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A Study on CRM Practices of Telecom Sector with Special Reference to BSNL

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Abstract

This paper is designed to study the CRM practices followed by BSNL. BSNL is seriously planning to come out of the bureaucratic mold and the organization structurally and operational to enhance customer relations and the largest subscribers base, technical strengths, and infrastructural assets. In this context, the philosophy and practices of CRM merit due consideration in the revival plan. The present study proposed to examine the CRM issues in case of BSNL. Typical elements that constitute customer satisfaction, value-added service, difficulties in tariffs, customer care, and timely response to customer complaints and to study the consumer opinion about tariff rates of SNL, Analyzing the awareness to BSNL subscribers about the facilities. Creating awareness of BSNL subscribers about the facilities in prepaid and postpaid connections. For the study, the researcher has selected 50 respondents who are aware of the SNL telecom industry. A descriptive research methodology is used to conduct the study. It includes surveys and fact-finding inquiries of a different kind. It focused on the problems or the benefits availed from BSNL. All levels of customers were surveyed by using a questionnaire, and the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction from BSNL was studied. Finally, the detailed information about the benefits they had received was also considered... Finally, it attempts to offer suggestions to the customers to educate much more about CRM practices of BSNL.

Keywords: CRM, Operational CRM, Analytical CRM, Collaborative CRM and BSNL.

Introduction

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has attracted the expanded attention of practitioners and scholars; more and more companies are adopting customer-centric strategies, tools, programs, and techniques for efficient and effective customer relationship management. They realize they need for in-depth and integrated customer knowledge to build close cooperated and partnering relationships with their customer. The emergence of new channels and techniques is significantly altering how companies interface with their customers, a development bringing about a greater degree of integration between sales, marketing, and customer service functions in organizations. For practitioners, CRM represents an enterprise approach to developing full-knowledge about customer behavior and preferences and to developing programs and strategies that encourage customers to enhance their business relationship with the company continually.

Marketing scholars are studying the nature and scope of CRM and developing conceptualizations regarding the value and process of cooperation and collaborative connections between buyers and sellers. Many scholars with interests in several sub-disciplines of marketing, such as channel, services marketing, advertising, business-to-business marketing, and so forth, are actively engaged in studying and exploring the conceptual foundations of managing relationships with customers. They are interested in strategies and processes for customer classifications and selectivity, one-to-one relationships with individual customers: key account management and customer business

development processes, loyalty programs, frequency marketing, cross-selling and up-selling opportunities; and various forms of partnering with customers including co-branding, joint-marketing, co-development and other types of strategic alliances.

What is Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Before we begin to examine the conceptual foundation of CRM, defining what CRM is would be useful. In the marketing literature, the terms of customer relationship management and relationship marketing are used interchangeably. As Nevin (1995) points out, these terms have been used to reflect a variety of themes and perspectives, some of these themes after a narrow functional marketing perspective while others after a perspective that is broad and somewhat paradigmatic in approach and orientation. A close view of customer relationship management is database marketing linked to database efforts.

Yet relevant, Another narrow, Viewpoint is to consider CRM only as seeking customer retention by using a variety of after marketing tactics that lead to customer bonding or staying in touch with the customer after a sale is made. A more simplified approach with the recent application of information technology is to focus on individual or one-to-one relationships with customers that integrate database knowledge with long term customer retention and growth strategy.

Review of Literature

Michael and Biner (1999) made a study on “CRM in the Telecommunication industry; the case study of Swisscom” in their article indicates Customer Relationship Management (CRM) activities will never come to an end. Therefore, it is essential to keep customer orientation in mind to enhance existing programs and to implement additional initiatives too. The study was undertaken at Swisscom the Swiss Telecom company has established a linkage between improved performance (profitability and shareholder value) and CRM. But the study also reveals that success in CRM cannot be determined without a focused plan. There was a need to be differentiated in a market place that was quickly becoming commoditized. The study shows

how Swisscom fought and won not using traditional price and promotional tools, but by understanding the customer redefining the processes that touch the customer and setting up technology that could let them stay ahead of the wave.

