Chapter 6.

EVOLVING AN INTEGRATED TELECOM STRATEGY FOR THE NEXT DECADE - AN INDO - UK PERSPECTIVE.

6.1. Objectives of an integrated telecom strategy.

From the literature review, data analysis and interpretation of the field survey, and the analysis of propositions and outcomes, it is being observed that although Indian telecommunication field is experiencing tremendous growth and new opportunities, there is a requirement to look at things in more systematic and structured way.

The strategic initiatives like National Telecom Policy 1994, New Telecom Policy 1999, VIII, IX ad X Five year plans of India, policies of Government, opening up of telecommunication to competition etc. are excellent means to ensure telecom growth in India happens on par with any other nation in the world. Infact from the analysis, it can even be quoted as “Indian telecommunication growth and experience can be used as a benchmark for the economies that are opening up now”. Having mentioned this, if we look at the Indian context, although the industry is poised for a bigger growth, there is a need for consolidation, planning for much bigger vision and ensure improved and enhanced support for infrastructure from policy and regulations perspectives.

Again to mention, the objective of this study is not to pinpoint at either policy or regulatory practices, but to explore a possibility of coming up with an integrated telecom strategy for the years to come. For this purpose the telecommunication environment of the United Kingdom is studied as illustrated in the previous chapters.
In this context the focus of an integrated telecom strategy will be as under.

- Evolve an integrated telecom strategy that is future proof and takes into consideration future telecom developments.

- Move towards a pro-active policy and regulatory environment.

- Indian telecommunication to have a more structured and systematic policy and regulatory environment.

- Plan and create cushioning for situations arising out of opening up of competitive environments like price competitiveness and its implications, impact of new technologies etc. There is a need for consideration of all aspects of competitive environment including disputes.

- To ensure consumer delight with “quality of service” as prime objective.

- To make India as one of the “most favored telecom investment destinations of the world”.

- Last but not the least “Indian telecommunication revolution can be a benchmark for similar economies experiencing similar growth and opportunities”.
6.2. Reasons to learn from the United Kingdom telecommunication.

In the previous chapters of the study, the case reference of the United Kingdom telecommunication has been mentioned. The objective of taking references and key learnings from the UK telecommunication can be justified as under.

- When it comes to telecommunication there are similarities between India and the United Kingdom, the reason being the UK had its colonial rule in India. And after independence India was influenced by the colonial rule and adopted the UK business practices even in the field of telecommunication.

- The business practices of the English are still being used in India in sectors like postal services and railways.

- The UK was the first country to liberalize telecommunications in Europe. The UK has gone through all the stages of telecommunication liberalization including privatization.

- The UK is among the few countries in Europe that totally privatized the sector.

- The UK telecom model is usually considered as the one model of the sector specific independent regulatory system.
6.3. Importance of benchmarking.

Before moving to the telecom strategy, it is important to define benchmarking and understand its importance. The definition of benchmarking by various authors is as below.

This can be quoted with reference from Journal of Management Studies 34:2 March 1997, 0022-2380, BENCHMARKING AS A MIXED METAPHOR: DISENTANGLING ASSUMPTIONS OF COMPETITION AND COLLABORATION by authors JuuE R. WOLFRAM COX, LEON MANN & DANNY SAMSON. University of Melbourne

- Benchmarking is a continuous, systematic process for evaluating the products, services, and work processes of organizations that are recognized as representing best practices for the purpose of organizational improvement - by Spendolini, 1992

- The continuous process of measuring products, services, and practices against the toughest competitors or those companies recognized as industry leaders - by David T. Keams, CEO, Xerox Corporation, cited in Camp, 1989

- Benchmarking is a continuous search for, and application of, significantly better practices that lead to superior competitive performance - By Watson, 1993

- Benchmarking a disciplined process that begins with a thorough search to identify best practice organizations, continues with the careful study of one’s own practices and performance, progresses through systematic site visits and interviews, and concludes with an analysis of results,
Importance of benchmarking. This can be best illustrated with reference from the abstract of the article *Journal of Management Studies* 34:2 March 1997, 0022-2380, BENCHMARKING AS A MIXED METAPHOR: DISSENTANGUNG ASSUMPTIONS OF COMPETITION AND COLLABORATION by authors JuuE R. WOLFRAM COX, LEON MANN & DANNY SAMSON. University of Melbourne, as below.

"Examination of the management literature on benchmarking reveals that the concept conveys a mixed metaphor. While collaboration among benchmarking partners is advocated, description of benchmarking practice is dominated by principles and language that convey notions of competition. The 'competitive' approach to benchmarking is due to four narrow, constricting assumptions:

- That the motivation behind benchmarking is to improve and reduce a performance gap relative to some superior comparison with others,
- That benchmarking is a formal, organizationally sanctioned means of competing with others, including partners,
- That benchmarking involves comparison through measurement or marking, and
- That benchmarking is an activity initiated (and assessable) by one party.

Two opposing concepts of benchmarking (as competition) and benchmarking (as collaboration) are introduced to develop a model for predicting the degree of competition and/or collaboration involved in relationships between benchmarking parties. Key factors within this model include context, activities, partnership and outcomes".
The context in which the UK telecom environment can be taken as a reference has been illustrated in the previous chapters.

