CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION
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6.1 Introduction

This chapter is presented with the summary of findings, discussion based on the findings of the research studies, managerial implications, conclusions and directions for future research. The chapter contains the significance of the study, the tested results of research hypotheses and the summary of research findings. It covers the discussions of results of the research study, the managerial implications of the study, and the delimitations of the research, followed by directions for future research.

6.2 Significance of the study

In the present cut-throat competition prevailing in telecom service market, customers have more choices to select, use and retain or switch the services. It is therefore essential that the service providers, who offer telecom services, have to understand the critical factors that influence the customers to select, use and retain their different service products. It is also worth to mention that the service providers who satisfy their customers may achieve higher market shares and the drivers of customer satisfaction is very critical for their long-term business success as well as to maintain their customer base. The present study was taken up to understand and evaluate the telecom services offered by the BSNL and other respective service providers from a marketing perspective. This study gives some insights on how can BSNL and other Telecom service providers win the
marketing strategies in the telecom competitive market. The study will be helpful in making relevant suggestions for the improvement of service marketing of BSNL in Kerala.

6.3 Main research objectives

The following are the specific objectives of the study.

- To study the marketing mix dimensions of various telecom services provided by BSNL and its competitors.
- To study the tariff plans for those services announced by various service providers and assess these from the customers’ view.
- To study real customer perceptions about the image and customer satisfaction levels of various services provided by BSNL and its leading competitors and assess them.
- To study the existing marketing process of BSNL and assess its effectiveness with a view to evaluate existing marketing strategies of BSNL and its competitors.

6.4 Research hypothesis

In order to meet the above objectives a conceptual framework was developed duly exploring the research problems and objectives. This framework was established duly explaining the concepts for assessing the real customer perceptions about corporate image and customer satisfaction levels of the telecom services, as well as various marketing mix elements that influence customer satisfaction and corporate image. It is also very essential for the telecom service providers to formulate marketing strategies not only to satisfy the customers but also to keep the customers stay with them due to stiff competition. Higher customer satisfaction leads
to customers being loyal and they stay loyal to their current service provider without switching and therefore this research framework has also focused on customer loyalty too in this research study.

Based on the theoretical frame work, sixteen hypotheses were developed together with a conceptual research model shown in Figure 3.2 of chapter 3. The model proposes that the customer satisfaction is influenced by perceived service quality, corporate image, service-product, tariff and value added service. The corporate image is influenced by promotion and distribution. The model also proposes that customer loyalty is influenced by customer satisfaction, corporate image and promotion. Sixteen hypotheses developed for this research study are reproduced below.

**Research hypothesis**

H1:  *Tangible has positive and significant relationship with perceived service quality in the Telecommunication service context.*

H2:  *Reliability has positive and significant relationship with perceived service quality in the Telecommunication service context.*

H3:  *Responsiveness has positive and significant relationship with perceived service quality in the Telecommunication service context.*

H4:  *Assurance has positive and significant relationship with perceived service quality in the Telecommunication service context.*

H5:  *Empathy has positive and significant relationship with perceived service quality in the Telecommunication service context.*

H6:  *Network quality has positive and significant relationship with perceived service quality in the Telecommunication service context.*
H7: Customer perceived service quality has positive and significant relationship with Customer satisfaction in the Telecommunication service context.

H8: Core service product performance has positive and significant relationship with Customer satisfaction in the Telecommunication service context.

H9: Value added services have positive and significant relationship with Customer satisfaction in the Telecommunication service context.

H10: Tariff or pricing has positive and significant relationship with Customer satisfaction in the Telecommunication service context.

H11: Corporate image has positive and significant relationship with Customer satisfaction in the Telecommunication service context.

H12: Corporate image has positive and significant relationship with Customer loyalty in the Telecommunication service context.

H13: Promotion has positive and significant relationship with corporate image in the Telecommunication service context.

H14: Promotion has positive and significant relationship with customer loyalty in the Telecommunication service context.

H15: Distribution channel performance has positive and significant relationship with corporate image in the Telecommunication service context.

H16: Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant relationship with Customer loyalty in the Telecommunication service context.

