5.1 FINDINGS

On the basis of analysis of the perception of the BSNL landline customers of Salem telecom district, the following findings are extracted from the interpretations made during the analysis.

1. As far as the gender classification of the sample frame of BSNL landline subscribers of Salem telecom district, males are of majority (60 percent) and the females take 40 percent. The males are the majority group so that it means the landline has been wanted by them. As the males are the head of many Indian families, they have decided that the landline is the must for their communication requirements. The females come next and it means that they have been supported by their families to subscribe the landline services.

2. Majority of surveyed customers (45 percent) are of 40-60 age group and it implies that the customers who are in the middle age and at old age are the subscribers of the BSNL landline connection. The landline was the only telecom service in the days of youngster years of them. As no other telecom device was in vogue, the landline had been their choice for oral communication in those days. ‘60 years and above’ is the next age category that consists of 40 percent of the customers. The present old generation had landline telephone since their young ages. ‘20-40 years’ is the age group that has 15 percent of the customers and they include the present youngsters. This
group has the landline connection when the landline connection was easy to get. The mean age of the customers is 55.06 and it indicates that the yesterday’s generation was the majority group of the BSNL landline connection in the sample frame.

3. Among the surveyed landline customers of Salem telecom circle, married customers are of the majority group (80 percent). It means that the married persons have the need for the landline connection. The other group i.e, unmarried consumers has rest of the customers (20 percent).

4. Majority of customers (30.6 percent) are diploma/ degree holders. It is noted that the medium level of education is the attribute of the BSNL landline subscribers in respect of the educational status. P. G degree holders and professional degree holders come next and they share the percent equally i.e., 24.5 percent each group. It means the educated and professional people have demanded the landline service at the time. The rest of the customers (20.4 percent) have the school level education only. They are the minority group in the sample frame and it means that the educationally lower group people have not demanded the landline service at large level.

5. Business people are the majority group (40 percent). It means that the landline connection is mostly used as a communication media in the business as well as personal life. Employees come next and they form 20.2 percent respondents. Profession takes to 15.1 percent of the customers; it can be assumed that both the customers i.e., employee and professional use the landline for their professional life. Agriculturists (19.8 percent) use the BSNL landline and the households are the least customers in the sample frame.

6. As far as the annual income is concerned, the majority customers (30.4 percent) have the annual income upto Rs.1 lakh. The mean income of the
sample subscribers of the BSNL landline connection in Salem telecom circle is 1.89 lakhs. It is clear that the mean annual income lies near to the minimum income ceiling, (upto Rs. 1 lakh).

7. The town has more number of subscribers (44.4 percent). Village has the second place in this regard and it has 30.7 percent subscribers. Town and village areas are having more number of landline connections than Salem city. It means that the city people switch over from the landline to cell phones. Surrenders of the landline connections are more in the city.

8. Majority of the customers (55.3 percent) has own house and the rest percent of the customers (44.7) live in rental house. This implies that the subscribers who possess own house prefer to landline connection as it is a convenient one. At the same time, it is notable that the customers who live in the rental houses possess the landline connection and this shows that the formalities and procedures do not annoy them in the case of shifting of residence.

9. Majority percent of the sample customers (42) possess the landline connection for the period of 2 – 4 years. This shows that the customers have obtained the landline connection recently. As the BSNL has been taking many steps to attract new customers the 42 percent customers might be attracted to the landline phone. 0-2 years is the period that has 20 percent of the landline customers. They are also the recently ‘added customers’ to the BSNL and they might have been motivated by the BSNL’s advertising campaign.

10. Post paid is the type of connection that has possessed by the majority (60 percent) of the surveyed landline customers. This is the traditional method of connection. But, 40 of the customers have prepaid connection and this is more convenience in one way that the customers can use the landline upto the prepaid amount without any hesitation.
11. Majority of the customers (64.9 percent) in Salem Telecom Circle do not have the caller ID instrument with their landline phone. This implies that either the landline customers do not have adequate awareness towards the caller ID and its usage or they ignore the facility. The BSNL does not take any steps to make the awareness among the landline customers regarding usage of the caller ID so that the facility is not used by the majority of the customers. Only a small percent of the customers (35.1 percent) use the caller ID facility with their phone.

12. In the case of payment of telephone charges to the BSNL, majority of the respondent customers (24.9 percent) use the online and the same percent (24.9) of the customers use the counter payment. This is an interesting fact the traditional way of payment and the modern way of payment (online payment) are supported by the two segments of the landline customers simultaneously and they are of equal percent.

