

A Comparative Study on Customer Relationship Management Practices in the Telecom Industry

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Abstract

A well-functioning telecommunication network is an essential component of the economic infrastructure, it is one of the prime support services needed for rapid growth of any developing country. The state-owned telecom player Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) needs to wake up to the reality and realize the importance of satisfying and retaining the customers. The service providers design and deploy customer centric strategies not only to grab a huge amount of the market share, but also to sustain themselves in the long-term. Banks have relationship managers, airlines have frequent flyer programs, credit cards offer redeemable bonus points for increased card usage, hotels have personalized services, and telecom service operators provide customized services to their users. Relationship marketing is emerging as the core marketing activity for businesses operating in fiercely competitive environments. On an average, every business spends nine times more to acquire customers than it does to keep an existing customer with itself. Firms are now paying more attention to their relationships with customers to retain them and to increase their share of customers' purchases. Although customized as well as off-the-shelf technological solutions are available in the marketplace, businesses need to do a lot more than just adopt these solutions to implement customer relationship management (CRM) practices with the aim of reducing the gap between the company and its customers. Today, the Indian telecom industry suffers from major problems of customer attrition in the name of "number portability" because of multiple service providers or close substitutes with zero or less switching costs. Hence, it is inevitable for the companies to develop a CRM strategy that enables them to improve their customer database and also improves the number of loyal customers. In the light of this context, the present research attempted to study CRM practices followed by the major public and private sector telecom service providers in India, that is, BSNL and Airtel.

Keywords: customer relationship management, service quality, cost efficiency, profit efficiency.

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Telecommunication is one of the prime support services needed for the rapid growth of any economy. The 1994 telecom policy of the government was introduced to liberalize the telecom sector by allowing private sector participation for both basic and value-added services. Initially, the government decided to allow only one private player other than the government-owned service provider so as to create a duopoly market strategy. The private players were given licenses to provide cellular services initially in four metro cities and subsequently, they were given licenses to operate in 19 cities apart from the four metro cities.

After the emergence of the private telecom players, customers have multiple options to get the best service from the best service provider. Companies find it difficult to attract and retain the customers and are concentrating more on service quality and relationship- management with the customers. On an average, every business spends nine times more to acquire customers than it does to keep an existing customer with itself. Therefore, many firms are now paying more attention to their relationships with the existing customers to retain them and increase their

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loyalty. In this competitive environment, businesses need to do a lot more than just adopt these solutions to implement customer relationship management (CRM) practices. The growing competition among the service sector organizations has forced the telecom industry to adopt different strategies to earn profits by satisfying, retaining, and delighting the customers.

Customer Relationship Management

Customer relationship management is a comprehensive strategy and process of acquiring, retaining, and partnering with selective customers to create superior value for a company and a customer.

↳ **Need for CRM in the Telecom Sector :** The telecom players in today's environment are required to design and deploy customer-centric strategies not only to grab a share in the market, but also to sustain growth in the long-run, as the beneficiaries of the severe competition are consumers. The players have realized the importance of constant service-quality delivery to the customers for long-run sustainability. Customer relationship signifies identifying the needs of the customers and stretching out ways and means to satisfy them. To be precise, it means achieving high customer profitability, customer revenues over and above customer costs, which demands matching customer expectations with customer satisfaction. The high cost of customer acquisition is making today's businesses understand the importance of retaining the customers for long-run sustainability. The current research topic aims at analyzing customer relationship management practices followed by the telecom companies to turn outstanding service into outstanding profitability.

Review of Literature

Customer relationship management (CRM) aims at narrowing the gap between the company and its customers. In the telecom sector, CRM plays a vital role in not only bringing the customers close to the company, but also in identifying the changing behavioral pattern of the customers. In technology- dynamic markets like telecom, an efficient CRM system is essential, since customer attrition is very high due to the presence of close substitutes and near zero switching costs. It is very necessary to throw light on the CRM practices commonly followed in the telecom sector and their applicability to several aspects of the service delivery process.

Latha (2004) identified how analytical CRM tools differ from traditional CRM tools which can enhance business profitability. She shed light on information and communication technologies which can provide better CRM practices. Raghava (2005) provided an insight into how E-commerce makes relationship marketing easier. For winning the hearts of customers in the best possible manner and to serve them accurately, the creation and management of data mining, data warehousing (from the part of e-commerce) is very much essential for successful marketers. Khan and Chaturvedi (2006) provided an insight into various promotional strategies implemented by major cellular service providers in India. Many private service providers entered into the market as a result of stiff competition between the players in the cellular industry. Hence, each player has to formulate more novel strategies to retain the customers and their market share.

