SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

“The greatest polluting element in the earth’s environment is the proliferation of electro magnetic fields. I consider that to be a far greater threat on a global scale than warming, or the increase of chemical elements in the environment.”

– Dr. Robert Becker, two time noble prize nominee.

Cellular service is taking advantage of an opportunity to become a highly distinguished and recognized industry leader in the cellular communications industry. It is the goal of any company to become established as the leading distributor of wireless communications services.

In order to achieve this goal, Cellular providers' critical success factors will be to identify emerging trends and integrate them into Cellular Providers' operations, respond quickly to technology changes be there early, provide high-quality services, continue to invest time and money in marketing and advertising, continue to expand into specialty markets, and stay ahead of the "technology curve."

6.1 The study on cellular service providers

In this study, three major cellular services have been considered. The companies were formed in different locations with different type of management capitalized on the growing wireless communications industry to create a niche market for its services and accessories. These Cellular service providers have maintained a technological lead in the marketplace and provided the best quality care for the consumer. Today, revenue sources include a variety of phones, and a full range of accessories and services.
6.2 The Services

These companies have developed mix of services targeting both businesses and consumers. At today's breakneck pace of business, companies need more ways than ever to keep in touch, and the easier the better. Therefore, the cellular service providers' innovative product and service offerings provide the best advantages to customers, including sleek and innovative cellular phone models, text and numeric paging, data capability, no roaming or landline connection charges, and much more.

6.3 The Market

The ten-year outlook in the wireless communications service is excellent. The number of new cellular subscribers in the country increased dramatically from 2005 to 2010, and 2011-2012 saw continuation of that growth. The number of new subscribers exceeded 10 million, with a record 11.5 million net new subscribers in 2005, for a total of 55.3 million at the end of that year. By the end of 2012 the figure reached around 80 million. While projections differ, the number of cellular and PCS subscribers in the country is expected to have a compound average growth rate of 12%. With the evolution of new technology, this industry is expected to generate increased revenues.

6.4 Market growth

Current economic conditions driving cellular service providers' industry sector include a rising GNP, interest rates edging up gradually, communications economy that is growing, and an increasing number of consumers with greater amounts of disposable income. The savings rate has begun to rise as well. Warning signs of change include rising interest rates and inflation. If these begin to rise sharply, it signals a faltering economy and can have negative effects on all businesses including cellular service providers.
The Indian Department of Commerce estimates that crores of rupees are invested each year for research and development in this sector. The number of new cellular subscribers in the country increased dramatically during last few years saw continuation of that growth. The number of new subscribers entered in to the cellular market with a significant growth. With the evolution of new technology, this industry is expected to generate increased revenues.

The explosive growth of the Internet, as a tool for global communications, has enabled millions of people to interact electronically. Rapid acceptance of the Internet as a communications platform by both businesses and consumers has created the foundation for significant growth in business-to-business and business-to-consumer e-commerce. The cellular and PCS industries continued to attract more non-business users largely as a result of a decline in the cost of handsets and bundled service packages. Additionally, it is seen as fashionable to have a handset while driving or interacting with others.

6.5 Competition and Buying Patterns

Effective competitive strategies are built upon understanding what defines and determines if another company is a competitor. Cellular service providers do not believe that all cellular and two-way radio service firms compete with each other because many of these do not provide the array of services that they provide. The number of companies selling cellular services continues to grow and each competes for a share of the market. This translates into escalating advertising costs especially with larger and established companies. This trend is expected to continue and intensify over the coming years.

Cellular service providers’ outline for competitive strategy includes monitoring competitors for innovative changes, devising responsive and timely strategies, contingency and implementation plans, devising marketing
strategies, compare pricing by rivals, and remain always watchful of technology developments and innovation by service providers, and respond accordingly.

6.6 Marketing strategies of cellular service providers

The selected three cellular service providers (i.e. BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone) have developed their sales and marketing strategies by analyzing their own internal strengths and then analyzing current market conditions. This process helped cellular service providers to create their marketing and sales strategy to leverage their competitive advantages with a unique marketing strategy, thus establishing these organizations as the nation's leading wireless communications service provider for businesses and consumers.

