6.1 Introduction

This study was conducted to understand the impact of customer care services on customer satisfaction, the relationship between satisfaction/dissatisfaction and switching intention of the subscribers and what role MNP is playing in the highly competitive mobile phone services in Uttar Pradesh (East) circle. This study evaluated the performance of all the service providers in this telecom circle and comparison of their services is helpful in understanding the nature of competition and satisfaction level of subscribers.

On the basis of responses received from the respondents and the data analysis, following are the major findings of the study:

- In U.P (East) circle - Airtel is the market leader with market share of 22.8%, followed by Vodafone (16.7%), Reliance (14.7%), BSNL (14%), Idea (10.7%), Tata (8%), Aircel (5%), Uninor (4.3%) and MTS (3.8%).

- 73.7% subscribers are using prepaid services and only 26.3% are using postpaid services.

- For mobile phone services, most of the subscribers prefer to have their monthly expenses less than or equal to Rs.500.
Two major network related problems faced by mobile phone subscribers are Busy Network and call disconnect problem. However Service providers are trying their best to fulfill the minimum requirements/expectations of their respective subscribers.

More than sixty percent subscribers are of the opinion that call charges of their service providers are economical in comparison to other operators and around forty percent subscribers do not agree with it. However, it is an area of serious concern for the market leader Airtel.

Mobile phone subscribers are aware about the multimedia/value added services but only few are using such services. Subscribers who are using multimedia/Value added services, most of the them are satisfied with their service providers.

The following points explain the preformance of service providers with special reference to dimensions of customer care services.

- Airtel is providing prompt customer services in terms of accessibility of customer care centres and handling of customer complaints however it an area of serious concern for Reliance, BSNL, Uninor and MTS.

- Airtel and Vodafone are rated as the top two service providers in terms of ability of the customer care executives to understand the specific needs of the customers however it an area of serious concern for service providers like Reliance, Tata, Aircel and MTS.

- Airtel and Vodafone are rated as the top two service providers in terms of sincerity, patience and capability of the customer care executives to solve customer problems and service providers like
Reliance, BSNL, Aircel and MTS are not able to fulfill their subscribers’ expectations.

- Subscribers of Airtel and Vodafone are satisfied with the responses they receive from the customer care executives but it is an area of concern for Reliance, BSNL, Tata and MTS.

- In emergency situations, customer care executives of Airtel and Vodafone have the willingness to help their subscribers but executives of Reliance, Tata, BSNL, MTS and Uninor are not doing well on this parameter.

- Executives of Airtel and Vodafone have customer centric approach and their behaviour is helpful in establishing service confidence but service providers like BSNL, Reliance, Uninor and MTS are not able to fulfill the expectations of their subscribers.

- From the factor analysis, it is identified that all dimensions related to customer care services are focusing on single factor i.e “Rating of Customer Care Services” and based on the performance of service providers with special reference to dimensions of customer care services, it is observed that Airtel and Vodafone are fulfilling the expectations of their subscribers and finally rated by subscribers as the best two services provider in this circle however the other service providers specially MTS, Uninor and BSNL should work hard to adress the serious issue of customer care services to satisfy their subscribers.

- On the basis of performance of service providers with reference to various quality dimensions such as network innovativeness, brand image and reputation, loyalty programme and entertainment
facilities, Airtel and Vodafone are the leading brands and factor analysis shows that quality dimensions are referring to one single factor i.e., Brand Image and reputation of service provider.

- Most of subscribers of MTS Uninor, Aircel, and BSNL are satisfied with the call charges however it is an area of serious concern for Airtel, Vodafone and Idea.

- Vodafone is the best service provider in this circle on the basis of overall satisfaction level of mobile phone subscribers.

- Most of the subscribers are of the opinion that their respective service providers have few drawbacks.

- In U.P. (East) circle, forty two percent subscribers have the switching intention.

- It an area of serious concern that except the Vodafone subscribers, more than forty percent of the subscribers of all the other service providers have the switching intention.

- It is certainly a challenge for the service providers to retain their existing customers in this competitive market after the introduction of MNP.

- Airtel and Vodafone are preferred service providers for the subscribers who have the switching intention.

- 45.6 percent of the subscribers who have the switching intention are switching to other service providers for better customer services.
- 24.4 percent of the subscribers who have the switching intention are switching to other service providers for minimum call charges.

- 14.4 percent subscribers are switching for better network connectivity and 15.6 percent are switching due to other factors i.e. for better value added services, multimedia services, billing services/tariff plans, network innovativeness, brand image etc.

The findings of the research were validated by testing of following hypotheses-

**H01:** There is no impact of customer care services on overall satisfaction of the mobile phone subscribers.

**H02:** There is no relationship between overall satisfaction and switching intention of the subscribers.

**H03:** There is no relationship between satisfaction with effectiveness of the network and switching intention of the subscribers.

**H04:** There is no relationship between the call charges and switching intention of the mobile phone subscribers.

**H05:** There is no relationship between satisfaction with multimedia/value added services and switching intention of the mobile phone subscribers.

### 6.2 Conclusion

On the basis of data analysis and testing of hypotheses, the study has identified the following factors affecting the satisfaction of mobile phone subscribers in U.P. (East) circle:
Customer Care Services

Call charges

Effectiveness of the Network

Other factors-Multimedia/Value added Services, Network innovativeness etc.

All the investment that has been made in the last decade for creating infrastructure has provided a forward momentum for growth. The right type and amount of telecom infrastructure is necessary for providing a variety and quality of telecommunication services required and expected by the customers.

Telecom service providers have always faced the challenge of matching their technology and infrastructure to the customers’ expectations. Lack of infrastructure can cripple all efforts towards providing a reliable, high quality world-class telecom services to the citizens of U.P. (East) circle. Though this circle has seen growth in all the constituents of the telecom infrastructure but connectivity problem is very common problem and service providers should do the needful to make their network effective to satisfy and retain the subscribers.