13. Majority subscribers (74.9 percent) do not attend the customer meet and it implies that they are either ignorant or do not care it or do not have any faith on the customer meet. But at the same time, 25.1 percent of the customers attend the meet and this shows that the minority of the subscribers have confidence in it.

14. 28.6 percent of the customers face the line fault as the technical problem and they are of majority. This type of fault makes them irritated and the BSNL does not take sufficient remedial steps in this regard. Repair in the instrument is the technical difficulty to 24.6 percent customers.
15. In respect of receiving clear voice, majority of the customers (44.3 percent) feel this as their experience occasionally. 39.8 percent customers have felt it sometimes. 15.9 percent of the customers always get the clear voice.

16. According to 54 percent of the surveyed customers, the bill has no full information regarding the calls, duration of the calls etc. They feel that this is the major defect in the billing system. At the same time, 46 percent of the customers pointed out that the short duration of the bill are an inconvenience to them.

17. Majority of the customers (35.7 percent) feel that the inconvenient working hours of the BSNL makes difficulty to pay for the bill amount. 35.3 percent of the customers mention that the crowd in the counter is a difficulty to them. Penalty for the delayed payment is a problem to the 29 percent or the customers.

18. Majority of the customers (44.4 percent) convey their complaints through phone. It is the easy way to them. 30.7 percent customers express their complaints in written form. In their opinion, it is a strong evidence for lodging a compliant.

19. Most of the customers (39 percent) experience that the BSNL attends the complaints very slowly. This shows that the BSNL does not give its attention towards the issue. But, 30.7 percent of the customers point out the time taken by the BSNL to attend the complaint is reasonable one. 30.3 percent of the customers feel that the BSNL attends it immediately. So, the performance of the BSNL in this regard causes for three types of experiences among eh sample customers of the landline in Salem telecom circle.
20. Advertisement is the source of knowing about the concessions, offers and different schemes to the majority of the customers (40.9 percent). So, it is clear that the BSNL makes powerful advertisements in this regard. 34.1 percent of the customers have the awareness through the BSNL office. The BSNL has made different display boards, notices and posters in its office. They are the enough sources to the customers. 25 percent customers know them through their friends and relatives.

21. Three are different reasons for the purpose of having landline. Majority of the surveyed customers (39.8 percent) have it because of granting free calls by the BSNL to the landline customers. It is one of the attracting factors to the 39.8 percent of the landline customers in Salem telecom circle. At the same time, 39.8 percent customers possess because usage of the landline phone is convenient to old age and illiterate people. This is purely a chance of convenience and it is true that the old age people and illiterate need not worry about attending calls or making calls by using the landline. 24.9 percent customers continue the landline connection because of usage of internet connection. (But, now the landline connection is not necessary to have broadband internet connection. Data card is enough to have it.) The customers have maintained their landline connection for the joint concessions for internet users offered by the BSNL along with the landline connections.

Findings from Level of Satisfaction

22. Majority of the respondents (25.3 percent) dissatisfied with the call rates of the BSNL landline connection. 9.4 percent of the customers are of highly dissatisfied group. This segment of the customers (354 out of 1,020) is of totally 34.71 percent. This shows that the two subgroups in this segment have dissatisfaction towards the call rate of the landline service.
23. In respect of the extent of free calls, ‘satisfied’ is the group that has the majority of the customers (30.7 percent). Likewise, ‘highly satisfied’ is the group that has second place in this regard (28.8 percent). So, it is clear that the satisfaction prevails among the majority of the surveyed landline customers in Salem Telecom circle. These two groups form the strong customer base of the BSNL in respect of the landline connection.

24. In respect of the rental plans for the landline connection, majority of the surveyed customers (30.6 percent) are satisfied. But, this is normal satisfaction but not the high satisfaction. The highly satisfied group consists of 14.8 percent only. However, the satisfaction prevails among the 463 customers (45.4 percent) of the sample landline customers. The BSNL has to consider the dissatisfied group as well as the neutral group to secure the contentedness in order to retain the customers in future.

25. In the case of level of satisfaction towards the billing system, the neutral group of customers (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) is of majority (30.2 percent). Apart from the group, satisfied customers are in 24.7 percent and highly satisfied group are of 15.1 percent in the total sample size.

26. Satisfactory level towards the mode of payment is of varied in nature. Minority of the landline customers (51.1 percent - dissatisfied and 15.1 percent - highly dissatisfied) feel some disturbance and inconvenience. These two groups of the customers usually pay the amount through the counters of the BSNL office. This implies that the counter payment is not easy due to crowd, lengthy waiting time, working hours and sometimes the delayed arrival of staff to the counter and rarely failure of functioning of the billing machine. But, this segment of the customers does not use the E payment because of their lack of awareness and knowledge. It is vivid that
the BSNL has to make sufficient arrangement in the counters in order to make the payment as easy.

