Identifying the Switching Determinants of Mobile Enterprise Customers : The Perspective of Pull - Push - Mooring Model and Mobile Number Portability

** C. N. S. Ramnath Babu*
*** S. Sundar*

Abstract

This study aimed at finding out the key determinants of switching behaviour among the enterprise customers of mobile network operators based on the push - pull - mooring theory and to ascertain the influence of mobile number portability on switching behaviour. An extensive review of literature coupled with focus group discussion and 11 one-to-one in-depth interviews provided the impetus to the design and development of the survey instrument, which was then administered through e-mail to the enterprise customers in rest of Tamil Nadu telecom circle. This descriptive research study adopted multi-stage, non-probability sampling method and convenience sampling technique to administer the field and e-mail survey to collect the primary data. This study identified the *push* factors (network services, billing system, service encounters, technology, and convenience) and *pull* factors (reputation, brand image, word-of-mouth recommendation, and pricing) that caused switching as well as the *mooring* factor (switching cost) that influenced the customers' decision to stay with or switch from the current in-use service provider. These factors will help mobile network operators (MNOs) to identify unsatisfied customers and to optimally allocate marketing resources to retain them satisfied and loyal to the brand, and also to acquire new customers.

Keywords : **mobile number portability, mobile network operator, switching behaviour, push-pull-mooring theory**

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The telecom sector continues to be a critical force for growth, innovation, and disruption across multiple industries. The Indian telecommunications service sector has been witnessing intense competition because of several structural and regulatory changes. Technological changes have made mobile network operators (MNO) to rethink their strategies for the services offered to both individual and enterprise customers. The development of network functions, especially mobile number portability (MNP), has aggravated both individual and enterprise customers' switching in a big way and has further made the wireless telecommunications services available at affordable prices to both urban and rural customers. In the matured market environment, it is very challenging for the MNOs to retain their existing customers rather than acquiring new customers. Customer retention is increasingly being seen as an important managerial issue, especially in the context of the saturated or lower growth market.

* *Assistant Professor (Corresponding Author),* Jansons School of Business, Coimbatore - 641 659, Tamil Nadu. E-mail : ramnathbabu@yahoo.com
** *Associate Professor,* Bharathidasan Institute of Management, Tiruchirappalli - 620 014, Tamil Nadu.

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Mobile Number Portability (MNP)

Traditionally, the customers of MNOs were required to give up their number when switching to a newer MNO. Customers were very hesitant to switch from the current in-use MNO to another competing MNO, thereby inhibiting more effective competition among MNOs. Mobile number portability (MNP) offers both individual and enterprise customers the flexibility to retain their original mobile phone number with the same or different service providers when crossing states across the country (moving from one telecom circle to another) or switching to another service provider within the same service area. Prior to MNP, the subscribers very often did not switch to another operator even if the competitor was offering lower tariff and better services because they did not want to change their mobile number. Changing a mobile number can be inconvenient, can be a problematic experience for users, and can lead to major costs, especially where the concerned phone number has become an important aspect of a consumer's identity and connectivity for professional purposes (Consumer Focus, 2010). India is currently the world's second-largest telecommunications market with wireless subscribers of 1,170.02 million by the end of October 2018 (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India [TRAI], 2018) and has registered a strong growth in the past decade and a half. The detailed information of subscriber addition, the MNP request applications received, and other relevant data are shown in the Table 1. Here, teledensity refers to the number of telephone connections for every hundred individuals living within an area.