It is area of concern that leading players in this circle are not very economical for their subscribers. To have a sustainable business, tariff/call charges will need to be rationalized in the coming years, because call charges are affecting the switching intention of the subscribers.

Nearly half of the subscribers who have the switching intention are ready to leave their existing service provider basically for better customer service so effective customer care services is the key to retain existing customers and attract new customers.
Other factors-multimedia/value added services, billing service/tariff plans, network innovativeness, brand image/reputation etc., are also important for service providers. Service providers have already started focusing on these factors. By offering multimedia/value added services at the economical rates, service providers can maximize their revenue since the users of such services are few.

All the above discussed factors certainly affect the overall satisfaction of subscribers in U.P.(East) Circle and finally satisfaction/dissatisfaction affects the switching intention of the subscribers as validated by hypotheses testing.

From subscribers point of view, the most important factor affecting their satisfaction/dissatisfaction and their switching intention is effectiveness of customer care services followed by call charges, value added services/quality dimensions and network effectiveness/connectivity.

Due to the nature of competition in U.P. (East) circle, service providers should evaluate their performance time to time for retention of their existing subscribers because MNP has given freedom to subscribers to select the best service provider while retaining their existing number.

After the introduction of Mobile Number Portability (MNP), service providers should focus not only on acquiring the new customers but also on existing customers to retain them. MNP may affect the position of all service providers as it is a highly competitive market. For subscribers, MNP, again validates the fact that ‘Customer is the King’, as today they have the freedom or flexibility to retain their mobile numbers, while moving from one service provider to another, based on their customer satisfaction levels.

MNP may be game changer in this circle because existing market share is not a guarantee for future market share because of nature of competition. The
players should regularly evaluate their performance on various parameters for formulation of strategy(s) to satisfy and retain the customers.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Service Provider-wise Recommendations

*Mobile phone service providers are recommended to formulate strategies in critical areas of their operations to achieve sustainable business growth in Uttar Pradesh (East) circle.*

_Airtel_ is the market leader in U.P. (East) Circle with 22.8 percent market share but in order to retain its existing customers, Airtel should try to make its network more effective although most subscribers are getting the expected level of network services i.e., it is fulfilling the minimum requirements of its subscribers. Most of the Airtel subscribers are not satisfied with the existing call charges and it is an area of serious concern. Most of the Airtel subscribers are satisfied with the value added/multimedia services and by increasing the use of such services, Airtel can increase its revenue. Around fifty percent Airtel subscribers have the switching intention due to existing call charges so Airtel should formulate proper strategy to address this issue to maintain its position in highly competitive market. On various dimensions of customer care and its quality Airtel was rated high, it shows customer care services offered by Airtel are very effective and it is the main reason for its existing market share in this competitive market. It is first preferred brand by the subscribers of other service providers in this circle who have the switching intention.

_Vodafone_ with 16.7 percent market share is the second largest player in U.P. (East) circle. It is a fact that Vodafone subscribers are also facing the connectivity related problem like in case of other service providers but existing users are of the opinion that Vodafone is capable of fulfilling their expectations
with reference to network services. Around thirty percent Vodafone subscribers are of the opinion that call charges are not economical in comparison to other operators. Vodafone subscribers are satisfied with the value added/multimedia services and by increasing the use of such services, Vodafone can increase its revenue. Most of the Vodafone subscribers are satisfied with customer care services and on the basis of overall satisfaction, it is the best service provider in U.P. (East) circle. Only twenty percent have the switching intention. Vodafone can become the market leader by focusing on economical call charges and by offering more effective customer services.

**Reliance** with 14.7 percent market share is the third largest player in this circle. Around fifty percent Reliance subscribers are suffering from connectivity related problem and are not satisfied with the performance of the network. Most of the Reliance subscribers are of the opinion that call charges are economical in comparison to other operators. Most of the Reliance subscribers are satisfied with its value added services and by offering 3G services in this circle, Reliance can increase its revenue. Around thirty percent subscribers are of the opinion that customer care services are worse than their level of expectations. Around forty percent subscribers are not satisfied and have the switching intention mainly for better customer service and connectivity. Reliance should immediately address the customer care and connectivity related issues to retain its market share in this market.

**BSNL** with 14 percent market share is the fourth largest player in this circle. Fifty percent BSNL subscribers are of the opinion that its network is worse than their level of expectation. In case of call charges it has the competitive advantage and is one of its strategies to retain its existing customers. Most of the BSNL subscribers are satisfied with its value added services but there is need to concentrate on 3G services for increasing the revenue. Around forty percent subscribers are not satisfied with the BSNL services and have the switching
intention mainly for better customer service. In this competitive market only economical call charges will not serve the purpose so BSNL should immediately focus on customer service and network effectiveness.

Idea with 10.7 percent market share is the fifth largest player in this circle. With reference to the effectiveness of the network, most of its subscribers are getting the expected level of services although call charges are not very economical for its subscribers. Value added services offered by Idea are very effective but it should concentrate on 3G services for increasing its revenue. By focusing on customer service, connectivity and introducing better plans for the customers, it can retain its existing subscribers and can easily acquire the better position in this market. It entered late in this telecom circle but doing well on various quality aspects.

Tata with 8 percent market share is the sixth largest player in this circle. Tata should try to make its network more effective because more than fifty percent subscribers are not satisfied with the effectiveness of the network. Tata is offering mobile services at economical rates and most of its subscribers are satisfied. Value added services offered by Tata are effective and by offering 3G services it can increase its revenue. Around forty percent Tata’s subscribers have the switching intention and the major factor affecting the switching intention is customer service. It should immediately formulate its strategy to address this serious issue in addition to other factors.

Aircel with 5 percent market share is the seventh largest player in this circle. Most of the subscribers are of the opinion that its network is not effective and they are suffering from connectivity problem. Its call charges are very economical so it has the competitive edge over the other players. Around 40 percent Aircel subscribers have the switching intention for better value added services, multimedia services, billing services/tariff plans in addition to other factors like better connectivity and better customer care services. It entered late in
the circle but by focusing on its network and other mentioned factors, it can perform well.

