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A STUDY ON THE SERVICE QUALITY OF TELECOM SERVICE PROVIDERS

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ABSTRACT

This research conducts an exploration into the service quality of telecom service providers, aiming to discern the critical determinants of customer satisfaction in this dynamic industry. The study focuses on key dimensions, including network coverage, customer support, affordability, and technological advancements. The researcher has employed the primary method of data collection through questionnaire which was distributed among individuals using the telecom services. A total of 150 responses were collected and the findings reveal specific areas for improvement, highlighting the significance of efficient issue resolution, proactive communication, and sustainable practices in enhancing service quality. The research tools used to analyse the data were percentage analysis, chi-square and anova. The research positions itself as a strategic guide for telecom providers seeking to navigate the evolving landscape by prioritizing customer-centric approaches. Ultimately, this research contributes valuable insights to the telecommunications sector, fostering a deeper understanding of the multifaceted elements that constitute superior service quality and providing a roadmap for providers to deliver exceptional services while maintaining a competitive edge in the market.

Keywords: Telecommunication, service quality, loyalty, network, technology, demography, data speed, fluctuation, variation, analysis, preference.

INTRODUCTION

In an era defined by unprecedented advancements in communication technology, the role of telecom service providers has become increasingly pivotal in shaping the global connectivity landscape. As societies become more digitally reliant, the quality of services offered by telecom providers emerges as a critical determinant of user satisfaction, loyalty, and overall socio-economic development. This research endeavours to delve into the intricate dynamics of service quality within the telecom industry, examining the multifaceted factors that contribute to customer experiences. The contemporary telecom landscape is marked by fierce competition, rapid technological evolution, and an ever-expanding consumer base.

In this context, understanding the nuances of service quality becomes imperative for telecom service providers seeking to differentiate themselves in a crowded marketplace. Moreover, the research will explore the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction, retention, and advocacy, providing valuable insights for telecom companies striving to enhance their market position. Additionally, technological innovations such as 5G, Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence have introduced new dimensions to service provision, warranting an examination of how these advancements influence service quality perceptions.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyses the responsiveness and effectiveness of customer support services provided by telecom companies.
- To measure and compare data speeds offered by different telecom service providers.
- To know the customer's loyalty towards their telecom service providers.
- To examine the service quality provided by the telecom companies in different demographics.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Telecom networks play a crucial role in modern society by enabling communication, connecting people globally, facilitating business operations, and supporting various technologies. This study aims to investigate the service quality provided by telecom service providers. The increasing significance of reliable networks, efficient customize support, and consistent data Speeds necessitates a comprehensive examination to identify potential challenges and opportunities. With the potential prevalence of issues such as network disruptions, inadequate Customer support, inconsistent data speeds and the rate of charge for services, it becomes imperative to analyses the specific challenges faced by consumers. Customers are increasingly discerning, expecting seamless and reliable services that meet their communication needs. In a landscape where

customers have the flexibility to switch providers easily, understanding the correlation between service quality and customer loyalty becomes paramount. Through a systematic exploration of these issues, the study seeks to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on improving service quality in the telecommunications sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- **Deepika Jhamb, Amit Mittal and Pankaj Sharma (2020)** "The behavioral consequences of perceived service quality: A study of the Indian telecommunications industry" studies about the discrepancies between the expectations and perceptions of service quality characteristics as well as the connection between customers' behavioral intentions and perceived services. Primary data collection was employed and data was collected from 500 customers in Delhi NCR, India. Paired sample t-test and multipe correlation analysis was performed. The results of the study point out the key areas wherein the service gaps are considerably high such as reliability and responsiveness. The findings of the study confirm that the perceptions of customers regarding the quality of service received definitely have an impact on their behaviour.

- **Mubashir Majid Baba (2018)** "Service Quality and Customers Loyalty: A study in Telecom Sector" explores the intricate relationship between service quality and customer loyalty within telecommunications industry. The author's work is likely to synthesize. findings to identify key dimensions of service quality that significantly influence customer loyalty in telecom sector. The author has focused to study gaps of service quality which involves five gaps and has also made a significant breakthrough in exploring the service quality dimensions which involve reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness. The author has studied about the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. The research methodology employed was to conduct a questionnaire survey by using simple random sampling. The primary findings of this study indicate that there exists a significant gap between expectations and perceptions of customers regarding quality of service provided by telecom operators under study.

- **Abd Elrahman Hassanein Abd Elrahman(2018)** "A review of telecommunications service quality dimensions" reviews the service quality dimensions established in various empirical studies conducted across the world specifically applied to telecommunications services. This paper reviews only empirical studies based on survey data and statistical methods of analysis since 2001 till 2017.This paper lends support to the contention that the dimensionality of SERVQUAL and importance of the dimensions vary with the cultural and country context even within the telecommunications industry. It identifies eight service quality dimensions in the

telecommunications   services,   reliability, tangibles,responsiveness,assurance,empathy,network,customer service and convenience.

