

**A Study on consumer preference and fulfilment in subscribing mobile network service with special reference to Madurai city.**

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**Abstract**

The life style increases the spending needs. Considerable quick changes developed the needs of mobile telecom network usage. In mobile telecom network India plays second largest mobile network role by the entry of foreign companies after implementing LPG. The implementation of LPG developed the priority of mobile network usage between the Indian consumers because it is very essential to bring the extreme changes in the life of today's consumer buying behavior. In the competition market the growth and survival of mobile network service provider depends on consumers buying behavior. The consumers putting effort to considered several factors before subscribing the mobile network service to get the best one among the alternatives at cheapest price so the study aims to examine the consumer preference and buying behavior towards mobile network service providers.

**Keywords:** customer preference, customer expectation, satisfaction level, Buying Behaviour

**Introduction**

The network communication plays a major role in global interaction. In the network interaction India plays the status of second largest telecom network in the world by holding 1 million subscribers to 881.40 million subscribers as of October 2011. Usage of mobile network by lower and middle class people increased by reducing the reducing the mobile network subscribing tariff form Rs 14 to Re 1. The world telecommunication industry agrees India will have 1.200 billion subscribers by 2013 and global consultancies point out India exceeds chine's mobile network subscriber's count in 2013. The Indian government by permitting spectrum operators clears the issue of signal clarity and develops the subscribers benefit. The healthy competition between different mobile network service providers create the mobile number portability, value added service, voice message, MMS, SMS, unbreakable signals, scheme changes, easy to recharge, other comfortable

and satisfactory service to the mobile network subscribers. The mobile network service providers ready to serve their subscribers anywhere at any time to retain the existing subscribers and to earn a new subscribers. By knowing the preference and buying behaviour of consumers the mobile network service providers can develop the promotional method to survive in the competitive market.

### **History of Indian telecom**

In the year 1850 in India for postal communication electric telegram was started between Calcutta and Diamond Harbor border of southern Calcutta. In 1851 British East India Company used for their Own Purpose. Oriented telephone from England started the telephone exchange in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and Ahmadabad in 1881. The formal telephone service with 93 subscribers was established in 1882. In the year 1883 the postal service and telephone service was merged. In 1902 considerable changes followed in India by innovating wireless telegraph. After independence the Ministry of Communication is authorized to govern the Indian telecommunication. The liberalization takes place in India by the agreement signed by Indira Gandhi with Alcatel CIT of France to setup 5,00,000 lines per year by merging with state owned telephone company in the year 1981. Department of telecommunication (DOT) is established in 1985 to regulate the tariff and policies and to reduce the government interfering. Telecom Regulatory authority of India (TRAI) established in 1997 by the government to regulate and help the telecom sectors to grow.

### **Mobile communication in India:**

The joint venture between India's Modi Group and Australian telecom giant Telstra is the first mobile network service provider in India. In 1995, July 31<sup>st</sup> in Calcutta Modi Telstra's Mobile net service was inaugurated by the west Bengal chief Minister by making the first phone call. The GSM (Global System for Mobile Communication) service is utilized by the Modi Telstra's Mobile net service to connect the subscribers. In India the telecom service providers classified as (1) state owned companies (2) Indian companies owned by private players (3) Private players from foreign companies. The GSM (Global System for Mobile Communication) operated under 900MHZ; CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) operated under 800MHZ. In the year 2008 3G services launched and owned by MTML and BSNL and the private mobile network operators permitted to launch the 3G service in the year 2010.

The healthy competition between mobile network service providers creates the fall in price tariff across India and became cheapest one in the world.

### Leading Mobile telecom service providers in India

The leading mobile telecom service providers based on the subscribers as of Dec 2011

Service providers	Subscribers in Millions
Bharti Airtel	175,652,816
Reliance Communications	150,079
Vodafone	147,747
Idea	106,380
BSNL	92,565
TataDoCoMo	83,493
Aircel	61,644
Uninor	36,305

### Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited

Bharat Sanchar Nigam takes birth in India in 2000 after corporatizing Department of Telecom to provide the telecom service in India. BSNL Functioning under the security of ministry of communication and department of telecommunication government of India. The policies of telecommunication framed and implemented by BSNL. It places the 7<sup>th</sup> largest one in the world. In India it places the 5<sup>th</sup> position based on 92,565 million subscribers as of Dec 2011.