*Uninor* a new player in this telecom circle has only 4.3 percent market share in the circle but more than sixty percent subscribers are of the opinion the Uninor’s network is worse than their level of expectation. Almost all the subscribers are satisfied with existing call charges of Uninor. With reference to value added services, most of the subscribers are of the opinion that such services are effective. Around forty percent subscribers are not getting the expected level of customer care services and expect that Uninor should do the needful. Nearly half of the existing subscribers have switching intention and major factor affecting it is customer care services so by focusing on customer care services and making its network effective, it can retain and increase its market share.

*MTS* is the new service provider in U.P. (East) circle and has only 3.8 percent market share in the circle. Nearly sixty five percent of its subscribers have the switching intention for better network connectivity, customer service and other factors including multimedia, tariff plans, network innovativeness etc. By formulating proper strategies to address such issues, it can satisfy and retain its subscribers in this highly competitive market.

### 6.3.2 Recommendations for Regulator and Policy Makers

TRAI has laid down the standards of quality of service to be provided by the service providers to create conditions for customer satisfaction and the user has a right to expect the quality services. TRAI has notified the various Directions/Regulations/Guidelines to the service providers to address the major issues related to consumers. In this research, it has been found that there is certainly gap between the expectations of the subscribers and performance of service providers on various quality issues. Such factors certainly affect the customer satisfaction. This imply that policy makers and industry regulators, need to be awakened to this empirical fact and take pragmatic steps to ensure that
service providers in U.P.(East) circle improve their efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of telecommunications services that meet and exceed customer needs, desires and expectations. TRAI should ensure that these operators are responsive to customer and community needs, and that customers’ interest is protected by focusing more attention and resources on customer care services, effectiveness of the network, making the services more economical and other quality related issues.

6.4 Scope for Future Research

The findings of the study cannot be generalized for the whole population of mobile phone users in India since research was conducted in U.P (East) circle. Telecom circle wise, the results may be different so there is certainly scope for similar researches in other circles of India.

The rapid change in technology has changed the subscribers’ expectations towards the various quality dimensions. In this competitive environment it has become a necessity for every service provider to satisfy and retain the subscribers after the introduction of MNP in U.P. (East) circle. Therefore, similar research in future in same geographical location may produce some different results.

The research of similar nature can be conducted with large sample size in U.P (East) circle and other telecom circles.

U.P. (East) circle is very large and for this study, the researcher collected the data from from four major cities of this circle. By adding the respondents from the other cities of this circle, the research in future may be conducted.

Satisfaction of mobile phone subscribers is affected by several factors but the researcher has taken only few factors for this research. In future, the research may be conducted by considering the other factors also.

*****
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http://www.mtsindia.in
http://www.google.com
http://www.reddiff.com
QUESTIONNAIRE

I (Shekhar Srivastava) am a research scholar in IFTM University, Moradabad. I am doing a research work on “A study of the Impact of Customer Care Services on Customer Satisfaction of Mobile Phone Subscribers of U.P.(East) Circle”, the same to be submitted to the university, under the supervision of Dr. Ashish Bhatnagar, Professor, IILM Academy of Higher Learning, Lucknow.

I will be thankful, if you could spare some time to answer these questions. The information you provide will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purpose only.

SECTION-A

Mobile Subscriber Identification:

(Please tick ( ) mark on the appropriate option)

Name of Respondent : ..........................................................

Place / Address : ........................................................................

1. Gender : (1) Male

                : (2) Female

2. Age : (1) Below 20

               : (2) 20 - 25
               : (3) 25 - 35
               : (4) 35 - 45
               : (5) 45+ years
3. Profession:
   (1) Government Service
   (2) Private Service
   (3) Self Employed/Business
   (4) Any Other: ☐ Housewife / ☐ Student

4. Monthly Income (Rs.)
   (1) ≤ 5000
   (2) 5001 - 15,000
   (3) 15001 - 30,000
   (4) > 30,001

5. Which one of the following is your service provider?
   (1) Airtel
   (2) Vodafone
   (3) Reliance
   (4) BSNL
   (5) Tata
   (6) Idea
   (7) Aircel
   (8) Uninor
   (9) MTS

6. What type of mobile communication do you have?
   (1) Prepaid
   (2) Postpaid

7. How long have you been using this connection?
   (1) Less than 1 year
   (2) 1 to 2 years
   (3) 2 to 3 years
   (4) More than 3 years

8. How much do you spent per month on your mobile phone?
   (1) Less than or equal to Rs. 300
   (2) Rs. 301 - 500
   (2) Rs. 501 – 1000
   (4) More than Rs. 1000
SECTION-B
Part – I

Effectiveness of the Network:

1. Which one of the following is the main connectivity problem you are facing with your service provider?
   (1) Network busy
   (2) Out of network coverage area
   (3) Call disconnect
   (4) Voice problem
   (5) Any Other. Please specify

2. When did you face network connection problems?
   (1) Inside the Circle
   (2) While Traveling
   (3) Outside the Circle

3. Do you face connectivity problem in specific hours of the day?
   (1) 06:00 – 09:00 AM
   (2) 09:00AM – 12:00 Noon
   (3) 12:00 – 03:00 PM
   (4) 03:00 – 06:00 PM
   (5) 06:00-09:00 PM

4. Do you get the expected network services from your service provider?
   (1) Yes
   (2) No

5. To what extent, your mobile services met your expectations?
   (1) Much worse than expected
   (2) Worse than expected
   (3) Equal to my expectations
   (4) Better than expected
   (5) Much better than expected

6. Rate your satisfaction level with reference to effectiveness of the network of your service provider?
   (1) Highly Dissatisfied
   (2) Dissatisfied
   (3) Neutral
   (4) Satisfied
   (5) Highly Satisfied
SECTION-B
Part – II

