

Apprehend the loyalty of the customers in an eclectic perspective: Empirical Study

فهم ولاء العملاء بمنظور انتقائي: دراسة تجريبية

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Abstract:

The objective of this study is to reconsider the loyalty behavior of the customers according to the eclectic approach. By trying to propose an abstract model validated empirically in the telephony, mobile market of the operator Orascom Télécom Algeria, this study tries to integrate other variables of a relational nature besides the behavioral variables to apprehend the loyalty either as a purchasing behavior only but also as a behavior of exchange by taking into account its various facets: perceptive, cognitive and conative.

Keywords: Eclecticism; Satisfaction; Trust; Commitment; Intention of repurchase; Intention of change; Loyalty

JEL Classification Codes: M31

ملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إعطاء رؤية جديدة لسلوك ولاء الزبون وفق المقاربة الانتقائية، من خلال اقتراح نموذج تصوري تم التحقق من صحته تطبيقيا في سوق الخدمات الاتصالية للمتعامل أوراسكوم تيليكوم الجزائر، حاولت هذه الدراسة دمج متغيرات جديدة ذات طابع علائقي إضافة إلى المتغيرات السلوكية بهدف تفسير سلوك الولاء وإعطائه بعدا جديدا لا يقتصر على السلوك الشرائي فقط، بل يتعدى ذلك ليصبح سلوكا تبادليا يكتسي عدة أوجه: تصورية، إدراكية، حسية.

كلمات مفتاحية: المقاربة الانتقائية؛ الرضا؛ الثقة؛ الالتزام؛ تكرار السلوك الشرائي؛ تغيير العلامة التجارية؛ ولاء الزبون

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Introduction:

For years, researchers in marketing, pay their attention to the concept of brand loyalty and quarrel on its definition, still difficult to determine. In fact, their method of approach varies according to the objective and the object of researches. So, the Marketing literature highlighted the diversity, even the difference which reigns as for the concept of loyalty. By multiplying the theoretical constructions, the researchers wanted to identify the levers of loyalty and to measure their impacts on the relations of exchange.

The research on the loyalty is indeed, particularly rich and prosperous. It gave rise alternately to behavioral models worried by the observation of the frequency and the proportion of the purchase of the brand, the cognitive models centered on the predispositions, the preferences, the relative attitudes and the intentions of repurchase and finally in eclectic models which ally simultaneously the observation and the anticipation of the repurchase. The objective of this article thus is to make a brief review of the literature on the concept of loyalty and to show that this built recover very diverse nations. We shall land, then,, the eclectic model and shall try to use it to measure the loyalty on customers' sample of the mobile telephony of the operator Orascom Telecom Algeria.

1- Review of literature:

1-1- Brand Loyalty:

The central element of the works on the loyalty is doubtless the relation between certain psychosocial states of the customer and its behavior, that they are relative to the offer or more widely to the way the customer perceives his relation with the brand. Thus, the definition of loyalty differs according to the researchers and according to the studies. The concept of the loyalty distinguishes itself in loyalty of behavior, attitude, cognitive and repurchase. And so the eclectic definition of the loyalty refers to the main theoretical contributions of the Marketing literature and joins to certain variables such as:

- **The repeated purchasing behavior:** by referring to "Brown (1953), Cunningham (1956)". *Loyalty is considered by acts of purchase repeated of stochastic nature, dependent on a high number of random variables which appear with an unpredictable frequency and which are difficult to define.*
- **Attitudes:** By referring to "Jacoby (1971), Jacoby and Olson (1977), Jacoby and Chestnut (1978), Hornero and Yao (1997)" and the satisfaction "Barbera and Mazursky (1983), Rust and Zahoric (1993), Anderson and Sullivan (1993), Bloemer and Kaspar (1995)" *The attitude towards the mark conditions the choice and, on the other hand, the satisfaction to the latter strengthen the attitude and then loyalty. Loyalty anchors essentially on the quality freed to the customer and on the positive gap between the evaluation post-purchase as well as expectations.*
- **The relation between the customer and the company:** "Dick and Basu (1994), Barnes (1997)" *based on the confidence and the commitment. In the course of the relationship marketing, loyalty is less motivated by the limited evaluation of a transaction or a product but rather by a sustainable relation which the consumer has to build with a supplier throughout his experiences of consumption. So, the accumulated satisfaction,*

the confidence and the commitment, the resistance in her against persuasion, the dependence or still the relation on the brand become determining.