Vani and Shanthi (2011) made a study on “CRM implementation in India Telecom industry- evaluating the effectiveness of mobile service providers using data envelopment analysis” in their article reviews that the telecom industry in India has witnessed a transformation from a monolithic regime, through an age of De-regulation and privatization, it has seen the rapid rise of market players who offer innovative products and services. It focuses on the customers looking for value in all their transactions and is willing to pay for the amount. A company that has built a long-term relationship with its customer’s advertising and promotion can become more effective in delivering returns, aggressive development, reducing costs, and advertising necessarily did not bring revenues and loyal customers. The whole idea is to develop business models that would enhance the quality and improve interaction with their customers leading to more satisfied and loyal customers.

Rakshitapurani (2013) made a study on “The study on factors influencing customer relationship management (CRM) of telecom companies” in their article reviews that globalization and the global dynamics of the market are many foreign enterprises to develop new strategies, the customer relationship is no longer only connected to products and services – the shift from a supply-driven market to a demanding market has already taken place today it is exclusively related to the customer’s needs. Today’s economy is supported by information business information that has the advantage of being easy to differentiate, customize, personalize, and dispatch over networks at incredible speed. CRM aims at increasing customer value, customer interaction customer participation, and it also helps in customizing products.

Meera Arora (2013) made a study on “Role of service quality in customer relationship management: An empirical study of Indian Telecom industry” in their article reviews Telecommunication is one of the prime support services needed for the rapid growth of any developing economy and is one of the fastest developing sectors in India. India was at the bottom

of the pyramid in the world telecom market. But after the opening of the telecom sector for competition, through liberalization, disinvestments, privatization, and DE monopolization initiatives adopted by the government of India, the industry, especially the mobile segment is experiencing tremendous growth. Today we are the second-largest telecom market in the world with growing engagement and increasing cost of acquisition of new customers; telecom service providers are continually seeking new ways to acquire retain and increase their subscriber base and are confronted with the challenges of providing a high quality of services to attract and maintain their customers. Thus service providers should maximize service quality to enhance customer loyalty.

Agbaje YinusaToyese (2014) made a study on “Customer relationship management and customer loyalty in Nigerian telecommunication industry” in their article evaluates customer relationship management in the telecommunication sector in Nigeria and its consequential effect on customer loyalty, CRM is expected to help the organization to provide products and services according to customers preferences and to increase reliability. In overall, it is expected to lower operational cost and increased revenue, CRM was referred to as a managerial strategy that helps organizations collect, analyze and manage customer-related information through the use of information technology tools and techniques to satisfy customer needs and establish a long term mutually beneficial relationship. The promise of CRM as an effective strategy for keeping a customer is very captivating some of the benefits that accrue to telecommunication firms understanding the CRM initiative include better communication with the customer, increased efficiency and effectiveness.

Abdulla and Nor Azila (2014) made a study on “The influence on trust on customer satisfaction in the mobile phone market and empirical investigation of the mobile phone market” in their article reviews that have focused on the impact of trust of customer satisfaction in mobile phone sector. To examine the relationship between the independent variable (faith) and dependent variable (customer satisfaction), SPSS and smart (PLS) have been used. For the study, data was gathered from mobile phone subscribers; out of 113 questionnaires distributed number of

usable questionnaires receive back was 130. The result of the survey regarding the impact of the independent variable and dependent variable of the mobile phone was reinforced in absolute conformity with the resources based view of past researches that considers customer satisfaction as a determining factor behind competitive advantage and long term success. The findings of this study have substantiated, so sign concludes with discussion limitation as well as future research insights and revenue for upcoming researchers to explore.

Danish and Dilpazir (2017) made a study on “Relationship Management Practices in Telecom Sector: Comparative Study of Public and Private Companies” in their article indicate relationship building is an activity that needs a strategic outlook and cannot be executed by few in an organization. Instead, it is a holistic approach which requires the involvement of one and all in an organization. However, the success of CRM depends upon the level of push given by top management. After the 1990s, CRM as gained much importance due to globalization and technology-driven business environment and has become the center stage of all the marketing activities in any organization. Telecom companies across the globe are facing intense competition in attracting and retaining customers. Though the entire service industry is troubled with declining customer loyalty. Telecom companies are putting forward their best possible efforts to attract and retain maximum customers.