### Bharti Airtel

In 1983 Bharti groups signed an agreement with Siemens to manufacture push button telephone mode. In 1986 Bharti telecom limited incorporated the push button telephone. In 1990 first fax machine and cordless telephone launched in India. The bid owned by Sunil Bharti Mittal to build cellular network in 1992. The Bharti Tele ventures established in 1995, 7<sup>th</sup> July and the business commenced by 18<sup>th</sup> July, 1996. Sunil Bharti Mittal is the founder of Bharti Airtel. It plays the role first largest cellular service in India with 175,652,816 million subscribers as of Dec 2011. In 2010 the first international network service launched by airtel in srilanka. In the status of world level it is the fifth largest telecom operator with 230.8

million subscribers across 19 countries. In 2007 the performance of the company ranked as best one by Business week magazine.

#### **Idea**

Birla communication limited incorporated on 4<sup>th</sup> march 1995 and commenced the business on 11<sup>th</sup> Aug 1995. In 1996, May 30<sup>th</sup> the name changed as Birla AT &T after executing joint venture between AT&T Corporation and Grasim industries limited. Birla communication merged with Tata cellular limited in 2000 and born as Batata and name was changed as idea cellular limited resulting to the introduction of the Brand Idea on 2002, 1<sup>st</sup> May. It is the 4 largest wireless service provider in India based on 106,380 million subscribers as of Dec 2011.

#### **Reliance Communication**

The reliance communication incorporated in the year Dec 2002. It plays the major role in Indian wireless communication. One nation one tariff plan is commenced by reliance in the year 2006. It is the 2 largest Wireless Service Provider with 150,079 million subscribers as of Dec 2011.

#### **Tata telecommunication**

In 1986, March 19th videsh sanchar Nigam was incorporated to provide international telecommunication service. The VSN converted as Tata communication limited in 13th Feb 2008. The joint venture between japans NTT Docomo and Tata group in Nov 2008 gives birth to the Tata Docomo. Do communication over the mobile network means the Docomo. It plays the status of 6th largest network operator in terms of 83,493 million subscribers as of Dec 2011.

#### **Vodafone**

In 1982 Vodafone incorporated by Joint venture between Racal Electronics plc's subsidiary Racal Strategic Radio Ltd along with Millicom and the Hambros Technology in the ratio of 80%, 15%, 15%. It plays the status of 3<sup>rd</sup> largest network operator in terms of 147, 747million subscribers as of Dec 2011.

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A review of previous studies has supported the researcher to conduct the present study. The previous study was examined and certain area which requires more attention has been considered in the present study.

**D. J. Petzer, et al (2011)** In his research by using Non probability convenience sampling 2339 respondents who hold cell phone in Gauteng province of south Africa were younger or age of 64 years are examined for the study .The study resulted the young generation awareness about service quality towards existing service offered by network service providers is considerably lower than other generation and towards network service providers the generation's behavioral intention is very low and creating risk in customer loyalty . It shows the major existing relationship identifying service quality level, satisfaction level and behavioral intention between dissimilar generations. The study point outs the cell phone network service providers in South Africa by using different marketing strategies must provide service quality level beyond customer expectation for different generation to stay away from service failure.

**Muzammil Hanif et al., (2010)** In his research he observed the factors affecting customer satisfaction with mobile service provider like Mobilink, Telenor, Ufone by examining 150 respondents in Pakistan. The study result suggested that important role is played by independent variable customer service and price fairness. But relatively price equality got the bigger impact on customer satisfaction than customer service. The service providers by charging fair tax with excellent customer service make them time in power for long period.

**Naman shahs (2008)** with the help of the questionnaire 100 respondents were surveyed by using single random sampling. The research shows in the world largest telecom network India also plays one of the vital role by grown mobile subscribers form 1 million to 100 million. The effective growth of mobile subscribers in numbers increased by sharp turn down in the cost of mobile handset and dropping the network tariff from Rs 14 to Re 1 brought the lower middle class people within reach. The government by making innovative policy can carry it to the remaining 90 % of the population and the issues in cellular signal clarity, this issue can be solved by utilizing over 70 billion universal service obligation funds by permitting spectrum operators by positive investment policy to set up equipment manufacturing in India. The mobile number portability helps the end user to create tougher competition between the service providers and to solve their problems. The 3G, Mobile number portability and value added service create comfortable to the customers to solve their problems by making more competitive market.

