

A ZERO-SUM GAME: CUSTOMERS' SWITCHING BEHAVIOR IN THE TURKISH GSM MARKET - A NEUROMARKETING ANALYSIS¹

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to measure the emotional responses of existing customers to their GSM operators after exposed to the other GSM operators' sales promotion campaigns aimed at attracting new customers. The study also aims to measure customers' brand loyalty towards their GSM operators before and after the exposure to these sales' promotion campaigns. The emotions of the customers towards GSM operators' promotions were measured by using a Facial Recognition Software, an eye tracker device and a questionnaire. The results of this study show that even if the customers are satisfied with their GSM operators, they can switch from their current operators when they encounter an attractive offer. Practitioners should focus more on customer retention as opposed to acquiring new customers. Findings indicate that GSM operators should consider their current customers in the long-term in accordance with the damage that targeted promotions may have on them.

Keywords: GSM operators, Sales promotions, Campaigns, Eye Tracking, Facial Expression Recognition, Neuromarketing.

Jel Classification: : M30, M31, M37.

SIFIR TOPLAMLI OYUN: TÜRKİYEDEKİ GSM PAZARINDA TÜKETİCİLERİN MARKA DEĞİŐTİRME DAVRANIŐI: BİR NÖROPAZARLAMA ARAŐTIRMASI

ÖZET

Bu çalıŐma, rakip GSM operatörlerinin yeni müşterileri çekmeyi amaçlayan satıŐ promosyon kampanyalarına maruz kaldıktan sonra mevcut müşterilerin GSM operatörlerine duydukları duygusal tepkileri araŐtırmayı ve ölçmeyi amaçlamaktadır. ÇalıŐma aynı zamanda, müşterilerin bu satıŐ promosyon kampanyalarına maruz kalmadan önce ve sonra GSM operatörlerine yönelik marka bađlılıklarını ölçmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Müşterilerin GSM operatörlerinin promosyonlarına yönelik

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duyguları bir yüz duygu tanıma yazılımı, bir göz izleme cihazı ve bir anket kullanılarak ölçülmüştür. Çalışma sonuçlarına göre müşteriler GSM operatörlerinden memnun olsalar bile cazip bir teklifle karşılaştıklarında mevcut operatörlerinden diğer rakip operatörlere geçiş yapabilecekleri görülmektedir. Araştırma bulgular, GSM operatörlerinin uzun vadede mevcut müşterilerini, hedeflenen promosyonların kendilerine verebileceği zarara uygun olarak dikkate alması gerektiğini göstermektedir. Sektördeki uygulayıcılar yeni müşteriler edinmek yerine mevcut müşteriyi elde tutmayı daha fazla önceliklendirmeleri gerekmektedir. Mevcut bir müşteri, algılanan fiyat adaletsizliğinden etkilenebilir. Çalışmanın, GSM pazarında sadakatin oldukça düşük olması ve satışların promosyon kampanyalarına maruz kalmanın değişme niyetini arttırması nedeniyle GSM şirketleri için önemli etkilerinin olduğunu göstermektedir.

Keywords: *GSM Operatörleri, Satış Promosyonları, Marka Değiştirme, Göz İzleme, Yüz Duygu Tanıma, Nöropazarlama.*

Jel Classification: *M30, M31, M37.*

1. INTRODUCTION AND THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Mobile communication is one of the most popular topics in recent academic literature (Kim et al., 2004; Mazzoni et al., 2007). On the other hand, mobile communication has become more attractive not only for academics but also investors. While mobile communication becomes more competitive, acquiring new customers and retaining the current ones become crucial for mobile service providers to maintain and improve their market share and profitability (Zhao et al., 2012; Calvo-Porrall and Lévy-Mangin, 2015: 125). Mobile communication market's competitive environment has increased customer switching among GSM mobile operators.