Billing/Call Charges:

1. If you are a postpaid customer, are you aware about the billing system of your service provider?
   (1) Yes   (2) No

2. If you are a postpaid customer, do you receive billing updates from your service provider?
   (1) Yes   (2) No

3. If you are a postpaid customer, are you satisfied with the billing services of your service provider?
   (1) Highly Dissatisfied   (2) Dissatisfied   (3) Somewhat Satisfied
   (4) Satisfied   (5) Highly Satisfied

4. If you are a prepaid customer, are you aware about the tariff plans/recharge coupons offered by your service provider?
   (1) Yes   (2) No

5. If you are a prepaid customer, do you receive updates to recharge your prepaid card?
   (1) Yes   (2) No

6. If you are a prepaid customer, are you satisfied with the prepaid tariff plans/recharge coupons offered by your service provider?
   (1) Highly Dissatisfied   (2) Dissatisfied   (3) Somewhat Satisfied
   (4) Satisfied   (5) Highly Satisfied

7. Do you think call Charges of your service provider is economical in comparison to other operators?
   (1) Yes   (2) No

8. Rate your satisfaction level with reference to call charges
   (1) Highly Dissatisfied   (2) Dissatisfied   (3) Neutral
   (4) Satisfied   (5) Highly Satisfied
SECTION – B
Part – III

Multimedia/Value added Services:

1. Are you aware about 3G (3rd generation) technology?
   (1) Yes               (2) No

2. Are you using 3G technology services offered by your service provider?
   (1) Yes               (2) No

3. Are you using Internet/Broadband/E-mail facilities offered by your service provider through mobile phone?
   (1) Yes               (2) No
   If Yes, how often you use this facility?
   (1) Occasionally       (2) Frequently       (3) Very rare
   If No, please specify the reasons
   .................................................................................................

4. Are you getting regular updates regarding various value added services offered by your service provider?
   (1) Yes               (2) No

5. To what extent, value added services (access to Internet, SMS, MMS, Voice message etc) offered by your service provider met your expectations?
   (1) Much worse than expected               (2) Worse than expected
   (3) Equal to my expectations             (4) Better than expected
   (5) Much better than expected

6. Rate your satisfaction level with reference to Multimedia/Value added Services
   (1) Highly Dissatisfied        (2) Dissatisfied        (3) Neutral
   (4) Satisfied                 (5) Highly Satisfied
SECTION – C

Customer Satisfaction with Reference to
Customer Care Services and Quality Dimensions.

In your opinion, what is your level of satisfaction with reference to service quality of your mobile service provider in the following dimensions? Please mark (\(\checkmark\)) any one option

1 - Much worse than expected
2 - Worse than expected
3 - Equal to my expectations
4 - Better than expected
5 - Much better than expected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Dimensions of Customer Care Services</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How the customer care centers are approachable?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>How best is your service provider in attending Customer complaints?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>How best is your service provider to give prompt customer services?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ability of the customer care executive to understand the specific needs of the customer.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ability of the customer care executive to communicate clearly with you.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sincerity and patience in resolving customer complaints.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Customer care executives have the capability to solve customer problems.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>To what extent, you are satisfied with the response of customer care executive.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Are they willing to help in emergency situations?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The behaviour of customer care executive in establishing service confidence in customers.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>How do you rate the customer centric approach of the executives?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>How do you rate the customer care services of your mobile operator?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Are they apologizing for inconvenience caused to customers?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sl. No.</td>
<td>Quality Dimensions</td>
<td>Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Effectiveness of your service provider to offer variety of entertainment facilities.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>How truthful (keeping to promises) is your service provider to you?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Having sound loyalty programme to recognize you as a frequent customer.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>How economical is the use of your telecom network services?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Network Innovativeness- ability to use modern technology to improve services.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>How do you rate the brand image and reputation of your service provider?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION – D

Customer Satisfaction and Switching Intention:

1. Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider:
   (1) Highly Dissatisfied (2) Dissatisfied (3) Neutral
   (4) Satisfied (5) Highly Satisfied

2. Do you think that your mobile service provider has few drawbacks as compared to other operators?
   (1) Yes (2) No

3. Are you aware about the MNP (Mobile Number Portability)?
   (1) Yes (2) No

4. Do you think MNP is helping operators to bring better choice to the customers?
   (1) Yes (2) No

5. Do you have the intention of switching to a better service provider?
   (1) Yes (2) No

6. If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider.
   (1) Airtel (2) Vodafone (3) Reliance
   (4) BSNL (5) Tata (6) Idea
   (7) Aircel (8) Uninor (9) MTS

7. Why do you want to switch to new operator?
   (1) Better Connectivity (2) Minimum Call Charges
   (3) Better Customer Service (4) Better value added /Multimedia Services
   (5) Any other, Please specify: .................................................................

8. Your valuable suggestions: .................................................................
   ..............................................................................................................

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RESEARCH PAPERS PUBLISHED

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT RESEARCH AND REVIEW

IMPACT OF CUSTOMER CARE SERVICES ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION-A STUDY OF MOBILE PHONE SUBSCRIBERS OF U.P. (EAST) CIRCLE

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ABSTRACT

Customer service is the provision of service to customer, before, during and after a purchase. Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) defined customer service as a series of activities designed to enhance the level of customer’s satisfaction that is, the feeling that a product or service has met customer’s expectation. Competitive advantage is secured through intelligent identification and satisfaction of customers needs better and sooner than competitors and sustainment of customer’s satisfaction through better customer service tools. This research focuses on various issues related to customer care and quality that customers consider as important as well as customers’ intention to switch to other competitor networks. This study is helpful in recognizing the importance of customer care services and its overall impact on customer satisfaction and finally the switching intention of the mobile subscribers and what role MNP is going to play in this highly competitive market. To the management of mobile phone service providers, the findings and results of this study will provide a more reliable, scientific measure and perspective for describing and evaluating the level of their customer satisfaction with the services they deliver. This will provide empirical support for management strategic decisions in several critical areas of their operations, and above all, provide a justifiably valid and reliable guide for designing workable service delivery improvement strategies for creating and delivering customer value, achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty, building long-term mutually beneficial relationship with profitable customers and achieve sustainable business growth in Uttar Pradesh (East) circle. To policy makers such as the Ministry of Communications and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, the findings and results of this study will provide invaluable insights and a more reliable guide to evaluate performance of service providers with special reference to customer care services. It will also help the TRAI to ensure that these operators are responsive to customer and community needs, and that customers’ interest is protected.

