Comparative study of Indian Postal Services with reference to Commercial Courier Services in India

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this research is to present an overview of current technical advances in the postal business and to estimate the probable future influence of various technologies and innovations in the market, particularly on customers. It also considers the issues that might arise for consumer protection authorities and possible actions to be taken. This study is conducted for the partial fulfilment of the PhD degree, using mix of desk research, expert interview and own analysis. The findings are based on literature review, expert interview and validated during interviews with postmaster, postman and customers.

KEYWORDS: Digitalization, E-commerce, Postal Services, consumers, Technological developments

INTRODUCTION: -

This report gives an overview of recent postal market developments as well as research on technology trends that will affect postal consumers. It outlines technology advances in India's postal and delivery sectors. It examines how technology will alter the postal market and the postal sector's strategic positioning. The major goal is to assess how future technological advancements will affect postal service users in the short and long term. The report develops future technology development possibilities to attain this goal. The scenarios highlight the most important technological advancements as well as the conditions that lead to their birth, such as legislative frameworks or consumer and commercial adoption of certain technologies.

BACKGROUND OF DIGITALIZATION IN INDIA: -

Once upon a time, having access to the internet was considered a luxury for a country. Countries nowadays require Wi-Fi, training, and equipment in order to become economically stronger. While India is a technology leader, there is a significant digital gap in the country, owing to low internet availability in rural areas. Farmers and small business owners in rural India lack access to basic healthcare, education, and financial inclusion due to a lack of connectivity. As a result, India's leaders are advocating for a digital revolution. In 2014, just about 20% of India's 1.2 billion people accessed the Internet. Cost was a significant barrier to entry. However, as the country enters a new digitalization phase, the Indian market is projected to boom over the next few years thanks to a new programmed. The Indian government began the nationwide "Digital India" program in July 2015, with the goal of making government services available to residents electronically through upgrading internet access and infrastructure. The initiative intends to connect rural areas to high-speed networks and boost digital literacy, which is a primary focus for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration.

BEING DIGITAL: -

Whatever industry you're in, digital is certainly a game changer. So, till date, successful digital investments have generally focused on cost management and productivity enhancement. The focus now needs to shift to revenue-generating investments. The Accenture post and parcel digital performance index was designed by India Post to evaluate enterprises based on their current digital capabilities and identify the gaps needed to make digital business "as usual."

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: -

According to the findings, there are three essential areas on which post and parcel firms should concentrate their efforts in order to achieve high performance. To begin, it must look for ways to monetize the digital opportunity, moving beyond productivity and cost reduction to profitable digital solutions that generate top-line development. Second, it must put strategies into action that respond to changing retailer and consumer expectations while maintaining some of the same nimble scalability as new market entrants in order to win the war for the last mile. Finally, it must understand that ecommerce-driven cross-border transactions are both an opportunity and a challenge, decreasing transaction complexities and investing in a global strategy that covers market access, product features, and competitive position. In the postal industry, technology and innovation are used in a broad sense to refer to technologies and products as well as their applications and uses. Different basic technologies are more of an enabler of innovation in the postal business than an innovation in and of themselves. RFID chips (radio-frequency identification chips), sensors, PDAs (personal digital assistants), as well as mobile internet and GPS, are all examples of novel technology that are already in use in the postal sector today (global positioning system). Cloud computing, big data, the Internet of Things, robotics, drones, and 3D printing are just a few of the technological advancements that will play a bigger role in the postal industry in the future. Postal and parcel operators use advanced technology for a variety of reasons, including improving operating efficiency and offering new products and services, as a result of competition and client demand. Consumer desire for faster order processing and more convenient delivery is driving change in the industry, and technical advancements are allowing e-tailers and postal operators to meet those demands. Automated sorting and centralization of letter and package operations, for example, are significant advancements, particularly in the sequencing of mail delivery to the street level and automated scanning. Postcode granulation has aided both of these processes. Last-mile deliveries have been enhanced in the parcels industry because to technologies such as PDAs for signature scanning, which have also added value and additional security for consumers.

