JIBE

Journal of International Business
and Economy

Theingi, Suchira Phoorithewet, Yunmei Wang, and Sikankaew Panthongprasert

THE ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE MOBILE NETWORK BUSINESS IN THAILAND

ABSTRACT

This study explores the antecedents and consequences of customer engagement behaviors in the Thai mobile network business. This study found that the approach to switching behavior and cross-buying behavior is connected to customer loyalty behaviors. However, the spending behaviors of customers may not be a good indicator of customer loyalty in the mobile network business because those who do not have the intention to switch to another brand do not necessarily increase their spending. In addition, most respondents are concerned with competitive promotional packages, which influence customer engagement behaviors. Hence, it was proposed that service quality and competitive promotional packages are antecedents to customer engagement behaviors and all these factors are important in explaining customer loyalty toward mobile network providers in Thailand.

Key Words: customer engagement, service quality, customer loyalty and competitive promotional package

Theingi, Suchira Phoorithewet, Yunmei Wang, and Sikankaew Panthongprasert
Assumption University, Thailand

Correspondence: Theingi
Department of Marketing, Martin de Tours School of Management and Economics, Assumption University, Thailand.
E-mail: theingi@au.edu
Tel: 66-2723-2222

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, customer engagement has been a topic of growing importance in marketing literature. This is due to the sophisticated and interactive nature of digital media that enables marketers as well as customers to exchange information and understand needs (Sashi, 2012). Moreover, customer engagement is believed to enhance the relationship with customers and increase customer loyalty (Vivek, Beatty, and Morgan, 2012). Vivek et al. (2012) also argued that marketers should focus not only on retaining current customers, but also on promoting customer engagement, which is beyond purchase, to attain long term performance as well as to attract potential customers. The inclusion of potential customers in customer engagement study is an important contribution to relationship marketing literature as it mainly focuses on the relationships with existing customers. On the other hand, customer engagement literature is not yet fully developed and is mainly found in conceptual papers (Doorn et al., 2010; Hamilton, 2009; Kaltcheva et al., 2014; Sashi, 2012; Wirtz et al., 2013). On the other hand, most studies on the mobile network businesses investigated service quality and customer loyalty (Aydin and Özer, 2005; Malhotra and Malhotra, 2013; Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010) but failed to explore the role of customer engagement in enhancing customer loyalty. Hence, the purpose of this study is to explore the understanding of customer engagement by examining its antecedents and impact on customer loyalty for mobile network providers in Thailand.

Mobile network operators in Thailand engage in intense competition to build customer loyalty due to two reasons: First, they are in an oligopolistic market dominated by three major companies (Srinuan, Annafari and Bohlin, 2011). The market-leading mobile operator in Thailand is Advanced Info Service Plc. (AIS), with an estimated subscription market share of 46%, followed by DTAC with about a 30% market share, and True Move with a market share of approximately 22% in 2015. The other mobile operators (CAT and TOT) in Thailand are small with a market share of about 2% (National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission, 2016). Secondly, customer loyalty is vital to sustain business growth and profitability in mature businesses (Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010). According to National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (2016), the Thai mobile network is at a maturity stage with a 124% penetration rate with an average of zero growth by the end of 2015, and this constitutes a 2.3% growth in postpaid subscribers and 0.5% negative growth for prepaid customers. The average zero growth rate is due to the termination of prepaid SIM cards in 2015 (BMI research, 2016).

Nevertheless, this is still an important industry which accounted for 3% of the country's GDP in 2014 (Tortermvasana, 2014) and as of the fourth quarter in 2015, Thailand had 83 million mobile subscriptions (14.3 million postpaid users and 68.7 million prepaid users) (National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission, 2016). Moreover, mobile networks have become very important due to the growing quantity of online business, and in Thailand, the smart phone is the key device for accessing most Internet services (Pornwasin, 2015).