6.7 Need and significance of the study

As a large group of cellular service providers, the BSNL, AIRTEL and VODAFONE, they have to attract all people including the business category for whom the customer satisfaction is more important to survive in the market. The no of cellular service users is increasing day-by-day, the providers of cellular services are also increasing in the same proportion. The correlation between the proportions of these two is prominent and significant. Inspite of the various levels of their breach comparative data across the Indian marketing system emphases on the business trends with higher marketing rates and a greater practice of sales and service techniques. Therefore, these cellular service providers developed their sales and marketing strategy by analyzing their own internal strengths and then analyzing current market conditions. This process helped cellular service providers to create marketing and sales strategy to leverage their competitive advantages with a unique marketing strategy, thus establishing themselves as the nation's leading wireless communications service providers for businesses and consumers.
These companies will create momentum through critical mass and brand recognition. These cellular service providers will monitor the effectiveness of their marketing efforts in order to determine the advertising return on investment and the commerce generated from the various channels. Hence, the selected cellular service providers' ongoing marketing strategy involves the company maintaining and expanding a broad base of clients in target territories, establishing alliances with product and service companies so that it can deliver high-quality products, and invoking its own organization to bring these together and implement total solutions for customers. The company will move from the traditional product-focused strategy to a total-focus on customer ownership.

Therefore, it is necessary to study on the marketing strategies of cellular services in connection with the satisfaction levels of people who are utilizing these services through their mobile phones. In this connection the present study has considered Visakhapatnam city as study area by the investigator for his research. This study can provide information that is useful for developing interventions on marketing strategies and improve the business of cellular services with the response of different cellular using customers. Further, this study has been conducted to understand behavior of cellular service users related to cellular service providers' marketing strategies to attract the customers through their packages, schemes, etc. Hence, the study has been entitled “Marketing Strategies of Cellular Services – A Study on Visakhapatnam Urban Cellular Customers with a Special Focus on BSNL, AIRTEL and VODAFONE”.

The objective of incentives is to portray cellular service providers' goals and products as an attractive functionality. It is also to show customers how to use the latest in technology as it relates to wireless communications services.
6.8 Objectives

1) To make a review of the present market scenario in Telecom Sector and to understand the prevailing competition among cellular operators.
2) To examine the various schemes launched by the various cellular operators.
3) To study customer perceptions and satisfaction in Visakhapatnam urban about the service providers and their service quality.
4) To study the marketing strategies applied by various cellular operators to sell their service products.
5) To find out the successful strategies of highest profit making top two private and top one government cellular operators.
6) To explore the applicability of this study to any other product for its successful marketing.

6.9 Methodology

This study has adopted random sampling method for data collection. A total of 600 cellular service users from BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone have been chosen for the present study. However, despite repeated visits and requests, some respondents failed to handover the filled in questionnaires. Hence 520 filled in questionnaires were received and the sample consists of 175 BSNL customers, 185 Airtel customers and 160 Vodafone customers is taken into consideration.. The sample size was decided after taking the existing customer population ratio of the service providers also into the account.. A pre-designed research tool viz., Questionnaire was applied in this study to collect the required information from the sample subjects. The schedule is applied to study the marketing strategies of cellular services on customers with their socio-economic and demographic characters in Visakhapatnam city. Hence the Visakhapatnam city was considered for the present investigation, the interviews were conducted either at the work place of employees, business people, professionals, labourers, street vendors, etc, and for students at their colleges. Data from secondary sources was collected from published reports, books,
journals, and articles.

6.10 Presentation of the Study

The study has been presented in six chapters.

The first chapter “Introduction” discussed about the history of telephone, history of mobile phone, concept & technical aspects of cellular communications. Besides that, the chapter also explains about the communications in India, History of Indian telecom, the present scenario of Indian telecom sector and marketing of cellular services.

The History and marketing strategies of major cellular services BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone has been presented in the second chapter. This chapter also states about nine more cellular service providers at a glance.

The third chapter “Review of related literature” out lines a brief review of earlier literature and studies performed on cellular services, cellular services marketing and their strategies.

Chapter four “Research Methodology” presents an overview of study setting, need for the study, objectives, hypotheses, methodology, data collection, sampling techniques and limitations of the study.

The fifth chapter is analysis chapter, which describes and compares the perceptions of respondents of selected area on given schedules.

Summary, major findings, conclusions and suggestions emanating from the study are presented in the last chapter.
6.11 Major findings

Product factor

1. The data reveals that more than seventy percent of respondents are using prepaid connections and sometimes they felt unhappy with experience of utilizing the service because of some technical problems.

2. It is evident from the data that most of the BSNL respondents are interested in money transfers, stock market trading, games, movies, music, and chatting. Airtel respondents are interested in Cinema and chatting and the Vodafone customers are interested in all the above services but with a relative rate of increase.

3. It is clearly visible from the response of cellular service users that majority of the BSNL, Airtel & Vodafone customers are interested in discounted card for monthly calling. All of the BSNL, Vodafone & Airtel respondents are not much interested and reluctant towards launching of 10Rs/- or lesser value of prepaid cards. The data revealed that most of the respondents choose e-purchase and e-reservations to be included with present service and they stick to particular brand of service. It is clear that most of respondents purchase talk-time based on their need and requirement.