- **The cognitive economy:** *by referring to " Morrison (1966), Jeuland (1979), Bawa (1990) " in these research works, the loyalty is influenced by the slowness and the apprenticeship as well as the moderating variable the search for variety.*
- **The costs of change:** *by referring in " Jackson (1985), Shapiro and Varian (1999) " the Latter approaches anchored in the conviction that a consumer remains faithful because the efforts to change brand, product or supplier are too important for being able to hope for a significant gain of the change. The authors of this current try to explain the loyalty by barriers to the release, which prevents in a way the free choice of the consumer.*

The loyalty is thus a relation which connects a customer with a product, a brand, a point of sale or a company. This relation is translated by a repetitive purchasing behavior and positive attitudes to the product, and it is this attachment which allow the customer to resist to the change of the brand due in its against –persuasive and to the Marketing efforts of the competition.

1-2- Abstract Models of the brand loyalty:

The marketing theory hasn't just defined loyalty, it also attempted to look for the causes. Any contribution to this research program can't ignore the respective contributions of both cognitive theories dominant which are in confrontation in the literature. The first one is an adaptive theory, in which the loyalty and the infidelity are treated as the always temporary states of a sequential process of adaptation of the customer. The second is a devolutive theory in which the loyalty is of acquired and mimetic behavior, motivated by the anticipations of the coexchangers. And the last one is an eclectic theory which tries to revisit the concept of loyalty, by looking at the phenomenon either as a purchasing behavior, but as a behavior of exchange.

1-3- The Adaptive Model of Loyalty:

The adaptive model admits as much the hypothesis of autonomy of the customer as that of the rational mimicry. With the first one the customer is supposed to make his decision independently of the way he develops it. We shall consider, for example, that his optimal level of stimulation is only the expression of its personality's features and what its expectations reflect only his desires and his personal values. With second the customer has to take into account the fact that his decision is taken in a certain social context. The significant correlations which Raju (1980) highlights between the professional status or the educational degree of the individuals and their optimal level of stimulation, underline the social influence in the process leading to the decision-making. Besides the debate which made a commitment on the nature of expectations in the process of confirmation/disconfirmation, seems today to turn in favour of "standards". At first conceived by the researchers as faiths limited to the brand of the product or the consummate service. Expectations are considered as sending back reference standards in a set of direct or indirect experiences vaster today. Individual standards attached to a class of products (product-based norms) according to Woodruff and alii (1983), social standards for Gomez (1994) who represents " the opinion averages " consumers or the superior limit of what that " the customer is entitled to wait ".

1-4- The Devolutive Model of Loyalty:

This model frees itself totally from hypotheses of rationality substantive and of autonomy. The customer is not any more isolated from other market players when he sets or when he maintains his decision of loyalty. Outside of the relation of exchange, that is on the not reserved market, the customer feels held by the agreements of loyalty. Inside the relation of exchange its decision to continue takes into account calculations of his partner. Calculations which he anticipates either by introspection, but by observing and by estimating the actual behavior and the reactions of this partner. The relational loyalty analyzes as a process in development during which the contributions in the commitments (commitment inputs) brought by each of both parts strengthen their mutual loyalty.