**Olu Ojo (2010)** by surveying 230 respondents with research questionnaire and by using three hypotheses He observed the expectations of the customers and the way to meet the expectation must be initially known by the organization. The Relationship between service Quality and customer satisfaction effects positively through service quality by welcoming customer's suggestions and designing more programmes to measure customer satisfaction. Measuring customer satisfaction assists in customer retention and loyalty. It also discovered retaining new customer costs than existing customer retaining. The research cleared that customer service has force on service quality perception and customer satisfaction.

**Selim zaim et al (2010)** with the help of the case study method 280 respondents were surveyed by using face to face method from Istanbul central district. The findings of the research show the expectation of customer and satisfaction as positive force on the image of the company. The researcher investigated expectation of customer, value of customer, perceived quality, and company picture. The company picture satisfies the customer in maximum, perceived value builds and evaluates customer, satisfaction of customer is very much connected to loyalty.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To study the consumer preference and satisfaction in Mobile network
- To study the factors considered while purchasing mobile network.
- To know the additional service expected.
- To study the overall satisfaction of respondents.
- To know the factors creating dissatisfaction.

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

Redman et al (1923) describes new information are gathered by regulating the attempts. The samples of 200 mobile network subscribers were selected including both male and female from different occupation.

#### **Primary Data**

The structured questionnaire is used to collect the primary data through personal interview

#### **Secondary Data**

Secondary data is collected by referring related books, journals, websites and magazines.

### Sample size and design

The sample size of 200 respondents selected by using Non probability convenient sampling

### TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed with help of simple Percentage analysis. On the basis of percentage the total sample respondents are analyzed, weighted average is used to rank the factors.

**Table1: Respondents Based on Age**

S.No	Age	Airtel	Reliance	Vodafone	Idea	BSNL	Other s	Total
1	15-25	32	12	4	5	10	2	65
2	25-35	38	10	8	7	9	3	75
3	35-45	12	8	4	3	11	2	40
4	Above 45	4	3	3	2	7	1	20
5	Total	86	33	19	17	37	8	200

Source: Primary data

The table shows 75 respondents are from the age group 25-35. Among them 38 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 65 respondents are from the age group of 15-25. Among them 32 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 40 respondents are from the age group of 35-45. Among them 12 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 20 respondents are from the age group of above 45. Among them 7 respondents are using BSNL mobile network.

**Table2: Respondents Based on gender**

S.No	Gender	Airtel	Reliance	Vodafone	Idea	BSNL	Others	Total
1	Male	50	12	11	13	16	15	117
2	Female	41	10	9	6	12	5	83
	Total	91	22	20	19	28	20	200

Source: Primary data

The table shows 117 respondents are male. Among them 50 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 83 respondents are females. Among them 41 respondents are using Airtel mobile network.

**Table 3: Respondents Based on occupation**

S.No	Occupation	Airtel	Reliance	Vodafone	Idea	BSNL	Others	Total
1	Business	18	10	11	10	12	7	68
2	Employees	16	9	7	3	6	6	47
3	Agriculture	10	8	5	2	16	9	33
4	Students	12	3	6	2	5	2	52
5	Total	53	35	29	13	42	28	200

Source: Primary data

The table shows 68 respondents occupation is Business. Among them 18 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 52 respondents occupation is scholars. Among them 12 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 47 respondents occupation is employees. Among them 16 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 33 respondents occupation is Agriculture. Among them 16 respondents are using BSNL mobile network.

**Table 4: Most important factor and least important factor considered by buyers**

7- Most important

1- Least important

Weighted average

Sl. No.	Factors	Weight [x]	7- Most important							1- Least important		Weighted Average $\sum fx / \sum x$	Rank
			7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total			
1.	Mobile Number portability	Frequency [f]	50	20	11	30	19	29	33	200	28.32	VI	
		fx	350	120	55	120	57	58	33	793			
2.	Low tariff	Frequency [f]	38	15	50	36	15	26	20	200	30.96	IV	
		fx	266	90	250	144	45	52	20	867			
3.	Customer service	Frequency [f]	32	15	38	28	56	17	14	200	29.71	V	
		fx	224	90	190	112	168	34	14	832			
4.	Brand name	Frequency [f]	43	39	38	28	26	13	13	200	34.07	I	
		fx	301	234	190	112	78	26	13	954			