4. More than sixty percent of respondents aware of number portability, but most of the respondents are aware of 3G technology. It is evident from the data that forty percent of respondents view videos/ movies occasionally in their mobiles.

5. According to the data most of the respondents are using single SIM mobile and they consume only 10 rupees and 20 rupees talk time per day because they make 5-15 calls in-a-day.

6. Majority of respondents face coverage problem. But still they are satisfied with the network service and connectivity of the current service provider. Narrowly they face network connectivity problem while they are traveling. Majority of the customers of all the selected three cellular
services felt that the morning time i.e. 0-6 am and 6-10 am they face connectivity problem with their cellular service.

7. It is evident from the data that more than fifty percent of BSNL customers are aware of mobile TV telecast, Video calls, and internet banking, whereas more than fifty percent of Airtel respondents are aware of Mobile TV telecast, Video calls, Navigation and Internet banking. In the view of Vodafone respondents, sixty percent are aware of Video calls and fifty percent are only aware of Video services, mobile broad band services, maps, internet banking and movies down loading.

8. More than sixty percent of respondents don’t recharge through internet, but most of the respondents are aware of mobile banking service and railway reservation.

9. Most of the respondents are receiving unwanted messages but the service provider didn’t help to restrict unwanted messages.

10. It is clearly visible from the data that most of the customers are still doubtful about getting full talktime, majority of respondents agree that (nearly 70%), top up will be done within few seconds after recharge. Most of the respondents aware that outgoing calls cannot be continued without talktime balance regarding prepaid customers and non-payment of monthly bill regarding post paid customers. There is a mixed response about unbranded cellular operators and warranty to provide quality talk time for cellular customers.

**Price factor**

1. Most of respondents are comfortable with the pricing of cellular service providers and fifty percent of them are interested in cash payment mode to recharge their cellular service. Majority favoured need based product pricing and flexible pricings simultaneously.

2. The data revealed that most of the respondents consume 200Rs/- value of prepaid card, but forty percent of respondents spend 500Rs/- per
month on their mobile connection, and they feel prepaid is more economical than postpaid.

3. Most of the respondents feel ISD rates are costly but they are satisfied with the local call charges charged by the operator and they are satisfied with the present billing service.

4. More than fifty percent of respondents admit getting their billing information in time, but more than forty percent of respondents are not aware of the billing system of the company. Most of the respondents get billing updates through customer care.

5. It is evident from the data that more than seventy percent of respondents agree to the statement price discounts are one of the marketing strategies of cellular service providers and customers figures vary according to price variations. Nearly fifty percent of the respondents agree that a family consumption of talktime is Rs.1000. Most of the respondents also accept that quality services naturally cost more, low call tariffs result in poor services, price allowances inspire more and price discounts motivate customers to purchase talk time.

**Place factor**

1. More than fifty percent of BSNL respondent decision of purchase is based on purchase location, whereas fifty percent of Airtel respondents and little more of Vodafone respondent’s purchase decision is based on location of purchase. Even though most of the respondents buy their cell phone talktime from nearby shop and they are satisfied with the services of franchises. The response of the cellular customers indicates that whenever they fail to get recharge from the nearest shops they are prepared to go to nearby town for recharge, but not wait or drop or postpone buying decision.
2. Most of respondents opine the service provider’s outlet locations should be in the middle of town and also at commercial centres, so that the personal services can be availed from cellular services. Further 43.8% of total respondents agree with the influence of service outlet existing at central point of the city.

3. The data shows that more than forty percent of total respondents accept that connectivity problems in town areas are lesser than in village areas. Moreover, sixty percent of respondents agree that recharge cards are almost available at every shop. While 37% expect that recharge cards should be delivered to their home, around seventy percent of the respondents felt E-recharge is more useful than recharge cards. They opined retail outlet locations are to be increased and purchase of talktime should be restricted for the age groups i.e. less than 18 years and more than 60 years.

Promotion factor

1. From the data analysis and responses of the cellular customers it is clear that most of the respondents come to know about cellular service through newspapers but nearly forty percent of respondents are attracted with mouth talk and offer of more free services. Most of the respondents appreciate the cellular companies’ if benefits are directly given to customer, and they opined mouth talk and personal selling are advisable and advantageous to illiterates.