Roy (2006) opined that in a modern era, information has become the life blood of marketing. Having the right information, at the right time, in the right amount, and in the right style is more important for marketers to maintain satisfying relationships with customers. He identified that as a result of advancement in IT, it is very easy for the companies to maintain a relationship with their customers. Arora and Gaur (2006) established that information technology has grown in various directions with the development of the database industry and its functionalities. They stated the importance of data warehousing and data mining in effective implementation of CRM.

Puneet (2007) conducted a study on CRM practices implemented by organizations and the experiences with technology, people, and processes to enhance existing businesses. CRM can stimulate business improvement and can benefit both a company and a customer. In his study, the author identified that CRM is a solution which can

deliver quality, consistent, and personalized care to the customers. CRM is a technology that enables a systematic way of managing customer relationships on a larger scale.

Sudhakar (2009) examined E-CRM and its features, steps in implementation of E-CRM in India, different levels of E-CRM, how it differs from traditional CRM, its applications, importance, major trends in E-CRM, global scenario for E-CRM, and why do companies need it? The study also listed the failures of E - CRM. It is not what an organization is doing on the web, but how effectively it utilizes the online channels to improve customer satisfaction is what is important.

Rao (2009) provided an insight into the customer experience management. He revealed that it has emerged as the most important aspect in achieving success for companies. The goal of customer experience management is to move customers from satisfied to loyal and address the solutions for customers' problems through cross channels (contact center, the Internet, self-services, mobile devices), cross touch points (phone, chat, email, web, in person), and cross life – cycle (ordering, fulfillment, billing, support, etc). Amulya and Anand (2011) presented a comprehensive note on the telecom industry, especially about BSNL, its landmarks, and its monopolistic power until the entry of private players. They conducted a SWOT analysis of BSNL and also gave suggestions for the organization so that it can sustain itself in the present telecom market.

Zainurin Bin Dahari, Muhammam Sabbir et al., (2011) found that customers are very much conscious of brand image, service quality, and price of the mobile operators. Therefore, mobile operators should be very much careful about these factors and the kind of service they are offering. They emphasized on the need to develop and maintain better service quality, minimize prices, and increase brand image to increase the level of customer satisfaction. Joshi (2011) noted that customer satisfaction is the ultimate metric of success in the huge competitive telecom sector. The surest path to a strong business bottom line is assuring that customers receive the highest appropriate quality of service across multiple applications and delivery mechanisms. During her study, the author identified the drivers of customer satisfaction so as to retain the profitable customers and also improve network coverage and personalized customer care services. The author also pointed out that the companies should provide proper training to the staff so that they can handle the problems of the customers in a better manner.

Selvachandra and Suresh Rajan (2011) studied rural consumers' preference attributes in purchase of cell phones and identified consumer experiences which would help the marketers to improve their sales volumes in the rural markets. The study revealed that nearly half of the consumers gave preference to price, after sales services, model, brand, company name, durability, and quality. The other factors were availability of spares, performance, good looks, credit facility, technical features, guarantee / warrantee, good will.

Hence, from the review of literature, we can conclude that service quality has to be assessed regularly. It helps the organization in assessing the current as well as the future expectations of the customers.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to analyze the need and importance of customer relationship management and its usefulness for the telecom service providers (with reference to Airtel and BSNL) to improve customer loyalty.

- ☞ To identify the existing marketing strategies followed by these companies.
- ☞ To find the association between implementation of CRM practices and loyalty of customers in the Indian telecom sector.
- ☞ To identify the growth in customer attraction, retention, loyalty and to find new strategies to be implemented in CRM to improve the customer base.

Methodology and Research Design

☞ **Universe of the Study:** The twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad were considered as the universe of the study.

↪ **Sample Size:** The sample size of 143 customers were considered for the study ; 70 and 73 respondents, respectively from BSNL and Airtel were asked to participate in the study.

↪ **Sampling Technique:** The sampling technique chosen for the study is random sampling due to its time and cost feasibility.

↪ **Data Collection:** A structured questionnaire with a 5 - point rating Likert scale was used to collect the primary data.

↪ **Statistical Tool:** Factor analysis was used with the help of Cronbach's alpha.

↪ **Secondary Data:** To support the primary data, we also reviewed some secondary sources like books, magazines, journals, and other published information. The data collected were analyzed and is represented in the form of tables.

Analysis and Results

The following paragraphs discuss about the study conducted on customer relationship management practices in the telecom sector by selecting a public entity, that is, BSNL and a private player, that is, Airtel. The study used various statistical tools for data analysis and interpretation such as percentages, frequency tables, cross tabulation, and factor analysis.