Hence, these three mobile network operators compete with each other intensely and attract customers by offering different promotional offers and packages, good customer services and loyalty programs. They focus on having emotional connections with customers by using, for example, the DTAC's "happiness" campaign and True's "Giving is the best communication" campaign. They facilitate customer engagement activities through Facebook and websites. Yet, the decline in subscriber usage from 246 to 234 minutes per month in 2015 is another challenge for network operators in the competitive mobile business (National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission, 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer engagement

There are different definitions of customer engagement, and all of the engagement models involve stakeholders such as customers, organizations and employees, in the provision of customer experience (Roberts and Alpert, 2010). Customer engagement activities are continuous processes involving both before and after purchase activities. They are not only related to purchase decisions, but also to consumption activities and after purchase (Javornik and Mandelli, 2012). Similarly, customer engagement also refers to customer interaction with the brand without the customer necessarily purchasing it or planning on purchasing it, and customer engagement could be initiated by either the marketer or the customer (Vivek et al., 2012). Jones (2010) stressed that in order to enhance customer loyalty, customer engagement needs to be relevant, offer value, and support customer needs together with the provision of superior customer service. However, most companies were found not to facilitate engagement with customers sufficiently (Jones, 2010).

According to Sashi (2012), customer engagement is a circular series of processes in which behavioral components come before emotional attachment. Customer engagement may result in emotional bonds between marketers and brands or products (Fliess, Nadzeika, and Nesper, 2012) which is crucial for long term relationship. However, the emotional

elements of customers after-purchase are often ignored, and it is one of the barriers to high levels of customer engagement (Roberts and Alpert, 2010). Hence, even loyal customers do not necessarily have such emotional attachment (Sashi, 2012).

Customer engagement activities could be both online and offline (Wirtz et al., 2013). Due to the rapid development of the internet and social media, there is an emergence of online business communities where customers could conveniently engage in online business because of fewer constraints of location and time, low cost, possible anonymity, and less moral responsibility (Wirtz et al., 2013). As of March 2016, all mobile network operators in Thailand have active Facebook pages; AIS with 2.3 million followers, DTAC with 2 million followers and True with 1.2 million followers. However, their online engagement on Facebook is quite low as only a few hundred customers gave feedback by writing comments. Customer engagement activities after purchase are often found in the form of word-of-mouth, co-creation, and complaining behavior (Javornik and Mandelli, 2012), providing recommendations and helping other customers as well as writing reviews and engaging in legal action (Doorn et al., 2010).

Customer loyalty

Customer loyalty is measured in terms of both attitudinal and behavioral aspects to provide a holistic view (Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010). Customer loyalty is defined as a commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future (Oliver, 1999) and is often measured in terms of repeat purchase, switching behavior and positive word-of-mouth communication (Mattila, 2004; Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010).

Recently, cross-buying behaviors have been considered part of customer loyalty and are very much the concern of the financial services sector as there is less money spent on new customer acquisitions, and the likelihood of customers staying with the same company is also lower (Jones, 2010). Most studies on cross-buying behaviors were found in the financial sector (Hong and Lee, 2012; Ngobo, 2004; Tung and Carlson, 2015). When measuring customer loyalty, cross-buying behaviors rather than repurchase intention are more applicable in the mobile network businesses because once customers have subscribed to a mobile network, they are less likely to purchase another SIM card. On the other hand, they might cross-buy the mobile phones sold by the mobile network providers if promotional packages are attractive enough. Hence, this study uses cross-buying intention as one of the measures for customer loyalty. Even though most studies used attitudinal and behavioral intentions (Malhotra and Malhotra, 2013; Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010), this study intends

to measure customer loyalty in terms of both past behavior and future intention to indicate future revenue. Hence, this study uses switching intention and cross-buying intention to measure future intention and past cross-buying behavior and past spending behavior to measure past customer loyalty behavior.

Service quality

Previous literature indicated that service quality enhances favorable behavioral intentions and reduces unfavorable intentions (Saha and Theingi, 2009; Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman, 1996). However, Johnson and Sirikit (2002) did not find strong links between service quality and behavioral intentions in the telecommunications sector and gave the reasons that the service quality dimensions (SERVQUAL) did not include "technical quality" in the telecommunications sector where network coverage, signals, and the speed of internet are crucial. Hence, the service quality dimensions should be adapted to different service sectors.