2. Most of the respondents do not prefer a particular cellular service due to the reason of their favorite cine hero/ heroine being brand ambassador for that. More than fifty percent of cellular customers of all the selected three cellular services are satisfied with the after sale services of their service providers, but they don’t know about the schemes and offers provided by them.
3. An overwhelming response of the cellular service users indicates that they bought mobile as they wanted it and they felt it gives convenience of calling any time which is the most important reason for purchasing the mobile.

4. More than forty percent of the customers get knowledge about cellular operator through sales persons, but more than thirty percent said they know through some other sources. More than fifty percent of the respondents have been attracted to take the cellular connection by television advertisement, but majority of the customers know about the talktime offers through hoardings and news papers. Around seventy percent of the respondents purchase talktime depends on the offers, but a few of the respondents maintain 4 to 5 SIMs for talk time offers. Major group of respondents agree that they maintain more number of cellular services to avail offers. Most of the customers agree that publicity plays an important role to take cellular connection but not the talk time. Therefore, it shows from the response of the customers that incentives given to customers are also part of promotional activities/ marketing strategies of cellular services and normally incentives are given in terms of talktime to the customers.

People factor

1. It is evident from the response of the customers that majority of BSNL, Airtel & Vodafone respondents said they are never a source of influence for existing customers, but influence prospective customers. Hence the data indicates that more than forty percent of BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone customers said ‘sometimes’ they may have that influence on same level of customers.

2. Majority of the total respondents opine the appearance and behaviour of service personnel never prompt them to take cellular connection. Nearly fifty percent of Vodafone customers strongly supported the non-
influence of service personnel behaviour and appearance, whereas thirty two percent of total respondents agreed that they take cellular connection depending on the looks and behaviour of service personnel.

3. Around twenty percent of total respondents said they will not quit a good cellular company just because of poor service personnel, but nearly forty percent of total respondents opined that sometimes they may quit that service because of poor service rendered though it is a good company.

4. More than thirty percent of total respondents opined they will quit that service, if the service provider is not that much good. More than thirty percent of total respondents said that they do not quit that service provided good service is rendered. More than thirty percent are not clear about their decision.

5. Around forty percent of total respondents from BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone are aware of the role of telecom services in providing broad brand without using cable net work. However, more than thirty percent of respondents contradicted this.

6. It indicates that forty percent of Vodafone customers are more reactive to purchase for the customer care operators alerts on mobile phone. More than thirty percent of total respondents are non-reactive to purchase and only five percent of respondents are reactive ‘some times’.

7. It is clearly visible from the particulars that around fifty percent of Vodafone customers information through SMS, whereas fifty two percent of BSNL customers get information through the same mode. Only eight percent of total respondents get communicated through internet but thirty percent of total respondents are communicated through postal service. Nearly fourteen percent of total respondents are getting information through call ups.
8. It is discernible from the particulars that majority respondents from BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone expect the customer care personnel should be knowledgeable whereas more than twenty percent opined they should be customer friendly. Eight percent of respondents said they should be obedient and around seventeen percent opined they should be helpful. Only two percent of total respondents declared that it is not a matter of concern for them.

9. Around sixty percent of respondents accept that their queries are resolved in a reasonable time period. More than fifty percent are complementing their customer service representative as courteous. Only twenty three percent accept their service representative as knowledgeable persons. More than thirty percent agree that they are attracted by the personal appearance of sales person while taking connection. Most of the people accept good service delivery as a powerful marketing strategy.

10. Around fifty percent agree influence of good customers on other customers and more than fifty percent accept influence of motivated service personnel. Nearly forty two percent accept the influence of beautiful sales persons. More than seventy percent of the respondents accepted number portability is a boon given to quit poor service. Around sixty percent opine that service quality will improve over launching of MNP.

Physical evidence factor

1. It indicates that more than forty percent of BSNL and Airtel respondents get connections from authorized show rooms. Twenty percent of total respondents get their connections through franchises, whereas ten percent get through a marketing executive. Thirty percent of total respondents get wherever services are available irrespective of specific interests.
2. It is evident from the data that forty percent of the total respondents say they are received in good manner in customer service outlets. Seventeen percent opined that they are not received in good manner. While twenty percent of respondents do not observe these things, same percent faced mixed experiences.

3. It is clearly visible that more than fifty percent of total respondents hold the opinion that physical evidence factor of a cellular service outlet have only partial influence. Twelve percent denied the influence of physical evidence and only sixteen percent accept the influence of physical evidence.

4. More than forty percent of total respondents prefer only service whereas thirty percent prefer only physical evidence but twenty percent of the respondents neither support service nor physical evidence.

5. Around forty percent of total respondents comprising BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone are satisfied on the basis of the image of service organization. While the fifty eight percent of total respondents are satisfied with the services of customer care, eleven percent are not.