Table 1. Highlights of Telecom Subscription Data

Subscriber Statistics (FY 2014 - 2018)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total telephone subscribers	933.00	996.49	1058.86	1194.58	1206.22
Total wireless subscribers	904.51	969.89	1033.63	1170.18	1183.41
Total wire-line subscribers	28.49	26.60	25.23	24.40	22.81
Urban wireless subscribers	532.73	555.71	588.79	672.42	662.18
Rural wireless subscribers	371.78	414.18	444.84	497.76	521.23
(the above given figures are in million)					
Overall wireless Tele-density (%)	72.94	77.27	81.38	91.08	91.09
Urban wireless Tele-density (%)	139.86	143.08	148.73	166.71	161.17
Rural wireless Tele-density (%)	43.27	47.78	50.88	56.47	58.67
MNP requests since implementation (million)	117.01	153.85	209.13	272.76	370.83
MNP as a percentage of wireless subscribers	12.94	15.86	20.23	23.31	31.34
MNP requests - FY basis (million)	27.3	36.8	55.3	63.6	98.1

Source : Compiled from Telecom Regulatory Authority of India's subscription data for March 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018.

MNP and Customer Switching Behaviour

MNP helps subscribers to easily make a comparison between the services of different MNOs and reduces the switching costs of customers desiring to switch their subscription from one MNO to another that significantly meets their expectations and enhances their experience (Bühler, Dewenter, & Haucap, 2006).These switching costs include informing friends, relatives, and business partners about the new number ; missing calls from uninformed people ; and updating company web pages, brochures, and business cards (Bühler & Haucap, 2004). On the other hand, MNP makes it more difficult for the customers to identify the operators by the prefixes of the phone numbers, which network they are calling to, and making it more difficult to find out the actual prices of the calls. Several studies have been conducted to examine the consequences of introducing MNP (Bühler & Haucap,

2004), costs and benefits of MNP (Lyons, 2010), and the causes and effects of MNP on call rates and service quality (Bühler et al., 2006). In a highly dynamic and competitive business environment, the influence of MNP and the ability of MNOs to defend and retain their subscriber base has a direct impact on their profitability and effectiveness of companies.

Customer Satisfaction and Switching Behaviour

Overall customer satisfaction has a significant impact on customer loyalty and switching behaviour. Customer satisfaction positively influences customer retention, while negatively affects customer switching intention (Kim & Yoon, 2004). Customer satisfaction in business-to-business context is often defined as a positive affective state resulting from the appraisal of all aspects of a firm's working relationship with another firm (Geyskens, Steenkamp, & Kumar, 1999). The switching behaviour is defined as the exit or the customer decision to terminate the contract with a particular service company (Stewart, 1998) or reduce the degree of usage because of service dissatisfaction (Keaveney,1995). Stewart (1998) stated that repeated service failures promote ending of customers' relationship whereas, the dissatisfaction caused by one-time service failure may not lead to the dissolution of a relationship with the service provider. Customer satisfaction for mobile communication services has been related to instant connectivity and messaging, mobile Internet service usability and applications, mobile e-commerce, value-added services, and customized solutions. If a customer feels dissatisfied with a service provider because of low service quality or poor service experience, the customer will be much more likely to switch to another service provider (Mann & Jha, 2015).

The Enterprise Customers

The mobile telecommunications service industry recognizes an enterprise customer as a company which necessarily has bulk mobile connections and may demand any type of end-to-end solutions for its business. For operational purposes, MNOs define an enterprise customer as a company that owns bulk post-paid enterprise mobile connections in its name and makes payment directly to the service provider. The Ministry of Communications and IT, Department of Telecommunications (2012) defined bulk connections as 10 or more than 10 mobile connections issued in a company or an organization at any given address by all the licensed service providers in the service area. The MNOs segmented enterprise customers into large enterprises (more than ₹ 250 cr. annual turnover), small & medium enterprises (less than ₹ 250 cr. annual turnover), government bodies and public sector undertakings for better focus of services, and to rise from being a pure mobile service provider to an end-to-end communications solution provider. As businesses get more complex, the enterprise customers look into solutions like healthcare services, cloud services, energy management, internet-of-things, mobile applications, video solutions, machine-to-machine communication solutions, etc. from MNOs.

As switching has become a common practice, this paper attempts to identify the fundamental drivers and the main dissatisfying factors which might have led to switching with the perspective of the pull - push - mooring model. We also investigated whether MNP has increased switching intention among enterprise customers.