Customer switching behavior can be considered as an important threat that damages company profitability and market share (Rust and Zahorik 1993; Keaveney, 1995; Liang et al., 2013). Moreover, customer switching behavior is a barrier to the accomplishment of long-term goals of service companies (Ganesh et al., 2000; Lopez et al., 2006). In competitive and intense markets such as the mobile communication market, companies struggle to find new customers as well as retain their loyal customers in order to stay competitive and maintain their market share and profitability (Misbah, 2014). Due to these reasons, GSM mobile operators need to be careful in determining the reasons of customers' switching decisions (Bansalet al., 2005). However, the main goal of GSM operators is to acquire customers of the other GSM operators by making various attractive offers. On the other hand, the current and loyal customers can be negatively influenced by these attractive offers made to the other GSM operators' customers. GSM operators endeavor not only to attract new customers but also to retain the current and loyal customers through the same attractive offers.

However, marketing research has dedicated much effort to studying especially *customer loyalty* (Dick and Basu, 1994; Hallowell, 1996; Bowen, 2001; Srinivasan et al., 2002; Uncles et al., 2003), *customer satisfaction* (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Anderson et al., 1994; Cronin et al., 2000), long term relationships and antecedents of customer switching behavior processes (Roos, 1999). However, there is limited literature about customer switching behavior. Customer switching behavior literature can be grouped under four main areas (Lopez et al., 2006):

1. Customer switching decision process,
2. The causal factors that motivate customer switching behavior,
3. The differences between switchers and stayers.
4. The factors that motivate customer switching behavior (Ganesan, 1994; Dick and Basu, 1994).

Additionally, the literature on customer switching behavior has mainly focused on characterizing customer differences in terms of their greater or lesser intention to switching their GSM operators (Keaveney and Parthasarathy, 2001). However, there is limited experimental study to measure customer switching behavior and customer switching behavior processes. Due to these reasons, the main goal of this study is to help understand the customer switching behavior process and price threshold of customer switching behavior by using neuromarketing tools for in-depth understanding for not only academics but also for practitioners. Finally, according to the results and findings, some managerial implications are provided for practitioners and academics.

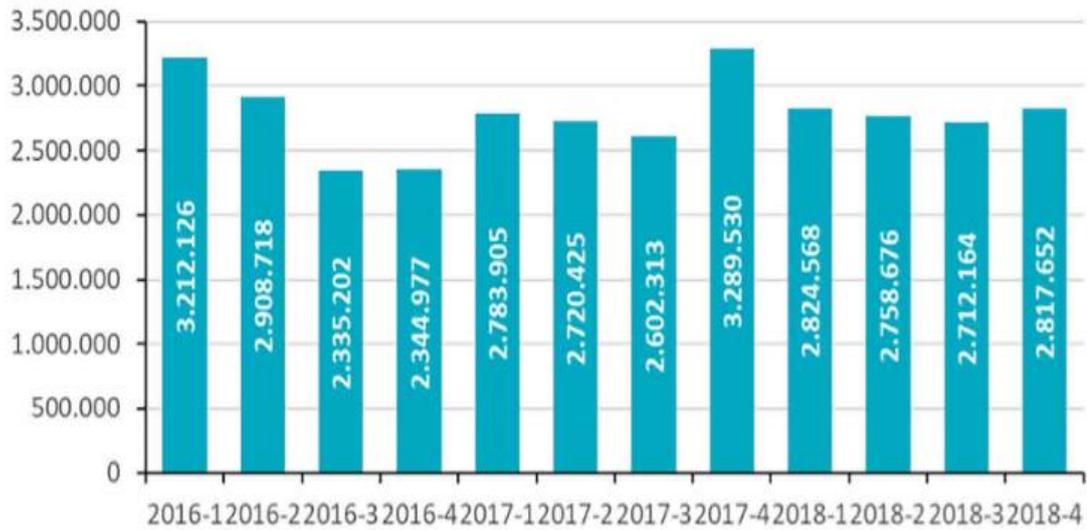
2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GSM MARKET