The Table 1 reveals that the respondents' age ranged from 15 years to 50 and above years. The respondents were engaged in different professions- they were engineers, lawyers, consultants, academicians, and businessmen with the qualifications from being educated upto 10th class to the post-graduation level. By taking age and education into account, it is observed that the younger respondents and the well qualified respondents were using the services of Airtel rather than those of BSNL. This preference may be due to high frequency of services, offers, and good network connectivity provided by Airtel.

Customers who are able to make both their ends meet can think of communication and can pay telephone bills. Hence, an understanding of the income levels of the respondents became necessary. Depending on the monthly income/budget and the habit of saving, every customer will choose the telecom service provider. It can be inferred from the Table 1 that there were 90 respondents among 143 respondents who paid a telephone bill of less than ₹ 500/ month. Hence, the respondents' monthly income influenced the amount of money that was to be expended on telecom service providers.

Retention of the customer is the main objective of CRM. The company should solve all the problems of the customers within the desired and expected time. Companies should pay sincere interest towards the customers' queries and problems. Majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that solving a problem takes less time in the private sector than it does in the public sector. It is due to lack of accountability and poor management that BSNL was unable to address the consumers' grievances. So, regarding solving problems with interest and sincerity, Airtel got more praises than BSNL.

First is best. Likewise, if a company delivers best services at the first instance, this makes them retain the customer. A word of mouth from a satisfied customer can pull many a customers to a service provider. The Table 1 shows that BSNL was able to perform the required services correctly in the first instance. If the company is not able to solve the customers' problems in the first instance, then the customers will switch from one service provider to the other.

A company needs to keep its customers informed about all the products and services it offers. Any product or service will be successful only when it matches the expectations of the customers. This shows the commitment of the company in updating their customers about the new products and services launched, which enables the company not only to attract the new customer, but also to retain the existing customers.

Good quality services give utmost satisfaction to the customer. It can be inferred from the Table 1 that the

telecom provider provides quick and urgent services for the customers. These days, companies that provide prompt services can only survive in the market. The consumer is the king in today's world. Employees must be courteous with the customers. Though the employees are busy with other responsibilities, they need to serve the customers by approaching them with a smile. In this regard, Airtel got good feedback. The growing competition between the public and private sector telecom companies has made Airtel prompt and one of the best service providers in the industry.

The employees of the telecom companies must be willing to help the customers by way of addressing their queries, asking the customer to give their contact information, and so forth. A majority of the customers agreed that employees of both Airtel and BSNL were willing to help them. The employees of a telecom company must have knowledge about the services offered by the company. Then only can they serve the customers well. Customer grievances are handled by the company to satisfy the customers. It is observed that both Airtel and BSNL employees had knowledge about the offered services. It is also observed that a majority of the customers were satisfied about the provision of services provided on demand.

The telecom sector employees must have a pleasant personality and should be professional. They must be well dressed, have a pleasing personality, and should be cheerful. The table represents the professionalism of the employees of both the companies. Appearance of the employees creates confidence in the mind of the customers. Comparing the dress code and appearance of the employees of Airtel, it was observed that the company provides a common dress to all its employees to show that they are equal. But in case of BSNL, there was no common dress code for all employees, which at times creates a confusion in the customers' mind regarding picking out the employees from the customers.

The customers need quality and continuous services from the service provider. It is observed from the Table 1 that the respondents' were of the view that both Airtel and BSNL were not charging fair and reasonable prices. However, the customers were happier with BSNL rather than with Airtel with respect to tariff and prices for other services. Wrong information leads to customer dissatisfaction. To avoid dissatisfaction, the company insists its employees to provide error-free services and records. Any wrong financial data and services not only makes the customer dissatisfied, but also creates a lot of confusion in his/her mind. It can be concluded from the Table 1 that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that it was not easy to get rectification done in Airtel billing errors. The service providers need to note that the customers' grievances must be solved immediately. If more time is taken by employees in solving the customers' grievances, then they may lose the customers. In this regards, Airtel customers were more satisfied than BSNL customers.

Recharge cards must be easily and widely available in all towns and villages. Otherwise, customers may be attracted towards other service providers. In this regard, the respondents opined that in comparison to BSNL, Airtel's recharge cards were more widely available.

The relationship center ambience must be good. It is the place where customer service can be delivered to the customers. Both Airtel and BSNL got almost equal scores regarding this. Hence, both these companies must maintain the same track record. Humans are said to be social animals, obviously they prefer talking to a person rather than to an automated voice application machine. Hence, when respondents call customer care, it would be better if their queries can be addressed by a customer care executive directly rather than being guided by a voice application.