Push - Pull - Mooring (PPM) Theory

The push - pull - mooring theory is one of the most widely used models in human migration research (Moon, 1995). People migration and consumer switching behaviour have a clear similarity of moving from one place (one product or service) to another (another product or service) (Hsieh, Hsieh, Chiu, & Feng, 2012). The PPM theory has been extended to the studies of consumer switching behaviour in different IT and ITES services (Hsieh et al., 2012 ; Xu, Yang, Cheng, & Lim, 2014).

This empirical study adopted Bansal and Taylor's (1999) service provider switching model for identifying the factors that influence the enterprise customers' switching behaviour in terms of *'push effects'* (dissatisfying factors of current in-use MNO), *'pull effects'* (attractive factors of competing MNO), and *'mooring effects'* (situational and/or contextual factors that are not being allowed to switch).

The *push effects* are better understood as a combination of indicators or determinants that motivate consumers to switch a product or service, making it a formative construct rather than a reflective construct. In the mobile telecommunications service industry, the negative factors are the push factors of current-in-use MNOs that cause dissatisfaction with the current-in-use MNO. The *pull effects* are the positive factors or attributes of distant places that attract and pull prospective migrants to the new destination (Moon, 1995). Therefore, the positive factors are the pull factors of competing MNOs that attract and affect the satisfaction with current-in-use MNO.

The *mooring effects* are the personal and social factors that can act to facilitate or hamper the migration decision, that is, to keep people in the same place despite the push and pull effects (Bansal, Taylor, & James, 2005). The mooring effects are 'swayers' that do not cause switching by themselves, they can only mitigate or strengthen the switching decision (Roos, 1999). The concept of migratory cost shares similarities with the concept of 'switching costs'. Quality is common in migration research (Boyle & Keith, 2014).

Literature Review

An exhaustive review of relevant literature on mobile telecommunications services switching behaviour reveals a variety of potential and sometimes conflicting determinants that influence the customers' intention to switch from their current-in-use service providers.

(1) The Push Factors : Many scholars acknowledged that 'perceived value' has a direct effect on customer satisfaction, repurchase intention, and word-of-mouth (Kuo, Wu, & Deng, 2009). 'Network service quality' was identified as the core service and critical factor to measure customers' perceived mobile service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty (Pasha & Masoom, 2012). The billing system criteria that brings convenience and satisfaction to customers are billing timeliness (Seth, Momaya, & Gupta, 2008) ; accuracy and clarity of billing, ease of understanding (Pezeshki, Mousavi, & Grant, 2009) ; comfortable payment methods, locations for bill payment (Liang, Ma, & Qi, 2013), and payment confirmations (Agrawal, Shah, & Wadhwa, 2007). The service encounters occur at three stages namely, enrolment of services, maintenance of services, and termination of services. Diligence, information communication, inducements, sportsmanship, and empathy were identified as the unique dimensions of customer account personnel service behaviour that are vital in consumers' evaluation of service quality (Ahearne, Jones, & Jelinek, 2007). The complainants base their evaluations on the perceptions of the variety of customer support systems, ease of reporting a complaint, the speed of complaint processing, and the friendliness of supporting staffs when reporting a complaint (Seth et al., 2008). The 'Call Centre Representative' (CCR) must possess the behaviours of adaptiveness, assurance, empathy, authority (Burgers, de Ruyter, Keen, & Streukens, 2000), and knowledge necessary to perform the service delivery (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2012) during the voice-to-voice service encounters.

The technology used must be accurate, consistent, error-free (or error levels can be maintained below a specified reliability threshold), user-friendly, and reliable (Yang, Jun, & Peterson, 2004). Having up-to-date equipment (Rahhal, 2015) and the degree of personalization offered by technology (Bitner, Brown, & Meuter, 2000) were found as the major criteria to measure the tangibility and reliability dimension of service quality. Consumer adoption of value-added services is affected by up-to-date mobile VAS (Santouridis & Trivellas, 2010) and the cost of VAS (Erlandson & Ocklind, 2000). Convenience is evaluated by measuring a sufficient number of retailers or kiosks, sufficient methods and locations for bill payment, and ease of subscribing and changing services (Hosseini, Zadeh, & Bideh, 2013). The concern over integrity, security, and the risks associated with