The study of Grönroos (1984) classified service quality into technical service quality and functional service quality. Technical service quality refers to what the consumers receive as a result of interaction with a service firm, and functional quality refers to how the service employees offer the services to customers. While evaluating technical service, Grönroos (1984) suggested that technical quality tends to be objective, while the functional service quality dimension is more likely to be subjective. Technical service quality in mobile networks is categorized into network coverage, mobile service, value-added services, billing system, convenience and price structure (Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010). Regarding functional service quality, Johnson and Sirikit (2002) also stressed that the important role of service employees is to offer a consistently high standard of service delivery. It is also very important for service employees to be screened, trained and motivated to become marketers (Bitner, 1990). Good customer service refers to the success of problem resolution, the help and service provided by call-centers (Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010) as well as frontline service employees at shops of mobile network providers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the customer perception and insights into the service quality, customer engagement and loyalty to Thai mobile networks, qualitative research interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of 15 current mobile users aged over 18 years. This approach is a set of interpretive activities to determine the meaning behind actions

and behaviors (Sinkovics and Alfoldi, 2012) and to help understand the underlying behaviors of customers (Zikmund et al., 2010). The data collected through interviews provided insights to explore and identify the important factors in this study (Hair et al., 2008) because at the moment only limited studies were found on the antecedents of customer engagement. Therefore, a qualitative study of this kind is important to identify service quality dimensions in a given industry (Burton, Easingwood and Murphy, 2001). However, the service quality dimensions found in the service marketing literature may not necessarily be applicable to other service businesses.

In order to enhance the reliability of the qualitative study, the interview protocol was based on the literatures on customer engagement and through the authors' brainstorming. The interview protocol included 34 open-ended questions covering the respondent's general information and modes of engagement with service providers; opinions about their service providers and the offered services, switching behavior and loyalty to mobile service providers. The duration of the recorded interviews ranged from 11 to 68 minutes. All of the 15 participants were obtained by employing convenience sampling by the authors and two research assistants between mid July and early September 2015 in Chiangmai (2 interviews), Chanthaburi (4 interviews) and Bangkok (9 interviews). Later, the data were transcribed for subsequent analysis, and the findings from these interviews were applied to develop the research propositions.

FINDINGS AND CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Table 1 provides the descriptive information from the respondents' profiles. These respondents consisted of 7 males and 8 females with ages ranging from 19 to 46 years old, all coming from diverse backgrounds and occupations, and nine of them were postpaid users. Eleven of them had 1 SIM card each, 3 respondents had 2 SIM cards and one had 3 SIM cards from two mobile network providers. The average time spent by the respondents on Internet was approximately 8 hours per day and 44 minutes of calling time, indicating that they spent one third of their day on mobile service networks. The results from these interviews were also used to identify the types of service quality and the important factors that might have an impact on customer engagement behaviors and customer loyalty behaviors. Content analysis was employed to perform systematic examination and interpretation as well as to identify themes and relationships (Berg and Lune, 2012; Hair et al., 2008). Based on the interview results, the sub-themes of customer engagement,

customer loyalty, and service quality are merged with an additional dimension, a competitive promotional package.

Table 1. Respondents' profiles

No.	Gen-der	Age	Occupation	User status	Net-work providers	Switch-ing behavior	Cross-buying	Spend-ing behavior	Engage-ment
R1	Female	40	Real estate lawyer	Post-paid	DTAC	No	No	More	No
R2	Male	24	University student	Post-paid	TRUE	Yes	No	Less	Yes
R3	Female	46	Human resource manager	Post-paid	TRUE	Yes	No	Same	Yes
R4	Male	36	Engineer	Post-paid	AIS	Yes	Yes	Same	Yes
R5	Female	39	Small Business owner	Post-paid	DTAC	No	Yes	Same	Yes
R6	Male	24	Business manager	Post-paid	TRUE	No	Yes	Less	No
R7	Female	30	MBA student	Post-paid	TRUE	Yes	Yes	Less	Yes
R8	Male	31	Private company employee	Prepaid/ post-paid	True/ DTAC	Yes to DTAC and No to True	Yes	Less	Yes
R9	Female	26	Freelancer	Prepaid	True	No	No	Less	Yes
R10	Female	26	Student/ part-time employee	Prepaid	DTAC	No	No	Same	Yes
R11	Female	22	Student	Prepaid	DTAC	No	Yes	More	Yes
R12	Female	25	Employee	Prepaid	True	No	Yes	Less	No
R13	Male	19	Cashier	Prepaid	True	No	No	Less	No
R14	Male	31	Teacher	Post-paid	DTAC	No	Yes	Same	Yes
R15	Male	43	Lecturer	Post-paid	True	Yes	No	Less	Yes