Keywords: Customer service, Customers’ satisfaction, Competitive advantage, MNP, Switching intention. *Corresponding Author
INTRODUCTION

Success in the market place rests on a firm’s ability to attract, satisfy and retain its customers. Customer satisfaction is the primary determinant of customer loyalty and subsequent relation of customer. This is true for goods as well as services. Continued success rests on reinventing oneself in the eyes of one’s customers and adaptation to their evolving needs, firms must anticipate where customer preferences are headed. Customer satisfaction holds the potential for increasing an organization’s customer base, increase the use of more volatile customer mix and increase the firm’s reputation. One path to achieve customers’ satisfaction is through customer service.

Telecom services are recognized world-over as an important tool for the socio-economic development of a nation. It is one of the prime support services essential for rapid growth and modernization of various sectors of the economy. In India too, the telecommunication sector has revolutionized the way we communicate and share information, thereby helping over 800 million Indians stay connected, over the last two decades.

In the last ten years, the mobile revolution has truly changed the socio-economic landscape of India and played a pivotal role in the growth and development of the economy. The Indian mobile telecommunication industry has witnessed significant rise in competition in recent years largely due to the deregulation policy of government and the advent of mobile telecommunication companies. Another complex dimension to the competitive trend in the Indian telecommunication industry is the case and rate at which products and services are duplicated in the industry and multi dimension nature of communication. This trend fosters a scenario of continuous fight for customers share (Mendzela, 1999) and, an increasing the need to build loyal customers through effective customer’s service activities. Customer service is the gateway for a mobile customers’ experience. Mobile operators that can achieve a high-level of service will be in a great position to win market share away from low-cost competitors. Great customer service is the key to retain existing customers.

Effective customer-oriented relationship marketing tactics may help marketers to acquire customers, keep customers, and maximize customer profitability, and finally build up customer loyalty. The competition is also becoming more and sharper. In order to obtain sustainable competitive advantage, telecommunication firms are forced to make innovation and do the best for customer satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a general consensus in the marketing literature about the importance of customer satisfaction in business success. Higher customer satisfaction leads to improved financial performance by lowering customer switching, improving loyalty, reducing price elasticity and transaction cost, promoting positive word of mouth and enhancing firm image and reputation (Garvin, 1988; Anderson, 1988; Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000; Homburg and Giering, 2001; and Kim et al., 2004)

While the Indian mobile market is poised to grow at an increasing rate, the mobile service providers have not been able to either maintain or increase customer satisfaction. According to Voice and Data mobile user’s satisfaction survey 2008, there was a significant drop in the overall satisfaction of all major service providers against the benchmark set by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

According to Claes Fornell, “satisfied customers represent a real, albeit intangible, economic asset that generates future income streams for the owner of that asset”. India has shown tremendous growth in past few years in telecommunication sector. The change in technology has changed the consumer mind. From fixed lines to wireless lines the number of subscribers has shown remarkable growth.
Increasing customer satisfaction has been shown to directly affect companies’ market share, which leads to improved profits, positive recommendation, lower marketing expenditures (Reichheld, 1996; Heskett et al., 1997), and greatly impact the corporate image and survival (Pizam and Ellis, 1999).

Parker and Mathew (2001) expressed that there are two basic definitional approaches of the concept of customer satisfaction. The first approach defines satisfaction as a process and the second approach defines satisfaction as an outcome of a consumption experience. These two approaches are complementary, as often one depends on the other. It was also noted that the process of satisfaction definition concentrates on the antecedents to satisfaction rather than satisfaction itself.

Levesque and McDougall (1996) in their case study on retail banking found out that if a service problem or customer complaint is not properly handled, it has a substantial impact on the customer’s attitude towards the service provider. However, the study did not support the notion that good customer complaint management leads to increased customer satisfaction. They reported that at best, satisfactory problem recovery leads to the same level of customer satisfaction as if a problem had not occurred.

Fornell (1992) investigated customer satisfaction with 100 corporations in over 30 industries in Sweden and expressed that the benefits of customer satisfaction include the following; highly satisfied customers -

1. Stay longer (i.e. prevent customer churn)
2. Purchase more as the company introduces new products and upgrades existing products
3. Talk favourably about the company and its products or services
4. Pay less attention to competing brands
5. Less sensitive to price
6. Offer product or service ideas to the company
7. Cost less to serve than new customers because transactions are routine
8. Enhances business reputation

These benefits make customer satisfaction and its measurement an important marketing construct, which is especially essential to the industry in which the long-term links between operators and customers are of greater importance to business performance.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the various issues related to customer service and its quality.
2. To analyse and compare the services offered by the mobile phone service providers.
3. To study and analyse the impact of customer care services on the customer satisfaction.
4. To study the switching intention of mobile phone subscribers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is basically descriptive in nature and includes surveys and fact-finding inquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research is to describe the state of affairs as it exists at present. Considering the objective of the research, a questionnaire was designed. Primary Data was collected through designed questionnaire/ personal interviews with subscribers of mobile phone services of U.P. (East) Circle. Secondary data used was provided by the various
telecommunications service providers, government agencies and regulatory body, published material, data through websites in connection to mobile phone services. For sample selection, the researcher used the combination of probability and non probability sampling. In this research, the researcher collected the primary data from the four major cities of U.P. (East) Circle- i.e. Varanasi, Kanpur, Lucknow and Allahabad. Total 600 respondents i.e. 150 mobile phone subscribers from each city participated in the study.