Ecommerce is a key driver for postal services: -

The mega themes that will shape the ecommerce sector in the near term, as one of India's fastest growing sectors in recent years, are as follows: The future expansion of the sector will be influenced by geography and demographic. Tier II and III cities and small towns have begun to make a substantial contribution to the ecommerce pie, and they will be critical for future growth due to a rapidly rising online population and low internet penetration. Advances in technological adoption, such as the rising prevalence of devices such as smart phones and tablets, as well as access to the internet via broadband, 3G/4G, and other means, will contribute to a growth in the number of online consumers. Due to increased competition and the difficulty of players to sustain high expenses, business models in the ecommerce sector have been fast evolving. Newer business methods, such as private labelling, white labelling, and drop-shipping, are also gaining popularity. The single most important financial hurdle will be profitability (or the lack thereof!). Key businesses are still concentrating on expanding their market share Investor interest has also prompted companies to take a gross merchandize value (GMV)-driven approach, putting their profits at risk. In the near future, consolidation appears to be unavoidable. Players are rushing to build scale, and those who can't will almost certainly be acquired. Mergers, alliances, and partnerships among players are also being pushed by common investors. Convergence of online and offline channels is increasing. Brands and traditional stores are putting more emphasis on 'moving online.' To improve the customer experience, e-Tailers are opening physical locations.

Objectives:

The study has been made with the following set of objectives:

- To compare India Post's digital postal services with those offered by commercial courier service providers.
- To analyze how employees of India Post and commercial courier firms use technology.
- To make recommendations for ways to improve the efficiency and customer satisfaction of India Post's and private courier firms' digital services.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

DATA COLLECTION

The information for this study was gathered from both primary and secondary sources. A standardized questionnaire and structured interview were used to obtain the primary data. A questionnaire was used to obtain responses from employees and customers, while structured interviews with managers of the postal department and courier were undertaken.

A.   Primary Source

1.   A questionnaire for the organization's employees and customers. The questionnaire includes questions about their working style and conditions, IT comparisons, and their interests, among other things.

2.   Managerial interview: The Managerial Interview: It contains a few verbal inquiries designed to tap managerial knowledge.

B.   Secondary Source

To continue the investigation, internal records from two different organizations were gathered. Case studies, empirical studies, surveys, reports, and digital resources relevant to the research issue were also examined.

Tools of Data Analysis –

Employees' opinions in the form of hypotheses have been framed based on numerous characteristics and qualities. Statistical methods such as SPSS software, which analyses Chi-Square tests, were used to test the results. For hypothesis testing and the Chi-Square test, SPSS software was utilized. However, a manual Chi-Square test computation is also supplied.

HYPOTHESES:

H0: There is no significant difference in use of more Technology in the Courier Services as compared to Indian Postal Services

H1: There is significant difference in use of more Technology in the Courier Services as compared to Indian Postal Services

Chi-Square Test

fo	Fe	fo-fe	Square(fo-fe)	Square(fo-fe)/fe
26	29.35323	-3.35323	11.24415	0.383064
66	66.66667	-0.66667	0.444449	0.006667
74	77.61194	-3.61194	13.04611	0.168094
26	19.9005	6.0995	37.2039	1.869496
8	6.467662	1.532338	2.34806	0.363046
33	29.64677	3.35323	11.24415	0.379271
68	67.33333	0.66667	0.444449	0.006601
82	78.38806	3.61194	13.04611	0.16643
14	20.0995	-6.0995	37.2039	1.850986
5	6.532338	-1.53234	2.34806	0.359452
Total				5.553106

$$X^2 = \frac{(f_0 - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

Degree of Freedom= (row-1) *(column-1)

(5-1) *(2-1) =4Significance Level = 0.05Table Value = 9.488

From Chi-Square Table the value of 4 Degree of Freedom and

0.05 Significance Level is 9.488

The calculated value of Chi-Square is Less than the Table value hence the Hypothesis is Accepted.

As a result, we can deduce that private courier service providers employ more technology than Indian postal services.

Recommendations and Conclusion: -

- The India Post should make use of technological management systems based on GPS (vendor management, rate comparison, scheduling and tracking, analytics)
- For demand and supply mapping, the India Post should be Analytics (dynamic scheduling based on capacity, availability, distance and idle time)
- Automation should be used by the Indian Postal Service: Mobile and Web Apps for (registration, ordering, LIVE tracking, deviation alerts, delivery time estimations, invoicing, payments)
- Customer relationship management (CRM) should be implemented by India Post as a technology, strategy, or process to assist organizations better organize and access customer data.
- The internet of things, or IoT, should be encouraged for interconnecting computing devices, mechanical and digital equipment with unique identities (UIDs), allowing data to be transferred over a network without the need for human-to-human or human-to-computer interaction.

Scope for Future: -

If firms are modernized with digital technology and employees are properly trained, employees' talent, management, and leadership abilities will improve, and their performance will be at its peak. Then, with a good model design for customers and other ecommerce platforms with various models, digital practices can be adopted. Workforce planning and performance management will both be properly channelled. Customers' feedback via digital channels will also enable very quick and efficient answers to their difficulties.

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