27. Majority of the customers (39.4 percent) are satisfied with the voice clarity at the other end. 15.1 percent of the customers have high level of satisfaction and this implies that their experience in this aspect has not been bad. But, there are dissatisfied customers also. So, it is clear that the both categories of the customers exist so that the BSNL has to pay its attention in this matter.

28. In respect of the on line balance enquiry, neutral customers are of majority (25 percent). This implies that the customers are not in a position to use and evaluate the facility. Apart from this segment, it is noted that the dissatisfied group of customers are in large number. (highly dissatisfied – 24.4 percent and dissatisfied – 19.9 percent). This means that the customers have felt disappointment from this facility and it may be due to slow process of customers’ request for information towards the balance amount.

29. 20.1 percent of the customers are of dissatisfied in respect of the service provided by the BSNL. 18.8 percent of the customers have felt high level of dissatisfaction. Service has been provided lately and some times, poor service might have been rendered by the BSNL. But, the customers are from mostly rural areas. At the same time, 20 percent and 10.2 percent of the surveyed customers have satisfaction and high satisfaction respectively.

30. 30 percent of the customers form majority and they belong to the dissatisfied segment regarding the grace period. 10.2 percent of the customers are of dissatisfied. And, they belong to middle income group people so that they are not able to pay the bill amount promptly. So, it is clear that they expect more length of the grace period.
31. In the case of information service of the BSNL, majority of the surveyed customers (30 percent) are of neutral. This implies that they do not have any experience in this regard. At the same time, dissatisfied section and satisfied section have the same strength of the customers. Both the segments have 20.2 percent of the customers for each section. So, it is clear that the customers are scattered in Salem telecom area in this issue.

Findings from Level of Awareness

32. In respect of the call rates for STD and ISD, 24.8 percent of the subscribers are of fully aware and 36 percent of the subscribers are of sufficiently aware. This shows that these landline subscribers use the landline for STD and ISD so that they have awareness in this regard.

33. In respect of the Level of Awareness towards Rental Plans, majority of the respondents (40.2 percent) have secured full awareness. The customers have the continuous usage of the landline and they know the changes of the rental plans.

34. 39.8 percent of the customers (majority) possess the sufficient level of awareness towards online balance enquiry and it means they use the facility at times. 25 percent of the customers have full awareness. 19.8 percent of the customers do have the slight awareness. 15 percent of the customers do not have the non awareness.

35. In respect of the awareness regarding the grace period, ‘sufficiently aware’ is the category that has the majority of the customers (46.3 percent). Likewise, the fully awareness is the category that has 24.9 percent of the customers. 19.8 percent of the customers have the slight awareness. From these three groups it is clear that the facility is known by the majority of the customers.
The minority customers (9.8 percent) do not have such awareness they retain the landline connection because of the prompt payment of the rental amount.

36. In respect of the customer care functions of the BSNL almost all the customers (except 5.1 percent) have secured the awareness. So, the customers have the awareness so that they are able to get benefits from the customer care functions of the BSNL.

37. All the customers have the awareness regarding the customer meet of the BSNL. The extent of the awareness differs among them. The customers have known that the periodicity of the meting, place, business of the meeting etc. 60.5 percent of the customers have sufficient awareness and 10 percent of the customers have the slight awareness. It is interesting that nobody has ignorance in this issue.

38. Regarding the information service of the BSNL majority of the customers (49.7 percent) has attained awareness at sufficient level. This shows that they may have been used the information service of the company or they are in a position to utlise the function.

39. In respect of the awareness towards the BSNL, ‘awareness customers’ are of majority; this means all of they see/ read/observe the advertisements. At the same time, 5.1 percent oft eh customers do not have any awareness regarding this. This shows the customers do not observe the advertisements due to either lack of time or lack of time.

Findings from Attitude

40. In respect of the attitude statement No.1, (landline phone is easy to use by old age and illiterate people) majority of the customers (55.3 percent) strongly agree the fact. Nobody refuses the statement. So, it is clear that the
landline phone is still desirable to the rural, old age and illiterate people. As no technical knowledge is necessary to the users the statement is wholly accepted by the surveyed customers.

41. As for as the Attitude Statement No. 2 (Landline is the cheapest means of communication) is concerned, it is noted that the 47.7 percent of the customers agree it, 10.2 percent of the respondents strongly agree it. Decrease in call rate, no. of free calls and concessions make the attitude of the customers in favour of this statement.

