## Chapter 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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5.1. INTRODUCTION

A consumer is an individual who purchase or has the capacity to purchase goods and services offered for sale by marketing institutions in order to satisfy personal or household needs, wants or desires. According to a statement made by Mahatma Gandhi, ‘consumer refers to the following, “A consumer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an outsider to our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favors by serving him. He is doing us a favor by giving us an opportunity to do so”. So consumer is like the blood of our business and also a satisfied customer is a word of mouth of product and services.

In today’s world of globalization with advancement in technology and telecommunication, where mobile phone service providers are facing cutthroat competition from each, it has become really important to understand and well anticipate about customers needs and requirements, for this it has become very much vital to study and understand about the opinions, perceptions and attitude of customers, in this context Consumer Behaviour plays a major role. In fewer than twenty years, mobile phones have gone from being rare and expensive pieces of equipment used by businesses to a pervasive low-cost personal item. The mobile phone itself has also become a totemic and fashion object, with users decorating, customizing, and accessorizing their mobile phones to reflect their personality. The present
study helps to understand the perceptions of the customers. This chapter presents summary and suggestions to the study on consumer behaviour in the telecom industry with reference to BSNL in Karnataka.

**5.2. Theoretical analysis of statistical data**

The statistical analysis clearly proved that almost 90.1% of the respondents considered mobile phones to be a necessity. Further it was only 23.8% of respondents who stated that they bought the cell phone connection for business use while majority of the respondents (76.5%) of them bought for personal use. Majority of the sample respondents were males (89.6%); female respondents formed a minor part of the research. Further, as per the analysis, 70.0% of the respondents who were part of this study were married. In terms of age, 34.5% of the respondents belonged to the age bracket of 36 – 45 years while 33.7% of them belonged to the age bracket of 26-35 years. In terms of educational qualification, 25.8% of the respondents are post graduates and 32.1% of them they had a Bachelor’s degree. In context of occupation, 41.5% of the respondents were professionals while 15.4% worked in the Agriculture sector. A mere 11% of the participants were Government employees.

More than fifty per cent (62.1%) of the respondents stated that they were using their connections for over two years. Further 60.3% of the respondents agreed that the current service was their first mobile
connection. This indicated that the respondents were loyal consumers of the cell phone operator.

Thus, it can clearly be deduced that a sizeable part of the sample were mature enough to take part in the survey and were educated and knowledgeable about the theme being investigated.

Consumer behaviour as per the extant literature can be defined as acts of individuals obtaining and using goods and services, including the decision processes that proceed and determine these acts. Thus it can be inferred that the decision process plays a crucial role in consumer behaviour. The customers are extremely influenced by their relations, family members, friends and advertisement at the time of buying or selecting a mobile phone service provider. As per the analysis, 50.4% respondents said that they knew about the mobile connection through their friends and relatives. Further, 53% of respondents said that family members influenced their purchase decisions of their phone connection while 23.8% of respondents said that friends influenced their purchase decisions of their phone connection. Thus it can be inferred that family, friends and relatives play a crucial role in impacting the decision process of the consumer overall.

It must be noted that the consumer is not dependent on anybody. A consumer is not an outsider to business. In fact the consumer is like the blood of business. In an aggressive and viable telecom field the service providers are expected to compete on both price and quality of
services and also it is necessary for the service providers to meet the consumers’ requirements and expectations in price and service quality. However, as per the statistical analysis, 47.3% of respondents felt that their cell phone service provider needed to improve their network coverage and 10.4% of respondents said that their cell phone service provider needed to improve their customer care services. In terms of the satisfaction level with the performance of their current services, 93.2% of the respondents said that they were very much satisfied with the performance of their current services and out of those, 37.8% of them told that their satisfaction level ranges from 40 to 60% and 37% of the respondents satisfaction level ranges from 60 to 80%.