6. It is visible from the data that around forty percent of total respondents are interested in getting cell phone connection and service at one place. Whereas twenty percent are interested in getting only cell phone sales at one place, eleven percent are interested in getting cellular connection facility at separate place. It can be concluded that majority of the respondents from Vodafone are opting cell phone connection and service at only one place.

7. It is also clear that around twenty nine percent of total respondents buy a new connection from business cards, twenty percent from statements, twenty three percent from reports and twenty two percent from guaranty.
8. It is evident from the data that more than thirty percent of total respondents from BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone expect a facility of comfortable seating, whereas a few respondents want to have drinking water facility. Around twenty percent expect A.C. to be provided, eighteen percent live music and fourteen percent toilets. It can be concluded that more than fifty percent are expecting A.C with comfortable seating.

9. The data shows that fifty percent are attracted by brochures, forty nine percent by physical evidence, fifty one percent by the excellent facilities provided and forty five percent by business cards and statements of good services whereas sixty percent by billing updates through SMS & customer care persons. More than forty percent agree that billing statements of their service provider are very beautiful and transparent. Around forty seven percent denied the influence of dress code of employees of service providers. More than forty percent opined that they don’t face any problem in service from the provider.

Process factor

1. It is clearly visible from the particulars that forty seven percent of total respondents opined getting cellular service is a complex process, whereas more than thirty percent disagreed with this statement.

2. The data indicates that forty percent of total respondents are interested in service on calling, forty two percent are interested in service against SMS and nearly seventeen percent of respondents on other modes than service on calling and SMS.

3. Twenty percent of total respondents are expecting voice quality, forty percent are interested in good services, twenty five percent are in need of wide coverage, whereas fourteen percent are much interested in quick connectivity.

4. It is found that twenty percent of total respondents are having long waiting time, whereas fifty percent are getting connected with customer
care operator with in a reasonable time frame. Around sixteen percent opined that they are getting connection ‘quickly’ with customer care operators.

5. More than thirty percent of total respondents comprising BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone are getting recharged with in a reasonable time whereas more than thirty percent are getting quick recharge. Nearly twelve percent opined that long time is needed to get recharge.

6. Around forty eight percent of total respondents comprising BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone are getting their complaints resolved with in a reasonable time, whereas twenty percent of respondents have to wait long time to get their complaints resolved. Nearly nineteen percent opined their complaints get resolved very quickly.

7. It is clearly visible from the data that more than fifty percent of total respondents opined that they are getting services equal to the value of money spent. Around twenty percent are not sure about value of the services offered. Nearly sixteen percent opined that they are not getting services exactly equal to the money spent, whereas nine percent are of the opinion that they are getting excellent services for the value of money they spent.

8. Around forty five percent of total respondents, agreed the waiting time for getting questions addressed is realistic. Nearly twenty percent disagreed with the statement.

9. More than forty percent of total respondents said they will not change their service provider if given a choice, whereas twenty five percent agreed that they will change surely if given a choice.

10. It is evident from the data that around thirty six percent of total respondents are getting activation with in a time of less than a day, whereas thirty percent are getting on the next day. Nineteen percent opined that it takes 2 to 3 days for activation.

11. It is clearly visible from the data that more than thirty percent of total respondents comprising BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone are facing problem
of call drops occasionally, whereas twenty seven percent are facing it frequently. But thirty four percent of respondents are not facing the problem of call drops at all. Further, ten percent of total respondents are getting the percentage of call drops at very high rate. Whereas more than twenty percent of respondents are getting call drops at higher rate. Nearly twenty two percent and fourteen percent of respondents are having problem of call drops with in a specific region at low and very low rate respectively.

6.12 Conclusion

Activities contributing to company success include identifying emerging trends and integrate them into operations, respond quickly to technology changes, provide high-quality services, continue to invest time and money in marketing and advertising, continue to expand into specialty markets, and stay ahead of the “technology curve”. The marketing strategies of cellular service providers are highly dependent upon measuring resources they need in order to execute their plans and be competitive. Their method includes qualitative and/or quantitative measurements of competition and by estimating their own company growth, sales, and cash flows. Their resources are also measured in terms of people, equipment, financial, and critique to see if the resources fit are adequate for the situation. Resources are available as needed to meet the technology curve. In general their strengths include business management, accounting and finance, knowledge of the wireless communications services industry, and experience in running successful businesses in the past. Therefore, the cellular service providers pride themselves on their high-quality customer service. Although excellent customer service is expected, not all provide this. Cellular service providers are available at all times for customer orders and inquiries.
6.13 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study identified so many gaps still persisting between customers and service providers. Due to stringent competition among various cellular service providers, they are always trying to be loyal to customer interests. There is an unseen gap between rendering of service and profitability of service providers. They are still lagging behind to reach expectations of all segments of customers and extension of service to full satisfaction of the customer. Due to built in bureaucratic behaviour of government operators, the private cellular service providers are getting advantage to that extent. This study is not complete in all aspects, as it is leaving so many areas to carry out further studies. Based on this study, some areas are identified, where the cellular operators can focus for getting more customer support.