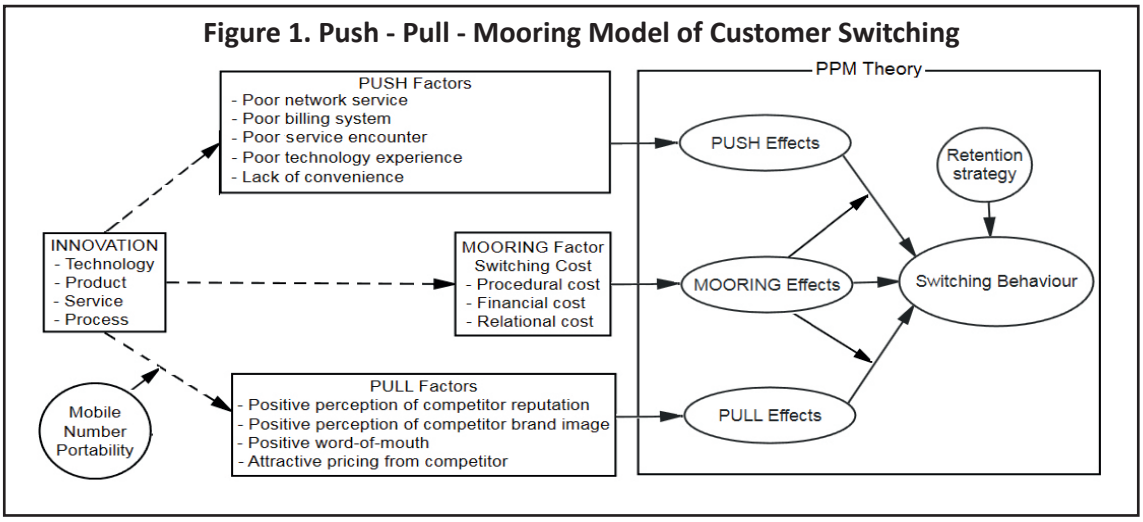
commercial transactions are critical in the use of a service provider's technology as these can influence the perception of service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Malhotra, 2005).

(2) The Pull Factors : The attractiveness of alternatives mean the service quality, brand image, and reputation of the competing service providers who are expected to offer more suitable or superior services than those of the current in-use service provider (Kim, Park, & Jeong, 2004).In a business buying situation, customers are expected to prefer stronger brands to minimize their risks (Roberts & Merrilees, 2007) as brand image increases purchase confidence (Romaniuk & Nenycz - Thiel, 2013) and reduces search and transaction costs (Kotler & Pfoertsch, 2007). Customers are more likely to perceive companies with good reputation by several interrelated features like credibility, reliability, responsibility, trustworthiness (Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997), perceived quality, and prominence (Rindova, Williamson, Petkova, & Sever, 2005). The complexity and multidimensionality of the cellular service offerings need to cater to the heterogeneous preferences of enterprise customers (Fibich, Klein, Koenigsberg, & Muller, 2017). The competitiveness of telecommunications service providers also offers enough choice of pricing plans to customers. In a business-to-business context, the buyers' WoM concerning the selling firm is characterized as the buyer's favourable recommendation to other buyers about the company (Swan & Oliver, 1989). The influencers are very likely to communicate and recommend to other members of the buying centre by virtue of their involvement in the product category (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2001).

(3) The Mooring Factor : Switching cost has been tested as the mooring factor in many prior studies (Xu et al., 2014). The high cost of switching has a direct and positive impact on switching behaviour. Migrants might abandon the migratory intention due to high expenses (Boyle & Keith, 2014). Jackson (1985) defined switching cost as the psychological, physical, and economic costs a customer faces in changing a supplier. Burnham, Frels, and Mahajan (2003) provided a comprehensive categorization of switching costs by dividing them into three dimensions : *procedural* - involving economic risk, search and evaluation, and learning costs ; *financial* - involving the loss of financial benefits ; and *relational* - involving psychological or emotional discomfort resulting from breaking bonds of affection with the provider's staff or with the service brand.