Customer engagement

From the interview results, customer engagement behaviors are viewed in many ways; they are classified into provider-initiatives and customer-initiatives. The most frequent provider-initiative activity described by the respondents was the receipt of SMS messages about promotional offers. Other customer engagement activities initiated by mobile network providers were found to be game shows and the distribution of satellite dishes for educational purposes. Most customer-initiative activities were recommending friends and family members to use a certain network, and downloading stickers from the service providers' LINE shop, which is a popular social medium in Thailand. However, only 6 respondents engaged online by visiting or sharing information online or writing reviews

while only one provided positive feedback to a service provider and two respondents complained to service providers. Hence, customer engagement activities between respondents are commonly found in terms of word-of-mouth communication followed by downloading stickers.

"I recommend XXX to my friends who asked for advice." (Respondent 9)

"I downloaded them (online stickers) if they were free of charge." (Respondent 10)

"I used to share some of XXX's videos on my Facebook's wall, and tagged some friends because the contents were lovely, or reflected my emotions or current social incidents." (Respondent 8)

"I visited the website to check new packages and promotions." (Respondent 4)

Customer loyalty

As discussed in the literature review, customer loyalty in this study is described in terms of switching behavior, cross-buying behavior and spending behavior. The findings indicate that customer loyalty seems to depend on a competitive promotional package and technical service quality. Ten respondents said they would not switch to another brand in the near future because they were quite happy with the current offerings of the marketers while five respondents planned to switch because of a better promotional package and better signals. On the other hand, eight respondents revealed that they would cross-buy additional products and services offered by the same provider. The findings also show that the average spending on mobile bills is about 615 baht (approximately US$ 17) per month with the minimum monthly spending of 200 baht (approximately US$ 6) to a maximum of 1300 baht (approximately US$ 37). Interestingly, eight respondents spent less money on a mobile network while five of them spent approximately the same amount because they tended to choose a price-related promotional package which best suited their lifestyle and where they could save money. The results also indicate that those who do not have the intention to switch to another brand may not necessarily increase their spending. Hence, their spending behaviors may not be a good indicator of customer loyalty. The following quotations reflect the customer loyalty behaviors of the respondents.

"I will definitely not switch to other service providers because I do not want to change my telephone number, as it is known by many people. If I change it, it would have an impact on my work" (Respondent 9).

"I do not remember why I chose XXX at the beginning as it was many years ago; however, after years of using XXX, I couldn't be bothered to change network. As I mentioned before I was happy with the services, many friends of mine are XXX users." (Respondent 1)

"I am thinking of buying new TV signal boxes from XXX." (Respondent 8)

"I feel like I am bonded with XXX because I use a lot of services offered by XXX (e.g. pre-paid and post-paid mobile network, home telephone, and cable television service), and I have used its services for a long time." (Respondent 8)

"I feel like we are good friend. I will not switch to others. I will use XXX. I like XXX." (Respondent 5)

Service quality

Two main types of service quality emerged from the interview results. They are technical service quality and functional service quality. Technical service quality is arranged in the order of frequency in the responses of the respondents. They are stability of network signals, network coverage, Internet speed, advanced online transactions, and free online SMS services. Functional service quality includes customer services offered by front-line service employees at call centers and shops and includes their ability to solve problems, their courtesy, service provided by call centers and consistent service. Previous research also used customer service as part of the service quality of mobile providers (Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010). The quotations related to technical and functional service quality are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The quotations related to technical and functional service quality