- **MS. Meena Suganthi.G and Dr.R.Shanthi(2017)** "Customer perception towards service quality in Indian telecommunications industry" determines what makes customers perceptions towards service quality of telecommunications industry. This study was confined within Sathyamangalam , Tamil nadu. A structured questionnaire was developed based on previous works and data was collected from 100 customers. A customer perception model was developed including variables taken from the extensive review of network quality, perceived quality, market factor, perceived value and company image statistically significant.

- **Archi Dubey and Dr. A.K.Srinivastava(2016)** "Impact of service quality on customer loyalty- A study on telecom sector in India" studied how customer loyalty and customer relationship management in the telecom industry were affected by service quality and discovered that it had big impact on both. A survey based exploratory and casual research was used. The data was collected from 262 customers using mobile service of various telecom operators of India through structured questionnaire distributed online. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to check the validity and Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to determine reliability. Results depicted that service quality has significant and positive impact on customer relationship management.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

- This study is confined within the city of Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu. Hence customers' experience and perspective of telecom service providers may vary accordingly.
- This study is based on the responses obtained from the general public through questionnaire which was restricted to 150 nos.
- The results of the study relate only to the current period which is limited and may vary after sometime due to multiple changes.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on evaluating the service quality of telecom service providers, encompassing various dimensions such as network coverage, customer support and technological advancements. It aims to analyze the current state of service quality and identify areas for improvement within the telecom industry. The scope includes assessing customer satisfaction, understanding the impact of technological innovations, and proposing strategies to enhance service delivery. The study's findings are intended to offer actionable insights for telecom providers, regulators, and policymakers, contributing to the overall improvement of service quality and customer experience in this rapidly evolving and competitive sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research methodology was employed. The primary data collection method involved the distribution of a structured questionnaire to a diverse sample of telecom service users. The questionnaire was designed to assess various aspects of service quality, including reliability, responsiveness, effectiveness. A total of 150 responses were collected from participants representing different demographics and regions. The sampling technique aimed to ensure a representative and diverse set of perspectives. The chosen methodology seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of customer perceptions, contributing to the enhancement of telecom services and customer satisfaction.

Area of study: The data has been collected from customers using telecommunications service in Coimbatore city**,** Tamil Nadu.

SOURCE OF DATA

Primary data: This primary data is collected through the questionnaire method from the public.

SAMPLE SIZE

A total of 150 responses were collected from telecom service users in Coimbatore city.

RESEARCH TOOLS

- Percentage analysis
- Chi square
- Anova

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Table 1.1

Gender	Responses	Percentage
Male	84	56%
Female	64	42.7%
Prefer not to say	2	1.3%

Source: Primary data

Table 1.1 reveals a balanced distribution of gender, with 56% male, 42.7% female, and a small 1.3% preferring not to disclose their gender.

Table 1.2

Age	Responses	Percentage
Below 15	4	2.7%
16-30	111	74%
31-45	33	22%
Above 45	2	1.3%

Source: Primary data

In Table 1.2, the majority of respondents fall within the age group of 16-30, constituting 74% of the total, while those below 15 and above 45 account for 2.7% and 1.3%, respectively.

Table 1.3

Location	Responses	Percentage
Rural	46	30.7%
Urban	87	58%
Semi-urban	17	11.3%

Source: Primary data

Table 1.3 illustrates that a significant proportion of respondents reside in urban areas (58%), followed by rural (30.7%) and semi-urban (11.3%) locations.

Table 1.4

Education level	Responses	Percentage
School	20	13.3%
Under Graduate	105	70%
Post Graduate	20	13.3%
Doctorate	5	3.3%

Source: Primary data

Educational backgrounds, as depicted in Table 1.4, show that 70% of respondents are undergraduates, while 13.3% each are in school and postgraduate, and 3.3% hold a doctorate.

Table 1.5

Occupation	Responses	Percentage
Student	102	68%
Employed	27	18%
Self employed	14	9.3%
Unemployed	7	4.7%

Source: Primary data

Table 1.5 provides insights into the occupational distribution, with a predominant 68% identifying as students, 18% employed, 9.3% self-employed, and 4.7% unemployed.

Table 1.6

Annual income	Responses	Percentage
Below 2,50,000	88	58.7%
2,50,001-5,00,000	34	22.7%
5,00,001-7,50,000	13	8.7%
7,50,001-10,00,000	3	2%
Above 10,00,000	12	8%

Source: Primary data

Table 1.6 highlights the income distribution, revealing that 58.7% earn below 2,50,000, 22.7% fall within the 2,50,001-5,00,000 range, and smaller percentages for higher income brackets.

TELECOM SERVICE USAGE

Table 2.1

How long have you been using telecom services?	Responses	Percentage
Less than 1 year	20	13.3%
1-2 years	22	14.7%
2-3 years	14	9.3%
More than 3 years	94	62.7%

Source: Primary data

In Table 2.1, it is observed that a majority of respondents, 62.7%, have been using telecom services for more than 3 years, indicating a high level of loyalty or satisfaction over an extended period.