Both functional and technical aspects of service quality were combined together based on PPM theory and the review of literature for mobile subscribers' switching behaviour. These are classified as shown in the Figure 1 to formulate the proposed theoretical research model.

Figure 1. Push - Pull - Mooring Model of Customer Switching



Methodology

Primary data is of paramount importance for this study due to minimal published literature (Thaichon, Sharma, Raina, & Kapoor, 2016) on choice criteria influencing the selection of MNOs and various determinants that cause customers' switching intention. One - to - one in-depth expert interviews (Seidman, 2013) and focus group discussion evaluation research method (Powell & Single, 1996) over an open-ended questionnaire was adopted because of their adaptability and ability to probe and investigate (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Two semi-structured one-to-one in-depth interviews with industry experts and seven interviews with the key persons of different types of ownership groups were conducted with a clear plan. Then the questionnaire was reconstructed for structured in-depth interviews to judge the applicability of the instrument items in a specific order. As per the nature and complexity of the research topic and objectives, the data saturation for the most part occurred by the time 11 structured interviews with enterprise customers were done. A focus group discussion was conducted with enterprise customers of leading MNOs who shared the key characteristics pertinent to the study. The participants were the members of a buying centre who engaged in buying and coordinated the post-purchase transactions.

The population of this study are the enterprise customers of MNOs in rest of Tamil Nadu telecom circle (ROTN) (that is, other than Chennai telecom circle). A two-stage and convenience sampling method was adopted for this study. The samples were chosen from the pre-existing groups, that is, the enterprise customers of MNOs in ROTN and then the individuals (the key contact persons) participated in the study. It was found from the field visits that some of the companies were not in operation and some had not availed the post-paid mobile enterprise services. Hence, a reliable source list was prepared with the help of employees of MNOs from 56,149 ROTN listed enterprise companies (information obtained on March 14, 2018 from www.mca.gov.in). Finally, a source list was prepared containing 5136 enterprise companies of ROTN. The minimum number of sample size of 355 was derived from the formula $N = Z^2 p\ (1- p) / e^2$. The primary data were collected following the non - probability convenience sampling technique.

Observations from expert interviews and focus group discussions led to few changes and a little modification to increase the clarity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was pre-tested in a pilot study with 32 enterprise customers. Subsequently, the soft form of the questionnaire was deployed randomly as an attachment that introduced it to 890 e-mail addresses in which 81 e-mails were undelivered. This procedure yielded 219 responses in the first invitation. A first reminder e-mail was sent to participants with an aim of motivating them to complete the survey. The first reminder improved the response rate to 36.84%. Later, a second reminder was sent to the individuals, which improved the overall response rate to 42.28%. A total of 291 responses were qualified for this study after vetting 51 unusable responses from e-mail survey. In addition, a field survey was also conducted with 72 enterprise customers by visiting their premises. We assured the respondents that the information collected will be used for academic research purposes and the respondents' details will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any individual or the company they worked for. The time period of the study is from 2017 - 2018.

↳ **Research Hypothesis (H_0) :** Push, pull, and mooring factors equally contribute to enterprise customers' switching (churning) behaviour.

Analysis and Results

The reassessment of relative strengths of the current in-use brand and competing brands occurs in two major circumstances, that is, during dissatisfaction with the present service provider and with positive information about the competing brands (Svendsen & Prebensen, 2013). This exploratory study reveals that no single factors alone could influence the switching intention because all determinants are perceived to be important by the customers. Five factors are identified as push factors namely : poor network service, poor billing system, poor customer

encounter, poor experience of technology, and lack of convenience. Four factors are identified as pull factors namely : positive perception of competitor reputation, positive perception of competitor brand image, positive word-of-mouth recommendation, and attractive pricing from a competitor. The findings of the mooring factor, that is, the switching costs (financial cost, procedural cost, and relational cost) are consistent with the previous studies (Nimako & Ntim, 2013).

