CONSUMERS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS THE USAGE OF MOBILE PHONE SERVICES IN ERODE CITY

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ABSTRACT

Telecommunication has been recognized world-over as an important tool for socio-economic development of a nation and plays a phenomenal role in the growth and modernization of various sectors of the economy. Over the last few years, Indian telecom market has shown an overwhelming growth due to domestic demand, policy initiatives undertaken by the Government and admirable efforts by the players of the industry and in the process, has managed to emerge as one of the youngest and fastest growing economies in the world. Factors like regulatory liberalization, structural reforms and competition played a very important part in this rapid transformation. The fact that India is one of the world's fastest growing telecom markets in the world, has acted as the primary driver for foreign and domestic telecommunication companies investing into the sector. It is also recognized as one of the most lucrative markets globally, resulting in massive investments being made in the sector both by the private and Government sector in the last decade. The services of mobile phone have become the way of life today. There are various mobile phone service providers operating in India. The present study focuses on the level of satisfaction of the consumers and the problems faced by them in the usage of mobile phone services in Erode City.

Keywords: Mobile Phone, Satisfaction, Service and Telecom

1. INTRODUCTION

The telecom industry has witnessed significant growth in subscriber base over the last decade, with increasing network coverage and a competition-induced decline in tariffs acting as catalysts for the growth in subscriber base. The growth and the potential have also served to attract newer players in the industry, with the result that the intensity of competition has kept increasing. India's telecom sector has experienced a massive upsurge in recent years, in all respects of industrial growth. Liberalization of the sector has not only led to rapid growth but also helped a

great deal towards maximization of consumer benefits, evident from a huge fall in tariffs. The introduction of Mobile Number Portability (MNP) in India has made the Indian Telecom market more competitive, in terms of service offerings and quality. The emergence of the mobile has benefitted people across all walks of life. It is expected to play a significant role in bridging the digital divide between the rich and poor, between near and far, thus in connecting the nation. It has not only become the primary communication medium for people, but is also finding numerous uses across various domains. Today, it is being used for banking transactions, making payments, acting as an educational and multimedia tool, etc. However, the urgent need is to deliver services that could enable efficient day-to-day life for the larger masses efficiently. It can be an efficient mode of spreading governance and can also be used across verticals such as agriculture and health care.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyse the level of satisfaction of the mobile users on various services offered to them by the mobile phone service providers.
- To bring out the problems faced by the users of mobile phone.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on survey method. In the present study, Simple Random Sampling Technique is employed to collect the data from the respondents in Erode Town. Accordingly, 100 respondents using mobile phone services have been interviewed with a well-structured Interview Schedule and data are collected. Maximum care has been taken to select the respondents with a view to give due representation to people of different walks of life. In the present study, both the primary data and secondary data have been used. The study is largely based on primary data. The required primary data have been collected through a well structured Interview Schedule both by visiting the houses of the respondents and by meeting the respondents from public places. Necessary secondary data have been collected from various sources like newspapers, magazines and websites to highlight on the various mobile service providers.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Level of Satisfaction towards the Usage of Mobile Phone Services

Rensis Likert's method of summated ratings is applied to find out the aggregate satisfaction of the mobile phone users by considering the statements which are identified as significant. The sample respondents are called to respond to each statement relating to satisfaction of mobile services, using 5 point rating scale ranging from highly satisfied to highly dissatisfied. If a respondent is highly satisfied with the statement, a scale value of 5 is assigned, scale value of 4 is assigned if his response is satisfied, 3 if it is neutral, 2 if dissatisfied and 1 if the respondent is

highly dissatisfied. The total score for each respondent from all the statements are calculated by using the above scoring procedure.

The mean score (20.86) is then calculated for the total score of 100 respondents. The standard deviation (2.80) is also calculated for the sample respondents. By using Mean + S.D (23.66) and Mean – S.D (18.06), the respondents are grouped into three categories viz., Low level (whose score is less than 18), Medium level (whose score is in between 19 and 24*)* and High level (whose score is above 24).

On the basis of above quantification procedure, the sample respondents have been classified into low level, medium level and high level. Details are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY SATISFACTION SCORE

Satisfaction Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Low	45	45
Medium	29	29
High	26	26
Total	**100**	**100**

Table 1 reveals that 45 per cent of the sample respondents are having low level of satisfaction, 29 per cent of the sample respondents are having medium level of satisfaction and 26 per cent of the sample respondents are having high level of satisfaction about the services offered by the mobile service providers. Hence, it can be concluded that majority of the sample respondents are having low level of satisfaction about the services offered by the mobile service providers. It is expected that independent variables of the sample respondents would influence the satisfaction level about the services of the mobile service providers. To examine the association between satisfaction level and independent variables, the following null hypothesis has been framed.