6.5 Summary of the research findings

The model fitness with the data was tested and found that all the three fit criteria for the comprehensive assessment of the model’s overall predictive and explanatory quality were met as the p-values for both the
Average Path Coefficient (APC) and the Average R-squared (ARS) were both lower than .05 and the Average Variance Inflation factor (AVIF) was lower than 5. The links were statistically significant as the P values were less than 0.05 levels. It was thus found that the model was fit and stands acceptable. The analysis details were available in chapter 5. All the hypotheses developed in the study were tested and all were found significant as the P values were less than 0.01. The result of the hypothesis testing is given below:

Table 6.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis number</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Path coefficient</th>
<th>P value</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Tangible → Perceived Service Quality</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Reliability → Perceived Service Quality</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Responsiveness → Perceived Service Quality</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>Assurance → Perceived Service Quality</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>Empathy → Perceived Service Quality</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>Nw-quality → Perceived Service Quality</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>PSQ → Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8</td>
<td>Service Product → Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9</td>
<td>VAS → Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10</td>
<td>Tariff → Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11</td>
<td>Image → Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12</td>
<td>Image → Customer loyalty</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H13</td>
<td>Promotion → Image</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14</td>
<td>Promotion → Customer loyalty</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H15</td>
<td>Channel performance → Image</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H16</td>
<td>Customer satisfaction → Customer loyalty</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is found from the above table that P values of the entire sixteen hypotheses were less than 0.01 and thus the entire sixteen hypotheses are significant and therefore accepted.

It is found that there are six significant constructs namely tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy and Network quality which have a significant and positive influence on perceived service quality. Further it is found that there are five significant constructs namely perceived service quality, service product; value added services, tariff and corporate image which have a significant and positive influence on customer satisfaction. It is also found that there are two significant constructs namely promotion and distribution channel performance which have a significant and positive influence on corporate image. Finally it is found that three significant construct namely promotion, corporate image and customer satisfaction which have a significant and positive influence on customer loyalty.

It was found that for the telecom service providers to be successful in the present competitive telecom market, they must try to improve customer satisfaction by focusing on the underlying factors value added services; Service products; tariff; corporate image and service quality. Moreover they have to boost up corporate image by focusing on promotion mix and distribution channel performance. The study revealed that to be profitable in telecom market the service providers have to devise their marketing strategy to keep customer stay loyal by improving customer loyalty by focusing on customer satisfaction and corporate image.
The study found that the most influential latent variable which influences customer satisfaction is “value added services” as the Latent Variable has a high significant strength of relationship with customer satisfaction. The study found that the measurement indicators “convenience of use of value-added services” and “whether value-added services are up-to-date” have the strongest loading which aid in enhancing the level of customer satisfaction with value added services.

It is found that the next influential latent variable which influences customer satisfaction is “tariff” as the Latent variable has a good significant strength of relationship with customer satisfaction. The study found that the measurement indicators “tariff for service products”; “STD tariff” and “variety of tariff plan” have the strongest loading which helps in enhancing the level of customer satisfaction.

Product satisfaction is a very important in the customer satisfaction function as it is considered as the main product element of the telecommunication service from where service product offerings are given. The study found that the next influential latent variable which influences customer satisfaction is “service products” as the latent variable has a good significant strength of relationship with customer satisfaction. The study found that the measurement indicators in respect of functioning of Telecom service Product which is done by “continuous product operation and usage”, “accessibility at peak time” and “transmission quality” are having the strongest loading which helps in enhancing the level of customer satisfaction. This is in line with the previous research studies on the subject.
Based on the analysis results of the present research study, corporate image positively influences customer satisfaction with a significant strength of relationship. The study found that the measurement indicators “range of promotion”; “concerned with customers” and “trust” have the strong loading which will increase the level of customer satisfaction with corporate image.

The perceived service quality positively influences customer satisfaction with a significant strength of relationship. Even though relationship of service quality with customer satisfaction is significant, the strength of relationship is not strong but satisfactory when compared to value added services, tariff plans and service products. That implies that customers of telecom services in Kerala consider uninterrupted product operation and usage, tariff for service product and easy use of value added services etc. more than quality.

It is found that the next influential latent variable which influences corporate image is “promotion” as the latent variable has a strong significant strength of relationship with corporate image. The study found that the measurement indicators “Credibility in advertisement”; “Promotional offers” and “advertising campaign” have the strongest loading which helps in enhancing the level of corporate image.