It is proved that customers have a preference to a particular mobile phone service provider on the basis of call tariffs, network coverage and value added services. Research also proves that customers have a preference for prepaid plans as well as all most every customer consider their mobile phone as an essential tool of communication. They in general make use of their mobile phone for their personal use and for both incoming and outgoing calls and at times for official usage too. As per the analysis, customers who bought the cell phone for personal use said that deposit amount was a factor which influenced them to decide their cell phone service provider. Customers who buy cell phone for business use stated that brand image was a factor which influenced them to decide their cell phone service provider. Further, customers who bought a cell phone for personal use said that the tariff rates on SMS
and MMS facility in BSNL was good and that they were satisfied with the mode of payment provided by the BSNL. They also agreed that the BSNL company responsiveness in dealing with their customers was good. They mentioned that BSNL network meet their needs and expectations regarding quality and performance. Further customers using prepaid scheme said that service charges was a factor which influenced them to decide their cell phone service provider. Customers using prepaid scheme felt that the quality of network of BSNL was good. Also customers using post-paid scheme said that periodical offers was an important factor that effect their decision of buying any particular product from BSNL. They also agreed that network availability was an important factor that effects their decision of buying any particular product from BSNL. They additionally stated that security deposits were an important factor that effects their decision of buying any particular product from BSNL. Hence it can be inferred that by and large consumers preferred BSNL due to the low tariffs and superior network coverage. Consumers also felt that BSN responded to their needs fast and they were satisfied with the service it provide.

Consumer satisfaction is extremely significant to each and every big business individual. The customer satisfaction subsequent to the purchase relies on the item for consumption or manufactured goods show in respect to her / his expectations. Consumers often prefer a specific brand as it caters to all their needs. If the consumers are satisfied they would remain dedicated to a particular brand. In the
telecom services there are two crucial aspects which service providers need to fulfill to ensure that the consumers remain satisfied. The shall have factors include Social relationship, Power, Easier, Quicker, More, Entertainment and Security. Mobile users want to be able to connect effortlessly with others through the service of their choice. They are also keen that they can be involved in the lives of others through SMS and MMS. The consumers also want some additional services through their service providers. Consumers also want to feel secure and have the power to check and pay their bills in an easy manner. In context of must have factors the consumers prefer the 3 minute value, simplicity, additional benefits and a friendly tariff structure. As per the analysis, customers who said that they don't have plans to switch over to other brands felt that the brand name of their mobile connection was good. Further they also stated they were satisfied with the tariffs of outgoing calls of their BSNL when compared to the qualities of services. Additionally, customers who said that they don't have plans to switch over to other brands felt that the availability of the mobile connection was good. They also agreed that they were satisfied with the various facilities offered by BSNL. In addition they believed that the mode of payment facilities provided by BSNL was good. Moreover, the value added services were one of the factors which influenced their decision on buying any particular product from BSNL. Furthermore, they also stated that the deposit amount was an important factor that influenced them to decide on their cell phone services. They were also very much satisfied with the availability of BSNL mobile connections. They also found the
sales and promotional activities of BSNL to be good. They were also satisfied with the SMS and MMS facilities and tariffs in BSNL and also brand image of BSNL.

It is stated that majority of consumers are conscious in relation to the services provided by their mobile phone operators. It has been even revealed that customers are contented with the services offered by their mobile phone operators. But sometimes, consumers face troubles of poor clarity, call drop and poor network signal strength but overall they are satisfied with the services given to them. Thus it can be inferred that consumers are aware and knowledgeable about various brand which exist and the services provided by such brands in the telecom sector. As per the analysis customers who are satisfied with the performance of current services said that brand image is an important factor that influenced them to decide on their cell phone services. They also said that availability of cell phone connection was an important factor that influenced them to decide on their cell phone services. They accorded equal importance to the customer care services and considered it to be an important factor that influenced them to decide on their cell phone services. Further customers who were satisfied with the performance of current services were satisfied with the Company delivery on time performance and their commitment to meet their delivery expectations.

The current study has proved that customers in the telecom sector are driven by several varied needs. The choice to purchase a specific connection from a service provider depends on many aspects. The family
and peer influence enacts a crucial role in individual's selection of a specific service vendor. Further, the brand, the coverage area, the tariff structure and the value added services play a crucial role in selecting the service provider.

The study also proved that there were many consumers who preferred using BSNL in Karnataka. The other preferred choice of operator was Airtel. It was seen that there were varied reasons why consumers preferred using BSNL. The chief reason was the low tariff structure and services provided by BSNL. Consumers using BSNL felt that it provided good service. They felt that BSNL provided several modes of payment and many value added services.

Thus it can be concluded that in terms of service BSNL was a good provider. Despite being a Government operator it was successful in fulfilling needs of the consumers and keeping them satisfied. It also had a low tariff structure which attracted several consumers who then remained loyal with the provider.

It is concluded that consumers have different behaviour while purchasing any product or service. Mostly consumer behaviour is influenced by several factors like locality, culture, sub-culture, social class, royalty, lifestyle, ethnicity, reference groups and market mix factors. In addition to these, consumer behaviours are also influenced by their feelings, personality, motivation, attitudes, beliefs and knowledge. It
is concluded that most of the consumers prefer buying only the branded services and goods.