H_0: There is no significant association between various socio- economic variables (Age, Occupational Status, Marital Status, Monthly Family Income, Sim Card Brand Owned) and satisfaction level of the respondents about the services offered by the mobile service providers.

This hypothesis has been tested with Chi-square test at 5 per cent level of significance and the results are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN INDEPENDENT VARIABLES AND LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

Independent Variables	Chi-square Value	Table Value	Degrees of Freedom	Significant/ Not Significant
Age	9.498	9.488	4	Significant
Occupational Status	1.721	15.507	8	Not Significant
Marital Status	6.208	5.991	2	Significant
Monthly family Income	2.188	9.488	4	Not Significant
Sim Card Brand Owned	3.304	15.507	8	Not Significant

It is found from Table 2 that the variables namely age and marital status are significantly associated with the level of satisfaction of the consumers. Further, the variables namely occupational status, monthly family income and sim card brand owned are not significantly associated with the level of satisfaction of the consumers using mobile phone services.

4.2 Problems Faced by the Consumers in Using Mobile phone Services

The mobile phone service providers offer various services to its customers. The provision of mere service is not sufficient. The service providers have to offer quality service to its customers in order to satisfy them. Moreover, it is essential to find out the problems that are frequently faced by them. The problems faced by the mobile users may be due to many factors. It is the responsibility of service providers to focus on the various problems of the users. The Table 3 gives the classification of the respondents based on problems faced by them in using mobile phone.

TABLE 3
CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS BASED ON PROBLEMS FACED BY MOBILE USERS

Problems in using Mobile Phone	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	60	60
No	40	40
Total	**100**	**100**

The Table 3 reveals that 60 per cent of the respondents have problems in using mobile phones and 40 per cent of the respondents do not have any problem in using mobile phone. Hence, it is found that majority (60 per cent) of the respondents face problem in using mobile phones. To examine the problems in a detailed manner, Weighted Average Ranking Analysis is used. The problems such as Poor clarity of signal, Additional Services, Delayed connectivity, Improve billing system, Cross talk and Poor customer service are considered. By way of giving these problems in the Interview Schedule, the sample respondents are asked to assess each problem on its own significance. The details of the findings are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4
PROBLEMS FACED BY THE RESPONDENTS IN USING MOBILE PHONE: WEIGHTED AVERAGE RANKING ANALYSIS

Weighted score points(w)		6	5	4	3	2	1			
Factors \ Rank		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total Score (∑wx)	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Poor clarity of signal	x	16	18	16	12	2	2	292	13.90	I
	wx	96	90	64	36	4	2			
Additional Services	x	12	13	9	14	6	8	232	11.05	III
	wx	72	65	36	42	12	5			
Delayed connectivity	x	14	15	11	8	4	4	237	11.29	II
	wx	84	75	44	24	8	2			
Improper billing system	x	6	3	11	10	16	13	163	7.76	V
	wx	36	15	44	30	32	6			
Cross talk	x	8	7	6	8	16	11	169	8.05	IV
	wx	48	35	24	24	32	6			
Poor customer service	x	4	4	7	8	16	22	150	7.14	VI
	wx	12	20	28	24	32	32			
Total		60	60	60	60	60	60			

Note: x - Number of Respondents, w- Weights

It is found from the Table 4 that the most important problem faced by the mobile phone users is

Poor clarity of signal with weighted average score of 13.90, followed by Delayed connectivity

(11.29), Additional Services (11.05), Cross talk (8.05), Improper billing system (7.76) and Poor customer service (7.14).

5. SUGGESTIONS

In the light of above findings of the present study, the following suggestions have been made to improve the services provided by the mobile phone service providers.

- It is suggested that the telecom authorities have to concentrate on improving the level of satisfaction of the mobile phone users. In this regard, steps must be taken to remove unnecessary charges levied on mobile users in the form of advertisement and reduce roaming charges.

- The present study reveals that the most important problem faced by the mobile users is poor clarity of signal. Therefore, it is suggested that the network connection must be improved by constructing adequate towers in rural and semi-urban areas.

- It is suggested that more awareness must be created among the consumers about the mobile phone services offered. It can be done through effective advertising in proper advertising media. The advertising medium has to be selected by considering the target group as there is stiff competition prevailing in the market.

6. CONCLUSION

The impact of the telecommunication on the consumers is incredible. In today's fast revolving era, the mobile phone becomes a necessity in everyone's life. The present study has been undertaken to know the level of satisfaction of the mobile users regarding various services offered to them and the problems faced by the mobile phone users. It is identified that most of the respondents have low level of satisfaction and more problems in using mobile phone services. The services offered by the mobile phone service providers can be improved when the constructive suggestions given are put into practice. It will enhance the quality of service provided by the mobile phone service providers there by bringing a successful future to the telecommunication sector.

7. REFERENCES

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