	Technical Service Quality
Quality of signals	"The Internet is really fast but the phone signal is not as good as advertised" (Respondent 3).
Internet speed	"The only thing I talked with my friends is about the Internet speed. A slower internet is frustrating and extremely annoying" (Respondent 4).
Connectivity	"I am happier with XXX than previous one because of the fast connectivity" (Respondent 6).
	Functional service quality
Friendliness willingness to help, knowledge (about product and promotion)	"The staff at the service center always seems to be very happy to help me out, they know their products well when I consult about package information or promotions. Same as on the phone call. They all come across quite friendly and patient" (Respondent 1).
Good customer service	"When I got to the store, the staff couldn't help me at all. They kept on saying "we will check it for you." They could not figure out the problem. And finally end up with asking me to change SIM Card and number. It was so bad" (Respondent 3).
Politeness, good personality	"The staffs gave me a warm welcome and treated me well. They were so down to earth that did not make me feel uncomfortable to ask them information. They also gave me a clear information, and a useful recommendation. They had a good and smart personality, and are friendly and polite" (Respondent 9).

A previous study found that customers' mobile service quality drives the purchase of more services in the future and reduces switching behavior (Malhotra and Malhotra, 2013) and technical service quality dimensions such as network coverage and customer service have an impact on customer loyalty (Aydin and Özer, 2005; Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010). Similarly, functional service quality provided by service employees, such as their willingness to help and their courtesy, has a positive impact on customer loyalty (Kaura, Prasad, and Sharma, 2015). Consistent with previous literatures, interview results suggest that those who are happy with the service quality offered by mobile network providers are more likely to be loyal customers.

"I will not switch for sure because I like the numbers, the services provided, the variety of promotions, and a good Internet signal." (Respondent 8)
"They are knowledgeable, friendly, polite, and courteous. I feel like we are good friend. I will not switch to others. I will use XXX. I like XXX." (Respondent 5)
Hence, the first proposition is as follows:

Proposition 1: There is a positive relationship between service quality (technical and functional service quality) and customer loyalty.

Even though this study initially focused on the impact of service quality on customer engagement and customer loyalty, thirteen respondents stressed the importance of competitive service fees, the variety of promotional packages and an affordable price structure as follows:

"I have subscribed this company for Internet usage because I need to use LINE and Whatsapp (social media) for my work's communication. It is cheaper to use post-paid, and I choose the cheapest package." (Respondent 8)

"My contract is finally up in two months. I may move back to XXX if YYY has no interesting promotion and attractive Internet packages." (Respondent 4)

"XXX is greedy and uncaring of their customers. I may move to YYY or ZZZ if it has better promotion." (Respondent 3)

"I think I will stay with XXX. But once the promotion package has expired, I may reconsider later." (Respondent 15)

The promotional packages and price offers tend to influence whether they will continue using the service from the same network provider. Respondents prefer promotional packages for unlimited Internet, prepaid promotion (e.g., 200 baht (approximately US\$ 6) for 20 days) as well as special promotions within the same network. Previous studies also found a relationship between perceived price fairness and customer loyalty (Kaura et al., 2015; Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010). Hence, it is proposed that;

Proposition 2: There is a positive relationship between having a competitive promotional package and customer loyalty.

Regarding customer engagement, respondents discussed about two types of customer engagement as mentioned earlier; provider-initiatives and customer-initiatives. This study focuses on customer-initiative engagement activities as it is more direct and relevant to measure customer loyalty. The interview results also reveal that when the customers are happy with the service quality, they tend to provide positive word-of-mouth communication and sometimes share their reviews and comments online. They sometimes make a call to a

service center to ask for information or to make a complaint. The interview results show that eight respondents who recommend the brand to others are not likely to switch brand and/or to participate in cross-buying behavior. The finding is consistent with the study of Vivek et al. (2012) in which customer engagement was believed to influence customer loyalty and cross-buying behavior.

> "I recommend the package I am using to my friends. I think it is cheap, and I want them to experience a decent service at a reasonable price as I do…I will not switch because of a suitable and cheap internet package." (Respondent 11)
>
> "I will not switch, and I will even recommend it to others." (Respondent 10)

A recent study also found that engaged customers of internet service providers are more likely to be loyal customers (O'Brien, Jarvis and Souta, 2015). Therefore, proposition 3 is developed.