Hypotheses
Considering the research objectives cited above and the review of literature, the following null hypotheses were set:

**H01:** There is no impact of customer care services on overall satisfaction of the mobile Phone subscribers.

**H02:** There is no relationship between overall satisfaction and switching intention of the subscribers.

Tools used for Data Analysis
It includes the various statistical tools & techniques. Statistical tools help in analyzing the data and the data analysis is helpful in drawing conclusions. Statistical tools are used mainly, to study the relationship between the variables and to perform the hypothesis testing. For testing of the hypothesis, the Chi Square test as a statistical tool is used and to show the major findings the cross tabulation and bar charts are used. The research study uses: computer with software like SPSS 16. SPSS is used for the cross tabulation, chi-square testing, to draw several bar graphs & frequency distribution charts & tables.

DATA ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mobile Subscriber’s Identification</th>
<th>Percentage Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td>63% Male, 37% Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Group(Yrs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 20</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-45</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45+</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Service</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Service</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed/Business</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other-Housewife/Student</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Income (Rs.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;5000</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5001 - 15,000</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15001 - 30,000</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;30,000</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the service provider</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airtel</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vodafone</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSNL</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>68.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>86.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircel</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninor</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>96.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTS</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>600</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table-3

**Name of the service provider * Rating for customer care services Cross-tabulation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating for customer care services</th>
<th>Much worse than expected</th>
<th>Worse than expected</th>
<th>Equal to my expectations</th>
<th>Better than expected</th>
<th>Much better than expected</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airtel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vodafone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSNL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Rating for customer care services of your mobile operator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you rate the customer care services of your mobile operator?</th>
<th>Rate overall satisfaction level with service provider</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much worse than expected</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse than expected</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>133.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal to my expectations</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>115.7</td>
<td>206.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better than expected</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>126.4</td>
<td>225.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much better than expected</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>167.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>337.0</td>
<td>600.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>6.532E2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>598.222</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>170.119</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DATA INTERPRETATION

Since the value of Pearson Chi-square is 6.532E2 i.e. 653.2, which is greater than the tabulated value (21.03) at 12 degrees of freedom and 5% level of significance therefore the Null Hypothesis—There is no impact of customer care services on overall satisfaction of the mobile phone subscribers—is rejected; the customer care services have an impact on the overall satisfaction of the mobile phone subscribers.
Table-5

Name of the service provider * Rate overall satisfaction level with the service provider: Crosstabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the service provider</th>
<th>% within Name of the service provider</th>
<th>Rate overall satisfaction level with your service provider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Highly Dissatisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airtel</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vodafone</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSNL</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircel</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninor</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTS</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6

Name of the service provider * Switching Intention of subscribers Crosstabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the service provider</th>
<th>% within Name of the service provider</th>
<th>% within Do you have the intention of switching to a better service provider?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airtel</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vodafone</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSNL</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircel</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninor</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTS</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table-7

Rate overall satisfaction level with the service provider: * Do you have the intention of switching to a better service provider? Crosstabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate your overall satisfaction level with your service provider:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Do you have the intention of switching to a better service provider?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>96.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>141.5</td>
<td>195.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>252.0</td>
<td>348.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>5.179E2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>657.131</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>363.346</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Symmetric Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interval by Interval</td>
<td>Pearson’s R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinal by Ordinal</td>
<td>Spearman Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DATA INTERPRETATION

Since the value of Pearson Chi-square is 5.179E2 i.e. 517.9 which is greater than the tabulated value (7.82) at 3 degree of freedom and 5% level of significance so the Null Hypothesis- There is no relationship between overall satisfaction and switching intention of the subscribers is rejected and the above table shows that in case of satisfaction, subscribers do not prefer to have the switching intention.
### Table-8

**Name of the service provider * In case of switching intention, Name of new service provider. Crosstabulation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of service provider</th>
<th>Airtel</th>
<th>Vodafone</th>
<th>Reliance</th>
<th>BSNL</th>
<th>Tata</th>
<th>Idea</th>
<th>Uninor</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airtel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vodafone</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSNL</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircel</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninor</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTS</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Name of service provider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within If Yes, Please tick the name of new service provider</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table-9

**Name of the service provider * Reason for switching to new operator Crosstabulation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the service provider</th>
<th>Why do you want to switch to new operator?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Better Connectivity</td>
<td>Minimum Call Charges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airtel</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vodafone</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSNL</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tata</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircel</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninor</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTS</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% within Name of the service provider</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DATA INTERPRETATION**

The above table shows that 45.6% subscribers are switching to other service providers for better customer service followed by 24.4% subscribers are switching for Minimum call charges, 14.4% subscribers are switching for better Network Connectivity and 15.6% are switching due to other factors i.e. for better value added services, multimedia services, billing services/tariff plans etc.
FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the identification of mobile phone subscribers in U.P. (East) Circle. The percentage distribution of the respondents is done according to their gender, age, profession and monthly income.

Table 2 shows that Airtel has maximum market share (22.8%) followed by Vodafone (16.7%), Reliance (14.7%), BSNL (14%), Idea (10.7%), Tata (8%), Aircel (5%), Uninor (4.3%) and MTS (3.8%).

Table 3 shows that Customer care executives of the service providers in U.P. (East) Circle are trying their best to fulfill the expectations of the mobile phone subscribers but 22.5% subscribers are of the opinion that customer care service offered by their respective service providers are much worse than expected/ worse than expected and it is an area of serious concern for service providers like Reliance, BSNL, Tata, Aircel, Uninor and MTS.

Table 4 shows that impact of the customer care services on overall satisfaction. The Null Hypothesis – There is no impact of customer care services on overall satisfaction of the mobile phone subscribers – is rejected; the customer care services have an impact on the overall satisfaction of the mobile phone subscribers.