42. The Attitude statement No.3 (Landline connection is easy to get) has been widely accepted by 30.2 percent of the customers (strongly agree group) and 24.9 percent of the customers (agreeing group). The minority group of the customers do not accept the statement due to their personal experience.

43. Attitude statement no.4 (Caller ID is must for landline) has proved the necessity for the caller ID among the customers. 34 percent of the customers (majority) agreed it strongly and 25.8 percent of the customers agreed it. Only 10.4 of the customers disagree it and this shows that the customers are not aware of the benefits from it.

44. Attitude statement 5 (BSNL provides all details to customers) states that the majority of the customers of the BSNL agree it and it is accepted by 25.1 percent of the customers. So, it is clear that the company has performed its information service properly.

45. Attitude statement no.6 (I read/see the BSNL advertisements carefully) is accepted by 43.1 percent of the customers (majority) and 16.8 percent of the customers strongly agree. So it is clear that the company provides powerful advertisements and at the same time, the customers are eager to see it.
46. Attitude statement 7 (I am willing to recommend the BSNL landline to others) has varied types of customers among the 5 categories. Majority of the customers (40.1 percent) are not willing to recommend the B.S.N.L to others. It is not sure that they are dissatisfied with the B.S.N.L. But, they may have a tendency of switching over to the cellular service. Minority group of the customers (10.4 – strongly agree ; 11.8 percent – agree) are in favour of the statement and it shows the convenience from the usage of the landline phone.

47. Attitude statement 8 (If call rates increase, I will surrender landline) is accepted by the majority of the customers (51.7 percent) and by 18.3 percent. The disagreed customers are in minority. So, the Company has to be careful in the increase of call rate for any reason and it can not depend upon the minority customers.

48. Attitude statement 9 (Landline is not necessary in the cell phone era) is strongly accepted by the majority of the customers (59.8 percent) and by 20.4 percent. Nobody has denied this statement. So, the present day old age customers may shift the landline phone for the cell phone in future or after their death their family will surrender the landline phone.

49. Attitude statement 10 (Usage of landline is out of fashion) is also strongly agreed by 44.8 percent and agreed by 20.4 percent of the customers. So, retaining the landline phone by them is not possible for a long period. The remaining customers (15.3 percent– neutral; 19.5 percent – disagree) retaining the phone for their convenience even it is out of fashion.

Findings from Chi Square Analysis

50. There is association between Gender and Technical Problem.

51. There is association between Age and Technical Problem
52. There is no association between Educational Qualification and Technical Problem.
53. There is no association between Occupation and Technical Problem.
54. There is association between Annual Income and Technical Problem.
55. There is association between Area of Residence and Technical Problem.
56. There is association between Gender and Technical Problem.
57. There is association between Age and Reason for having landline.
58. There is association between Educational Qualification and Reason for having landline.
59. There is association between Occupation and Reason for having landline.
60. There is association between Annual Income and Reason for having landline.
61. There is association between Area of Residence and Reason for having landline.

Findings from ANOVA Test

62. Among the different age groups, out of 10 variables only two variables were not statistically significant variations in the mean responses of the respondents. The variables are ‘Satisfaction towards Billing System’ and ‘Satisfaction towards Voice Clarity’. The rest eight variables (Call Rate, Free Calls, Rental Plans, Mode of Payment, On-line Balance Enquiry, Service, Grace Period and Information Service)

63. Among the different occupation groups all the 10 variables were statistically significant variations in the mean responses of the respondents.

64. Among the different income groups, out of 10 variables only one variable was not statistically significant variations in the mean responses of the respondents. The variable is Satisfaction towards Grace period was not statistically significant. The rest nine variables (Call Rate, Free Calls, Rental
Plans, Billing System, Mode of Payment, voice clarity, On-line Balance Enquiry, Service, and Information Service) were statistically significant.

**Finding from Analysis of Attractive Factors**

65. The most important eight attractive factors were identified for using Landline connections in BSNL. The most important attractive factors of the respondents were Free calls permitted. The least important attractive factors of BSNL land line connections where billing system and Service.

**Finding from Analysis of Discouraging Factors**

66. Line and Technical fault was rank one and Call rate and Cross talk were ranked forth for the Land Line BSNL Connection.

**Finding from Analysis of Expectation Factors**

67. There are five significant expectation factors. The respondents ranked that decrease in call rate is one of the most important expectation factors in BSNL Landline connection. Increase in number of free calls was rank 2 as the expectation factors. The respondents ranked third as extension of grace period, fourth as quick service. Lastly the respondents ranked that full details about the calls and duration should be furnished in every month bill. Thus the most expected expectation factor was decrease in call rate.