In the last few decades, the mobile communication service market has considerably grown worldwide (Parvatiyar and Sheth, 2001; Chakraborty and Sengupta, 2014). According to the Hootsuite (2019) Report, two-thirds of the world's (5 billion inhabitants) population have a mobile phone. The number of European mobile users has reached 131% of the population (1.106 billion users). Turkey's mobile penetration rate is 99%, while the world average is 68% as of 2017 and the size of the Turkish GSM market was about 7.5 billion dollars in 2018 (KPMG, 2018: 185). Number of mobile subscribers in Turkey has exceeded eighty million. (BTK, 2019). There are three major GSM operators in Turkey; Turkcell, Vodafone and Turk Telekom. Turkcell is the market leader of the Turkish GSM market in terms of number of subscribers. According to the BTK (2018) report, Turkcell has 42.1% market share while Vodafone holds 31% and Türk Telekom holds 26.9% of the Turkish GSM market share. In addition, Turkcell is the Turkish GSM market leader in terms of revenues. According to the distribution of revenues, Turkcell's market share is 42.4%, Vodafone's market share is 35.6% and Türk Telekom's share is 22%.

Rapid growth of the mobile communication services has accelerated the competition between operators. This leads GSM operators to offer more aggressive discounts to customers of other operators

(Shukla, 2010). Mobile communication companies are estimated to lose between 2 to 4% of their customers on a monthly basis, which is approximately 27 to 48% of their total annual customers (Vandenbosch and Dawar, 2002; Aydin and Ozer, 2005). According to Table 1, every day on average, 32,000 people switch their GSM operators in Turkey (BTK, 2019; Koç, 2019). According to this data, more than eleven million subscribers change their GSM operator per year in Turkey. As of February 14, 2018, a total of 123,194,542 subscribers changed their GSM operators. In the fourth quarter of 2018, TT Mobile gained approximately 484 thousand subscribers and Vodafone gained approximately 49 thousand subscribers, while Turkcell lost approximately 533 thousand subscribers (BTK, 2018). High switching rates can cause millions of Turkish Liras worth of damage to GSM operators every year. Therefore, switching behavior is vital in the GSM market. Finally, businesses need to focus on their current customers instead of finding new ones.

Table 1. Total Mobile Number Transport Numbers in Turkish GSM Market



Source: BTK, 2018.

3. CUSTOMER SWITCHING

Relationship marketing is the key determinant of marketing theory and practice in terms of improving long-term profitability and market share of firms (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Gronroos, 1995; Lopez et al., 2006). Additionally, relationship marketing contributes to the development of long-term relationship between consumers and businesses (Lopez et al., 2006). Developing a long-term relationship with customers is one of the barriers to prevent customer loss. Loss of a customer can directly affect the short- and long-term profitability of the company.

Customer loss can be costly for GSM operators not only for profitability but also for marketing budgets. Peters (1987) suggests that acquiring a new customer costs five times more than retaining a current customer. According to Vandenbosch and Dawar (2002), the cost of acquiring a new customer

is around \$ 600-800dollars while the cost of retaining a current customer is only about \$20.Thus, acquiring a new customer is thirty times more costly than retaining a current customer. Results of Dawkins& Reichheld (1990) and Reichheld (1996) studies show that only a 5% increase in customer retention generated an increase in customer value of up to 95%.Hanks (2007: 70) study result shows that a 5% enhancement in customer retention may lead up to a 75% increase in thecompany's profitability. The 1% increase in the retention rate of customers adds five times more value to the company than the 1% discount to the product (Gupta et al., 2004).

Loss of customers in the service sector can be very high. There are many ways of losing current customers. Customer switching behavior is one of the most important reasons of losing current customers.GSM operators may offer aggressive tariffs to competitors' customers in order to gain new customers from them. However, current customers have more profitability potential for GSM operators. According to Nelson et al., (2002) study, while the probability rate of selling new products to the current customer is more than 65%, the probability of selling to a new customer is less than 10%.Due to this reason customer switching is crucial for the survival of GSM operators.