It is found that the users who chose to stay with their service provider regarded it as having relatively good network services, billing system, customer encounter, convenience, and technology experience, and they were found to be satisfied with the present offerings. Therefore, these factors are conceptualized as push factors. It is observed that the potential antecedents for switching of an MNO are poor network services, poor billing system, and poor customer service encounters. The factor 'network service' contributes the maximum for switching to another MNO. Keaveney (1995) also found a similar result as 'core service failure' is the biggest critical determinant for switching of a service provider. The customer account service was considered as the most important among the customer encounter factors.

Table 2. Chi - Square Table for Switching of MNO

Factors	Code	Description	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
Push	Reason 1	Poor network services	227	160.9	27.155
	Reason 2	Poor billing system	189	160.9	4.907
	Reason 3	Poor service encounters	213	160.9	16.870
	Reason 4	Poor experience of technology	112	160.9	14.861
	Reason 5	Lack of convenience	123	160.9	8.927
Pull	Reason 6	Positive perception of competitor reputation	147	160.9	1.201
	Reason 7	Positive perception of competitor brand image	166	160.9	0.162
	Reason 8	Attractive pricing from competitor	159	160.9	0.022
	Reason 9	Positive word-of-mouth recommendation	123	160.9	8.927
Mooring	Reason 10	Attractive switching cost	150	160.9	0.738
		$N = 363$	1609		

The chi - square (χ^2) test was applied to compare the experimental frequencies and theoretical frequencies based on a hypothesis. The test is used to examine the independence of attributes. The closer the agreement between the observed and expected frequencies, the smaller is the value of chi-square. If the null hypothesis is disproved, as indicated by a large value of chi-square, then a significant difference exists. From the Table 2, it is observed that the expected value for (n - 1) is 10 - 1= 9 and *df.* at 5% is found to be 16.92. Since this was a multiple choice question, the sample is taken as 1609. The $\chi_o^2 > \chi_e^2$ for 9 and *df.* at 5% level, so the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it is concluded that all the reasons were not equally contributing to the intention to switch to another MNO. Comparing the observed and expected values, it is found that the reason : poor network service contributes the most for leaving an MNO. It is also determined that the reasons 1, 3, 2, and 7 played a major role in churning among the enterprise customers.

MNP, the facilitator of the consumer switching process, has become a critical issue for MNOs because it is leading to relationship dissolution. Thus, the retention of existing customers has become a very challenging task, which has resulted in the development of relationship marketing strategies in an already fragmented Indian telecom industry. The Table 3 shows the cross tabulation between the association of the enterprise customers with the past MNO and the choice of opting for MNP. This shows that 60.05% of the respondents opted for MNP and

Table 3. MNP Option

Ownership Type	Opted MNP			Association with Previous MNO	Opted MNP		
	Yes	No	Total		Yes	No	Total
Proprietorship	43	38	81	Less than 1 year	4	6	10
Partnership	28	49	77	1-2 years	30	31	61
Private Ltd.	41	66	107	3-4 years	70	81	151
Public Ltd.	33	65	98	5-6 years	30	76	106
Total	145	218	363	More than 6 years	11	24	35
					145	218	363

39.95% of the customers did not opt for MNP because of various reasons. Some of the reasons identified are a misuse of the mobile number by the employees and receiving unsolicited calls frequently. Those who did not opt for MNP retained few important connections as these contact numbers were shared with many important customers, business partners, and others. This could be one of the reasons for using services of multiple MNOs.

Service providers must create switching barriers through higher levels of satisfaction and relationship marketing efforts to retain customers (Gerpott, Rams, & Schindler, 2001 ; Kim et al., 2004). This study reveals that financial switching costs positively influence the switching intention. However, currently, most MNOs do not charge their customers, though the porting fee is very marginal. Switching cost can be a barrier to change service providers, irrespective of the positive attractiveness of pricing from a competing MNO. It is found that the attractiveness of switching cost along with the other push factors play an important role to influence the switching behaviour.