Overall, in most of the cases, Airtel customers, as compared to BSNL customers, were more satisfied with their service provider. Dissatisfaction arose in BSNL customers due to lack of commitment of the employees towards their job, attitude of the employees, not satisfied with assurance from the top-level management regarding complaint redressal, behavior, and others. However, in some cases, BSNL got a favorable response, for instance, charges and tariff of BSNL were lower than that of Airtel.

↳ **Loading of Selected Variables on Key Factors (Telecom Sector)** : A customer takes into account various factors while opting for a service from a telecom company. These factors range from customers' perception and attitude towards the service provider, the promoted facilities for retaining the customers. So, from informal

Table 1. Cross Tabulation of Demographic Factors Vs. Service Provider

Age of the Respondents vs. Service Provider					
Below 15	6	2	8		
15-25	18	30	48		
25-35	26	31	57		
35-50	16	7	23		
Above 50	4	3	7		
Total	70	73	143		
Profession of the Respondents vs. Service Provider					
Engineer	10	8	18		
Lawyer	2	2	4		
Academician	12	15	27		
Consultant	3	3	6		
Manager	1	1	2		
Other	42	44	86		
Educational Qualifications of the Respondents vs. Service Provider					
Below 10	5	5	10		
Intermediate	9	4	13		
Degree	25	21	46		
PG	23	38	61		
Others	8	5	13		
Total	70	73	143		
Monthly income of the Respondents (in INR) vs. Service Provider					
Below 5000	28	26	54		
5000-10000	19	14	33		
10000-15000	13	15	28		
15000-25000	4	15	19		
more than 25000	6	3	9		
Total	70	73	143		
Monthly Income of the Respondents vs. Monthly Telephone Bill of the Respondents (in INR)					
	< 500	500-1000	1K-2K	2K-5K	<5K
Below 5000	44	8	0	2	0
5000-10000	22	6	0	4	1
10000-15000	17	9	1	1	0
15000-25000	6	5	8	0	0
< 25000	1	4	3	1	0
Total	90	32	12	8	1
Service Provider vs. the Service Provider shows a Sincere Interest in Problem Solving					
BSNL	4	17	1	38	10
Airtel	1	2	5	52	13
TOTAL	5	19	6	90	23

Service Provider vs. the Service Provider Performs the Required Service Correctly in the Very First Instance					
BSNL	7	7	7	42	7
Airtel	2	4	4	51	12
TOTAL	9	11	11	93	19
Service Provider vs. the Service Provider (SP) keeps the Customers Informed					
BSNL	0	3	0	50	17
Airtel	1	2	4	58	8
TOTAL	1	5	4	108	25
Service Provider vs. Employees Provide Prompt Service					
BSNL	0	11	0	57	2
Airtel	1	3	1	64	4
TOTAL	1	14	1	121	6
Service Provider vs. Employees are Courteous					
BSNL	1	12	11	40	6
Airtel	2	11	12	40	8
TOTAL	3	23	23	80	14
Service Provider vs. the SP Provides Services on Time (as Promised)					
BSNL	8	19	0	37	6
Airtel	1	3	4	52	13
TOTAL	9	22	4	89	19
Service Provider vs. Employees in the Company are Always Willing to Help me					
BSNL	2	3	48	17	70
Airtel	1	3	60	9	73
TOTAL	3	6	108	26	143
Service Provider vs. Employees have Knowledge About Services					
BSNL	3	13	6	27	21
Airtel	0	10	16	32	15
TOTAL	3	23	22	59	36
Service Provider vs. Provision of Services are Provided on Demand					
BSNL	0	12	3	54	1
Airtel	1	5	2	63	2
TOTAL	1	17	5	117	3
Service Provider vs. Employees are Well Dressed, Professional, have a Pleasant Personality					
BSNL	0	20	14	29	7
Airtel	1	5	20	39	8
TOTAL	1	25	34	68	15
Service Provider vs. Roaming Facility is Excellent					
BSNL	0	17	3	50	70
Airtel	1	4	0	68	73
Total	1	21	3	118	143
Service Provider vs. Rates Charged by the Service Provider are Fair and Reasonable					
BSNL	0	42	27	1	70
Airtel	2	56	15	0	73

