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Customer Loyalty in FMCG Sector of Pakistan

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to find an empirical relationship of proposed variables and to find the impact of customer satisfaction, trust, and corporate reputation on customer loyalty. This study attempts to contribute to the knowledge how FMCG companies of Pakistan can retain their customers by making them loyal through satisfaction, trust, and corporate reputation. A theoretical framework is proposed to suggest links among variables. The sample size selected for research constitutes 200 respondents, and these respondents belong to the cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, Pakistan. Multiple regression and correlation coefficient was used to examine hypothesized relationship. Regression analysis reveals that customer satisfaction, trust, and corporate reputation bring 79.0% change in customer loyalty. There is a strong positive yet significant relationship of trust and customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction & corporate image also posit a positive and significant impact on customer loyalty. The results indicate that FMCG companies in Pakistan should pay more attention toward the reputation of their company, satisfaction of their customers, and trust in order to build loyalty of customers. Generalizability and time constraint are the limitations of the study.

Key words: *Customer Satisfaction, Trust, Corporate Reputation, Customer Loyalty*

1. Introduction

Customer loyalty is more critical in Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies because consumers shift rapidly from one product to another. The challenging task in the current arena is to make customers loyal to ensure the long-term survival and profitability of the firm. Managers of these companies therefore look for the ways to attract the potential customers and to retain the existing customers. Customer loyalty remains an important and ever discussing topic in the literature with lot of proposed moderating, mediating, and independent variables. The purpose of writing this paper is to talk about the most critical factors or variables, which contribute more in developing customer loyalty in FMCG sector. Loyalty of customers is verified by the actions of its customers, customer can be very much satisfied and not yet to be loyal. Islam (2008) predicts the relationship of trust, switching cost and corporate image with customer loyalty. Results of the study indicate that though all independent variables such as: switching cost, trust and corporate image have certain level of relationship with independent variable i.e. customer loyalty; but customer loyalty only has strongest relationship with trust. Similarly, Chiou and Droge (2006), declared relationship between customer satisfaction and trust as a milestone of behavior loyalty.

Akber & Pervez (2009) concluded trust and customer satisfaction have significant and positive relationship with customer loyalty. Several authors argue that customer satisfaction, sales person listening behavior and trust have direct effect on customer loyalty (Ramsey & Sohi 1997). Similarly, Haq and Amin (2009) found that customer satisfaction is the most important driver in order to enhance customer loyalty. Kuusik (2007) found that four factors: importance of relationship, satisfaction, image and trustworthiness affect customer loyalty differently at different levels. Gallay and Homgler (2008) concluded that quality and on time delivery help to attain customer loyalty. Li and Xu (2008) found that customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are interrelated with each other, which in result contribute to business performance. Another research done by Chirico and Presti (2008) showed that dimensions of loyalty are overall satisfaction, trust & convenience, and by improving these factors customer loyalty can be improved, likewise Singh (2006) concluded a positive relationship between customer retention, satisfaction and loyalty.

The main emphasis of the research is to find an empirical relationship of customer satisfaction, trust and corporate image with customer loyalty. Aim of the study is to find out how the independent variables such as: customer satisfaction, trust and brand image leads to dependent variable i.e. customer loyalty. This research is conducted on FMCG by selecting customers from the three malls (Metro, CSD and COSMO) of twin cities i.e. Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Pakistan. This paper yield managerial implications and decision making for managers working in FMCG companies that how they can increase customer loyalty of fast moving consumer goods that is quite a challenging task for managers. This paper begins with the introduction of the topic and theories behind the variables which further lead to methodology that include sample size, sampling technique, data collection and analysis procedure. The fourth part of the paper is based upon the results and findings followed by discussion of the results. At the end, conclusion and recommendations for mangers and practitioners are presented.