**Finding from Factor Analysis**

68. The factors of Satisfaction of customers towards BSNL landline connection comprises of 10 individual statements. These 10 statements were grouped and reduced to 3 factors which contribute towards Satisfaction of customers towards BSNL landline connection. The 3 reduced components accounted for 69.703 percent of the variance in the original 10 statements. The individual
statements in first components were (1) Satisfaction towards Billing System, (2) Satisfaction towards Grace Period, (3) Satisfaction towards Call Rate. All the above 3 individual factors are reduced in the component as Payment plans. The First component Payment plans contribute 23.643 percent of variance in the original variance. The individual statements in second component were (1) Satisfaction towards Service, (2) Satisfaction towards online Balance Enquiry, (3) Satisfaction towards Information Service, (4) Satisfaction towards Rental Plans. All the above 4 individual components are reduced in the component as Customer Services. The Second component Customer Services contribute 23.572 percent of variance in the original variance. The individual statements in Third component were (1) Satisfaction towards Mode of Payment, (2) Satisfaction towards Extent of Free Calls, (3) Satisfaction towards Voice Clarity. The third component Technology contribute 22.489 percent of variance in the original variance.

Finding from Correspondence Table

69. Majority of the customers in towns used landline connections, thus showing that stability of landline connections. Whereas, in cities people have moved to cellular phones resulting in lesser usage of landline connections and also showing that majority of the city continued to use landline connections for more than 6 years. There is association between area of residence and period of using landline. The correlations between these two variables are mild.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS

The BSNL should take the following steps to retain its existing customers of the landline phone.

1. The ‘reconnection mela’ held should be held in all areas of the country especially for backwards and rural areas. Proper publicity should be given to
the 'mela' that is to encourage the ex-subscribers of the landline connection to get reconnection.

2. It is important to contact institutional customers particularly private sector organizations to induce them to get landline connection with all concessions.

3. The customers are from two extreme ends in respect of the services. So, the BSNL should attend the customers’ grievances quickly. More number of staff may be used by the BSNL to look after the grievances and complaints of the customers.

4. Even in the on line payment days, there is a crowd in front of the BSNL office counters to pay amount towards the telephone bill. The BSNL should make sufficient arrangements for the sake of convenience of the customers in the form of additional counters to collect the amount for the telephone bill.

5. The BSNL should use its marketing and customer care staff members to canvass for new customers to increase the landline connections.

6. Likewise, the disconnected lines should be paid with special attentions and the staff members should be sent to meet the ex-subscribers to convince them to get reconnection. For this purpose, the staff members may be benefited with any extra remuneration.

7. Caller ID may be granted with the instrument to the new connections and reconnections for the benefit of the customers.

8. More advertisements should be given to the customers and general public to attract them to get the landline connection.

9. The BSNL should pay its attention for extension of the grace period for delayed or time barred payment of the telephone bill for the benefits of the low and middle income group of customers.

10. Customer meet should be held as a public meeting to redress the grievances of the customers and attract the new customers.
5.3 CONCLUSION

The landline customers of the Salem telecom district have their own likes and dislikes in using the landline service. The landline service is retained by the old age, illiterate and rural area customers for their convenience. The convenience in handling of the landline phone is in the sense of making calls and attending calls by the old age, illiterate and rural mass without much technical knowledge and it makes the landline phone alive. Apart from the concessions, offered by the BSNL for the benefits of the customers, the real reason for having the landline phone is the convenience. But, this situation can not prevail for a long period. Old generation is going on and the coming generations may entirely avoid such landline connections in future. So, the BSNL has to devise its marketing strategy very carefully immediately. For this, the BSNL may use its marketing and customer care staff to contact the customers directly. It is important duty on the part of the BSNL to consider the case of the dissatisfied customers carefully and steps should be taken to convert them as the satisfied customers. Then only, the BSNL can get survival and success in the lines of its traditional telephone.

5.4 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There is a wider scope for further researches in the field of landline connections offered by the BSNL. The future research may be held on an extensive way to cover a large geographical area i.e., state level or even national level. It is also possible to conduct the research from the service provider’s point of view. The survival problems of the landline phone may further be studied by the future researchers from the angle of the BSNL. And, it is necessary to explore the ways and means to retain the landline phone. The future researches may be useful in these lines. Particularly, apart from the academicians, the BSNL may make a market survey at national level to probe into the real problems in marketing the landline connections successfully.