Customer switching is also one of the most important issues in consumer behavior literature and it can be defined as consumer replacement or switch from their current provider to another provider (Carpenter and Lehmann1985; Bucklin and Srinivasan 1991; Fornell, 1992). Consumer switching behavior consists of two determinants: cognitive and emotional. Emotional determinants are triggered by effective states or response of consumers towards their current company (Antón et al., 2007; Wieringa and Verhoef, 2007). Cognitive determinants are generated by the value of the consumer's relationship with the current company (Gwinner et al.,1998; Wieringa and Verhoef, 2007). To cope with these cognitive and emotional determinants, customers may takeaction to terminate their relationship with the offending service provider (Cox, 2001; Xia et, 2004).Pricing is one of the key factors in cognitive determinants of customer switching behavior and itcan provoke switching behaviors (Gerrard and Cunningham, 2004). Keaveney (1995) suggests that pricing includes all critical switching behaviors and main pricing strategies consist of promotions, prices, rates, fees, service charges, penalties, special offers and coupons. Pricing is the third most important reason for customers to change a service provider (Keaveney, 1995). While the service providers offer the best service, customers can change their service providers that offer better prices and better campaigns (Koç, 2019). Therefore, GSM operators need to determine their marketing strategies effectively.

Acquiring new customers should be the secondary purpose for GSM operators while retaining current customers should be the primary goal. This can lead to increased promotion costs and negative feelings for current customers towards their current GSM operators Dos Santos and Basso, 2012; Lympelopoulos et al., 2013. However, most companies spend about 80% of their marketing budget to attract new customers Weinstein (2002). GSM operators are among companies that spend the highest on advertising. Advertising expenses of Türkcell, Türk Telekom and Vodafone are 341 million dollars,

215 million dollars and 711 million dollars in 2016 respectively. These advertising expenses can reach up to 25.5% of their total income (Gazi, 2017). GSM operators should make more effort to enhance customer retention rates and develop long-term relationships with the current customers, especially in Turkey where the sector tends to be highly changeable (Yang, 2006). Based on the above explanations, this study aims to explore the influence of price promotion campaigns on GSM customers' switching behavior.

4. THE METHOD

The validity and reliability of research are associated with the number of data collection methods (Bogdan and Biklen, 2006; Koç and Boz, 2014b; Taşkın et al., 2017). According to the Koc and Boz (2014b) study, the use of triangulation in the data collection method is crucial to the validity, reliability and generalizability of the data. Therefore, triangulation was used as the data collection method in the study. Triangulation can be described as the combination of multiple methods in the study of the same issue (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz and Sechrest, 1966).

4.1. Sample and Data Collection Methods

Neuromarketing enables researchers to use multiple data collection tools simultaneously and there are many tools for neuromarketing studies such as Electroencephalography (EEG), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), Positron Emission Tomography (PET), Electromyography (EMG), Eye Tracker, Galvanic Skin Response (HR), Facial Expression Recognition to apply marketing studies.

Research data were collected through a questionnaire, facial expression recognition software and an eye tracking device. Facial expression recognition is used to determine the emotions of the participants such as surprise, happiness (*positive feelings*) anger, sadness, disgust and fear (*negative feelings*) and eye tracking enables to see where the participant focused on the marketing stimuli. The questionnaire was used to determine the response of the participants towards exposed marketing stimulus. Eye tracking and facial expression recognition are one of the most frequently used tools in neuromarketing studies. Questionnaire is the most frequently used instrument for data collection methods especially in social sciences (Koç and Boz, 2014b). Data were collected from 12 female and 9 male participants.

4.2. Apparatus

The experiment was conducted in a Human Behavior Lab. An eye tracker device and eye tracking analysis software were used. The eye tracking device is non-invasive and image-based.. The accuracy rate is between 0.5° – 1° . Facial expression recognition software was developed by Boz and Köse (2018). Facial expression recognition software measures seven feelings. The stimulus was presented on

a 15,6-inch flat panel screen display with a refresh rate of 144Hz. The computer's resolution was 1366 x 768 pixels.

4.3. Stimuli

Images of GSM promotion visuals were selected from freepik.com (vector created by Starline). Three GSM promotions were shown to the participants. These are;

1. First offer: 1-year contract, 5% discount on participants' current contract fee, the participant can quit within the first six months without any obligations.
2. Second offer: 2-year contract, 10% discount on participants' current contract fee, the participant can quit within the first three months without any obligations.
3. Third offer: 1-year contract, 5% discount on participants' current contract fee, no information on quitting conditions.
4. Participants' responses were measured by questionnaire towards three GSM mobile promotions.