BSNL being the oldest telecommunication service providers of India has remarkable numbers of consumers from all age groups, educational and income statuses from Karnataka. People belonging to various professional groups from agriculture to IT are patrons of BSNL mobile services. With the advancement of information and telecommunication technology almost all people consider mobile phone as one of the most essential aspects of life. This study also portrayed the same from the fact that 90% of the total of 383 respondents who attended the survey denoting mobile phone as a necessity. This study shows that even though there are several modes such as newspapers, radio, television, hoardings and magazines to influence consumers towards choosing BSNL services, most consumers are persuaded by their friends and family members in choosing mobile services. Almost all consumers use BSNL for both incoming and outgoing calls and a majority prefer BSNL’s prepaid connection rather than postpaid connection since it reduces much cost for them. It can be understood that the prepaid connection customers considered service charges and quality of network as important factors for choosing BSNL. On the other hand, the post-paid connection customers considered network availability, periodical schemes and security deposits as important factors for choosing BSNL.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited being a largest telecom company of India surprisingly caught all attention very soon as they stepped into the
new digital age with Broadband Internet services and mobile services after years of providing BSNL dial-up Internet services and BSNL Landline. With various infrastructure resources, planning and experience BSNL are always managed to attract their consumers by offering lowest price for their Data One connections when comparing with other competitors in India like Aircel, Bharti Airtel Limited, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL), Reliance Communications Ltd, Tata Teleservices Limited, Aircel and Vodafone. The main strength of BSNL is that, it provides its service in rural areas. When looking from a customer’s perspective the brand name, extensive coverage as well as mode of payments offered by BSNL attracts the customers of Karnataka to a great extent. Even though, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited is considered as the fourth largest mobile telephone company in India and is the largest provider of the fixed telephone services and also broadband services, since the last few years, BSNL is facing several pressures in market share due to the high competition in Indian telecommunications industry and have encountering huge losses. Therefore it is essential for BSNL to provide various offers for their services and products and in addition to that undertake efficient marketing strategies in order to attract customers to stand in the market place. Customers will always look for the services that are cost effective as well as of top quality. In addition to these, consumers will look at the past experiences, service quality, service delivery, references and communications. Presently a majority of customers have plans to stick on to BSNL itself without switching to other operators. The study reveals that the prepaid
consumers go towards a service depending upon the call tariffs and messaging charges of the service provider. So, it is essential to reduce call and SMS charges and provide more and more offers to retain the existing customers and help them get globally connected at better rates.

This study shows that the major competitors of BSNL, that operating in India are Aircel, Vodafone and Airtel. They too provide equally valuable services to the customers. These three service providers mainly cover the main segments of Indian telecommunication market such as wireless services, mobile markets and technologies, IP services, and broadband markets and technologies. In addition to these, they provide some value added services and most sophisticated mobile services such as Wireless Application Protocol (WAP), Third Generation Services (TGS or 3G), Subscription Services (SS), Short Message Service (SMS), and General Packet Radio Services (GPRS). However, BSNL lags behind these competitive products in terms of speed of the services as well as technology. Few of the consumers who attended the survey have been customers of Vodafone or Airtel in the past and a majority of them have been using BSNL services for almost two years and above. However, the study clearly shows that most of BSNL’s customers of Karnataka are unhappy about BSNL’s signal strength of towers and customer care services. Network busy voice call has also been identified as one of the major concerns of customers of BSNL. A few consumers in fact are planning to switch over to Airtel in future. Therefore it is high time that
BSNL takes action towards expanding its product line as well as quality of services offered.

Marketing is most important for the telecommunication industry in order to spread the offers and services of telecommunication service providers to the consumers around the country. Marketing plays a main role in changing the buying behaviour of the consumer. This study concludes that it is hard to analyze the consumer buying behaviour and marketing behaviour. It is essential for marketing or service providers to analyze the consumer or buyer’s behaviour and will help them to promote their business to next level. This research concludes that BSNL tries hard and follows different strategies to be at the top of all the competitive service providers. However, there is a long way for BSNL in order to supersede its competitors. BSNL is in particular need to improve and modify their services in call rates to stand in the competitive market. To survive in current situation, call rates is one of the key to be different from other mobile phone operators. It is essential to introduce more schemes for students, housewives and senior citizens. When comparing with other mobile phone service provides BSNL in particular are at bottom in their customer services, poor clarity, and call drop as well as poor and bad network. It is concluded that, it is essential for BSNL to install extra towers to have the huge network coverage area and to avoid unnecessary call drop and to avoid poor and bad network conditions.