1. A group of respondents felt unhappy with experience of utilizing the service because of some technical problems. So there is a need of sophisticated software for easy utilization of all the services provided by the cellular operators. This enhances 70% of respondents to be able to utilize the services to their fullest satisfaction.

2. As the utilization of cellular services is taking place at each corner of the world, still there are many areas where the network of some particular services has not covered. So there is a need for installation of cell towers in each end every corner make to the services available to all people in the world.

3. During festivals like New Year, Christmas, etc., the network of almost all the cellular services will be busy because of all the people throughout the world utilize the cellular services at a time. In order to overcoming this situation, and the cellular service providers should take remedies for the benefit of the customers.

4. Now-a-days, more than sixty percent of the cellular service users especially in India are from working group and housewives. These people utilize the cellular services one for livelihood and the other for
the time pass. Therefore, to facilitate these people there is a need for giving call rates at a low price than the present call rates.

5. Still in some remote villages there are no cellular service outlets to assist or facilitate the people who are illiterates and utilizing cellular services. So the cellular service providers should install their service outlets to create more awareness among those people on their services.

6. The satisfaction level of cellular service users is the most important factor in the marketing strategies by cellular service providers. This will be possible only through the best service provided to the cellular service customers. So customers should be the main role players in formulating marketing strategies by cellular service providers. Therefore, the cellular service providers should satisfy their customers through their schemes and services.

7. Majority (nearly 75%) of total respondents comprising BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone are interested in prepaid, only 25% opt for post-paid connection. Normally post paid connections can be continued for longer periods, whereas the prepaid cannot. Connections sustained will strengthen the cellular operators in terms of profits.

8. 30 percent of the respondents are interested in taking discounted card for unlimited talking throughout the year. This could be a better option for cellular service providers to get one year amount of call charges in advance and catch hold of customers. This is one area to concentrate.

9. Nearly 38 percent of the respondents are interested in taking discounted card for unlimited talking all thirty days in a month. This is another area for cellular service providers to look up.

10. Nearly 64 percent of respondents are interested to continue with same operator provided they do not render worst services. All cellular service providers have to take care of these things to retain the existing customers.

11. Nearly 27 percent of respondents opted that they will also purchase talk-time based on the prices discounts irrespective of their need. So this is
also one important area for service providers to formulate strategies. They can give price discounts in the areas of low cellular population to encourage them to purchase talk time and offer special low prices at weekends, festival seasons to utilize full spectrum.

12. Majority of respondents, nearly 70 percent, are able to consume 10 to 20 Rs value of talk time in a day. Operators have to encourage them further to consume more talk time by offering extra talk time to the consumers of more than 20Rs/- category.

13. More than 36 percent of respondents comprising of BSNL, Airtel and Vodafone, are finding problem in coverage. This should be taken care of to sustain current customer base, without losing a single one.

14. While traveling, nearly 43 percent of respondents are getting non-connectivity problems. This problem is persisting also in some specific regions. These difficulties are to be overcome for achieving full satisfaction of the customers.

15. Mobile banking is one important area for cellular operators to gain big momentum for regular financial transactions of the customers. For this, they have to educate more and more customers initially. It will be a big area for operators to flourish.

16. Railway reservations through mobile application is another area having large potential to pay profits for the cellular operators. Customers are to be properly educated, encouraged and trained for learning of this application first.

17. More than 72 percent of respondents are not happy with receiving of the unwanted messages. Cellular operators can convince their customers by offering some talk time allowance for them to receive those messages happily, provided cellular operators are getting benefits to that extent.

18. As majority of respondents are non-reactive for the news alerts, cellular service operators have to work in this area to get loyalty and faith of customers to generate purchase intent in them. If they are successful in this area, it will be a good factor for increase of their business.
19. Majority of respondents are more interested to buy cell phone talk time from nearby shop. So that instant availability of recharge facility is required to increase business. Cellular service providers have to ensure and concentrate on this area to get advantage of this issue. So they have to make recharge facility available in all streets and wards of the country either by increasing outlets or by appointing franchises.

