

IMPROVING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract: *The objective of this study is to evaluate the factors which determine customer experience in cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies. The factors, which include brand, price and service quality, are the independent variables and the dependent variable is customer experience. Primary data was obtained from 384 residents in Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu. The data was collected using structured questionnaires and the conceptual framework was formulated based on the customer experience. Analysis of the study was carried out through descriptive and multiple regression methods. The result showed that price and service quality provided by the telecommunication companies in Kuala Terengganu influenced the customer experience. Moreover, it was revealed that the price is the most important factor in selecting cellular mobile services provided by the telecommunication companies. Since technologies in telecommunication are rapidly developed, this study proposes the knowledge of the current perceptions and expectations of customers towards the cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies.*

Keywords: *Brand, Service quality, price, customer experience, telecommunication*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, telecommunication is one of the major needs in business and social life. Besides, the improvements of the cellular devices' technology is giving the telecommunication companies opportunity to perform in mobile commerce as the prices of the mobile devices are declining by time to time Lu *et al.*, (2009). Thus, customer experience plays a vital role in determining the customer loyalty to any telecommunication companies. There are various factors affecting the customer experience such as brand, price, service quality, customer care, environment, culture and offering. Salmiah *et al.*, (2012), reported that customer loyalty in Malaysia is positively affected by believe, cost, expectation as well as service quality received from the telecommunication service provider. For the telecommunication companies, customers' retention is the most important challenge. Hence, customer retention is determined to be the outcome of its dynamic nature and increased competition. Furthermore, Joshi (2014) stated that telecommunication company's variant their strategies to attract new customers as well as to sustain their existing customer satisfaction on their services.

According to Turel and Serenko (2006), mobile network providers' study the level of their customers' satisfaction as a strategy to enhance their services. Malaysia has been developing telecommunication technology since the past two decades especially in cellular mobile application. Sulaiman et al. (2011) mentioned that the market of mobile service providers in Malaysia came across critical development of their lifespan during recent years. Malaysia is listed in the international mobile market ranking based on some statistical data provided by Malaysia Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) (Sulaiman et al., 2011). Terengganu is one of the states in West Malaysia which is located geographically in the East Coast and though slower than the other states in West Malaysia, is also developing in terms of telecommunication. Kuala Terengganu is one of the districts in Terengganu that has the highest population of approximately around 186,100 citizens according to Economic Planning Unit, Terengganu states.

The mobile network market in Kuala Terengganu is developing rapidly. These days, most people in Kuala Terengganu from all ages are using cellular mobile to communicate in social life, work, business, education and so on. This positive development creates opportunity for mobile services providers to obtain their customers loyalty through customer experience. Foroudi et al. (2014) stated that the company's capability in utilization of technology is able to influence their customers' experience in the present market development. Kay (2016) stated that the primary banks and telco service providers are not likely being promoted by Malaysian consumers to others in contrast to their insurance partners. However, Frost and Sullivan (2014) study found all three sectors which consist of primary bank, telco service providers and insurance peers require to refine need to improve on their customer experience. At this point, Net Promoter Score (NPS) has been looked by the research firm and is calculated as the percentage of promoters. As a consequence, the score of the three sectors namely primary bank, telco service providers and insurance, shows that the scores -8%, -6% and -17% respectively.

Customer experience is the second most popular issue which is 31% based on the Frost and Sullivan's Malaysia Telecommunication Services Customer Experience Study (Kay,

2016). According to Mohammad and Rima (2013), a positive customer experience is delivered by the company through value added services, considerable price, distinctive network, appropriate customer service and flexible product variation. Unfortunately, at present time, research on customer experience in the telecommunication industries in Kuala Terengganu has discounted the positioning of telecommunication companies with regards to customer experience. In other words, a research is needed to examine customer experience for cellular mobile services in Kuala Terengganu. In a study by Frost and Sullivan's (2014) from October to November 2014 shows that pricing and subscriptions of plans caused 83 per cent of consumers switched to another telecommunication service provider. Their study reported that 58 per cent of respondents discontinued their subscription due to the lack of customer experience from the telecommunication service providers. Based on the data analyzed by Frost and Sullivan, Celcom is ahead of the industry with an average of 57 per cent, which is at 66 per cent when it involves customer loyalty. Meanwhile, U Mobile is higher with the average of 51 per cent with 65 per cent in customer experience. Hence, the objective of this research is to investigate the factors which determine customer experience in selecting cellular mobile services from telecommunication service providers in Kuala Terengganu.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer experience