It is found that other influential latent variable which influences corporate image is “distribution channel performance” as it has a strong significant strength of relationship with corporate image. The study found that the measurement indicators “number of distribution outlets”; product stock in distribution stores”; and “well maintained web sites” have the strongest loading which help in enhancing the level of corporate image.
This research study offers more insights into the services marketing area by exploring the relationship between three important latent variable customer satisfaction, corporate image and promotion mix with the well-known customer loyalty. The study found that the most influential latent variable which influences customer loyalty is customer satisfaction as it has a very strong significant strength of relationship with customer loyalty.

The next influential latent variable which influences customer loyalty is corporate image as it has a strong significant strength of relationship with customer loyalty. Promotion is the third latent variable which has a strong significant strength of relationship with customer loyalty.

The study found that the measurement indicators of customer satisfaction “Satisfaction with the service products and features”; Happiness with the provider; and “choice to purchase” have the strongest loading which helps in enhancing the level of customer loyalty.

The study found that the measurement indicators of customer loyalty “Recommending company to friends”; “recommending company to all who seek advice”; “say positive things”; “purchase from the same company even if competitor offers the same”; “purchase from the same company even competitor reduce tariff” and “repurchase from the same company” have the strongest loading which helps in the retention of customers.

As far as demographic characteristics are concerned it is found that BSNL and IDEA have customers in all age group. The private telecom service providers in Kerala have more concentration on Youth wing.
Based on this research study it is observed that BSNL has more Government service connection, Idea has more connection for professionals, Vodafone has more number of connections for students, and Reliance and Airtel have more telecom connections for business population. It is also found that higher income group is more in IDEA followed by BSNL.

It is found that customers have subscribed to BSNL mainly due to the reason of “No hidden charges”. Tariff consideration, company image and faith in billing are also some of the reason whereas customers have subscribed to its leading competitors due to the inspiration of the marketing executives, promotional offers and inspiration from advertisement and tariff consideration. It is found that using the service for lengthy time by customers is common for all the service providers’ connections. Bill amount paid by the customers is higher for all service providers and BSNL is the least.

In pursuance of the first objective of this research study it is found that various telecom service products like land line telephone service; fixed wireless service; prepaid mobile; post-paid mobile; dialup internet; fixed broadband and mobile broadband services are offered by different telecom service providers in Kerala.

It is found that BSNL is the only telecom service provider who provides all types of the telecom service products mentioned above in Kerala. Its competitors in Kerala Idea Cellular Ltd and Vodafone Essar Cellular Ltd provide only prepaid mobile; post-paid mobile and mobile broadband services whereas Reliance Infocomm Ltd and Bharti Airtel Ltd provide fixed wireless service; prepaid mobile; post-paid mobile and
mobile broadband services. It is found that enough variety of Tariff (pricing) plans was made available by BSNL and its leading competitors in Kerala to their customers for freely choosing any of them.

It is also found that BSNL and its leading competitors in Kerala have arranged a range of attractive and effective promotion like advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, road show as well as offering special offers such as free recharge coupons, free sms, more talk time, etc. to their customers in Kerala.

It is also found that BSNL and its leading competitors have adequate presence in different point of purchases through own offices or dealers, franchises, retail shops etc. to distribute telecom service products of customers choice in Kerala.

In pursuance of the second objective of this research study, the tariff plans for the telecom services and features offered by BSNL and its leading competitors in Kerala, were assessed from the customers’ view and it is found that majority of the customers have considered the tariff plans of telecom services and features offered by telecom service providers in Kerala are reasonable and competitive. The assessment level of customers with regard to reasonable and competitive tariff for telecom services and features in respect of BSNL was the highest when compared to its competitors Idea, Vodafone, Reliance and Airtel. Among the competitors, Idea was the highest; Vodafone the second, Airtel the third and Reliance is the last. There is no perception difference in the rating of tariff for telecom services and features offered by telecom service providers in Kerala.
The price charged for value added services offered by BSNL and its leading competitors in Kerala were assessed from the customers’ view and it is found that only half of them have considered the price charged for value added services offered by telecom service providers are reasonable and fair. The assessment level of customers with regard to reasonable and fair tariff for value added services in respect of BSNL was the highest when compared to its competitors Idea, Vodafone, Reliance and Airtel. Among the competitors, Idea was the highest; Vodafone the second, Airtel the third and Reliance is the last. There is no perception difference in the rating of tariff for value added services offered by telecom service providers in Kerala.