Jadhav, NR (2018) made a study on “Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Practices in the Telecom Sector in Maharashtra State” in their article reviews that To succeed under the existing conditions, the telecom industry will have to perceive the needs of their customers and devise better means of fulfilling them. They will have to formulate marketing strategies in a way not only to acquire new customers but also to retain them for the lifetime; customer relationship management has emerged as a popular business strategy in today’s competitive environment. It is a discipline which enables the telecom sector to identify and target their most profitable customers. It has been invented as a unique technology capable of remarkable changes in the total output of companies, services.

Statement of the Problem

Telecommunications occupy center stage in a fast developing country. That would alone make it an exciting area to study. BSNL is seriously planning to come out of the bureaucratic mold and the organization structurally and operational to enhance customer relations and to exploit its most extensive subscribers base, technical strengths, and infrastructural assets. In this context, the philosophy and practices of CRM merit due consideration in the revival plan. The present study proposed to examine the CRM issues in case of BSNL. Typical elements that constitute customer satisfaction are; value-added service, difficulties in tariffs customer care, and timely response to customer complaints.

Objectives of the Study

- Analyzing the awareness of BSNL subscribers about the facilities.
- Analyze the problem faced by BSNL subscribers.
- To know the customer opinion about tariff rates of SNL
- To identify customer relationship management programs being run by SNL.

Scope of Study

The present study confined to analysis the Customer Relationship Management on the telecom sector concerning BSNL, Shivamogga town.

Research Methodology

A descriptive research methodology is used to conduct the study. It includes surveys and fact-finding inquiries of a different kind. In this methodology, the researcher can report only what was happened or what is happening. There is no control over the variable.

Survey Method

- **Sample size:** A total number of 50 respondents selected for the collection of information related to BSNL.
- **Sample:** Taken sample of 50 respondents who are aware of the BSNL telecom industry
- **Sampling techniques:** Simple Random Sampling techniques are used to collect the necessary information required for the study.

Data Collection

The information needed to proceed in the project further had been collected through primary data and secondary data.

Primary data: Primary data consists of information collected for the specific purpose at hand to collect primary data - survey research in the approach best-suited gathering description.

Secondary data: The secondary data consists of information that already exists somewhere, having been collected for another purpose. Any research begins the research work by first going through the secondary data; secondary data includes the information available with the company.

Hypothesis

H0: There is no substantial change in the prices between the call charges of BSNL with other competitors.

H1: There is a substantial change in the prices, between the call charges of BSNL with other competitors

Limitations of the Study

The present study is subjected to the following limitations.

- Due to the time constraints, all the customers were not covered.
- The scope of the study is restricted only to the shivamogga.
- The method of data collection was through personal interviews, and therefore bias becomes a significant limitation.
- Owing to their pre occupation, some customers were unable to answer the complete questionnaire.

Objectives of Customer Relationship Management

- CRM, the technology, along with human resources of the company, enables the company to analyze the behavior of customers and their value.
- To simplify marketing and sales process
- To make the call more efficient
- To provide better customer service
- To cross-sell products more effectively
- To discover new customer and increase customer revenue

Benefits of Customer Relationship Management

- Improve the quality of communication and networking
- Collect customer-related data
- Increase customer satisfaction
- Create detailed profiles of individual customers
- Increased market share and profit margins
- Improved customer service and support
- Enhanced customer improved ability to meet customer requirements
- Better stand against global competition

Types of Customer Relationship Management

In a continuously growing competitive market, a business must share the right information with the right person at the right time. Otherwise, the business will lose its opportunities to sell products or services. Customer relationship management software is the only solution that can help businesses to communicate with prospects or customers properly. For any CRM application, the primary goal is to enable an organization to understand. Customers need and behavior and provide a better quality of service. It helps to retain the existing customer and capture new opportunities by building a strong relationship between an organization and its customers. CRM can analyses data and generate reports whenever required.

There are mainly three types of CRM applications:

- Operational CRM
- Analytical CRM
- Collaborative CRM

Operational CRM

Operational CRM streamlines the business process that includes sales automation, marketing automation z and service automation. The main purpose of this type of CRM is to generate leads, convert them into contacts, capture all required details, and provide service throughout the customer life cycle.