Table 5 shows that more than 40% subscribers of Reliance, BSNL, Aircel and MTS are dissatisfied/highly dissatisfied. 80% of Vodafone and 62.5% of Idea subscribers are satisfied. From analysis of table4 and 5 it is clear that in addition to customer care services, some other factors also affect the overall satisfaction of the mobile Phone Subscribers.

Table 6 shows overall 42% subscribers have the switching intention and it an area of serious concern that except the Vodafone subscribers, more than 40% of the subscribers of all the other service providers have the switching intention. It is certainly a challenge for the service provider to retain their existing customers in this competitive market after the introduction of MNP.

Table 7 explains how the overall satisfaction and switching intention are related to each other. Null Hypothesis- There is no relationship between overall satisfaction and switching intention of the subscribers is rejected on the basis of Chi-Square test and the table shows that in case of satisfaction, subscribers do not prefer to have the switching intention.

Table 8 & 9 explain the behavior of subscribers who have the switching intention - overall 45.6% subscribers are switching to other service provider for better customer service followed by 24.4% subscribers are switching for minimum call charges, 14.4% subscribers are switching for better connectivity and 15.6% are switching due to other factors i.e. for better value added services, multimedia services, billing services/tariff plans etc.

Service provider wise analysis of the customers with switching intention- 50% of those Airtel subscribers who intend to switch will prefer BSNL, 18.8% will prefer Tata. All Airtel subscribers are switching to new operator for minimum call charges. 66.7% of those Vodafone subscribers who intend to switch will prefer Airtel and 33.3% will prefer BSNL and the factors affecting their intention are customer service and call charges. 44.4% of those Reliance subscribers who intend to switch, will prefer Vodafone, 22.2% will prefer Airtel, 22.2% will prefer Tata and the major factor affecting their intention is customer service. 61.5% of those BSNL subscribers who intend to switch are preferring Airtel ,23.1% to Vodafone and the major factor affecting the intention is customer service. 72.7% of those Tata subscribers who intend to switch are switching to the Vodafone and factors affecting the intention are customer service, connectivity and other factors including value added services, Multimedia services, billing services/tariff plans etc. 37.5% of those Idea subscribers who intend to switch are switching to Airtel, 25% to Vodafone, 25% to BSNL and factors affecting the intention are customer service, connectivity and call charges. 50% of those Aircel subscribers who intend to switch are switching to Airtel and 50% to Reliance and the major factors affecting the intention are value added services, multimedia services, billing
services/tariff plans etc. 50% of those Uninor subscribers who intend to switch are switching to Vodafone and 33.3% to Idea and the major factor affecting the intention is customer service. 46.2% of those MTS subscribers who intend to switch prefer Airtel and 46.2% to Vodafone and the major factors affecting the intention are value added services, multimedia services, billing services/tariff plans in addition to customer service.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1- Airtel has maximum subscribers in U.P. (East) Circle but 48.2% Airtel subscribers have the switching intention due to existing call charges so Airtel should formulate proper strategy to address this issue to maintain its position in highly competitive market.

2- 80% Vodafone subscribers are satisfied and only 20% have switching intention. Vodafone with 16.7% subscribers in this circle can retain all its existing customers and can become the market leader by offering better customer service and minimum call charges.

3- Reliance has 14.7% subscribers in the circle. More than 40% subscribers of Reliance are not satisfied and have the switching intention. Major factors affecting the switching intention are customer service and connectivity. Reliance should focus on both the factors to maintain its market share and position in this competitive market.

4- BSNL has 14% subscribers in the circle. More than 40% subscribers of BSNL are not satisfied and have the switching intention. Major factor affecting the switching intention is customer service. BSNL by focusing on customer service can retain and increase its market share because it has the competitive advantage as far as call charges is concerned.

5- Idea with 10.7% subscribers in the circle is the fifth largest player in this circle and more than 60% subscribers are satisfied with Idea. By focusing on customer service, connectivity and introducing better plans for the customers, it can acquire the better position in this market.

6- Tata has 8% subscribers in this circle. More than 56% subscribers are satisfied and do not have switching intention. Tata’s subscribers who have the switching intention prefer Vodafone and the major factor affecting the switching intention is customer service. It should immediately formulate its strategy to address this serious issue.

7- Aircel, Uninor and MTS are the new service providers in this circle and have 5%, 4.3% and 3.8% market share respectively in this circle. 40% subscribers of Aircel have the switching intention largely for better value added services, multimedia services, billing services/tariff plans etc so Aircel should work in this area to fulfill customer expectations. Around 53% Uninor subscribers have the switching intention mainly for the for better customer service so it should immediately address this serious issue. MTS may also retain its subscribers by offering better customer service, value added services, multimedia services, billing services/tariff plans etc.

8- It is an area of concern that 33.3% of those subscribers who have the switching intention are switching to Airtel and 31.1% switching to Vodafone, 15.6% to BSNL, 10% to Reliance, 6.7% to Tata 2.2% to Idea and only 1.1% to Uninor. Therefore Airtel and Vodafone can be considered as first two preferred operators in this circle as far as switching intention is concerned after the introduction of MNP. So the other operators have to formulate their strategies to face this challenge considering the factors responsible for switching intention as mentioned above but it is an area of interest that 48.2% of Airtel subscribers have the switching intention while in case of Vodafone it is only 20%. Airtel should work hard in the area of call charges to retain its position in the market since Airtel subscribers have the switching intention for minimum call charges.

9- It is an area of concern for all the service providers that most of the subscribers(45.6%) are switching to other operators for better customer service, 24.4% for minimum call charges, 14.4% for better connectivity and 15.6% for other factors i.e. for better value added services, Multimedia
services, billing services/tariff plans etc. Considering the nature of competition, service providers should focus on better customer service and call charges in addition to other factors for their long term survival and growth. Such factors may affect the market share of the players.