1-5- The Eclectic Model:

The loyalty eclectic approach, said so sometimes integrative, aims at associating the complementary aspects of a phenomenon, without leading to the absolute truth. We do not have to confuse the eclecticism with the syncretism which tries in vain to gran irreconcilable ideas. The eclecticism, consists in coordinating rival but complementary systems of thought one of the other one. In the case of the loyalty, this complementarity is all the more difficult to see, that the rival theories strive to mask it. Nevertheless, in his theory which inspires the behaviorist approach of the loyalty, Skinner (1965) recognizes the existence of the mental states which favors cognitivistes to define the loyalty. He sees only in them of simple mental copies of the behavior. On the other hand the cognitive theory of the loyalty tries too to explain the repeated purchases. Thus these two approaches serve the same purpose which is to explain the control of the behavior of loyalty. By control, we make reference to the processes which introduce, maintain, and sometimes stop the purchase of a mark. The idea of control applied to the behavior of loyalty of the buyer, considers that the purchase is at first a try before being an act. Purchases can be indeed considered as purposes, which are sometimes reached, sometimes missed, if outer obstacles annoy the intentions of the buyer (ex.: stock shortage, not referenced product). According to Oliver (1999), the intention of loyalty can change into action of loyalty only if the customer tries hard, in every opportunity of purchase, to surmount these obstacles.

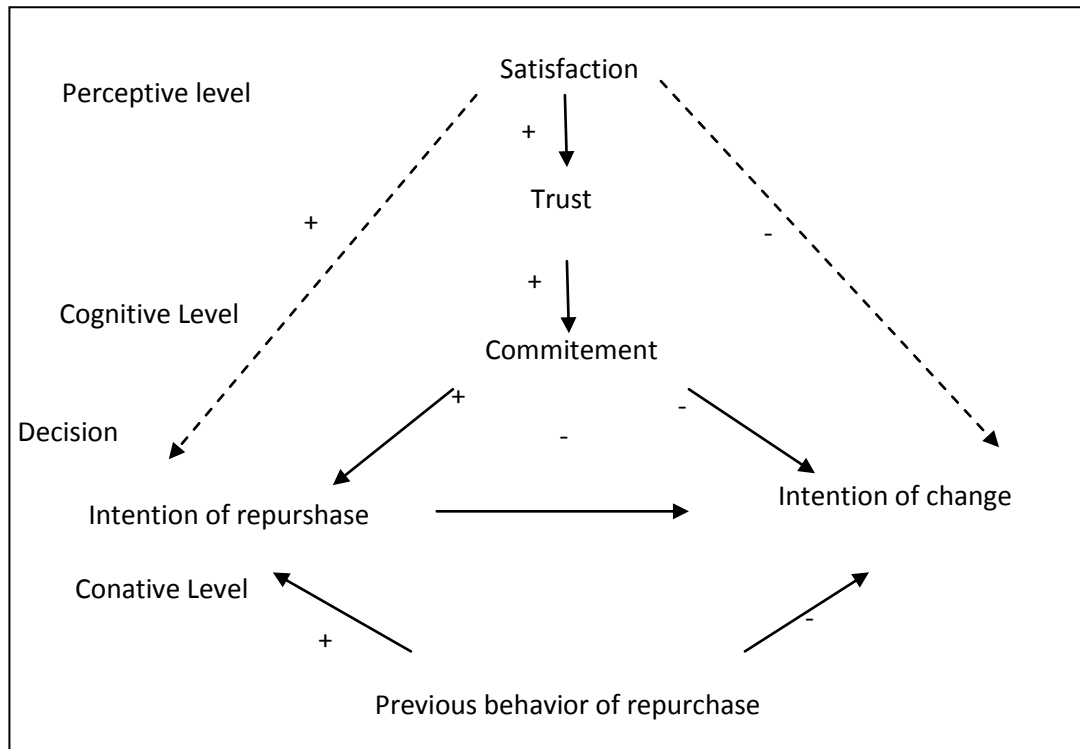
Thus, it turns out undeniable that to choose between two specific theories of the loyalty, can only limit the understanding of the phenomenon. With the adaptive theory we neglect the effect of the cognitive apprenticeship; with the devolutive theory we underestimate cruelly the individual, his emotional capacities, and his tendency for the autonomy.

Certain authors move forward besides that the adaptive loyalty (repeated purchases) can lead to the devolutive loyalty (commitment) while others hold the inverse hypothesis (Ambler, 1995). To report better the complex nature of the loyalty and exceed the theoretical oppositions which it arouses.