2. Literature Review

Customer Satisfaction: Customer satisfaction is a measure of how supplied products and services of a company meets or exceeds customer expectations. In other words, degree to which offered products and services meet or surpass the customer expectations is termed as customer satisfaction (Blanchard & Galloway, 1994). Now more companies are struggling, not just for achieving customer satisfaction but for also making customers delight because companies believe customer loyalty can be increased through extra value. Furthermore, Akbar and Parvez (2009) defined customer satisfaction as a reaction which result from a method of assessing what has been received against what was expected, including needs and wants related with the purchase and purchase decision itself. Customer satisfaction points towards the emotion of disappointment/happiness a customer feels once he or she evaluates the certain product perceived effects with the effects he or she expects (Juan & Yan, 2007).

Another research by Rasmey and Sohi (1997) contend that customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are correlated. Some other reserchers showed that customer satisfaction play vital role in enhancing and maintaining long-term relationship among companies and their customers, customer satisfaction is reveled to be the improved predictor of customer loyalty (Haq & Amin, 2009). Kuuisk (2007) sugessted that there is a direct connection among loyalty and satisfaction, satisfied customer happen to loyal and dissatisfied customer switches to another vendor. Customer satisfaction can act as a connection between customer participation and loyalty. According to Luarn and Lin (2003) found that brands which make its consumers happy/satisfied/demonstrative get rapid larger attitudinal commitment and behavioral (purchase) loyalty. Likewise, author emphasizes that customer satisfaction mediate consumer learning from past experience and enlightens main post purchase behaviors, which include word of mouth, complaining, product usage and repurchase intention and suggested that repurchase intention and post purchase complaint are significantly influenced by web customer satisfaction.

Some authors identify satisfaction as how the customer is overall satisfied by provider's services. It reveals how the service quality is being perceived. Satisfaction does not imply necessary Loyalty, but generally affects it (Chirico & Presti, 2008). Singh (2006) defined "*satisfaction as: a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations".* Satisfaction shows what is the approach of customers towards provider of services, or a moving reaction towards distinction flanked by what customers foresee and what they obtain, regarding the accomplishment of a few requirements, ambition or wish. A study done by Pirc (2008) showed that for customer satisfaction, there is an overall consensus about their influence on customer loyalty; however the proposed effect is sometimes empirically supported and other times the effect is not found. According to Hallowell (1996) satisfaction of customers, their loyalty and productivity are interlinked. He presented it in the form of this model: satisfactory customers move into the category of loyal customers and that eventually leads toward profitability. Another study suggests customer satisfaction and loyalty are positively related to each other. It is also suggested that customer preservation rate, market share and profits can be improved through boosting up the satisfaction level of customers (Ponirin, Scott, & Heidt, 2009).

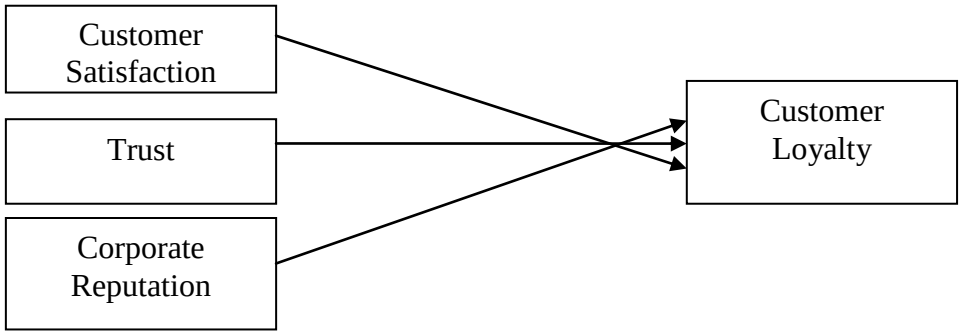
Trust: Trust has become significant antecedents of customer loyalty (Akbar & Parvez, 2009). Trust can be the source to construct confidence amongst patrons. Furthermore, trust is vital and intended for edifice and