Customer is essentials in any telecommunication companies because the business development is determined by the customer experience. Joshi (2013) defined customer experience as interactions between a customer and an organization throughout their business relationship. An interaction can include awareness, discovery, cultivation, advocacy, purchases and service. Based on the data analysis in their study, 86.17% of the factors in influencing customer experience for a cellular mobile service provider are indicated by five factors; service delivery/service performance factor, culture of customer care, communication factor, brand factor and environmental factor. The importance of customer experience has been supported by Sundbo and Hagedorn-Rasmussen (2008). They have defined customer experience as is an internally and subjective customer who has direct or indirect contact with the company.

According to them customer experience will give benefit and gain for the customers. (Bustamante & Rubio, 2017) and De Keyser *et al.* (2015) argued that customer experience is a cornerstone of marketing and a foundation in developing fuller understanding of the concept has been established by theoretical knowledge. However, Lipkin (2016) stated that even though customer experience has received substantial theoretical development, less attention has been given in measuring customer experience. In a study by Luo *et al.* (2011) there is a positive significant between customer decision-making process and online customer experience. In line with this, a study by Rose *et al.* (2012) asserted that that repurchases intention can enhance online customer experience. Based on the literature reviews above, there is a significant role of customer experience in establishing a relationship between customer and organization.

Brand

Brand stands for a company to identify itself as an entity in business. Telecommunication companies are getting developed in many brands along with the rapid technology development today. Brand is defined by Angus (2004) as the name, term, sign, symbol, or design (or combination of one or more of the above) that was used to introduce a product. Brands symbolize the nature of the product, service, or the entire company as a person who has its own characteristics. According to Ying (2005), branding is considered as the centre of any marketing communication. Other authors also discuss the impact of brands and branding is far beyond the field of marketing and advertising (Khalid & Ahmad, 2009).

Research found that brand preference is influenced by a range of factors Alamro and Rowley (2011) for mobile telecommunication services. They conducted the study by using a multi-stage sample and quantitative methodology was used to achieve the purpose of this study. Their focus is on the antecedents of consumer brand preference in at telecommunication service in Jordan. Their study shows that brand personality and country of origin made trivial contribution to the customer. Previous researches have proven the significance and the importance of brand between customer and company. Martensen (1997), in his study found that there is a relationship between satisfaction and brand with customer experience. Moreover, Cronin and Taylor (1992) arguing that customer satisfaction over product would have a positive impact on customer's experience. On the other hand, if customers are not satisfied with a brand, they will be negativity towards the brand of the goods. However, according to de Chernatony, (1999), consumer brand perceptions are also influenced by the reputation of an organization.

This is because customers are willing to pay a higher price for a reputable brand Erdem *et al.*, (2004). Joshi (2014) states the selection of branded items will increase one's confidence in a product. The selection of branded products will guarantee the quality of the goods thus giving consumers' confidence (Drewniak & Karaszewski, 2016). Previous studies also show Alamro and Rowley (2011), which brand awareness, brand image and consumer properties are among the factors that influence the selection of a company.

In contrast, Kevin and Ceridwyn (2010) that customer experience with company does not have a significant impact on brand meaning. Accordingly, evoking the brand in the customers' consideration set still require to be emphasized by brand awareness. Therefore, the hypothesis is:

H1: There is significant relationship between brand and customer experience for cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies in Kuala Terengganu.

Price

Price is very crucial to be considered by the customer because there are different types of target market in business. Nowadays, the telecommunication companies offer variety of price packages in order to attract new potential customer and establish the good customer-company relationship. Therefore, in the context of this study, price is defined as the tariff rates offered by the network providers (Gerpott *et al.*, 2001). DiRusso, Mudambi and Schuff (2011) examined the determinants of prices in an online marketplace. 498 observations of online sellers of a variety of online sellers with a variety of electronic products labeled as subjects in their research. With regards to their study, an empirical research design using

quantitative research study on Amazon marketplace was used is to identify the drivers of price differences in an online retail marketplace by examining pricing information from a sample of sellers in the market.