Therefore, the eclectic model simplifies deliberately the concepts and emphasizes the effect of apprenticeship. It favors three built of transactional loyalties: the intention of repurchase (loyalty during the next purchase), the intention of change (which explains the search for variety or the quality search), the previous behavior of repeated purchases.

The first two concepts reflect upstream the mental states the closest to the decision of loyalty, the third expresses downstream the loyalty noticed from actual repurchases. Our eclectic model bases on three hypotheses of apprenticeship, which define nine relations expected as underlines it the figure 1 this below:

Figure N° (01): The eclectic model of brand loyalty



Source : Frisou, J., Le contrôle du comportement de fidélité: premiers jalons pour une théorie dynamique et éclecctique, Thèse pour le doctorat en sciences de gestion, Université de Pau, 2004, p 55

2- The hypotheses of search:

The first category of hypotheses is of perceptive nature described by arrows in lines dotted lines. The customer is supposed made proof of hyperperspicacity; he anticipates directly the result of the future purchases from the satisfaction or from the dissatisfaction that he felt during the past purchases and adjusts of the blow his intentions of repurshase and change common. The expected relations are:

- H1 : The customer satisfaction strengthens its intention of repurchase*
- H2 : The customer satisfaction limits its intention of change*

The second category of hypotheses is of cognitive nature represented by arrows in full lines and suck heights. According to the common state of satisfaction or dissatisfaction got by products and services, the customer improves the judgment which he concerns the capacity of the mark or the person receiving benefits to satisfy him again (Trust), revalue his relational orientation (commitment), and updates its intentions of réachat and of change. The expected relations are:

- H3 : The customer satisfaction strengthens its trust in the brand*
- H4 : The trust favors the commitment of the customer in the relation*

H5 : The commitment of the customer in the relation strengthens the intention of repurchase
H6 : The commitment of the customer in the relation limits the intention of change
H7 : The intention of change limits the intention of repurchase of the customer

The last category of hypotheses is of conative nature, a represented by arrow in full lines and sucks full also and supposes that the behavior of repurchase previous influences the intention of repurchase running so:

H8 : The past behavior of repurchase strengthens the common intention of repurchase of the customer
H9 : The past behavior of repurchase limits the current intention of change of the customer

3- Data collection and scales of measures:

A questionnaire was distributed to 132 customers of the mobile phone operator Orascom Télécom Algeria. This sample of suitability was targeted in particular because the competitors of Orascom Telecom (Watanya Télécom Algeria, Algeria Telecom Mobilis) also operate on this market of mobile telephony

On 132 received questionnaires, the respondents were so structured: 52% women, 48% men and of majority (18-30) years: 53%. We underline that this sample of suitability gives an estimation moved closer enough of market shares.

Items used in this questionnaire were borrowed from scales of measure having already showed their ability, such as those of Morgan and Hunt (1994) for the commitment and the trust and that of Bône and Ellen (1992) for the intention of repurchase. Other scales (satisfaction, intention of change) had then been tested previous studies on the residential market : Frisou (1995).

The past behavior of loyalty of the customer is measured by the proportion of products and services which the respondent declares to have acquired with Orascom Télécom after its connecting. It is thus about declared and not directly observed purchasing behaviors.

Table N° (01): The scales of measure retained for the questionnaire

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Items retained after Purge of scales</i>
<i>Satisfaction towards products and services of Orascom Telecom</i>	<i>S1 - I am satisfied by the services which returns to me Orascom Telecom</i> <i>S3 - The quality of service of Orascom Telecom seems to me satisfactory</i>
<i>Trust in the operator Orascom Telecom</i>	<i>C2 - I trust in Orascom Telecom</i> <i>C3 - This company seems to me honest</i> <i>C4-Orascom Télécom answers customer expectations</i>
<i>Commitment in the relation with Orascom Telecom</i>	<i>E2 - I would like that this relation lasts for a long time even</i> <i>E3 - It is the relation which I hear if possible to protect</i>
<i>Intention of repurchase</i>	<i>For the next purchase of a product or a service of telecommunication...</i> <i>IR1- I will choose Orascom Telecom</i> <i>IR2 - ..., There are 99 chances on 100 that I deal with Orascom Telecom</i> <i>IR3 - ..., My intention is to take Orascom Telecom as supplier</i> <i>IR4- I shall consider Orascom Télécom the first choice for this kind of products or services</i>