4.4. The Experimental Task and Procedure

Description of a study's experimental task and procedure is said to be one of the most important issues of an empirical research. Based on the objectives of the study, a procedure has been formed. The study will be carried out in three stages. The task and the experimental procedure of the study are as below;

1. In the first stage, customers were given a questionnaire asking the following:
 - Their GSM companies,
 - How many years they have been using a mobile phone?
 - How many years they have been with the same GSM company,
 - How many times they have changed GSM operators over the years,
 - Their level of satisfaction with the GSM operator they are currently subscribed to,
 - Demographic questions,

2. In the second stage, the GSM customers who were selected as participants were exposed to attractive sales promotion campaigns by the GSM operators including their own operator, aimed at attracting new customers. The participants were asked to view and evaluate the sales promotion campaigns. At the same time, participants' emotions were measured by using Facial Expression Recognition Software and an Eye tracker device. Each participant's emotions were measured towards GSM sales promotion campaigns comparatively.

3. In order to eliminate the influence of the order effect, the visual materials (Mobile GSM package advertisements) were shown randomly to the participants.

4. The duration of the experiment was 135 seconds for each participant.

5. After the placement of the eye tracker device, the subjects were asked to take a comfortable position and relax. Participants ran the experiment individually using a mouse to answer assessment questionnaires.

6. Three mobile GSM package advertisements were shown to the participants. Each mobile package was shown to the participants for a period of 20 seconds.

7. First, the mobile GSM package advertisements were shown for five seconds after the experiment started. During the intervals, the participants were shown a black screen for five seconds for neutralization.

8. After having been exposed to a Mobile GSM package advertisement, participants were asked to make an evaluation for a duration of twenty seconds and indicate their responses on the screen by using the mouse.

9. In the third stage of the study, participants were asked to respond to questions testing their level of brand loyalty to see whether there has been a decline in their level of brand loyalty and intention of switching behavior as a consequence of the sales promotions they have viewed.

10. The questions participants were asked:

«How much would you like to change your current operator after the offer made to you in the campaign?»

«How much has your loyalty been influenced after the offer made to you in the campaign?»

11. The participants indicated their responses on a scale of 1 to 10 –

For Question 1

A Score of 1 meaning – I would definitely change my current operator.

A Score of 10 meaning – I would definitely not change my current operator.

For Question 2:

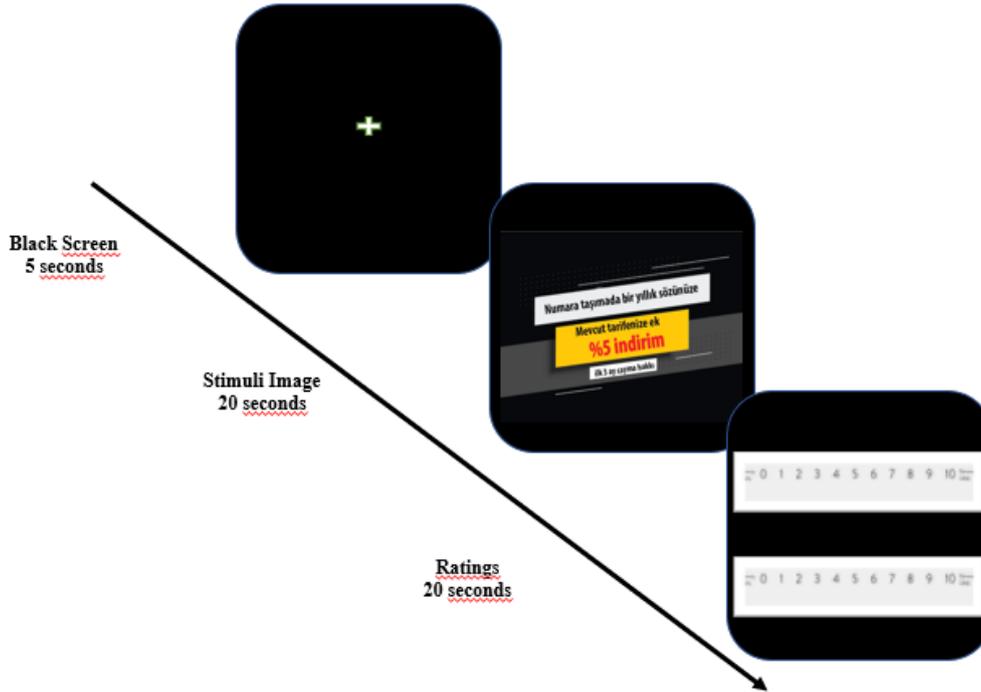
A Score of 1 meaning – My loyalty towards my current GSM operator has definitely decreased.