According to (Zeithaml, 1988), price refers to the value given or sacrificed to obtain a product. Consequently, customers are willing to pay higher prices for brands that they consider to be of high quality and quality Erdem *et al.*, (2004). Normally consumers will compare the prices of products or services for all telecommunications companies (Matzler *et al.*, 2007). Among other factors considered by customers are tariff rates, purchase costs and call costs to other networks of another mobile network providers Chakraborty and Sengupta (2014). The study conducted by Edward, George and Sankar (2010), shows consumers making purchase decisions based on the benefits and costs involved and the quality of services based on the money they did. In that regard, they concluded that the price affected customers in making decisions. This literature brings us to the following hypothesis

H2: There is significant relationship between price and customer experience for cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies in Kuala Terengganu.

Service Quality

Naik *et al.* (2010) mention that service quality refers to the ability of an organization to provide the best service according to customer's wishes and wants. The quality of service will be enhanced as a result of customer and customer support before and after the service (Naik *et al.*, 2010). Service quality is usually measured from five aspects such as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy and is known as the SERVQUAL scale (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985).

A study conducted by Chakraborty and Sengupta (2014) shows that service quality is an important factor affecting customer satisfaction. Their study was conducted on students, civil service personnel, businessmen, professionals, unemployed and retirees. Similar studies were also conducted by Edward *et al.*, (2010), on customer satisfaction towards telecommunications companies in the city of Kolkata, India. It is also supported by (Salmiah *et al.*, 2012), (Alexander *et al.*, 2002; stating that the quality of the services seen is very important to influence customer loyalty and make it one of the sources to increase customer loyalty Brady and Robertson (2001), Caceres and Paparoidamis (2007). It is supported by studies conducted by Muhammad, Muhammad and Hafiz (2012) and (Agyapong, 2011) that the quality of service has greatly influenced the telecommunications sector in Pakistan and found that competence, courtesy, reliability, reliability, responsiveness and communication factors have the effect of the customer satisfaction of telecommunications companies. To elucidate the connection technically, this study underlines on the following hypothesis:

H3: There is significant relationship between service quality and customer experience for cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies in Kuala Terengganu.

RESEARCH METHODS

Sample Selection and Data Collection

The data in this study included the residents in Kuala Terengganu. The population of the study comprised of 186,100 provided from the department of Economic Planning Unit, the states of Terengganu. A sample size of 384 would be required to represent a given population. Therefore, this study requires convenience sampling in order to get the data from the respondents. Self-administered questionnaires were then distributed to the random residents in Kuala Terengganu directly by hand or telephone distributions as well as through email. The data will be given by the respondents afterward or next three days. Finally, from the total of 400 questionnaires distributed, 191 questionnaires were received, representing an overall response rate of 50.3%. All the returned questionnaires (191) were useful for statistical analysis using SPSS software version 21.0.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Profile of the Respondents

As shown in Table 4.1, a set of personal characteristics, namely Gender, Age, Highest Education, Occupation and Main Reason of the 193 respondents have been examined and presented in this chapter. However, 1 out of the total respondents was missing.

Gender

The majority (69.3%) of respondents were females, whereas about 30.7% were found to be males. The dominated gender among the respondents is female with the total of 133 for female and 59 for male based on the figure. This shows that there are typically females who have an interest in participating in this research study.

Age

Table 4.1 shows 19.3% of the respondents were 16-25 years old, showing that most of them were already considered as young adults. 47.9% of the respondents were between 26-40 years old. 20.3% of the respondents were between 41-55 years old. Respondents' aged 56-65 is 11.5% of the total respondents. On the other hand, 1% of the respondents are in the 66-75 years old. 47.9% of the respondents whom used the most cellular mobile services were aged 26-40 with the total of 92 in this study.

Highest Education

Out of the young and old generation of respondents, most of them have attained a bachelor's degree. This category comprised of 42.2% of the respondents, and 22.9% of respondents have accomplished their Diploma and secondary school-leavers which were SPM and below. 2.1% of the respondents have received their O' Level and equivalent qualifications. The remaining 9.4% of the respondents have obtained their master's degree and 0.5% or 1 respondent is holding a Doctoral's Degree.

Occupation

The majority of respondents are working in public employment, 46.6% and 24.6% of private employment. Meanwhile, 8.4% of respondents are business owners and 14.1% are students. The remainders 6.3% are unemployed.

Main Reason

33% of respondents stated their main reason of using cellular mobile services for working and 5.2% of respondents used for education/study. 2.1% of the respondents used cellular mobile services for entertainment. 59.7% of respondents mostly used cellular mobile services for the communication medium indicated the highest percentage.