Moreover, it is observed from the data set that many combinations of reasons influenced the enterprise customers' decision to switch to another MNO. This induced us to identify the various important combinations of reasons for churn from the present MNO. The total unduplicated reach and frequency (TURF) statistical analysis, a technique that is used to assess the different combinations of products and services preferences (Conklin & Lipovetsky, 1999) to the greatest number of customers, is applied to find out the critical combinations of the reasons for churning. It is observed from the Table 4 that network services, billing system, and service encounters contributed around 39.1% to churning. The top five reasons observed that contributed around 59.3% to churning are network services, billing system, service encounters, pricing, and brand image.

The findings suggest that the attributes related to reputation and brands matter even in rational B2B switching

Table 4. TURF Analysis - Top Combinations of Reasons for Churning

Combination of Reasons	Statistics				
	Group Size	Reach	Pct of Cases	Frequency	Pct of Responses
Added: Reason 1	1	227	62.5	227	14.1
Added: Reason 2					
Kept: Reason 1	2	330	90.9	416	25.9
Added: Reason 3					
Kept: Reason 1, Reason 2	3	361	99.4	629	39.1
Added: Reason 8					
Kept: Reason 1, Reason 2, Reason 3	4	363	100.0	788	49.0
Added: Reason 7					
Kept: Reason 1, Reason 2, Reason 3, Reason 8	5	363	100.0	954	59.3

decision-making processes, specifically who have a large number of employees and/or higher annual turnovers. Similarly, the importance of reputation and brand image is relatively less for companies which have fewer employees and have lesser turnovers. The results provide an insight similar to Gale and Wood (1994) that a customer choosing between two options, that otherwise seem about equal in terms of product and service specifications, might prefer the stronger brand.

Wide geographic spread (presence in terms of local/national/international) and a similar range of services across the geographical spread are desirable for customers. The enterprise customers who had national and/or international operations were concerned over the convenience of the geographical spread of MNOs. The enterprise customers who had limited operations within a state or region were not much concerned about national and/or international roaming services and the brand image. However, they were more critical about the reputation of the MNO on service and price factors. It is also found that the enterprise customers rarely utilized the customer help-care services as the key account manager of the selling firm is the single point of contact and facilitates the links between parties. The interesting finding is that all enterprise customers had experienced billing related problems and were exposed to the customer support - grievances handling system.

Discussion

The number of MNP requests received year-on-year conveys that the customer churn has become the main concern for the MNOs. Today, MNOs are being challenged to deal with retention of their existing subscriber base. As the market matures, consumers' values and preferences diversify, and so, the consumer switching behaviour becomes more complex (Kim, 2008). The offer of quite similar services, the adaptation of MNP, and the presence of low switching costs are making the MNOs direct their marketing strategies towards attracting new customers as well as retaining their existing customers.

Similar to Gerpott et al.'s (2001) findings, three factors are identified as the main drivers for customer satisfaction namely : network services, pricing, and service encounter. The billing system is directly related to actual customer churn decisions. The factor - network services, which comes from the base infrastructure of MNOs, is very important to both individual and enterprise consumers as it serves as the minimum requirement for positive overall customer service perceptions. An MNO which effectively handles its customers' complaints creates satisfied and more likely loyal customers and maintains its customer relationships. The customer perception of service quality can also be influenced by the use of technology by MNOs as the customers are quite concerned over the risks associated with the security of commercial transactions and the misuse of user information. Moreover, the adaptation of up-to-date and reliable technology by MNOs enhances the performance of network services, billing systems, technology solutions, convenience, and service encounters. The key account managers should role-play as a partner and consultant to serve customers by providing a comprehensive solution for their needs.

The enterprise customers with a negative experience of a brand supposedly formed negative associations with that brand. This triggers the switching intention and creates a negative word of mouth. Today, most or all MNOs are capable of integrating technology in providing customized services (e.g., corporate ringtone, vehicle tracking, meter reading, location-based services, etc.) as this factor is perceived to be an important service quality of an MNO.