A Score of 10 meaning – My loyalty towards my current GSM operator has definitely not decreased.

12. The experiment was carried out in a quiet room.

13. In order to relax the participants, the process of showing visual materials started 4-5 minutes after the calibration of the Eye Tracker sensor and facial expression recognition software.
14. Subjects were instructed to avoid any excess movements during the experiment.

Figure 1. Trial Sequence and Experiment Procedure



4.5. Findings

According to Table 2, the participants have been using GSM for an average of 8 years. They have been using the current operators for an average of 5 years. Participants changed GSM operators at least once. Satisfaction levels of the current operator are high with an average of 7.27. It is seen that the satisfaction levels of the operator they use are lower than their general satisfaction (5,91).

Table 2. Questionnaire Responses Before Experiment -1-

Mobile Phone Use (Number of Years)	Current GSM Operator Use (Number of Years)	How many times have you switched operators?	How satisfied are you with your current GSM operator?	On average, how satisfied are you with the GSM package price you pay?
8,09	5	1,55	7,27	5,91

According to Table 3, the level of satisfaction with the service quality of the current GSM operator is 7 out of 10. In addition, their overall loyalty level to their current GSM operator is 7 out of 10. The

request of the participants to change the current operator is 4.11 out of 10. Finally, the price participants pay for their current operator tariff is at a level of 7 per month on average.

Table 3. Questionnaire Responses Before Experiment -2-

How satisfied are you with the service quality of your current GSM operator?	The level of loyalty to the current GSM operator	How much would you like to switch your current operator?	The price you pay for your current package
7,09	7,09	4,11	7 \$

Table 4 contains the answers to the same questions after the participants were shown the first offer. The average of the participants intending to switch their operator before the first offer is 4,11. After the offer, participants' switching intention decreased. The offer was not appealing enough to the participants to change their current operator. It was observed that the loyalty levels of the participants before the first offer to the operator were at the level of 7.09, but they increased relatively after the offer. According to the data in Table 3, the participants did not find the proposal attractive. While the loyalty level of the participants before the first offer was 7.09, it remained unchanged after the offer. According to the data in Table 3, the participants did not find the offer attractive.

Table 4. Questionnaire Responses After Experiment for Offer 1

Offer 1			
1-year contract - 5% Discount on Your Current Contract -Can Quit within the first three months without any obligations-			
Desire to Change the Current Operator Before the Offer	Desire to Change the Current Operator after the Offer	The Loyalty towards Current Operator Before the Offer	The Loyalty Change towards Current Operator after the Offer (the higher the value the lower the decline in loyalty)
4,11	3,57	7,09	7,11

In table 5, there are answers to the same questions given by the participants about their current operator both before and after they were shown the second offer. While the participants' desire to change their current operator was at 4,11 before the second offer, it increased by approximately 10% after the offer. The offer appealed to them. The participants' level of loyalty before the second offer was at 7,09 whereas after the offer it decreased down to 6,64. Hence, this offer reduced their level of loyalty towards their current operator by 7%. The results of the study contradict with the results of Zhou et al., (2012) study. According to the Zhou et al., (2012) study, customer satisfaction is an important precursor to improve the market share and profitability of GSM mobile operators (Zhao et al., 2012). According to extensive literature, there is a causal relationship between customer satisfaction and switching intention in the services sector and they have an inverse relationship (Dick and Basu, 1994; Cronin et