All variables tariffs for outgoing calls, availability of mobile connection and company responsiveness in dealing with customers,
company services regarding quality and performance, company delivery on time performance and their commitment have positive relationship Quality management to ensure customer satisfaction. Hence it is concluded from the research that all these variables must be considered in designing and launching services to get good match between consumer and marketers. The regression analysis shows the significance of all variable in the model. Hence the model design is of high importance and there exist significant correlation which strongly recommends the intention of consumer perception towards telecom services.

5.3 Findings of the study

- Customers who buy cell phone for personal use said that deposit amount and tariff rates on SMS and MMS facility is a factor that influenced them to decide their cell phone service provider. And they are satisfied with the mode of payment provided by the BSNL.
- Customers who buy cell phone for personal use said that the BSNL company responsiveness in dealing with their customers and network meets their needs and expectations regarding quality and performance.
- Customers who buy cell phone for personal use said BSNL Customers using prepaid scheme said that service charges is a factor which influenced them to decide their cell phone service provider.
• Customers who buy cell phone for business use said that brand image is a factor which influenced them to decide their cell phone service provider.

• Customers using prepaid scheme feel that the quality of network of BSNL is good.

• Customers using post-paid scheme said that periodical offers, security deposits and network availability are an important factors that affect their decision of buying any particular product from BSNL.

• Customers who said that they don’t have plans to switch over to other brands feel that the brand name of their mobile connection is good. And they are very much satisfied with the tariffs of outgoing calls of their BSNL when compared to the qualities of services.

• Customers who said that they don’t have plans to switch over to other brands feel that the availability of the mobile connection and feel that the mode of payment facilities provided by BSNL is good.

• Customers who said that they don’t have plans to switch over to other brands said that value added services is one of the factor which influence their decision on buying any particular product from BSNL.

• Customers who said that they don’t have plans to switch over to new brands said that deposit amount is important factors that influence them to decide on their cell phone services. And feel sales and promotional activities of BSNL are good.
• Customers who said that they don’t have plans to switch over to new brands are satisfied with the tariffs on SMS and MMS facility in BSNL.

• Customers who are satisfied with the performance of current services said that brand image and availability of cell phone connection is an important factor that influence them to decide on their cell phone services.

• Customers who are satisfied with the performance of current services are satisfied with the Company delivery on time performance and their commitment to meet their delivery expectations.

• Customers who are not satisfied with the performance of current services feel that the customer care services and service charges is an important factor that influence them to decide on their cell phone services.

• Customers who are not satisfied with the performance of current services feel that the company approach to quality management to ensure complete customer satisfaction need to be improved.

• Customers who do not have any difficulty in their cell phone connection said that call tariffs, value added services and branding are the factor that influences their decision of buying any particular Product from BSNL.

• 70.8% of the respondents, who said that they are aware of monthly charges of their cell phone connection said that they are satisfied
with BSNL connection compared with other substitutes available in the market.

- 53.4% of the respondents who said that they are aware of monthly charges of their cell phone connection said that the brand name of their mobile connection is good.

- 72.3% of the respondents who said that they are aware of charges for cell phones to landlines of their cell phone connection said that they are satisfied with their BSNL connection compared with other substitutes available in the market.

- 54.3% of the respondents who said that they are aware of charges for cell phones to landlines of their cell phone connection 43.6% of the respondents who said that they are aware of signal of tower networking of their cell phone connection said that the availability of their mobile connection is good.

- 69.6% of the respondents who said that they are having excellent sale promotional activities of BSNL feel that call tariffs is a very important factor that influences their decision of buying any particular Product from BSNL. 59.3% of the respondents who said that they are having very good sale promotional activities of BSNL feel that call tariffs is a very important factor that influences their decision of buying any particular Product from BSNL.

- 65.2% of the respondents who said that they are having excellent sales promotional activities of BSNL feel that network coverage is a very important factor that influences their decision of buying any particular Product from BSNL. 74.6% of the respondents who said
that they are having good sale promotional activities of BSNL feel that network coverage is a very important factor that influences their decision of buying any particular Product from BSNL.

- 65.2% of the respondents who said that they are having very good quality of network of BSNL feel that branding is a very important factor that influences their decision of buying any particular Product from BSNL. 50% of the respondents who said that they are having very good quality of network of BSNL feel that branding is an important factor that influences their decision of buying any particular Product from BSNL.