We also obtained findings similar to Thaichon et al. (2016) that though the benefits of pricing were similar across providers, some participants believed that their familiarity with the brand name or perception that the brand is a global brand had an influence on their choices. Majority of the participants shared the view that positive perceptions of brand reputation and image were essential for service providers' choice decisions and were very unimportant while switching. The CSR activities of an MNO did not have any influence on customers' choice decisions. However, as claimed by Thaichon et al. (2016), we also believe that the CSR activities of an MNO

would enhance the view of an MNO's brand. Although organizational buyers consider service and other more intangible aspects in their buying decisions, brands tend to be secondary when compared with price, technology, logistics, and product features (Zablah, Brown, & Donthu, 2010).

Service bundling by imparting different levels of usage requirements at an optimal price level may hinder switching by making it more difficult for consumers to compare services. Many other factors also intervene in customers' switching decisions apart from the ones discussed in this study. Aspects such as the level of satisfaction (Ganesh, Arnold, & Reynolds, 2000), trust between the parties (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), and the perceived quality of service (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996) - all intervene in the process of switching suppliers, and these relational constructs are expected to differ between customers (Ganesh et al., 2000). The low barrier to switching is the main reason for the intense competition in the mobile telecommunications service industry. This induces the enterprise customers to switch their MNOs. Peters (1987) showed that it can cost five times more to acquire a new customer than to retain an old one. Consequently, retaining the current customer base is much more attractive than searching for new customers. Due to the high costs of attracting new customers, the MNOs raise different barriers to encourage customer retention, such as increasing switching costs and/or developing new barriers and/or developing ties with customers in an effort to lock-in customers into an existing contractual relationship (Burnham et al., 2003).

Managerial Implications and Conclusion

The outcomes of this study provide a concise integrated framework to help MNOs better understand the factors that influence enterprise customers' switching behaviour. TRAI's report clearly shows that the Indian mobile telecommunications industry has been witnessing high switching rates after the introduction of MNP. Due to this, many MNOs are trying to acquire new customers through price competition, which might deteriorate the firms' performance as well as services infrastructure. Such competition might be vulnerable to smaller companies with low capital, which cannot compete against major corporations (e.g., the exit of MTS, Telenor, Videocon, Aircel and the entry of Reliance Jio in India). Thus, the results of this study and the proposed model offer a deeper understanding of the push - pull - mooring factors that influence enterprise customers' switching behaviour and provide MNOs with a tool for identifying and capitalizing on the strategic opportunities for increasing retention of profitable customers and attracting new customers. As a result, MNOs will be able to mitigate the influence of push - pull - mooring factors in establishing, developing, and maintaining successful customer relationships over time within their respective target markets.

The purpose of this article was to examine enterprise customers' switching behaviour towards the adoption of MNP when switching an MNO and to construct specifications in the PPM framework. The perceived usefulness and approach towards MNP appear considerably favourable among enterprise customers. Nimako and Ntim (2013) claimed that about 67% level of misspecifications existed in the application of the PPM framework in the customer switching behaviour literature. As the misspecifications of the PPM effect may result in an adverse consequence of the choice of reflective versus formative measurement, perspective does matter from a practical point of view.

Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research

It should be noted that the suggested model does not eliminate the need for making a list of concrete switching determinants for any specific service. However, this model is an attempt to present a logical classification of switching determinants using the PPM theory for easy use in further research studies. We also acknowledge the need for a more comprehensive consumer research in the identification of other relevant variables. The data were collected from the key contact persons who were involved in the decision making process of selection of an MNO

and coordinated the post-purchase transactions for the enterprise. It would be of great use if future research investigates deeper by applying this model to understand these determinants and the retention strategies of MNOs in a more challenging customer environment.

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About the Authors

C.N.S. Ramnath Babu is an Assistant Professor at Jansons School of Business, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. His areas of interest are business to business marketing, services marketing, retailing, and distribution.

Dr. S. Sundar is an Associate Professor at Bharathidasan Institute of Management, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu. He is interested in the area of business to business marketing, services marketing, retailing, and distribution.