10- After the introduction of Mobile Number Portability (MNP), service providers should focus not only on acquiring the new customers but also on existing customers to retain them. MNP may affect the position of all service providers as it is a highly competitive market. For subscribers, MNP, again validates the fact that 'Customer is the King', as today they have the freedom or flexibility to retain their mobile numbers, while moving from one service provider to another, based on their customer satisfaction levels. Mobile Number Portability or MNP is an offering that allows you to switch your mobile network without changing your number.

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• www.vodafone.in
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• www.bsnl.co.in
• www.idealcellular.com
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ABSTRACT

Mobile telecommunication companies are continuously competing for customers. The players in today’s environment are required to design and deploy customer-centric strategies to sustain in the market in the long-run. There is an increasing need to build loyal customers through effective customer services. Loyal customers, from cost perspective, tend to stay longer with the preferred providers, buy more, and generate favorable word-of-mouth effect that may further benefit the service provider but considering the competitive battle in the Mobile telecommunications industry, there is a risk that customers may leave their service provider irrespective of retention efforts.

Key Words: Customer service, Marketing Myopia, MNP, Self-care

I INTRODUCTION

The concept of having sustainable interactions with customers is not new. Companies, for ages, have been trying to establish interface with customers. However, earlier the focus was always on selling the product/service instead of retaining the customers. The current competitive post-liberalization scenario has compelled the marketers/organizations globally to adopt the customer orientation and leave behind the obsolete concept of product focus. No organization can afford to have “marketing Myopia” at the cost of losing precious customers.

Customer service varies by product, industry, and customer. It however assume important dimension in service delivery and sales of product. Telecommunications is one of the prime support services needed for rapid growth of any developing country. Telecommunications is one of the fastest developing sectors in India.

Customer service is central to the customer-centric paradigm shift, and has gained much attention from scholars and practitioners as it has become one of the cardinal means for achieving quality improvement programmes, and one of the crucial foci of strategic marketing management in business organizations that have long-term perspective for growth.

II CUSTOMER-PROVIDER RELATIONSHIP

Since mobile services are continuously provided services, the customer – provider relationship and relational constructs such as trust become an important consequence of customer satisfaction (Selnes, 1988). Ranaweera and Prabhu (2003) emphasized that customer satisfaction and trust have strong association with repurchase intentions and loyalty.

Gronroos (1984) stated that in service environments, customer satisfaction will be built on a combination of two kinds of quality aspects; technical and functional. While, technical quality is related to what customer gets (transaction satisfaction); functional quality is related to how the customer gets i.e. the result of the interaction (relationship satisfaction).
Several studies have shown that it costs about five times to gain a new customer as it does to retain an existing customer (Naumann, 1995) and this result into more interest in customer relationships. Thus, several companies are adopting customer satisfaction as their operational goal with a carefully designed framework.

Customers who have complained to a company and had their complaints satisfactorily resolved tell an average of five people about the good treatment they received. Moreover, when the service provider accepts responsibility and resolves the problem when customers complain, the customer becomes “bonded” to the company—Hart et al., (1990).

III OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

India has been the role model for low-cost mobile services. Because of the fastest subscriber growth rates in the world, operators have slashed prices in a race to acquire customers. After the introduction of mobile number portability (MNP), few subscribers in India switched to new operators offering lower rates. However, many have already discovered that price is not everything—poor customer service is a serious issue for telecom operators.

Timelines promised to Indian wireless customers are often not met and response to inquiries can be poor. With increased competition in India, good customer service could be a significant competitive advantage for operators.

For any organization, front-line customer service is the gateway for a mobile customers’ experience. Customers everywhere in the world expect operators to resolve their issue then and there. Mobile operators that can achieve a high-level of service will be in a great position to win market share away from low-cost competitors. Great customer service is the key for the long term survival in the competitive market of mobile telecommunications.

The telecom industry no longer talks only about customer service — instead, it is addressing the broader topic of the customer experience, which includes not just the conversations between customer service representatives and customers when something goes wrong, but the full range of customer contact from when a service is ordered to when it is delivered.

Service providers of all types are investing heavily in this customer experience. A recent survey found that all the service providers are increasing their spending on customer service every year. Increased investment will be required because customer service requirements increase exponentially. It is easier for customers to get confused and it is difficult for customers to evaluate the service providers.

Because of technological advancement, cost control initiatives are driving service providers to create more self-care options to eliminate costly labor wherever possible. Throughout the industry, there is a movement toward natural speech options for interactive voice response systems.

Expectations for the performance of the customer service executives have changed significantly. Now, in addition to attending to unhappy and even irate customers — as well as new service requests —customer service provider must understand the vital role of customer’s expectations when interacting with them. The customer determines the quality of the service delivered.

This shift in focus puts tremendous pressure on the underlying IT systems and CSEs of mobile operators to succeed in their retention strategies.

IV CONCLUSION

It is critical for operators to understand their market positions relative to their local and regional competitors and to develop a set of strategies. There are specific implications for each operator as well as strategies they can employ depending on their market positions. These strategies include supply chain management, customer experience innovation, and organizational effectiveness.
Since Mobile Number Portability - MNP allows subscribers to retain their existing mobile numbers when they switch from one mobile service provider to another. MNP gives the freedom to the subscriber to choose a service provider based on their service offering (e.g. Quality of Service, Price and Customer Service Support). So, MNP will be a good test for the mobile service providers to check their customer loyalty factor.

If service providers are really taking care of their customers/subscribers, by understanding their needs, promptly addressing their problems/grievances, offering them good quality of service and are well backed by excellent customer service support, they really need not worry about customer churn, as their customers will be loyal to them and will remain with them.

On the other hand, if the service providers, have been taking their customers for granted, then MNP is a point of concern for them, as it can lead to customer churn, as it opens door for their subscribers to switch over to other service providers, whose service offerings are good and have loyal customer base, who would go out of the way to recommend them to their friends and family.

For subscribers, MNP, again validates the fact that 'Customer is the King', as today they have the freedom or flexibility to retain their mobile numbers, while moving from one service provider to another, based on their customer satisfaction levels.

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