> *Proposition 3: There is a positive relationship between customer engagement and customer loyalty.*

In the study of low-cost carriers, perceived service quality triggers customer feedback (Saha and Theingi, 2009), thereby increasing the chance of customer engagement. A previous study indicated that functional service quality rather than technical quality is more likely to encourage positive word-of-mouth communication (Ng, David, and Dagger, 2011). The interview results also indicated that customers tend to share their service experience with their family and friends as well as with the service provider. However, as discussed earlier, most of the customer engagement activities are offline and customer-initiatives. The following quotations also show that service quality is an antecedent of customer engagement behaviors.

> "I recommend XXX to my friends who asked for advice because I found that the service provided by XXX such as speed, stable signal and coverage was alright compared to the fees I paid." (Respondent 9)
>
> "Since I had experienced problems they were complaining about (bad and slow signal), and I found the right network, and I then wanted to recommend XXX to them, I could

even watch movies, listen to music and share Wi-Fi hotspots without a slow signal."
(Respondent 10)
"I recommend my girl to use XXX (she is using YYY) as it is not very stable from time
to time." (Respondent 2)

Hence, it is proposed that;

> *Proposition 3A: There is a positive relationship between service quality and customer
> engagement.*

Most previous studies investigated the relationship between competitive price offers
and customer loyalty (Kaura et al., 2015; Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010) and the indirect
relationship between perceived price unfairness and negative word-of-mouth and switching
intention (Santos and Basso, 2012). Hence, there is little or no study investigating the direct
relationship between price structure and customer engagement. Despite the lack of
previous literature, the interview findings indicate that most respondents prefer the
promotional packages that save money for example 200 baht for 20 days unlimited calls or
79 baht (approximately US$ 2) per week package. Moreover, many respondents were likely
to engage with other customers about competitive promotional packages offered by mobile
service providers as seen in the following quotations.

"I used to share my experience to my friends on Facebook and Instagram. At that time
I really appreciated and liked its offers. XXX gave me 8 months free usage. I felt so
good and I just wanted to tell everybody that I was really happy. I pay not more than
20 baht a month." (Respondent 5)
"I recommended my family and friends to switch from XXX to YYY because it is
cheaper to call those with the same network." (Respondent 8)
"I like to visit and share information on Panthip website (one of the most popular
websites in Thailand) because I would like to be updated and help other consumers as
promotional package offers change very fast." (Respondent 7)

Hence the following proposition is developed.

Proposition 3B: There is a positive relationship between having a competitive promotional package and customer engagement.

Based on the previous literature and interview results, the main antecedents of customer engagement are identified as service quality (technical and functional) and competitive promotional packages while customer loyalty is measured in terms of switching intention and cross-buying behavior. Even though past spending behavior was initially thought to be a part of customer loyalty, the interview results show that good service quality and customer engagement behavior may not influence their spending behavior because once respondents become subscribers to a mobile network provider, they tend to choose the promotional packages that suit their lifestyle to limit their spending on mobile bills. Hence, spending behavior is excluded as an indicator of customer loyalty behavior in the mobile network business and the following conceptual framework is developed.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework
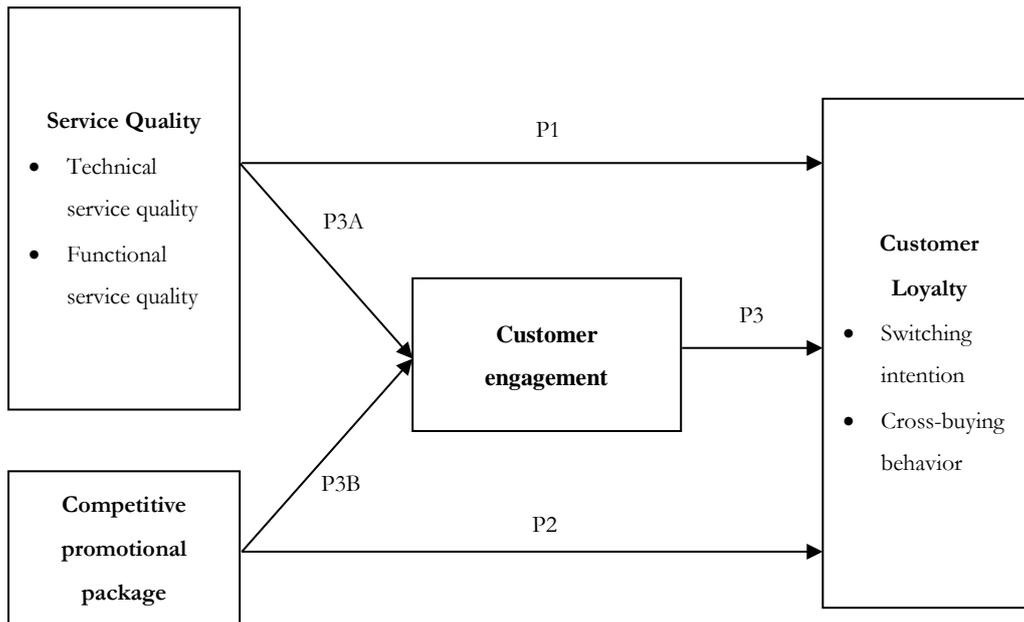
CONCLUSION