20. Nearly 28 percent of respondents opined that getting cellular connections in rural areas is very difficult. Due to this reason, many persons from the rural segments are getting connections in turns. This is resulting in poor identification of customers while calculating statistical details of cellular subscribers. This is also one area for cellular operators to expand their services and to gain advantage out of this.

21. Majority of respondents came to know about particular cellular service through TV and News paper advertisements. So these cellular service providers can think of increasing publicity or promotional activities through both of these mediums. Publicity through hoardings attracted only 6% of the respondents. So this can be further reduced, more over publicity through hoardings can be seen by the people, who travel on that way and updating data on hoardings time to time is very expensive.

22. More than 50 percent of respondents opined that they will be happy if the benefit is given directly to them instead of spending on advertising. So cellular service providers may think in this line to benefit customers and themselves.

23. Personal selling and mouth talk are accepted by respondents as best tools to promote cellular services among illiterate persons. So this can be another area to concentrate for cellular service providers to penetrate in that segment.

24. More than 60 percent of respondents indicated clearly that branding by cine hero is not a reason at all for taking cellular connection. So cellular operators need not spend more budgets for promoting cellular products by cine artistes.
25. Majority of respondents are not aware of promotional as well as attractive schemes launched from time to time. So that they are unable to utilize. So service providers may focus on this area to achieve targeted profits also from these schemes.

26. Most of the respondents firmly said that they are ready to quit even it is a good cellular operator, provided good service is not rendered by their service persons. This is another area for cellular service providers mainly and urgently to concentrate.

27. Though many respondents are getting communication through SMS, all cannot read and understand those messages as they are not in their own language. Hence cellular service providers have to focus on this area to send messages in understandable language or telling them in local language through customer care operators.

28. The study says that persons are not required to market talk time but for value added service products, it is required it seems. Many customers are not aware of all schemes. Marketing executives may be helpful in this area to promote all schemes launched by cellular service providers.

29. All cellular service providers should concentrate mainly on creating awareness among customer regarding mobile number portability so that customers can shift to another operator as per his interests. This will be more beneficial for good cellular service providers.

30. Majority of respondents are interested in all cellular related service facilities under one roof. So operator may think of providing cell phone sales, service, cellular connections and related service at one place. This may be followed all over the country. This will boost up sale of cell phones and cellular connections simultaneously.

31. Most of the respondents are interested in good ambience and hygiene at retail service outlets. They are primarily opting comfortable sitting with Air conditioning facility in the outlet. So cellular operators may design standard format of outlets with these amenities to catch hold of more and more customers.
32. This study indicates, that most of the respondents/customers are interested to get services against a call and against SMS. Service delivery system may be modified accordingly. Nearly 50 percent of respondents are not getting services as assured and to their expectations. This is another important matter of concern for cellular service providers. It is their responsibility to reach customer expectations.

33. Most of the respondents are not happy with the frequent call drops. They are losing call charges as well as connectivity with the other cell users. So cellular service providers have to improve the quality of services to the users satisfaction for maintaining good customer base.

34. Respondents are discouraged to give complaint to customer care because of the sequence of steps involved in getting. They are frustrated about the logic of steps to be followed. So the cellular service providers have to focus on this area to provide improvised services and a good venue to hear customer soul.

6.14 Suggestions for major cellular operators

BSNL

1. BSNL is suffering with high call drop rates and a reduction in brand equity. This is one area for BSNL to strengthen.

2. It has a major presence in C-circle. BSNL has to improve in this area and should prove itself in all areas of its presence.

3. Low brand visibility and low brand loyalty is another draw back for BSNL. It has to get faith among majority of customers.

4. Low price offerings from rival operators is making BSNL to be pushed in threats. It has to become more effective and competitive to get advantage.

5. BSNL has reached saturation point in the services of basic telephony. There is not much further growth in this sector, so it has to reformulate strategies to grab new customer base.
6. Mobile number portability is another threat for BSNL. It has to deliver good services by reorganizing service mechanisms to retain existing customers, otherwise MNP will greatly affect its potential growth.

7. Untapped rural markets, are another big area for BSNL to divert its focus.

8. BSNL may think of extending services in the area of mobile banking by making agreements with post offices. This will strengthen BSNL to grab total mobile banking value added service benefits.

9. Poor marketing strategy and bureaucratic organizational set up are making BSNL to lag behind. So they have to focus on formulating and implementation of good marketing strategies. More over they have to come out of bureaucratic system of working to satisfy their customers.

10. BSNL is providing very limited number of value added service products. They have to go on adding new services and to consider customer taste and interest while designing the value added service product.