6.4. Policy research - its importance and utility.

Before proceeding further to importance of policy research it is important to define the term policy analysis. The term policy analysis can be defined as follows.

- “Policy analysis is a means of synthesizing information including research results to produce a format for policy decisions (the laying out of alternative choices) and of determining future needs for policy relevant information” - By Walter Williams, (Social policy research and analysis, New York : American Elsevier Publishing Company, 1971, Page xi), and

- “Policy analysis is an applied social science discipline which uses multiple methods of inquiry and argument to produce and transform policy relevant information that may be utilized in political settings to resolve policy problems” - by William N. Dunn, Public Policy Analysis (Eaglewood Cliffs, N.J Prentice Hall, 1981) page ix.

Importance of policy analysis and its utility can be best illustrated as below. This illustration comprises of main objectives, client to whom it is meant for, common style i.e. how the analysis can contribute to desired results and time constraints and general weakness of the policy analysis.

**Major Objective** - Analyzing and resenting alternatives available to political actors for solving public problems.

**The Client** - A specific decision maker or a collective decision maker.
**Common Style** - Synthesis of existing research and theory to estimate consequences of alternative decisions.

**Time Constraints** - Completion of analysis usually tied to specific decision point.

**General Weakness** - Myopia produced by client orientation and time pressure.


From this study context, the importance of policy analysis can be mentioned as below.

- This study is intended to analyze, in the light of international exposure suggests ways and means of improving policy and regulatory framework.
- This study is intended to come out with references that can power research to enable better policy making.
- This policy research brings out the facts and figures of present telecom situation in India and gives scope to learn from experiences of other nations.
- This kind of analysis also presents views and opinions from the outsider perspective by analyzing the telecom situation with the help of respondents questionnaires, articles published in various journals, views of authors and published documents on telecom policy and regulations.
- This kind of policy analysis also emphasizes on *research scope at the Government level to support policy decisions*. Had there been any such initiations by the Government to do analysis and reviews, it can aid
in better policy making and results in more comprehensive telecom policy and regulation practices.

6.5. Integrated Telecommunication Strategy for India for the next decade.
Before proceeding further it would be very appropriate to analyze need for an integrated telecommunication strategy for India for the next decade. The need can be described as,

- In the light of a new policy being made for telecommunications in India, this would aid in considering facts like benchmarking and strategic reviews which will contribute to improved and long term policy.
- The strategic inputs / models to aid better policy making.

Taking the context of the study and analysis done for Indian and the United Kingdom telecommunication environment, an integrated telecommunication strategy for India for the next decade can consider above 2 important points.

The Strategy Statement - An integrated telecom strategy for India for the next decade will consists of following 3 important strategic elements.

1. A 3 year strategic approach.
2. Strategic review of telecoms.
3. Futuristic approach and focus areas.

The above 3 elements will work closely with the policy maker and regulator with feedback mechanism clearly established. Description of integrated strategy can be explained as below.
1. **A 3 year strategic approach** - This approach is for the policy maker. It is being observed that both National Telecom Policy 1994 and New Telecom Policy 1999 are fairly long term policies. It is also observed that due to the this long term policy approach, TRAI has come out with several directives, consultation papers and other regulation issues as it needs to deal with fairly long term policy goals. This approach will also strengthen policy approach for futuristic telecom solutions and services which can always be accommodated if the policy making is done over a period of 3 years. This approach can also take recommendations from periodical reviews of telecoms in the country which will aid in better policy making.

2. **Strategic reviews of telecoms** - This approach is prescribed for the regulator. The review mechanism of telecoms in India by the regulator every year can help in giving suggestions to policy makers who will be on a short term policy process i.e. 3 year strategic approach. During the strategic reviews of telecoms the regulator can identify the future trends also give feedback to policy makers to accommodate these futuristic trends and focus areas while coming out with the policy.

3. **Futuristic Approach and Focus Areas** - This approach is for both policy maker and the regulator. Policy maker can adopt "Proactive policy strategy" by considering these future trends and focus areas. The regulator can give feedback to policy maker after the strategic review of telecoms on the future trends and focus areas. Since considering of future trends which can be termed as “apportioning for unknown” is one of the essentials of a comprehensive policy making, this approach
will ensure a more robust telecom strategy is in place which takes care of today and tomorrow.

An integrated strategy can be best depicted in the form of a telecom model for India which is as follows.

Chart 32 - Illustration of an integrated telecom strategy and model for India.

From the above model it can be observed all the three strategic moves are interlinked. The feedback mechanism is clearly established which will ensure objectives of each move are being met. This model comprises of strategies for both policy maker and the regulator. Futuristic approach and focus areas will ensure both policy maker and the regulator will work with same objectives.

This model will also ensure both the policy maker and the regulator are aware of each others goals and will work in more harmonious way which can lead to enhanced and improved telecommunication situation in India.
The next chapter (chapter - 7) focuses on conclusions, recommendations and suggestions. Summary of the study, limitations and suggestions are outlined in this chapter. This chapter also focuses on roadmaps and scope for further studies and research.