Intention of change	For the next purchase of a product or a service of telecommunication... IC1- ..., There are 99 chances on 100 that I deal with a competitor IC2 - ..., My intention is to choose a competitor of Orascom Telecom
Response device: Scale of Likert in 5 marks	

Source: Developed by the author

4- Exploratory Analyse:

Because the correlations between the variables of the eclectic model can be important, it is possible that the respondents confused certain criteria or because certain criteria are redundant. That is why we proceeded to a factorial analysis of the latent variables, to determine what are variables latent. Several methods of factorial analysis of the latent variables exist. We used here the method of the main factors with the aim of generating five factors, before proceeding to a varimax rotation to facilitate the interpretation of the results by using the statistical XL-Stat software.

Table N° (02): Correlation between variables and factors

	<i>F1</i>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	<i>F4</i>	<i>F5</i>
<i>Repurchase 1</i>	0,664	0.005	0.248	-0.331	-0.031
<i>Repurchase 2</i>	0,629	0.092	0.130	-0.196	0.187
<i>Repurchase 3</i>	-0,430	-0.483	-0.248	-0.043	-0.364
<i>Repurchase 4</i>	0,687	0.009	0.364	0.051	0.081
<i>Change 1</i>	-0,488	-0.743	0.185	-0.328	0.129
<i>Change 2</i>	-0,519	-0.594	-0.054	-0.223	0.192
<i>Change 3</i>	0,602	0.124	-0.133	-0.089	0.610
<i>Change 4</i>	0,080	-0.389	0.037	0.356	0.007
<i>Satisfaction 1</i>	0,734	-0.393	0.481	0.250	-0.292
<i>Satisfaction 2</i>	0,731	-0.195	0.081	-0.162	0.225
<i>Satisfaction 3</i>	0,504	0.000	-0.155	-0.118	0.048
<i>Satisfaction 4</i>	0,815	0.163	0.112	0.013	0.204
<i>Trust 1</i>	0,745	-0.269	0.227	0.142	-0.030
<i>Trust 2</i>	0,688	-0.293	-0.204	-0.219	-0.093
<i>Trust 3</i>	0,665	-0.010	-0.209	-0.157	0.148
<i>Trust 4</i>	0,589	-0.002	-0.422	-0.285	-0.356
<i>Commitement 1</i>	0,501	-0.261	-0.404	0.514	0.066
<i>Commitement 2</i>	0,779	-0.149	-0.249	0.049	0.211
<i>Commitement 3</i>	0,810	0.148	-0.183	-0.112	0.106
<i>Commitement 4</i>	0,785	-0.198	-0.184	0.172	0.053

Source : Output of Xlstat Software

Faithful to the psychometric approach, we subjected at first the data collected in a series of factorial analyses in common and specific factors. They allowed us to eliminate several "defective" items, that is those who were weakly correlated in the restored factors, or those whose presence damaged the indications of internal consistency of scales under construction (alpha of Cronbach). This preliminary work allowed to clear a satisfactory factorial structure reproduced in the board 3. The last analysis with orthogonal varimax rotation indeed brings to the foreground five built which translate rather faithfully five studied specific concepts. Their items present saturations raised on a single factor and low saturations on the others. A factorial

analysis with oblique rotation confirms the existence of a correlation raised between factors confidence and commitment and the alphas of Cronbach are any superiors 0.74.