11. Legacy of poor service image is keeping BSNL, to be far away from old and good customers. They have to change their image by creating a service-oriented culture within the organisation.

12. Procedural delays, lack of strategic alliances, poor IT penetration within the organisation, huge and aged man power are making BSNL to go down from the peaks. They have to think of improvising these conditions to become market leader again.

13. BSNL is having good faith in the hearts of citizens; as a government organisation. But they are not in a position to encash that situation to mould themselves to make organisation to flourish. So it has to retain its loyal customer base.
1. Until recently, Airtel did not have its own towers, which was a particular strength of some of its competitors. Towers are very important to provide wide and good coverage all over. It has to think in this line to arrange its own towers.

2. Rival competitors of Airtel are improving their customer base day to day particularly among teens and youth. So Airtel has to reformulate and design new strategies to get their attention.

3. Airtel is not having plans like free local calls and unlimited talking time as their competitors have. It has to launch new plans to attract more and more customers to retain its customer base.

4. Airtel has customer base of premium users. It has to still reach down level of customers and to catch hold of them by designing schemes to suit their taste and requirements.

5. Though Airtel is a market leader in wireless services by having huge customer base, it is not in a position to become leader in wire line services. They have a potential to grow in this area. So it is another area for Airtel to focus. Knowledge and technology were previously available only to Airtel. Now it moves in to the hands of some of its rival operators so that its rival operators or competitors are becoming further strong. Initially, Airtel was the king but it cannot survive so long with the previous good image. Though it is a market leader at present times, its market share is reducing day by day. So they have to redefine their objectives and visionary views to sustain in that position.

6. The quickly changing pace of the global telecommunications industry could tempt Airtel to go along the acquisition trial, which may make it vulnerable if the world goes in to recession. Presently Airtel operates in 19 countries across South Asia, Africa and the channel Islands and is still in acquisition mood to grab some more services. Because of these acquisitions, Airtel’s profitability is decreasing year by year. It is losing ground in its own place. It is not in a position to offer discounts to
customers. It is not in a position to reduce prices. This situation should not continue for longer periods. So this is one important area for Airtel to concentrate.

7. Airtel could also be the target for the takeover vision of other global telecommunication players - those wish to move into the Indian market. So it has to be careful at this juncture to overcome this threat. It has to be successful in implementing its pre-designed long term strategies on right time. Otherwise Airtel may face difficulties.

VODAFONE

1. New mobile market entrants and future strategic partnerships may become a threat to Vodafone. It has to concentrate on this and divert focus to dominate its rival operators.

2. Inability to satisfy the needs of the target group (i.e. students) may reduce the market share of Vodafone. It should not totally dependent on only one group. It has to try to get customer base in all segments.

3. Vodafone is a global, well established competitive company with a lot of opportunities to take advantage; So it is advised for Vodafone to continue emerging into the new markets in order to align with the successful globalization strategy.

4. Vodafone has become second private player in India to have huge market share by taking over essay share. But it has a potential to become number one, for that it is advisable for Vodafone to establish prices for the products that would be attractive for certain target groups in relation to their needs and problems.

5. There is an impression that Vodafone is only for teens or students group. So that other segments of customers are not coming forward towards Vodafone. So it is recommended to implement more personalized approach towards other consumer groups to gain their support.

6. There is an impression that Vodafone is good & cheap in providing short message service. Like that, Vodafone has to gain popularity in
providing facilities regarding calling, and other value added services. This would increase the competitive advantage of Vodafone, thus differentiating this company in highly competitive market area.

7. To keep its leading edge, Vodafone should continually add value to the services it provides and packages it offers to customers.

6.15 SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This study is not complete in all aspects, as it is leaving so many areas to carry out further studies as given below:

1. This study has taken only three major operators Airtel, BSNL and Vodafone. Even though there are nearly eight more operators to study. This area can be considered for further studies.

2. This study is confined to only Visakhapatnam urban area respondents. It may be extended to rural areas.

3. This study did not cover tribal area of Visakhapatnam. This can be separately done to get perfect study in all respects.

4. This study has considered five major groups professionals, students, employees, business persons and street vendors. Still so many left out groups are there to take up studies. Senior citizens, house wives, illiterates, teenagers, hotel servers, railway employees, bank employees, APSRTC workers can also be included in the sample group.

5. Information is taken from the customers regarding service & performance of cellular service providers in this study. Another study may be taken up by including feed back from cellular services providers themselves regarding their difficulties in extending services and designing various service products to cope up with competition.

6. Environmental and social pollution arising out of cellular services – can also be taken up as a separate study.