Table 4.1: The Profiles of Respondents (N=193)

| | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 59 | 30.7 |
| Female | 133 | 69.3 |
| Age | | |
| 16-25 | 37 | 19.3 |
| 26-40 | 92 | 47.9 |
| 41-55 | 39 | 20.3 |
| 56-65 | 22 | 11.5 |
| 66-75 | 2 | 1.0 |
| Highest Education | | |
| SPM and below | 44 | 22.9 |
| O level and equivalent | 4 | 2.1 |
| Diploma | 44 | 22.9 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 81 | 42.2 |
| Master's Degree | 18 | 9.4 |
| Doctoral's Degree | 1 | 0.5 |
| Occupation | | |
| Public Employment | 89 | 46.6 |
| Private Employment | 47 | 24.6 |
| Self Employment | 16 | 8.4 |
| Student | 27 | 14.1 |
| Unemployed | 12 | 6.3 |
| Main Reason | | |
| Work | 63 | 33.0 |
| Education/Study | 10 | 5.2 |
| Entertainment | 4 | 2.1 |
| Communication medium | 114 | 59.7 |
| Others | 0 | 0 |

Descriptive Analysis

Quantitative variables can be measured depending on an amount or quantity and also known as numeric, scaled, or metric variables. When the values only take integers or a small number of values, it is referred as a discrete or discontinuous, numeric scale (Mendenhall, Beaver, & Beaver, 2009). The mean and median are the most common statistical measures for numerical variables. The mean is typically called the arithmetic average, whereas the median is the midpoint of the distribution. The mode is the value that occurs with the most frequency.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics for Dimensions of Variables

| Variables | Mean | Median | Mode | Std. Deviation | N |
|---------------------|------|--------|------|----------------|-----|
| Brand | 3.80 | 3.80 | 4.00 | 0.73 | 191 |
| Price | 3.61 | 3.80 | 4.00 | 0.74 | 192 |
| Service Quality | 3.51 | 3.60 | 3.60 | 0.63 | 192 |
| Customer Experience | 3.62 | 3.70 | 4.00 | 0.70 | 192 |

Based on Table 4.2, the mean of brand in this study was at 3.80 with a standard deviation of 0.73. The range of brand was 3.40 from 1.60 to 5.00. The median of the brand was at 3.80 meanwhile mode was at 4.00. The variable of price in this study collected the mean at 3.61 with a standard deviation of 0.74. The range of price was 4.00 from 1.00 and 5.00. Therefore, the median of price was at 3.80 whereas the mode was at 4.00.

The mean of the service quality is 3.51 with a standard deviation of 0.63. The range of service quality was 4.00 from 1.00 to 5.00. The median of service quality was at 3.60 and the mode was at 3.60 as well. The mean of the customer experience was at 3.62 with a standard deviation of 0.70. The range of customer experience was 4.00; it falls between 1.00 and 5.00. The median of customer experience was at 3.70 whereas the mode was at 4.00.

Reliability Analysis

The range of alpha coefficient value is in between 0 to 1. The data is more reliable when the value is closer to 1.0. Therefore, internal consistency explains the extent to which all the items in a test determine the same concept or construct. A significantly approved and good measure for reliability scale value is greater than 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978).

Table 4.3: Reliability Analyses

| Variables | Cronbach's Alpha | Items (No) | Remarks |
|------------------------|------------------|------------|----------|
| Independent Variables: | | | |
| Brand | 0.923 | 5 | Reliable |
| Price | 0.921 | 5 | Reliable |
| Service Quality | 0.826 | 5 | Reliable |
| Dependent Variable: | | | |
| Customer Experience | 0.912 | 5 | Reliable |
| All variables | 0.834 | 20 | Reliable |

The Cronbach's alpha for all the variables is 0.834, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha presented in Table 4.3 for brand was at 0.923, which is the highest reliability among the variables. Cronbach's alpha for price valued at 0.921 meanwhile Cronbach's alpha for service quality was at 0.826. The dependent variable in this study which is customer experience collected the Cronbach's alpha at 0.912.