maintaining long-standing associations (Islam, 2008). Trust not only can envisage the worth of the service but it also can also reverse the insecurity concerned in purchasing any service or product (Chiou & Droge, 2006).Trust is crucial for construction and maintaining long-term associations (Akbar & Parvez, 2009). Ramsey and Sohi (1997) also came up with the conclusions that were found consistent with the above findings. Kuuisk (2007) explored trust of brand leading towards loyalty of customers as trust creates trade associations that are extremely appreciated. Brand trust has direct relationship with purchase intention as well as attitudinal loyalty. It is also suggested loyalty is achieved through trust (Luarn & Lin, 2003). Trust creates an important relationship between loyalty and commitment. They also suggested two results of trust, which are loyalty and commitment. According to other researchers, trust identifies how the customer relies on the provider reliability. It concerns the provider ability, perceived by the customer, to assure a reliable service in respect of the contractual rules. Trust is the linked with the provider's capability to resolve problems with the smaller possible uneasiness for the customer as well (Chirico & Presti, 2008). Another study done by Pirc observed trust as having a positive impact towards loyalty of customer (Pirc, 2008).

Corporate Reputation: Walsh and Beatty (2007, p. 129) define customer-based reputation (CBR) as "*the customer's overall evaluation of a firm based on his or her reactions to the firm's goods, services, communication activities, interactions with the firm and/or its representatives or constituencies (such as employees, management, or other customers) and/or known corporate activities."* Companies having good reputation easily build trust and commitment among their customers and this commitment play the role of mediator between identification of customers and their behavioral intentions (Keh & Xie, 2009). Some researchers prove that the favorable corporate reputation and image has positive and direct influence on its customers in return increasing their loyalty towards firm. Such image and good reputation of the company yield financial benefits for the company (Bartikowski & Walsh, 2011). Tsai and Yang (2010) describe these three proportions of corporate reputation *"i.e. citizenship, credibility and image (both product and service) are all positively related to organizational attractiveness".* According to Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) customer loyalty increase if perception of customer about corporate image and corporate reputation is good and favorable; and customer loyalty is also affected by the extrinsic factors like contact personnel and the physical environment where services are being delivered. Concerning with the worth of corporate reputation, Shamma and Hassan (2009) find corporate reputation's importance along with the behavioral intentions for customer loyalty and commitment.

Customer Loyalty: Customer's preference of choosing one brand over other one for an exacting need is described as customer loyalty (Chirico & Presti, 2008). Loyalty not only describes the behavioral dimensions of repetitive customers but also the behavior of provider (Pirc, 2008). Loyalty of customers is investigated with customer satisfaction (Ponirin, Scott, & Heidt, 2009), trust (Rosemary & Sohi, 1997), corporate image (Islam, 2008) and with corporate reputation (Tsai & Yang 2010; Nguyen & Leblanc 2001; Shamma & Hassan 2009. In the study of Walsh and Beatty (2007), they further provide evidence for the importance of the reputation of firms to get customer loyalty and financial benefits as well. Corporate devotion is significantly affected via the reputation of the firm within the corporate sector (Souiden, Kassim & Hong, 2006). Bartikowski and Walsh (2011) prove that the favorable corporate reputation has positive and direct influence on its customers in return increasing their loyalty towards firm.

Figure 1: Theoretical framework of Customer Loyalty



H1: Customer satisfaction has a direct affect on customer loyalty.
H2: Customer trust has a direct affect on customer loyalty.
H3: Corporate reputation has a direct affect on customer loyalty.

3. Methodology

Participants and Settings: Participants of the study were FMCG customers. The sample size selected for this research purpose constituted of 300 customers though structured questionnaire in the natural environment. Only 200 usable responses were received and the response rate was 67%. In this research, we used non-probability sampling by using its category of convenience sampling. The reason behind selecting convenience sampling was that because in this, the most easily accessible customers were chosen as subjects of research and it was the quickest, convenient and less expensive technique used.