In pursuance of the third objective of this research study, the real customer perceptions about the customer satisfaction levels of various services provided by BSNL and its leading competitors were assessed from the customers view and it is found that majority of the customers have satisfied with the telecom service products and features provided by them in Kerala. It is also found that satisfaction level of various service products and features with the exception of fixed telephone services in respect of BSNL was the highest with respect to its leading competitors Idea, Vodafone, Reliance and Airtel. Among the competitors, Idea has the highest satisfaction level, Vodafone the second, Airtel the third and satisfaction level in respect of Reliance was the lowest.

It is also found that satisfaction level of cellular mobile telephone service in respect of BSNL was the highest with respect to its leading competitors. Among the competitors, Idea has the highest satisfaction level, Vodafone the second, Airtel the third and satisfaction level in respect of Reliance was the lowest.
It is further found that satisfaction level of fixed telephone services in respect of BSNL was the lowest with respect to its leading competitors Reliance and Airtel and Airtel was the highest. It is also observed that fixed telephone services are not offered by the service providers IDEA and Vodafone in Kerala.

It is also found that satisfaction level of broadband service in respect of BSNL was the highest with respect to its leading competitors. Among the competitors, Idea has the highest satisfaction level, Vodafone the second, Airtel the third and satisfaction level in respect of Reliance was the lowest. The study also found that Broad band services of BSNL have the highest percentage of satisfaction (100%) compared to its leading competitors whereas for the land line services the satisfaction level is the lowest.

Customers perception on image was assessed regarding stability, trust, innovate and forward looking company with interest in customers etc. and it is found that those were having strong loading. Image influences positively customer satisfaction and loyalty. This endogenous construct can aid not only in retaining the existing customers but also in acquiring new customers.

In pursuance of the fourth objective of this research study, the marketing strategies of BSNL and its competitors were evaluated and the study has found that the important findings in this research study regarding the significant positive influence of the marketing mix elements Product (telecom service product); Price (tariff); and value added services on customer satisfaction, would be helpful for BSNL and its competitors in Kerala Telecom circle to reengineer their marketing strategies.
On the product side it is found that the functioning of the service product, accessibility of service at peak time and transmission quality have significant and positive impact on customer satisfaction. There is no perception difference for usage of service products belong to different service providers even if the product features are different for different service providers.

On the price side it is found that the tariff for various service products and features, variety of tariff plans, voice tariff (STD, ISD and LOC) and VAS tariff etc. are having positive impact on customer satisfaction which leads to devise appropriate marketing strategy. BSNL and its competitors have to revise and reduce the VAS tariff as the customers’ assessment to this aspect was not encouraging.

It is found that the satisfaction of telecom service customers of Kerala belong to BSNL and its competitors could be further enhanced by ensuring satisfaction with value added services. VAS with downloadable up-to-date contents and its easy and convenient usage are having the significant impact of customer satisfaction where youth wings as well as mobile lovers have shown strong inclination to advanced VAS. Therefore this study reaffirms that Value added services will help in devising appropriate marketing strategies for BSNL and its competitors in this direction as it helps a lot to earn more revenue for them and get more satisfied customer who stay loyal always.

Promotion mix positively influences corporate image and customer loyalty. Corporate image is an important construct of the satisfaction function in service industries. Customer loyalty has the crucial role in keeping the satisfied customers stay loyal. Both corporate image and
customer loyalty are the tools for effective marketing strategy. The study therefore confirms the influence of promotion mix on marketing strategy. It is found that the assessment level of Promotional effectiveness by customers in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors. Among the competitors Idea was assessed highest, Vodafone comes next, then Airtel and Reliance becomes the last.

It is also found that the assessment level of customers regarding the effectiveness of the advertisements they have frequently seen through media such as TV, Newspaper, periodicals, website etc. in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors. Among the competitors Vodafone was assessed highest, Idea comes next, then Reliance and Airtel becomes the last.

The study found that the assessment level of customers regarding promotional offers such as free recharge coupons, free sms, more talk time, etc. in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors. Among the competitors Idea was the highest; Vodafone the second, Airtel the third and Reliance becomes the fourth.

Distribution channel performance positively influences corporate image and which leads to effective marketing strategy. The study also found that the assessment level of customers regarding the product availability in distribution stores/outlets in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors. Among the competitors Idea was the highest; Vodafone the second, Airtel the third and Reliance becomes the fourth.
Service quality positively influences customer satisfaction and which is having paramount importance in devising effective marketing strategy. It is found that the assessment level of customers regarding the employees’ role in reliable and early performance of the service to customers in case of need right at the first time in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors. Among the competitors Idea was the highest; Vodafone the second, Airtel the third and Reliance becomes the fourth.