Correlation Analysis

Table 4.4: Correlation Analysis

| Correlations | | MEAN_BRAND | MEAN_PRICE | MEAN_SQUALITY | MEAN_EXPE RIENCE |
|-----------------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| MEAN_BRAND | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | 1 191 | .554** 191 | .399** 191 | .449** 191 |
| MEAN_PRICE | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | .554** 191 | 1 192 | .632** 192 | .730** 192 |
| MEAN_SQUALITY | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | .399** 191 | .632** 192 | 1 192 | .689** 192 |
| MEAN_EXPERIENCE | Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N | .449** 191 | .730** 192 | .689** 192 | 1 192 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Relationship between IV and DV

The correlation between brand and customer experience is 0.449 with $p = 0.000$, shown that there is a positive correlation between brand and customer experience. It has been observed from Table 4.4, the correlation between price and customer experience is 0.730 ($p = 0.000$). There is a significant relationship between price and customer experience when correlation coefficient is greater than 0.700. Finally, the correlation between service quality and customer experience is 0.689 with $p = 0.000$. It is observed that service quality has a positive correlation with customer experience.

Multiple regression analysis

Table 4.5: Model Summary

Model Summary^b

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|---------------|---------------|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change | |
| 1 | .769 ^a | .592 | .585 | .43234 | .592 | 90.459 | 3 | 187 | .000 | 1.755 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), MEAN_SQUALITY, MEAN_BRAND, MEAN_PRICE

b. Dependent Variable: MEAN_EXPERIENCE

According to Table 4.5, the value of R^2 is 0.592. The value of R Square indicates the independent variables (brand, price and service quality) explain 59.2% of the variance dependent variable of this study (customer experience).

Table 4.6: Coefficients^a

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|--------------|---------|------|-------------------------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 (Constant) | .471 | .211 | | 2.238 | .026 | | | | | |
| MEAN_BRAND | .042 | .052 | .046 | .810 | .419 | .449 | .059 | .038 | .686 | 1.457 |
| MEAN_PRICE | .437 | .061 | .465 | 7.178 | .000 | .710 | .465 | .335 | .519 | 1.925 |
| MEAN_SQUALITY | .403 | .065 | .364 | 6.188 | .000 | .663 | .412 | .289 | .630 | 1.586 |

a. Dependent Variable: MEAN_EXPERIENCE

The Relationship between Brand and Customer Experience

Table 4.6 shown the Sig. value (p-value) of brand is 0.419 which greater than 0.05, that reject H_1 . The p-value of brand is not significantly contributed to customer experience in this study. The Beta coefficient value for brand is 0.046. Therefore, for every unit increase in brand, 0.046 unit increases in customer experience.

The Relationship between Price and Customer Experience

Result shows the Sig. value (p-value) is 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05. Thus, H_2 is accepted. At this point, it can be concluded that there is statistically significant difference between the values of coefficient regression in this study. The Beta coefficient value for price is 0.465. For every unit increase in price, 0.465 unit increases in customer experience, holding all other variables constant.

The Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Experience

Based on the Table 4.6, the Sig. value (p-value) is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Hence, the finding accepts H_3 because there is statistically significant difference between the values of

coefficient regression in this study. The Beta coefficient value for service quality is 0.364. As a result, for every unit increase in service quality 0.364 unit increases in customer experience is predicted, holding all other variables constant.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The relationship/influence of Brand on Customer Experience

Table 5.1: Research Objective 1 and Research Question 1

| No | Research Objective | Research Question |
|----|---|---|
| H1 | To identify the relationship between brand of cellular mobile services and customer experience. | What is the relationship between brand of cellular mobile services and customer experience? |

The regression analysis undertaken indicates in order to answer the first research question in Table 5.1. The significant influence of brand did not play an important role in customer experience. As has been noted, the first independent in this study has been proven there was positively related to customer experience ($r = 0.449$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). However, there was no significant relationship between brand and customer experience ($\beta = 0.046$, $p\text{-value} = 0.419 > 0.05$) for cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies in Kuala Terengganu. Then, there is a significant relationship between brand and customer experience for cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies in Kuala Terengganu was rejected.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that found by Kevin and Ceridwyn (2010) that customer experience with the company does not have a significant impact on brand meaning. Accordingly, evoking the brand in the customers' consideration sets still require to be emphasized by brand awareness. Their study had been supported by Gerpott *et al*, (2001) and Dirusso *et al*, (2011) suggested that recalling of a brand name is not a guarantee that the customer will and hold a positive disposition towards the brand or pay for the brand in the future. In effect, external brand communications such as word-of-mouth and publicity were found to have non-significant overall perceptions of the brand (Kevin & Ceridwyn, 2010).