5.	Network coverage	<b>Frequency</b> <b>[f]</b>	50	31	24	22	30	22	21	<b>200</b>	32.11	II
		<b>fx</b>	350	186	120	88	90	44	21	<b>899</b>		
6	Easy recharge	<b>Frequency</b> <b>[f]</b>	50	19	10	18	20	50	33	<b>200</b>	27.82	VII
		<b>fx</b>	350	114	50	72	60	100	33	<b>779</b>		
7	Offering new schemes	<b>Frequency</b> <b>[f]</b>	74	10	12	16	27	31	30	<b>200</b>	31.25	III
		<b>fx</b>	518	60	60	64	81	62	30	<b>875</b>		

The above table shows that the respondents consider the I<sup>st</sup> rank brand name (34.07) as a most important factor and VII<sup>th</sup> rank easy charge (27.82) as a least important one

**Table 5: Respondents based on factors considered**

S.No	Factors considered	Airtel	Reliance	Vodafon e	Idea	BSNL	Others	Total
1	Network coverage	15	8	9	3	4	4	43
2	Brand name	16	10	9	4	5	6	50
3	Offering new schemes	8	4	5	4	6	5	32
4	Mobile Number portability	4	2	2	1	1	3	13
5	Low tariff	9	6	4	2	3	3	27
6	Easy recharge	4	2	2	1	1	2	12
7	Customer service	8	3	5	2	3	2	23
	Total	64	35	36	17	23	25	200

Source: Primary data

The above table shows factors considered by respondents. Brand Name considered by 50 respondents. Among them 15 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, Network coverage considered by 43 respondents. Among them 15 respondents using Airtel mobile network, offering new schemes considered by 32 respondents. Among them 8 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, Low tariff considered by 27 respondents. Among them 9 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, Customer service considered by 23

respondents. Among them 8 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, Mobile Number Portability considered by 13 respondents. Among them 4 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, Easy recharge considered by 12 respondents. Among them 4 respondents are using Airtel.

**Table 6: Respondents based on additional features expected**

S.No	Additional features	Airtel	Reliance	Vodafone	Idea	BSNL	Others	Total
1	Innovated service	10	7	8	6	9	7	47
2	Connecting frequency	11	9	8	6	7	8	49
3	Internet operations	17	11	12	6	16	13	75
4	Others	8	5	5	3	4	4	29
	Total	46	32	33	21	36	32	200

Source: Primary data

The above table shows respondents additional features expectation. Internet Operations Expected by 75 respondents. Among them 17 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, connecting frequency expected by 49 respondents. Among them 11 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, Innovated service expected by 47 respondents. Among them 10 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, other additional features expected by 29 respondents. Among them 8 Respondents Using Airtel Mobile Network.

**Table 7: Respondents based on overall satisfaction level**

S.No	overall satisfaction level	Airtel	Reliance	Vodafone	Idea	BSNL	Others	Total
1	Highly satisfied	10	6	5	4	5	6	36
2	Satisfied	15	8	9	4	8	7	51
3	Neither satisfied	14	7	4	2	11	6	44
4	Highly dissatisfied	3	6	5	9	4	7	34
5	Dissatisfied	3	6	6	11	5	4	35
	Total	45	33	29	30	33	30	200

Source: Primary data

The table shows 51 respondents were who are satisfied with overall satisfaction level. Among them 15 respondents are using Airtel mobile network , 44 respondents says that they are neither satisfied with overall satisfaction level. Among them 14 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 36 respondents say that they are highly satisfied with overall satisfaction level. Among them 10 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 35 respondents say that they are dissatisfied with overall satisfaction level. Among them 11 respondents are using Idea mobile network, 34 respondents says they are highly dissatisfied with overall satisfaction level. Among them 9 respondents are using Idea mobile network.

**Table 8: Most important factor and least important factor create dissatisfaction**

**7- Most important** **1- Least**

**important**

**Weighted average**

Sl. No.	Factors	Weight [x]	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total	Weighted Average $\Sigma fx / \Sigma x$	Rank
1.	Customer care Negligence	<b>Frequency [f]</b>	15	12	11	10	7	4	10	<b>69</b>	11.11	V
		<b>fx</b>	105	72	55	40	21	8	10	<b>311</b>		
2.	Unwanted messages	<b>Frequency [f]</b>	20	8	11	9	10	5	6	<b>69</b>	11.54	III
		<b>fx</b>	140	48	44	45	30	10	6	<b>323</b>		
3.	Uninformed money deduction	<b>Frequency [f]</b>	8	7	6	11	9	13	15	<b>69</b>	8.57	VII
		<b>fx</b>	56	42	30	44	27	26	15	<b>240</b>		
4.	Non attractive schemes	<b>Frequency [f]</b>	22	10	8	12	3	5	9	<b>69</b>	11.79	II
		<b>fx</b>	154	60	40	48	9	10	9	<b>330</b>		
5.	Network Interception	<b>Frequency [f]</b>	16	18	6	13	7	3	6	<b>69</b>	12.64	I
		<b>fx</b>	112	108	36	65	21	6	6	<b>354</b>		