al., 2000; Eggert and Ulaga, 2002; Choi et al., 2008; Deng et al., 2010; Han et al., 2011). According to this plentiful literature, customer satisfaction positively affects customer retention (Bansal and Taylor, 1999; Walsh et al., 2006; Eshghi et al., 2007). However, the result of this study shows that even if the customers are satisfied with their current GSM operator, they can change it when faced with an attractive offer. Patterson & Smith (2003) and Lu et al. (2011) stated that the availability of attractive alternatives is an important factor especially when customers consider switching providers. Current customers have a lower price sensitivity especially if they are unaware of the attractive alternatives (Keaveney, 1995; Jones et al., 2002; Patterson and Smith, 2003; Lam et al., 2004; Vazquez-Carrasco and Foxall, 2006; Lu et al., 2011). The results of the research contradict these findings. Consumers with a high level of loyalty and satisfaction have accepted only a 5% discount. Finally, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are the greatest barriers that prevent the customers from switching behavior (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Gupta and Zeithaml, 2006; Chandrashekar et al., 2007; Williams and Naumann, 2011). However, even if the level of satisfaction and loyalty of current customers are high, they can change their operators by being offered a 5% discount from their current tariff.

Table 5. Questionnaire Responses After Experiment for Offer 2

Offer 2			
2 year contract -10% Discount on Your Current Contract- Can Quit within the first six months without any obligations			
Desire to Change the Current Operator Before the Offer	Desire to Change the Current Operator after the Offer	The Loyalty towards Current Operator Before the Offer	The Loyalty Change towards Current Operator after the Offer (the higher the value the lower the decline in loyalty)
4,11	4,49	7,09	6,64

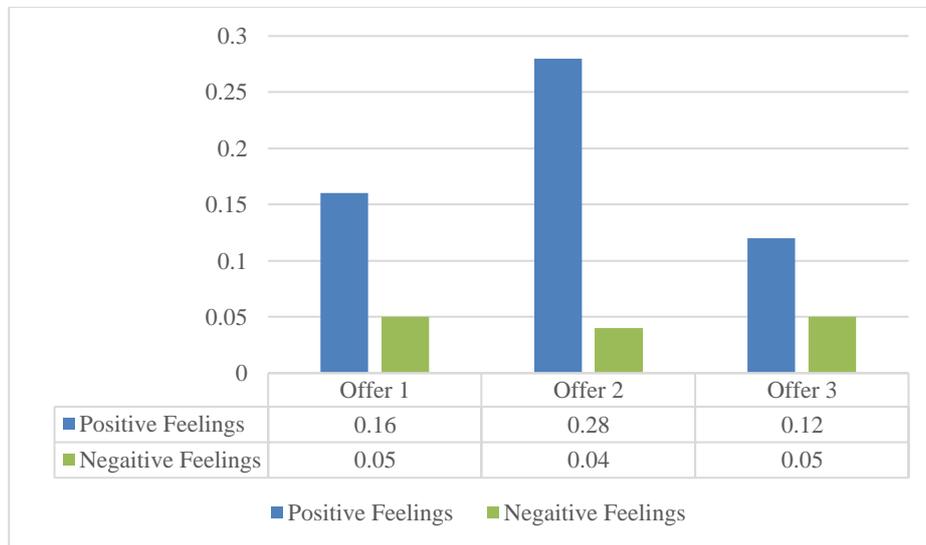
In table 6, there are answers to the same questions given by the participants about their current operator both before and after they were shown the third offer. While the participants' desire to change their current operator was at 4,11 before the third offer, it decreased by approximately 22% after the offer. While the participants' level of loyalty before the third offer was at 7,09, it increased by around 22% after the offer. This offer increased their loyalty towards their current operator. On the whole, the related offer did not appeal to them.

Table 6. Questionnaire Responses After Experiment for Offer 3

Offer 3			
1-year contract -5% Discount on Your Current Contract- (*No Info on quitting – meaning – it cannot be quitted – without having to pay a fine).			
Desire to Change the Current Operator Before the Offer	Desire to Change the Current Operator after the Offer	The Loyalty towards Current Operator Before the Offer	The Loyalty Change towards Current Operator after the Offer (the higher the value the lower the decline in loyalty)
4,11	3,36	7,09	8,62

In table 7 there is data about the participants' feelings obtained from their facial muscles while analyzing the three offers. Facial expression recognition software results show similarities to the data obtained from the subjects via the questionnaire. According to facial expression recognition scores, the participants showed the most positive feelings for the second offer. The second highest level of positive feeling was for the first offer. As for the last offer which did not enable the participants to quit the contract at will, they showed the least positive feelings.