Table 2.2

Which telecom network are you using currently?	Responses	Percentage
Airtel	56	37.33%
JIO	69	46%
VI (Vodafone and Idea)	15	10%
BSNL	10	6.67%

Source: Primary data

Table 2.2, the telecom network distribution shows JIO as the most widely used, with 46% of respondents, followed by Airtel at 37.33%. VI (Vodafone and Idea) and BSNL have relatively smaller user bases at 10% and 6.67%, respectively.

Table 2.3

What type of service have you opted?	Responses	Percentage
Prepaid	117	78%
Postpaid	33	22%

Source: Primary data

Table 2.3 reveals a predominant preference for prepaid services, chosen by 78% of respondents, suggesting a prevalent inclination towards flexibility and control over usage.

Table 2.4

How much satisfied are you in accessing the official app of your telecom service provider?	Responses	Percentage
Highly satisfied	40	26.7%
Satisfied	57	38%
Neutral	48	32%
Dissatisfied	3	2%
Highly dissatisfied	2	1.3%

Source: Primary data

Table 2.4 reveals the satisfaction levels in accessing the official app of the telecom service provider are notable, with a combined 65.7% expressing either highly satisfied or satisfied sentiments.

Table 2.5

What factors influence your loyalty towards your telecom service provider?	Responses	Percentage
Good customer support and service	36	24%
Data speed and consistency	58	38.67%
Call quality	43	28.67%
Affordable recharge plans	13	8.67%

Source: Primary data

Table 2.5 delves into the factors influencing loyalty towards telecom service providers, with data speed and consistency emerging as the most critical factor, influencing 38.67% of respondents. Good customer support and service, as well as call quality, are also substantial influencers, each contributing to 24% and 28.67%, respectively. Affordable recharge plans, while a factor for 8.67%, indicate that other factors like data speed and call quality may have a more significant impact on overall loyalty.

CHI-SQUARE

H0 = There is no significant relationship between age & loyalty factor.

H1 = There is significant relationship between age & loyalty factor.

This hypothesis is an analysis between age and factors influencing customers' loyalty towards their telecom service provider.

X²	Degree of freedom	P Value
13.0671115	9	0.15959298

The chi-square test assesses whether there is a significant association between age groups and factors influencing loyalty towards a telecom service provider, with a p-value of 0.159592978, the result is not statistically significant at conventional significance levels (e.g., 0.05). Therefore, there is not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis in this context would be that there is no association between age groups and factors influencing loyalty.

ANOVA

This anova analysis is taken between the occupation and factors influencing customers' loyalty towards their telecom service provider.

Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F	P- value	F crit
Between groups	654.75	3	218.25	1.205246	0.349751	3.490295
Within groups	2173	12	181.083			
Total	2827.75	15				

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore whether there are significant differences in the observed frequencies of factors influencing loyalty towards a telecom service provider among individuals with different occupations, namely students, employed individuals, self-employed individuals, and the unemployed. The factors considered include good customer support service, data speed, call quality, and affordable recharge plans. The ANOVA results indicate that there is no significant difference in the means of observed frequencies across the various occupations. The p-value obtained (0.35) exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05, leading to the conclusion, occupation does not have a statistically significant impact on individuals' loyalty towards their telecom service provider concerning the specified factors. In summary, the

study suggests that the influence of occupation on loyalty is not prominent within the considered factors of customer support, data speed, call quality, and recharge plan affordability.

SUGGESTIONS

- Enhance Network Coverage: Invest in expanding and improving network coverage to minimize dead zones and ensure reliable connectivity.

- Faster Issue Resolution: Streamline customer support processes to address and resolve issues more efficiently, reducing downtime for users.

- Transparent Billing: Provide clear and transparent billing information to avoid confusion and disputes, fostering trust among customers.

- Regular Updates: Keep customers informed about service upgrades, maintenance schedules, and any potential disruptions to manage expectations.

- User-Friendly Apps: Develop and maintain user-friendly mobile apps for account management, bill payments, and quick issue reporting.

- Quality Assurance: Regularly assess and improve service quality through customer feedback, focusing on areas that need enhancement.

- Proactive Communication: Communicate proactively about service outages, upgrades, or any changes to minimize inconvenience for users.

- Affordable Plans: Offer competitive and affordable pricing plans with clear value propositions to attract and retain customers.

- Robust Security Measures: Prioritize cybersecurity to safeguard customer data and protect against potential threats.

CONCLUSION

The research on telecom service providers' service quality illuminates' vital insights for industry enhancement. Examining network coverage, customer support, and various other factors revealed key facets influencing customer satisfaction. The findings emphasize the need for streamlined issue resolution, proactive communication, and sustainable practices to elevate service quality. As the telecom landscape evolves, providers must prioritize these aspects to meet growing customer expectations. By adopting these strategies, telecom service providers can not only address current challenges but also fortify their position in a competitive market. Ultimately, a commitment to efficient service delivery, technological advancements, and customer-centric practices will not only improve overall service quality but also foster lasting relationships with customers in the rapidly advancing telecommunications sector.

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