings show that more respondents (76%) concurred that when customers have problems, customer service representatives are sympathetic and reassuring compared to 11% who opposed and 12% who were not sure. In addition, more respondents (80%) concurred that employees were always willing to help customers compared to 3% who opposed and 17% who were not sure. However, fewer respondents (3%) concurred that employees of Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) are too busy to respond to customer requests promptly compared to 81% who opposed and

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16% who were not sure. Lastly, more respondents (76%) concurred that customers are provided with timely feedback compared to 6% who opposed and 17% who were not sure.

Therefore, these findings reveal that more respondents held a positive view on items about service responsiveness at Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL). Despite this, it can be deduced that although service responsiveness at Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL) was better, there were few instances where it was compromised. Having established this, an analysis was conducted to establish if service responsiveness affected customer loyalty at Airtel Uganda Limited (AUL). Findings were presented in the following sub-section (Polycarp et al., 2023).

Conclusion

The study concludes that effective communication, service reliability, and service responsiveness significantly contribute to customer loyalty within Airtel Uganda Limited. The nuanced relationships uncovered in this study emphasize the importance of tailoring strategies based on specific organizational and customer dynamics. The youthfulness of the workforce introduces considerations for communication and engagement strategies, highlighting the need for adaptive approaches. Service reliability and responsiveness, while generally positive, require ongoing attention to specific touchpoints and potential bottlenecks. The moderator influence of switching costs suggests a strategic opportunity for enhancing customer retention initiatives by recognizing and leveraging the unique dynamics at play.

Recommendations

Maintaining and enhancing service reliability is crucial for sustaining positive customer perceptions. Ongoing efforts to monitor and optimize service accessibility at all touchpoints are recommended. Addressing concerns related to specific touchpoints or experiences is vital for ensuring a consistently positive customer experience. Proactive measures to address potential challenges and bottlenecks in service reliability contribute to building and retaining customer trust.

Understanding and leveraging switching costs for customer retention is recommended. Developing targeted loyalty programs and incentives that align with the identified moderating effects can enhance customer retention strategies. This involves strategic initiatives that capitalize on the enhancing effect of switching costs in specific contexts. Recognizing the role of switching costs as a dynamic factor allows for the development of more effective and tailored customer retention initiatives.

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