One possible reason to support this finding is there are currently various brands of telecommunication companies started to establish in Kuala Terengganu as their market target. To put it another way, local residents have upgraded their knowledge as time goes by to the current needs in telecommunication. The brand may positively contribute to the customer preference and come out with positive and negative customer experience, but technically brand does not significantly affecting the customer experience for cellular mobile services in Kuala Terengganu. On the whole, hypothesis 1 was not supported. Therefore, Objective 1 of this study was rejected.

The relationship/influence of Price on Customer Experience

Table 5.2: Research Objective 2 and Research Question 2

| No | Research Objective | Research Question |
|----|---|--|
| H2 | To determine the relationship between prices of cellular mobile services provided by the telecommunication companies and customer experience. | What is the relationship between prices of cellular mobile services provided by the telecommunication companies and customer experience? |

Based on the final analysis in done in previous chapter, the result has answered the second research question shown in Table 5.2. There was a significant influence of price play an important role in customer experience. Therefore, the second independent variable proved has a positively related to customer experience ($r = 0.730$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Similarly, price has a strongly significant relationship between prices of cellular mobile services ($\beta = 0.465$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$) provided by the telecommunication companies and customer experience. As a result, there is a significant relationship between price and customer experience for cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies in Kuala Terengganu in this study. The hypothesis was accepted.

The previous studies supported these findings where the customers consider the price factor for their cellular mobile services among telecommunication Company. Chakraborty and Sengupta (2014) proved that consumers of mobile phone network providers are considered important for assessment of price in order to satisfy their needs. This includes by consumers make purchase decision based on the benefits and costs involved. Generally, the value of service concept held the notion of the quality and benefits consumers get for a unit of money-the-price involving the trade-off between what consumers receive (Edward *et al*, 2010).

Another likely reason to support this finding is the customers' perception is the higher price of cellular mobile services in an investment which means the higher the price paid, the more benefits they receive. Customers are willing to pay more in order to get the advantages as promised by the telecommunication companies. Overall, hypothesis 2 was supported. Hence, Objective 2 of this study was accepted.

The relationship/influence of Service Quality on Customer Experience

Table 5.3: Research Objective 3 and Research Question 3

| No | Research Objective | Research Question |
|----|--|---|
| H3 | To analyze the relationship between the service quality provided by the telecommunication companies and customer experience. | What is the relationship between service quality provided by the telecommunication companies and customer experience? |

Table 5.3 presents the third research question in this study which has been answered by using regression. Consequently, service quality had a significant influence in customer experience. To emphasize, the third independent variable established a positively correlated to customer experience ($r = 0.689$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). On the positive side, there is a strong significant relationship between the service quality ($\beta = 0.364$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$) provided by the telecommunication companies and customer experience in Kuala Terengganu. To sum up, there is a significant relationship between service quality and customer experience for cellular mobile services of telecommunication companies in Kuala Terengganu. The hypothesis was accepted.

These findings have been supported by the previous studies which stated service quality is also significantly and positively related to customer loyalty which makes it one of the sources for improving customer loyalty (Brady & Robertson, 2001) and (Caceres & Paparoidamis, 2007). Though their study were differed from this study which focusing on customer experience, yet the point or the variable used was similar and indicated the significant relationship with customer experience. By the same token, Muhammad et al. (2012) found that service quality had given a huge influence in Pakistan telecommunication sector based on regression analysis done in their study.

A possible reason to support this finding is services offered by the telecommunication service providers are almost similar among them. As a matter of fact, the customers use the cellular mobile services majoring in communication and they probably look for a good and fast service line all the time, wherever they are. Since Kuala Terengganu is the main district of Terengganu, there are sometimes the cellular mobile services become slowly due to hectic telecommunication networking especially on the peak hour such as on weekends and later than working hours which are usually after 5 pm. All in all, hypothesis 3 was supported. Thus, Objective 3 of this study was accepted.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study contributes in several ways to the body of knowledge and practical aspects, there are some limitations that need to be highlighted. The limitations are acknowledged as essential for further study. The study involved only Malay users or residents in Kuala Terengganu. However, to get a more accurate picture of the impact of brand, price and service quality on the telecommunications firms, the scope of the study should cover: (1) Residents from among all the major races, and (2) all customers from various district. Such a comprehensive study scope could lead to more significant findings, particularly about the influence of brand, price and service quality on the customer experiences.

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