Scale development: To measure variables of interest: customer satisfaction, Trust, and Company Reputation on a five point likert scale was used in which 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. The variables adopted from different researchers by selecting different numbers of items, reliability of these variables reported in the previous researches is also mentioned in the following table:

Table 1: Results of Reliability Analysis

Variable	Adopted from	Number of Items	Reported Reliability
Customer Satisfaction	Lee, Lee, and Feick (2001)	3	0.77
Trust	Morgan & Huntt (1994)	5	0.86
Company Reputation	Long-Tolbert (2000)	5	0.81
Customer Loyalty	Narayandas (1996)	5	0.88

Source: Developed by Researchers

Data Collection: Data was collected from the respondents through self-administered questionnaire with minimal interface in non-contrived work settings by considering individuals as unit of analysis. Data was collected by selecting age group (20-25, 26-35, 46-55, 55 & above) and gender (male, female) as nominal scale.

Data analysis technique: To analyze the data, regression analysis was run on SPSS.18.00. The correlation was also run to see the intensity of relationship between variables.

4. Results and Discussion

The data obtained for this research paper was tested against SPSS 18.0 for Windows Evaluation Version. Goodness of data was analyzed by doing the reliability analysis. The answers of the questions given by respondents through questionnaires were checked for their reliability. Interval scale was used for collection of data from respondents. These scales ranged from the interval of strongly agree and proceeded to strongly disagree. The digit 5 stood for strongly agree, 4 indicated agree, 3 indicated neutral, 2 stood for disagree while 1 was meant for showing strong disagree state of respondents. SPSS 18.0 did reliability of Variables Reliability analysis of every variable separately for Windows. The Cronbach's alpha of every variable is shown in the following table:

Table 2: Reliability (alpha) of variables

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Customer Loyalty	0.664
Customer Satisfaction	0.700
Trust	0.633
Corporate Reputation	0.727

Customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, trust, and corporate reputation were checked for reliability and all were accepted. The reliability of all variables was also good as exhibited by the above table. The acceptability of customer loyalty and trust was less as compared to others.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Customer Satisfaction	3.9800	.72308	.523
Trust	3.7609	.46523	.216
Corporate Reputation	3.8082	.36929	.136
Customer Loyalty	3.8181	.30432	.093

The feel for the data can be obtained with the help of the descriptive analysis provided in the above table. The researcher can do so by checking the central tendency and the dispersion. Mean, range, standard deviation, and variance in the data provide a good measure of how the respondents have reacted to the items in the questionnaire and it provides idea about the goodness of the items and measures. The range of the data of every variable was calculated in the above table, which helped in indicating that the data of a certain variable falls where on the interval scale. For customer satisfaction, the data lied between; (3.3-4.7) which means that most of the respondents agreed to the questions asked with some of them being neutral. For trust, it was between; (3.3-4.2) again meaning that respondents were agreed to some extent. For corporate reputation, the range calculated was (3.4-4.2) so, most of the people again agreed to some extent. Finally the range for customer loyalty was (3.5-4.1) meaning that mostly respondents again were neutral. Therefore, overall we can say that most of the respondents were agreed and neutral to some extent, on the questions asked to collect data for every variable.

Table 4: Correlation Results

	CL	CS	TR	CR
CL	1			
CS	.532**	1		
TR	.766**	.675**	1	
CR	.912**	.757**	.726**	1

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

Pearson correlation is used for the data analysis in the above table. According to the above table, there is a positive relationship between customer loyalty (CL) and customer satisfaction (CS), customer loyalty and trust (TR), and customer loyalty and corporate reputation (CR). The correlation is moderately positive for customer loyalty with trust. There is a weak positive relationship of customer loyalty with customer satisfaction as compared to other variables.

Table 5: Regression Analyses

R	R -Square	Adjusted R-Square
.799	.790	.783

Customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, trust, corporate reputation

To test the hypothesis of this research we have used multiple regression analysis. The results obtained by applying multiple regression technique on the three independent variables can be seen in the above table. R is the correlation of three independent variables with customer loyalty. R-square is the variance. This model summary shows that there is 79.0% relationship among our dependent variable and three independent variables.