### 5.4. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the suggestions offered by the respondents to the BSNL to improve their services and to increase the number of their customers.

1. BSNL has to keep in mind the occupation of the customers and also the mode of payment facility. Mode of payment includes prepaid as well as post-paid. BSNL service provider should introduce a nominal value of recharge coupons and better mode of payment facility to suit buying capacity of the customers belonging to different occupation segment.

2. Adequate network facility should be developed by the mobile phone service provider to avoid network connectivity problem. High
frequency towers to be provided to avoid link failures and better clearance.

3. The tariff rate is to be in such a way that the low income people can also utilize the mobile phone services.

4. In the modern competitive world of business, customer satisfaction plays an important role in the market structure of the economy. So proper training should be given to the employees of the mobile companies to treat their customer in a friendly way.

5. Mobile phone service provider should try to reduce the charges of SMS facility or wind up the charges, so as to enable the customers to use this facility freely.

6. By reducing the cellular connection cost and operating cost as well as documentation requirement, the companies can attract new customers.

7. Cellular companies can include more information-related services under the gamut of value-added schemes. More emphasis should be given to banking-related services and latest news and match scores as respondents consider these important.

8. To increase the customer base, there is a need to change the image of the product from status symbol to product of necessity. For this, the cellular companies must further reduce ‘per minute’ charges and introduce more flexible plan schemes.

9. Service operators should promote more sales promotion schemes with various alternatives of payments and airtime packages.
5.4.1. Recommendations for BSNL to improve the customer services:

It is strongly recommended that, BSNL should improve its service in order to compete with other network operators. Most of the customers points out that, BSNL has poor customer service and poor marketing strategy and it is providing limited number of value added services, poor service image, and lack of strategic alliances problems like social obligations, unproductive rural assets, political interference, outdated technologies and poor IT penetration within the organization. So it is essential for BSNL to improve the services with different perspectives. In addition to these, BSNL have several threats and they need to face it to survive in Indian market. BSNL is receiving various pressures from its competitive and private service providers. BSNL should keep fast technological changes and it is essential to keep an eye about market strategies of other service providers.

It is strongly recommended that BSNL should improve their customer service. The customer services are so poor in BSNL and so the customer prefers to switch over to other networks for better services. It is strongly recommended that, BSNL have several opportunities to improve it services. BSNL must concentrate in providing the customer services which is most important in the telecommunication businesses. It is essential to help the unknown customers about the plans, services, and offers and so on. This will make customer satisfied. Customer satisfaction is most important in all businesses.
It is strongly recommended that, BSNL should concentrate on customer satisfaction and their buying behaviour. In addition to these, BSNL should concentrate on long term strategy and to keep the customers with them by not allowing them to switch over to the other networks and this will only possible by providing various offers and continues services. BSNL should concentrate on introducing various new schemes which will make their company standalone. It is strongly recommended that, BSNL should concentrate on customer care services. Customer care is the most essential and important department in the Telecom industry.

It is strongly recommended that, it is essential for BSNL to redefine the marketing strategy. BSNL's marketing strategy must focus on Value Added Services, customer services, building strong distribution chain and offering new services to the customers. Marketing is one of the key to success, so it is essential for BSNL to come out with the variety of schemes for customers, dealers and subscribers. It is strongly recommended that, it is essential to restructure organization with each segment and product should be considered as the separate business and it will be help in improved organizational communication, improved segmental efficiencies, better management, and it would help in developing the focus on revenue and also better performance monitoring.
5.5. CONCLUSION:

In today's world of globalization where there is cut throat competition, mobile service providers are all facing competition with respect to one another. In the competitive world of business people would expect quality products and quality services. A company which is unable to provide quality products and quality service cannot survive for a long period. Communication and information technology are the blood streams of the business world. Right quality communication will enable a person to do more business. Cellular phone service is a wonderful modern gift to the world of communication. No company, irrespective of their business, can satisfy their customers uniformly. To make a study into their behaviour and to arrive at a correct conclusion is rather impossible. But at the same time, any company which tries to improve their service and increase their customers, must float some effective and efficacious methods. This study has focused on the BSNL Karnataka prominent areas and their problems in the mobile phone services. The researcher humbly believes that the statistical data, findings, moderate analysis and consequently the suggestions will be useful for the relevant mobile services for their furtherance of their business. This dissertation can be used as a pioneer study for their future researchers in the same field.