Table 7. Facial Expression Recognition Scores Towards 3 Offers



The offer causing the most positive feelings (which offers the possibility of a 10% discount for a two-year commitment and subscription cancellation within the first six months) created 75% more positive feelings than the second-best offer. Level of negative feelings towards the second offer that created the most positive feelings is 25% less than the other two offers. One may say that the results of the questionnaire conflict with the study of Santos & Baso (2012). Santos & Baso (2012) stated that

current consumers tend to have negative feelings when they come across a price that is lower than what was offered to them. However, consumers also tend to have positive feelings when they find a more suitable alternative according to the questionnaire results.

Figure 2 contains visuals of heat/attention map results of locations that attract the attention of participants in offers through an eye tracker device. Colorization in the heat map turns into green, yellow and red from purple respectively as one proceeds inwards. Red depicts the location where participants focused on the most. Locations without color mean no attention was paid to the said locations thus visuals or verbal messages without color mean they weren't found attractive. Observing the heat/attention map, the phrases “5% discount” and “one year” attracted the highest attention from participants in offer 1. Offer 2 shows that participants focused more on the phrases “10% discount” and “2 years”. Offer 3 shows that participants focused more on the phrases “5% discount”, “right to quit within 1 year in transfers” and “right to withdraw in the first 3 months”.

Figure 2: Eye Tracking Heat/Attention Map Analyses



Source: Freepic.Com Vector Created by Starline

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Practical Implications and Recommendations

Marketing budgets and operations in recent years show that GSM operators focus on acquiring new customers. Nonetheless, cost of acquiring new customers is approximately thirty times more than the cost of losing current customers Vandenbosch and Dawar (2002). This situation becomes much more important in Turkey where nearly ninety million subscribers switch operators on an annual basis. Consumers are generally price sensitive (Munnukkka, 2005). Results of the study show that consumers tend to switch their operators when they come across an offer with a more favorable price (even if they have a high level of loyalty to their current operator). Accordingly, the level of current customers' loyalty and satisfaction decrease after having been exposed to attractive offers from other operators.

5.2. Practical Implications and Recommendations

The study has both practical and the oretical implications. The practitioners (managers and employees in GSM operators) should focus on spending more towards current customers compared to

acquiring new customers as GSM companies mainly focus their attention and resources. Findings indicate that GSM operators should consider their current customers in the long-term in the light of the campaigns of competitive GSM operators. Current customers may be influenced by perceived price unfairness which appears to be an important determinant of customers' switching behavior intentions. GSM operators can offer more benefits to current customers to increase loyalty. Customer satisfaction or customer loyalty may not always be sufficient for customer retention (Jones et al., 2000; Kim et al., 2004). Due to this reason, other influencing factors, antecedents and consequences of the switching behavior need to be analyzed by academics.

It is seen that GSM operators have not been able to establish brand loyalty despite spending excessively on promotion. This is due to the fact that a significant proportion of marketing budgets of GSM operators are spent on attracting new customers. A significant proportion of their advertising and promotion budgets. Subscribers can switch their operators when exposed to slightly better offers. In general, GSM operators keep attracting customers from one other, whilst not increasing market share (or total number of customers), but at the same time wasting significant amount of their financial resources for these campaigns.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Triangulation was used as the data collection method in scope of this study. Triangulation is vital in terms of the validity and reliability of the study (Boz and Koc, 2014b). Nonetheless, 22 people constitute the sampling of the study. A group of 22 is seen adequate for sampling in especially neuromarketing studies in general (Khushaba et al., 2013; Zamani et al., 2016). In any case, study findings may not be generalized to the population. Nevertheless, future research might expand the sample size/participants. Finally, the research data were obtained in the experimental environment. Future studies can be done in real consumption environment to achieve more solid results.

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