6	Roaming charges	<b>Frequency [f]</b>	10	8	5	12	9	14	11	<b>69</b>	9.18	<b>VI</b>
		<b>fx</b>	70	48	25	48	27	28	11	<b>257</b>		
7	More service charges deduction	<b>Frequency [f]</b>	17	6	14	12	8	5	7	<b>69</b>	11.21	<b>IV</b>
		<b>fx</b>	119	36	70	48	24	10	7	<b>314</b>		

The table has been analyzed with the help of the respondents who are highly dissatisfied and dissatisfied. The above table shows respondents consider the 1<sup>st</sup> rank Network interception (12.64) as most important dissatisfaction factor and VII<sup>th</sup> rank uninformed money deduction (8.57) as least important dissatisfaction factor.

**Table 9: Respondents based on factors create dissatisfaction**

S.No	Factors create dissatisfaction	Airtel	Reliance	Vodafone	Idea	BSNL	Others	Total
1	Customer care Negligence	2	1	2	1	1	1	8
2	Unwanted messages	3	2	1	1	1	2	10
3	Uninformed money deduction	3	1	1	0	0	1	6
4	Non attractive schemes	2	1	2	2	3	1	11
5	Network Interception	1	1	2	4	6	4	18
6	Roaming charges	0	0	1	1	2	3	7
7	More service charges deduction	2	0	3	2	1	1	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>69</b>

Source: Primary data

The above table shows factors create dissatisfaction. 18 respondents dissatisfied with Network interception. Among them 6 respondents are using BSNL mobile network, 11 respondents dissatisfied with Non attractive schemes. Among them 3 respondents are using BSNL mobile network, 10 respondents dissatisfied with unwanted messages. Among them 3 respondents are using Airtel mobile network, 9 respondents dissatisfied with more service charges. Among them 3 respondents are using Vodafone mobile network, 8 Respondents

dissatisfied with customer care negligence. Among them 2 respondents are using Airtel, 7 respondents dissatisfied with roaming charges. Among them 3 respondents are using other mobile network,

### Findings

- 75 respondents are from the age category 25-35. Among them majority of them i.e. (38) respondents using Airtel.
- 50 respondents are using Airtel mobile network among 117 male respondents
- Majority of the respondents running their own business and majority of them are using Airtel mobile network i.e. 18 respondents.
- Brand name is considered as important factor. Airtel mobile network is the brand considered by Majority of the respondent.
- Among 75 respondents 17 respondents are expecting Airtel mobile network internet operation as additional features.
- Among 51 satisfied respondents 15 respondents are satisfied with Airtel mobile network
- Network interception is an important factor creates dissatisfaction. Majority of the respondents are dissatisfied with BSNL Network interception.

### Suggestions

Based on the findings the researcher suggest

- Airtel mobile network service provider leads Indian mobile network. The other mobile network service provider must implement necessary promotional steps to capture the place of Airtel to lead Indian mobile network.
- Most of the respondents considered Brand name as the main factor. So the mobile service provider must take necessary steps to promote and maintain the brand name mean time other factors and additional features also given more priority by mobile service provider to retain and earn new customers.
- Mobile network service provider must know the factors creating dissatisfaction and by knowing the needs and expectation of dis satisfied customers the mobile service provider must concentrate more on dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied customer to convert them as satisfied.
- Customer satisfaction is considered as a main factor by the entire mobile service provider so the mobile service providers must differentiate them from other mobile service provider by making their customer as delightful somewhat than satisfied

## Conclusion

Mobile network service plays an important role in human being life by connecting others any were in the world mean time they are facing tight competition in order to avoid the competition knowing about customer preference and satisfaction is very essential for entire network service providers. The customers are confused by various offers by various mobile network service providers at various times. Mutual agreement between various mobile network service providers to offer same sort of benefitable schemes to the customers and not entertaining the customers to switch from one network service to other network service assist all the service providers to get equal benefit mean time the service provider by creating the good imagination between the customers their network service is user friendly to very one assist the network service provider to earn new customer and to retain the existing customers.

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