It is also found that the assessment level of customers regarding the employees’ responsiveness in telling to customers exactly when services will be performed in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors. Among the competitors Idea was the highest, Airtel the second, Vodafone the third and Reliance the fourth.

6.6 Recommendations

Some of the suggestions and recommendations based on the findings of this research study are:

1. The telecom service providers can be profitable in telecom market by improving customer loyalty as loyal customers may repurchase the service products from their service provider, buy from the same provider even if the competitor reduces tariff, recommend their company to friends and relatives, say positive things about their company etc. Based on the findings of this study, it is to state that customer satisfaction, corporate image and promotion mix are having positive significant strength of relationship with customer loyalty. Telecom service providers have to initiate necessary steps to increase
the strength of customer satisfaction; corporate image and promotion mix so that customer loyalty is improved.

2. Based on the findings of this study it is evident that customer satisfactions with regard to various telecom services are having the most significant positive influence in creating customer loyalty. It is also clear from this research study that if telecom service providers have met the expectation of customers in relation to all telecom service products and features offered to them, they may be happy with the provider and may treat the purchase as wise and right one and finally they can be satisfied and loyal to the company. It is further clear from this research study that more improvement in customer satisfaction may be possible by taking into consideration the underlying constructs namely perceived service quality, service product, value added services, tariff and corporate image. This study therefore recommends that service providers may consider all the above aspects to make customers stay loyal so that they can be profitable in the competitive telecom service market as the cost of retaining the existing customers are less than the cost of acquiring new customers.

3. Customer’s perceptions of corporate image are positively significant to customer loyalty. Advertising effectiveness, Promotion mix strategies, company name etc. too impact corporate image. Stable, innovative and forward looking companies can also impact corporate image. As per this study, customers consider corporate image as one of the reason for subscription to telecom services. Telecom service providers have to ensure that good corporate image is developed in the minds of customers so that customer satisfaction and customer loyalty is enhanced.
4. The customer satisfaction can be enhanced by focusing on the advanced value added services in telecom market. Hence the telecom service providers can deploy in conjunction with core services varieties of advanced value added services with updated contents and new technology related downloadable applications like Entertainment VAS (Music on Demand, Video Clip, Mobiles Games) M-Commerce (Mobile Banking, Travel and Holiday Bookings, Payment confirmations etc.) Social VAS (Chat, Astrology Service, Mobile Greetings) and Enterprise VAS (LBS System, IVRS based contact centres) etc. for easy use among youth wings as well as mobile lovers whom have shown strong inclination to advanced VAS.

5. Tariff for all value added services with special mention to SMS and ringtones may be reduced so that customer satisfaction can be enhanced.

6. Telecom service providers need to ensure that delivering unsolicited SMS and other value added services to customers may be totally stopped to enhance customer satisfaction and company image.

7. Charging for non-requested ringtones and other value added services may be prevented.

8. Telecom service providers may control the content providers of value added services from disturbing the customers with pumping of SMS contents in customer’s devices.

9. Telecom service providers may introduce more bundled packages with free offers for smart phones, iPhones and tablets users to promote more advanced VAS.

10. More advanced VAS may be made available to rural network so that it can generate income.
11. Value added services including SMS may be offered in the fixed telephone service network of BSNL to enhance customer satisfaction.

12. Price charged for local calls and international calls may be reduced.

13. Telecom service providers have to ensure transparency in billing and tariff rates without any hidden charges since customers consider those aspects as one of the main reason for service subscription.

14. Telecom service providers have to ensure immediate updation of the telecom service bill amount in subscriber account once bill payment is made by customers through on line portals.

15. Telecom service providers have to ensure uninterrupted function of telephone instruments, broadband modems, and access networks so that continuous operation and use of telecom services are possible always for customers. Duration of mean time to repair may be drastically reduced so that customer satisfaction can be further increased.

16. Telecom service providers have to ensure continuous functioning of the core services to enable customers to use services whenever required. It is the prime responsibility of the providers before marketing for any additional services and value added services.

17. Telecom service providers have to install and maintain the transmission network capable of voice reproduction with excellent clarity and without any break so that service quality and customer satisfaction can be enhanced.