Table N° (03): Factorial parameters after rotation Varimax

	<i>F1 : Commitement</i>	<i>F2 : Change</i>	<i>F3 : Repurshase</i>	<i>F4 : Trust</i>	<i>F5 : Satisfaction</i>
<i>Repurshase 1</i>			0.558		
<i>Repurshase 2</i>			0.547		
<i>Repurshase 3</i>			-0.536		
<i>Repurshase 4</i>			0.623		
<i>Change 1</i>		-0.883			
<i>Change 2</i>		-0.718			
<i>Change 3</i>					
<i>Change 4</i>					
<i>satisfaction1</i>					0.648
<i>Satisfaction2</i>			0.081		
<i>Satisfaction3</i>					0,440
<i>Satisfaction4</i>			0.112		
<i>Trust 1</i>			0.227		
<i>Trust 2</i>				0,659	
<i>Trust 3</i>				0,574	
<i>Trust 4</i>				0,718	
<i>Commitement1</i>					
<i>Commitement2</i>	0,625				
<i>Commitement3</i>	0,613				
<i>Commitement4</i>	0,568				
<i>α of Cronbach</i>	0.8078	0.7427	0.85	0.8240	0.7706

Source: Outpout of Xlstat Software

5- Modelling, estimation of the parameters and the validation of the constructed:

The second generation methods are indeed more successful and more powerful than the classic multivariate methods. They allow to testsimultaneously the validity of the constructed ones, theirunidimensionnalite and the nomological validity, the appreciation ofwhich depends on networks of built which contribute to give meaningthem. We used a model of structural equations based on the analysis ofthe structures of covariance. The first one is the model describes whojoins exclusively in an eclectic logic (figure 2).

The parameters were estimated first time with a function of the maximum of credibility. The estimation (RV) of the parameters is postponed on board 2 this below:

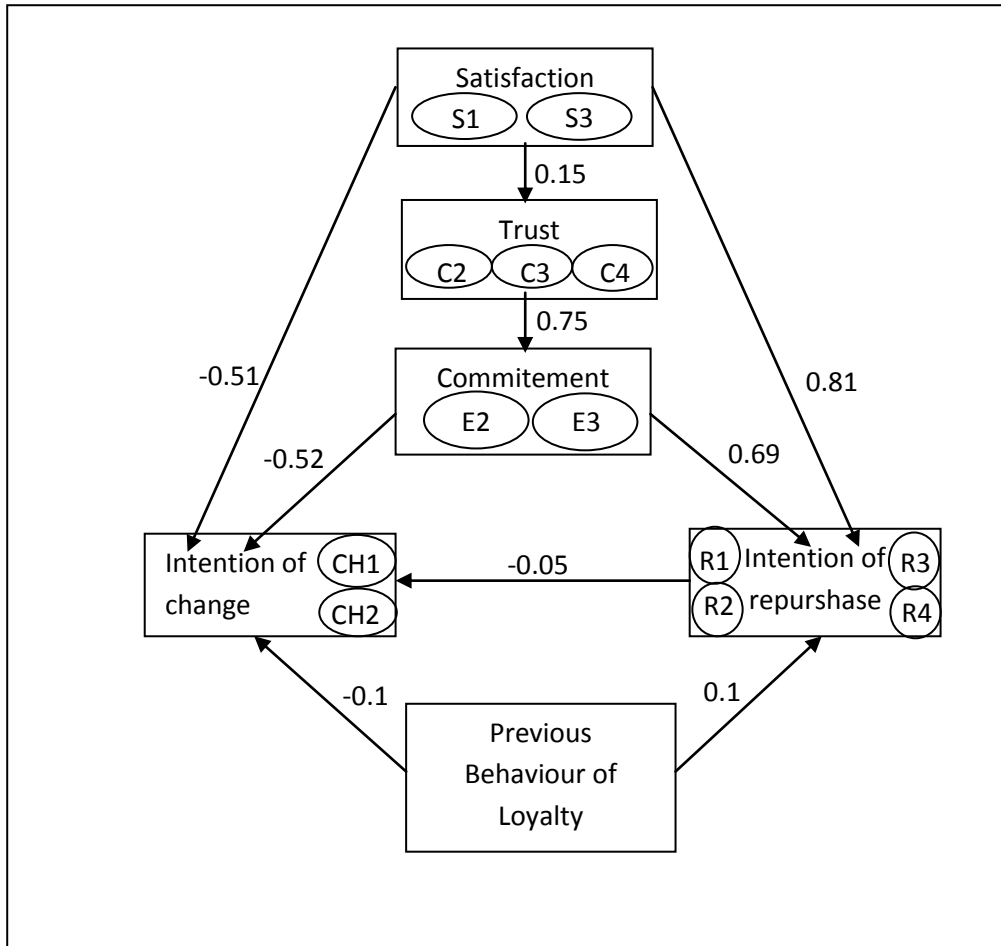
Table N° (05): Coefficients RV of model parameters