Analytical CRM

Analytical CRM helps top management, sales, marketing, and support personal to determine the better way to serve customers. Data analysis is the primary function of this type of CRM application. It analysis customer data, coming from various touch

point, to get better insights about the current status of an organization. It helps top management to make better decisions, marketing executives to understand the campaign's effectiveness of support and build strong customer relationships.

Collaborative CRM

Collaborative CRM, sometimes called strategic CRM, enables an organization to share customer information among various businesses you need like the marketing team, sales team, technical and support team. For example, feedback from a provider team could be useful.

For the marketing team to approach targeted customers with specific products or services. In the real world, each business unit works as an independent group and rarely shares customer's data with other teams that often cause business losses. Collaborative CRM helps to unite all groups to aim only one goal-use all information to improve the quality of Customer service to gain loyalty and acquire new customers to increases the sales.

Different types of CRM applications have many features and advantages. So before implementing the CRM system, it is very much essential for a business to decide future goals and strategies.

CRM in the Telecom Sector

An effective CRM system includes tools such a customer care staff and leading-edge automation and workflow management software platforms. With tools, it is possible for a Telecom company to track sales inquiries, trouble tickets, emails, telephone calls, and customer satisfaction surveys.

Leading companies with competitive advantage find their success by listening to customers to understand their needs in the trunk, offering the best solution/product possible. This is essentially customer service, and this is what differentiates companies in the market place. Customer relationship management systems capture customer activity and business, a process where buy to measure and manage customer interaction. Social media encourages participation in an open community environment where users can share information and makes comments in a two-way conversation that connects people, sites, and resources.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Social-Economic profile and Opinion of Respondents

S. No.	Gender	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Male	25	50
2	Female	25	50
	Total	50	100
S. No.	Educational qualification	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Up to SSLC	3	6
2	PUC	7	14
3	Graduate	17	34
4	Postgraduate	22	44
5	Others	1	2
	Total	50	100
S. No.	Occupation	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Student	22	44
2	Business men	7	14
3	Employee	13	26
4	Professionals	1	2
5	Agriculturist	4	8
6	Other	3	6
	Total	50	100
S. No.	Income	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Up to 5000	2	4
2	5001 to 10000	5	10
3	10001 to 15000	25	50
4	Above 15000	18	36
	Total	50	100
S. No.	Means of awareness of BSNL	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Advertisement	9	18
2	News paper	17	34
3	Word of mouth communication	12	24
4	Friends and relatives	12	24
5	Others	0	0
	Total	50	100

S. No.	Reasons to prefer BSNL	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Rental	2	4
2	Brand value	13	26
3	Network coverage	24	48
4	All of these	11	22
	Total	50	100
S. No.	Customer's Monthly expenses on mobiles	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Less than 150	5	10
2	150-350	24	48
3	350-500	13	26
4	Above 500	8	16
	Total	50	100
S. No.	Services availed from customer care services	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Call rate services	12	24
2	Message pack services	14	28
3	Value-added services	9	18
4	Information regarding new schemes	3	6
5	Internet package	8	16
6	Complaints lodging and solving	4	8
	Total	50	100
S. No.	Offers /Incentives package offered	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Message packages for few days	7	14
2	First 5 calls are free	9	18
3	BSNL to BSNL free from some days	15	30
4	Internet packages for some days	9	18
5	Others	10	20
	Total	50	100
S. No.	Services of BSNL which are availed	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	GPRS	3	6

2	Internet	37	74
3	Hello Tune	10	20
4	Astrology	0	0
	Total	50	100

Source: Survey data

The above table analysis economic profile, the social, and opinion of the respondents who avail the services of BSNL. Out of 50 respondents, an equal percentage of males and females avail of the functions of BSNL.

Among them, 44% are post products and are employees; their monthly income is 10000-15000.

The means of awareness are through friends and relatives (24%). Since the network coverage is pervasive, 48% of the people prefer it.

The customers are bearing a monthly expense of Rs 150-350.

The message pack services and call rate services are very high in BSNL (28%)

The internet facilities provided by BSNL is high (74%)

Hypothesis Testing using Chi-Square Test Hypothesis

H0: There is no substantial change in the prices between the call charges of BSNL with other competitors.