18. 3G networks in rural area may be expanded by all service providers to make available 3G coverage and facilities to all rural population of Kerala.
19. The inspiration of the marketing executives is one of the reason for subscription to telecom services by customers in case of telecom service providers other than BSNL and initiatives from marketing executives of BSNL for getting subscription to services is also suggested.

20. Stable and innovative company can help in enhancing image. Corporate image of BSNL can be enhanced by technology upgradation in fixed line services including external plants.

21. The satisfaction level of land line services of BSNL can be improved by ensuring timely clearance faults in phone and cables, provision of advanced telephone instruments, reduction of rents etc.

22. BSNL may offer prepaid landline services without rental so that new customers can be encouraged to subscribe.

23. Closed user group facilities may be given free of charge for fixed telephone service customers as in the case of mobile telephone services.

24. As the effectiveness of promotion mix namely advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, road show etc. in respect of BSNL is the lowest compare to its leading competitors, proper reengineering the promotion mix strategies are felt necessary.

25. As the effectiveness of the advertisements placed in media such as TV, Newspaper, periodicals, website etc. in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors, appropriate breakthrough in these directions are inevitable.

26. As the assessment level of customers regarding promotional offers such as free recharge coupons, free sms, more talk time, etc. in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors, proper action plan in this regard is required.
27. As the product availability in distribution stores/outlets in respect of BSNL is the lowest compared to its leading competitors, appropriate immediate steps in this regard too are felt necessary.

28. Help services of BSNL may be improved by deploying the trained customer service executives in the front end system to deal with the customers to enhance customer satisfaction.

29. BSNL has to ensure that employees posted in customer encounter location give personal attention to customers in solving their problems which in turn may increase customer satisfaction.

30. The reliability and responsiveness of the BSNL employees in performing requested services to customers need improvement. Restructuring the customer relationship management system of BSNL may be made so that service quality and customer satisfaction can be enhanced.

31. BSNL may improve the complaint management functions for resolution of service complaints, billing complaints to the fullest satisfaction of customers.

32. BSNL has to ensure that customer service executives service the customers quickly and effectively so that those customers need not wait for more time than anticipated. Keeping the customers to wait for more may affect customer satisfaction.

33. BSNL also has to ensure that employees with adequate knowledge in telecom services and possess confidence in answering doubts and queries of customers are posted in front end system of customer service center so that customer confidence in the company could be increased and enhances customer satisfaction.
6.7. Conclusions

The tremendous progresses in the Indian Telecom Service sector have led to significant improvements in telecommunications performance, customer base and tele-density. But the BSNL and other telecom service providers are now struggling day by day to maintain revenue and profit due to ever changing telecom technologies, demand of innovative products from customers, frequent downward revision of tariff and access charges, continuous decline of subscriber base and average revenue per user. The contribution of the present study is how BSNL and other telecom service providers can drive in competition in the present telecom service market of Kerala. The findings of this research study can be used to redesign the marketing strategies of BSNL and its leading competitors to win competition both in core and value added services and become profitable.

6.8. Implication of the study

This study has presented a valid and reliable model that measures the customer satisfaction and various constructs which impacts it. The crucial role of image on the telecom service companies in Kerala and real perception of customers on it would aid the provider BSNL and its competitors to devise appropriate strategies to keep the customers satisfy and stay them loyal. The study also discusses various proven strategies to retain customers in the present competitive telecom market so that the concerned managers can try it to create profitable customers in telecom circle of Kerala.
6.9. Limitations of the study

The processes of collection of data from the customers of competitors are difficult. Some of the respondents may refuse to cooperate for attending the researches. The hostile attitude and the rough manners of some of the respondents may obstruct data collection. The researcher may have to wait for a long time to collect data from the preoccupied customers. Due to the explosive growth of telecommunication service sector the collected data in one year become very old in the next year. As such continuous collection and updating of current telecom service data became a necessity. The study pertains to Kerala state and the findings may not reflect the whole nation. The continuous change of telecom technology and introduction of advanced newer services, may give varying results if data is collected in future.

6.10 Suggestions for Future Research

Researchers may consider the following for their future research

1. “Impact of fixed broadband on customer retention of land line services of BSNL” a case study in Kerala
2. “Impact of SMS bundles like mobile marketing on ROI (return on investment) of telecom service providers” a case study
3. “Marketing of advanced value added services” a comparative study of telecom service providers in India
4. “The effect of unsolicited commercial channels like sms, mms, e-mail etc. through mobile phone on customer loyalty”, a case study of telecom service providers in India