	<i>Repurshase</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Satisfaction</i>	<i>Trust</i>	<i>Commitement</i>
<i>Rrpurshase</i>	1.000	0.309	0.395	0.328	0.336
<i>Change</i>	0.309	1.000	0.337	0.272	0.284
<i>Satisfaction</i>	0.395	0.337	1.000	0.377	0.406
<i>Trust</i>	0.328	0.272	0.377	1.000	0.464
<i>Commitement</i>	0.336	0.284	0.406	0.464	1.000

Source: Outpout of Xlstat Software

After validation of the model, it turns out that all the expected relations are verified. The instruments of evaluation of Fornell and Larcker (1981) allowed us to validate the eclectic model. What gives us the following abstract plan?

Figure N° (02): Eclectic abstract model of the loyalty of the customers



Source: Developed by the author

6- Discussion of the results:

It turns out essential from then on to estimate the reserved theoretical contributions of the integration of the transactional and relational approaches of loyalty in a new approach. In other words, verify the possible credibility of the eclectic model. What stands out from it at first sight, it is the partial validation of the hypothesis of conative learning that is influence of the previous purchasing behaviors on the intention of repurchase and of change. However, none confirms the existence of a direct relation between intentions of repurchase and intention of change. This absence of link lives in the empirical contribution of the scale used to measure the intention of change because we are obliged to notice that it captures more the search for variety than the search of variety the quality search. The latter remains however independent from the satisfaction.

Involving now the hypothesis of perceptive learning, it is too that partially admitted in the elaborate eclectic model, because the customer the intentions of their purchasing behaviors.

It is also necessary to underline that the elaborate eclectic model of the loyalty of the customers dresses a seen limited enough explanatory power which its contribution lives rather in the plurality of the information which it brings on the understanding of the behavior of the loyalty of the customers as proves it the analysis of the direct and indirect effects of the constructed of the model on three levels: perceptible,

The elaborate eclectic model stresses however the significant direct effect between the variables of the cognitive level is: the trust and the commitment. It seems that the trust can strengthen the commitment of the customer and so to predispose him to continue his relation with the brand and so the effect of the commitment remains upper with the eclectic model whether he is concerning the intention of repurchase or concerning that of change which turns out limited.

The eclectic model described in a more complete way mechanisms fixative sprays of the loyalty and distinguishes what with the intention of the customer is of the autonomy of its judgment and what results from the relational constraint which it gave itself.

However, this eclectic model remains limited enough seen the reduced size of the sample which lifts a concern of unchecked representativeness, as well as the used scales of measure which are borrowed from the Marketing literature and which remain subject to structural modifications. Nevertheless, we remain rather optimistic to open the ways of this research to other perspectives, in particular: the retort of the eclectic model on other business sectors relative to convenience goods and packaged products and to allow groins the generalization of this model.

Conclusion:

If regarding research in marketing, it is always necessary to take into account the complexity of the phenomenon and the variety of the theories which report it. The eclectic model of the loyalty of the customer does not escape this rule seen that it translates attitudes and previous and current experiences of purchases into constant interaction and so translating the intentions of the customer and those by taking into account influences of the environment which operate to allow his intentions to come true or not. This loyalty passes by a process of perceptible, cognitive and conative apprenticeship. But conversely, it is excluded ignoring what takes place in the head of the customer, and it turns out imperative to reconsider the individual psychological differences which can explain why, placed in the same conditions, certain customers are faithful and others are not. Which leads to arrest loyalty also as a trend of the customer to check his purchasing behavior. This control process leads the customer to arbitrate between its internal capacities, the external stimulations which it receives from its environment, and its desire to surmount the obstacles which it meets to buy its favorite brand.

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