The findings from this exploratory study extend the understanding of customer engagement literature in marketing, its antecedents and its contribution in enhancing

customer loyalty which is especially important in mature mobile network business in Thailand. As previous studies in mobile network business mainly investigated the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty, this study highlights the impact of service quality and competitive promotional package on customer engagement which in turn influences customer loyalty. To have a more complete picture of customer engagement behavior, future study should include respondents from the other side of customer engagement such as marketers and service employees to understand their different perspectives. In addition, findings suggest that most interviewees are not emotionally connected to service network operators due to their concern about competitive promotional packages, network coverage or internet signals. Hence, future study may investigate the impact of calculative commitment in determining customer loyalty.

The findings may be limited since the majority of the interviewees were from Bangkok and the technical quality and functional quality of the telecommunication provider in different areas may provide different customer experiences as well as degrees of loyalty. The service operators should also establish more customer loyalty programs as most operators are weak in establishing long term relationships with customers. In addition, service operators should strengthen their service quality and offer attractive promotional package to enhance customer engagement, which is likely to influence customer loyalty. Moreover, this study should extend its research by conducting surveys with a larger sample size to provide more insight into the telecommunications business in Thailand and to have a better understanding of the crucial role of customer engagement in determining customer loyalty.

Acknowledgements

REFERENCES

Aydin, S. and G. Özer. 2005. The analysis of antecedents of customer loyalty in the Turkish mobile telecommunication market. *European Journal of Marketing* 39: 910-925.

Berg, B. L. and H. Lune. 2012. *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Boston: Pearson Education.

Bitner, M. J. 1990. Evaluating service encounters: The effects of physical surroundings and employee responses. *Journal of Marketing* 54: 69-82.

BMI research 2016. Thailand telecommunication report. London: Business Monitor International Ltd.

Burton, J., C. Easingwood, and J. Murphy. 2001. Using qualitative research to refine service quality models. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* 4: 217-223.

Doorn, J., K. N. Lemon, V. Mittal, S. Nass, D. Pick, P. Pirner, and P. C. Verhoef. 2010. Customer engagement behavior: Theoretical foundations and research directions. *Journal of Service Research August* 13: 253-266.

Fliess, S., A. Nadzeika, and J. Nesper. 2012. Understanding patterns of customer engagement: How companies can gain a surplus from a social phenomenon. *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness* 6: 81-92.

Grönroos, C. 1984. A service quality model and its marketing implications. *European Journal of Marketing* 18: 36-44.

Hair, J. F., M. F. Wolfinbarger, D. J. Ortinau, and R. P. Bush. 2008. *Essentials of marketing research*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Hamilton, J. 2009. Building a targeted pharmacy customer engagement approach. *International Journal of Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Marketing* 3: 381-396.

Hong, J. K. and Y. Lee. 2012. Determinants of cross-buying intentions in banking services in collectivistic culture. *International Journal of Bank Marketing* 30: 328-358.