H1: There is a substantial change in the prices, between the call charges of BSNL with other competitors

Price of BSNL Competitors	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Total
Reliance	17	2	4	0	23
Airtel	11	1	1	2	15
Vodafone	3	2	1	1	7
TATA DoCoMo	3	1	0	1	5
Total	34	6	6	4	50

Chi square = $(O - E)^2 / E$

O = Observed frequency

E = Expected frequency

DOF = Degrees of freedom = $(R-1)(C-1)$

$(4-1)(4-1) = 9$

Expected frequency = $\frac{\text{Row total} \times \text{Column Total}}{\text{Grand Total}}$

Grand Total

S. No.	Observed	Expected	O-E	(O - E) ²	(O - E) ² / E
1	17	15.64	1.36	1.8496	0.118261
2	11	10.2	0.8	0.64	0.062745
3	3	4.76	-1.76	3.0976	0.650756
4	3	3.4	-0.4	0.16	0.047059
5	2	2.76	-0.76	0.5776	0.209275
6	1	1.8	-0.8	0.64	0.355556
7	2	0.84	1.16	1.3456	1.601905
8	1	0.6	0.4	0.16	0.266667
9	4	2.76	1.24	1.5376	0.557101
10	1	1.8	-0.8	0.64	0.355556
11	1	0.84	0.16	0.0256	0.030476
12	0	0.6	-0.6	0.36	0.6
13	0	1.84	-1.84	3.3856	1.84
14	2	1.2	0.8	0.64	0.533333
15	1	0.56	0.44	0.1936	0.345714
16	1	0.4	0.6	0.36	0.9
Total					8.474404

Inference

Calculated Value = 8.48

Degree of freedom = 9

Table value of chi-square for 9 degrees of freedom @ 5% level of significance is 16.919

Since the calculated value is smaller than the table value, the Null hypothesis is accepted, and so an alternative explanation is rejected. Hence proved that there is no substantial change in the prices between the call charges of BSNL with other competitors.

Findings of the Study

- Most of the respondents are postgraduates who come under the age group up to level 25.
- The majority of the respondents are having an income level between Rs 10001 to Rs 15000.
- Respondents prefer to use prepaid services than postpaid services.
- Customers prefer BSNL because of message pack services.
- Customers are satisfied with the customer care help of the BSNL as they offer better services.
- The company offers a bonus/incentive package for attracting their customer, both existing customers and new customers.
- From the study 35% of the respondents are satisfied with call rates because BSNL offers discounts and combo offers in call rate.
- From the study, 44% of the respondent's opinion that the BSNL office responds regarding complaints immediately.
- Advertisement is the best promotional strategy used by the BSNL to attract new customers.
- Customers felt that the overall performance of the BSNL is to satisfy them.

Suggestions for the Study

- BSNL must give priority for its promotional activities through an advertisement for offers and packages.
- The company should introduce new schemes or offers for attracting and retaining their valuable customers.
- BSNL should give offers at a reasonable price and there by reach all the segments of customers.
- The company should give more preference to existing customers to retaining them rather than

attracting new customers.

- To ensure better customer satisfaction and maintain a higher level of customer relationship management, BSNL has to strengthen its network coverage and voice clarity.
- To attract customers of the different age groups, it has to introduce new offers different from others.
- Improving the network speed of BSNL and adopt for 4G network in all towns.
- BSNL may also introduce some sales promotions such as cash discounts, quality discounts; hence the promotional enterprises would further strengthen the market share of the country.
- To retain existing customers, BSNL has to offer better or improved schemes from time to time to compete with competitors. This would automatically attract new customers.

Conclusion

BSNL being a public sector; to thrive and excel, have to understand customer expectations. They have to understand their competitors and their nuances in understanding their customers. Since the communication industry in a very competitive one, it is high time for BSNL to understand its customers in landline as well as mobile services. Hence from this report, it is clear that BSNL is the best service provider in Asia; BSNL provides world-class state-of-art technology telecom services to its customers on-demand at competitive prices world-class telecom foundation in its area of operation and to contribute to the growth of the country's economy.

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