Table 6: Variance Analyses (ANOVA)

Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
17.320	5	3.464	605.521	.000(a)
1.110	194	.006		
18.429	199			

The value of F as can be observed through the above table came out to be 605.521%, which mean that the model was best fitted by this much. The value of F must be more than 12% for the model to be fitted. This value was significant at significant level of 0.000 and it was signified by value of F because its value was more than 12%.

Table 7: Coefficients t-value

Variables	Beta	t	Significance
Customer Loyalty		7.775	.000
Customer Satisfaction	.048	2.741	.001
Trust	.083	3.761	.000
Corporate Reputation	.013	1.882	.000

Relationship of dependent and independent variables is seen through the value of t. It shows by amount the impact of independent variables on the customer loyalty (i.e., the dependent variable). In this research study as the value of t for trust is high, this showed that it has more impact on customer loyalty comparatively. The value of t for customer satisfaction and corporate image was significant. As we can see through the above table the variable possessing a higher t also has greater beta (rate of change), which means that those variables bring a greater change in the dependent variable. This means that all hypotheses are accepted.

Discussion: The present study contributes towards better understanding of relationship among trust, corporate reputation and customer satisfaction with customer loyalty. The findings of this study indicate significant relationship among these variables. These results strengthen the belief of Islam (2008), Chiou & Droge and Akber & Pervez (2009) that showed strong relationship among corporate reputation, trust, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. First, our results showed that customer satisfaction has direct effect on customer loyalty. These findings are consistent with Kuuisk (2007) that revealed a direct connection between satisfaction and loyalty and concluded that satisfied customers become loyal and dissatisfied customers move to another vendor. Results of customer satisfaction and loyalty indicated that if firms put more attention towards satisfying customers through different processes and actions then they could achieve long-term customer loyalty.

Secondly, our results also showed that trust has significant positive influence on customer loyalty, which was consistent with the results of Akbar & Parvez, (2009); they found that trust is essential for building and maintaining long-term relationships with the customers. Ramsey and Sohi (1997) also found similar results and concluded that customer loyalty is attainable if companies build trust of their customers. Thirdly, our results also demonstrated that corporate reputation is also of great importance when improving or building customer loyalty. Favorable reputation will attract more customers and will result in customer satisfaction and loyalty, which in the end will be highly profitable for the organizations, not in form of profitability but also for customer retention. These results were consistent with the results of Nguyen and Leblanc (2001), customer loyalty increase if perception of customer about corporate image and corporate reputation is good and favorable. Therefore, companies should also pay attention towards building and maintaining reputation.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The driving purpose behind pursuing this research study was to determine the relationship of customer satisfaction, trust, and corporate reputation with customer loyalty. Customer loyalty was chosen as the dependent variable and the impact of above-mentioned independent variables was checked by questionnaires. Through our analysis, we came to know that there was 79.0% relationship of customer loyalty with all of the independent variables, which implies that the null hypothesis for this research study was accepted and alternative hypothesis rejected. Independent variables are positively and significantly linked with the dependent variable, which shows that customer loyalty can be achieved by improving customer trust, satisfaction and reputation of the firm. More inclination of firms towards building customer trust through different processes, achieving customer satisfaction by delivering superior products and services and building and maintaining reputation through diverse practices will escort towards customer loyalty.

Limitations and Future Research: As is the case with most research, our study also has some limitations. This study has an issue of generalizability as data is only collected through twin cities of Pakistan. This study is done without any moderating or mediating variable that can alter the relationship. Future research should attempt to replicate this study in any other context. Future research can also include other important moderating or mediating variables that contribute to the well-being and growth of firms by retaining more customers or by enhancing customer loyalty.

Practical and Managerial Implications*:* The role of the satisfaction, trust and reputation of firm have been increasing simultaneously in order to attract and retain customers, it is incredibly necessary for the executives and brand managers to understand the customers' needs and making them satisfied as much as possible by working on mentioned independent variables in the FMCG industry, as a result of this customers will remain stick with the organization on long term basis as an important part of the organization. If it is done systematically with managerial insights, then they can retain their customers and it will be win-win situation for organization and customers as well

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