Javornik, A. and A. Mandelli. 2012. Behavioral perspectives of customer engagement: An exploratory study of customer engagement with three Swiss FMCG brands. *Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management* 19: 300-310.

Johnson, W. C. and A. Sirikit. 2002. Service quality in the Thai telecommunication industry: A tool for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. *Management Decision* 40: 693-701.

Jones, M. 2010. Customer engagement and loyalty in financial services. *Corporate Finance Review* 15: 25-29.

Kaltcheva, V. D., A. Patino, M. V. Laric, D. A. Pitta, and N. Imparato. 2014. Customers' relational models as determinants of customer engagement value. *The Journal of Product and Brand Management* 23: 55-61.

Kaura, V., C. S. D. Prasad, and S. Sharma. 2015. Service quality, service convenience, price and fairness, customer loyalty, and the mediating role of customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Bank Marketing* 33: 404-422.

Malhotra, A. and C. K. Malhotra. 2013. Exploring switching behavior of US mobile service customers. *Journal of Services Marketing* 27: 13-24.

Mattila, A. A. 2004. The impact of service failures on customer loyalty: The moderating role of affective commitment. *International Journal of Service Industry Management* 15: 134-149.

Ng, S., M. E. David, and T. S. Dagger. 2011. Generating positive word-of-mouth in the service experience. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal* 21: 133-151.

Ngobo, P. V. 2004. Drivers of customers' cross-buying intentions. *European Journal of Marketing* 38: 1129-1157.

O'Brien, I., W. Jarvis, and G. Souta. 2015. Integrating social issues and customer engagement to drive loyalty in a service organisation. *Journal of Service Marketing* 29: 547-559.

Oliver, R. L. 1999. Whence consumer loyalty? *Journal of Marketing* 63: 33-44.

Pornwasin, A. 2015. Thailand moving ahead fast with connected lifestyle, Ericsson says. *The Nation Multimedia*, July 23.

Roberts, C. and F. Alpert. 2010. Total customer engagement: Designing and aligning key strategic elements to achieve growth. *The Journal of Product and Brand Management* 19: 198-209.

Saha, G. C. and Theingi 2009. Service quality, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions: A study of low-cost airline carriers in Thailand. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal* 19: 350-372.

Santos, C. P. and K. Basso. 2012. Price unfairness: the indirect effect on switching and negative word-of-mouth. *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 21: 547-557.

Santouridis, I. and P. Trivellas. 2010. Investigating the impact of service quality and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty in mobile telephony in Greece. *The TQM Journal* 22: 330-343.

Sashi, C. M. 2012. Customer engagement, buyer-seller relationships, and social media. *Management Decision* 50: 253-272.

Sinkovics, R. and E. Alfoldi. 2012. Progressive focusing and trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Management International Review* 52: 817-845.

Srinuan, P., M. T. Annafari, and E. Bohlin. 2011. An analysis of switching behavior in the Thai cellular market. *Info* 13: 61-74.

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission 2016. Mobile Market Share. http://www.nbtc.go.th/TTID/mobile_market/market_share/ (accessed March 31, 2016)

Tortermvasana, K. 2014. CMI upbeat about mobile potential: Chinese firm gains 18% stake in True. *Bangkok Post*, September 11.

Tung, B. and J. Carlson. 2015. Examining determinants of cross buying behaviour in retail banking. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management* 32: 863-880.

Vivek, S. D., S. E. Beatty, and R. M. Morgan. 2012. Customer engagement: Exploring customer relationships beyond purchase. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* 20: 127-145.

Wirtz, J., A. den Ambtman, J. Bloemer, C. Horváth, B. Ramaseshan, J. van de Klundert, C. Z. G. Canli, and J. Kandampully. 2013. Managing brands and customer engagement in online brand communities. *Journal of Service Management* 24: 223-244.

Zeithaml, V. A., L. L. Berry, and A. Parasuraman, 1996. The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of Marketing* 60: 31-46.

Zikmund, W. G., B. J. Babin, J. C. Carr, and M. Grifin. 2010. *Business research methods*. Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage Learning.