TOTAL	2	98	42	1	143
Service Provider vs. Rectification in Billing Error is Easy					
BSNL	0	42	28	0	70
Airtel	1	55	17	0	73
TOTAL	1	97	45	0	143
Service Provider vs. Little Time is Taken by Employees in Solving Grievances					
BSNL	2	16	12	27	13
Airtel	3	12	8	42	8
TOTAL	5	28	20	69	21
Service Provider vs. Recharge Cards are Easily and Widely Available					
BSNL	1	12	2	55	0
Airtel	1	3	2	64	3
TOTAL	2	15	4	119	3
Service Provider vs. Relationship Center Ambience Is Good					
BSNL	10	0	57	3	70
Airtel	5	1	64	3	73
TOTAL	15	1	121	6	143
Service Provider vs. I Prefer to Talk to a Person Rather than to a Machine in case of Problems/Queries					
BSNL	0	5	0	65	0
Airtel	0	9	0	62	2
TOTAL	0	14	0	127	2
Service Provider vs. the Company Insists on Error Free Records					
BSNL	0	42	0	27	1
Airtel	1	56	1	15	0
TOTAL	1	98	1	42	1

discussion with the employees/customers /organizations and references from earlier studies, all the relevant factors in CRM are included in the study. Various statements were generated for measuring the respondents' opinion on a 5 point rating scale for CRM practices in the selected service sector organizations. The selected factors have been listed in a chronological order based on their importance in Table 2.

These factors are known as key factors that enhance customer satisfaction and delight. Factor matrix and their corresponding factor loading after the varimax rotation are presented in the Table 2 for further interpretation. The factors range from F1 to F10 (Table 2). The grouping of the variables with a factor coefficient >0.06 is shown in the Table 3. We thought it proper to build a comprehensive idea about the loading of various variables on key factors and then to derive a key attribute for the design of customer relationship management strategy (Table 3).

The factors (refer to Table 4) were named after grouping the key variables and looking at the commonality of the variables in explaining the typical attributes for CRM practices.

Factor Analysis

Customer tastes and preferences are changing from time to time. This is the result of several factors like internal and external environmental factors. The Table 4 depicts that the first factor is identified with the following product features : the idea of running business through computers, not sure of providing information through a computer, not safe to give credit card data on computer, online transactions. The Table 4 represents the factors

Table 2. Key Factor Identification

S.No	KEY FACTOR	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10
1	Quick services					1					
2	Quality of services					1					
3	Excellent roaming facility					1					
4	Uninterrupted services					965					
5	Fair and reasonable rates							1			
6	No billing error							1			
7	Error rectification is easy							1			
9	Employees are well dressed									1	
10	Staff is well educated and is able to provide required services						0.9				
11	Easy availability of recharge cards						0.8				
12	Ambience in the relationship center						0.9				
13	Provision for demanded services						0.9				
14	Prefer to talk to a person rather than a machine	0.9									
15	Doing business through computers	0.91									
16	Information delivery through machine	0.92									
17	Credit card information on the computer is not good	0.9									
19	Secrecy of information										0.8
20	Technology averting privacy	0.89									
21	Technology improves control	0.81									
22	Human touch is important	0.89									
23	Customer support lines are not useful	0.88									
25	New technology is convenient to use	0.76									
26	Early adopters of technology	0.78									
27	Trouble with high tech gadgets	0.85									
34	Challenges of figuring out new technologies								0.6		
35	Company fulfills its promises in time			0.7							
37	Co provides required service at first instance			0.8							
38	Co provides services on time in case of problems			0.9							
39	Co provides error free records			0.8							
40	Co keeps customers informed		0.9								
41	Employees provide prompt service		1								
42	Employees willing to help		0.9								
43	Employees are never too busy to respond		1								
46	Employees are courteous								0.6		
47	Employees have knowledge about services offered		0.8								
54	Round the clock service								0.7		
56	Physical facilities are visually appealing		0.7								
57	Employees professional, well dressed		0.7								

(PC extracted 5 factors done at the 0.700 or above level)

Table 3. Grouping of Factors - Loading for Identifying Key Product Features (Telecom)

S.No	KEY FACTOR	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10
14	Prefer to talk to a person rather than a machine	0.904									
15	Doing business through computers	0.91									
16	Information delivery through machine	0.921									
17	Credit card information available is not good	0.901									
20	Technology averting privacy	0.89									
21	Technology improves control	0.807									
22	Human touch is important in business	0.89									
23	Customer support lines are not useful	0.884									
25	New technology is convenient to use	0.759									
26	Early adopters of technology	0.78									
27	Trouble with high tech gadgets	0.845									
40	Co keeps customers informed		0.9								
41	Employees provide prompt service		0.962								
42	Employees willing to help		0.884								
43	Employees are never too busy to respond		0.985								
47	Employees have knowledge about services offered		0.745								
56	Physical facilities are visually appealing		0.744								
57	Employees professional, well dressed		0.704								
35	Company fulfills its promises in time			0.72							
37	Co provides required service at first instance			0.84							
38	Co provides services on time in case of problems			0.89							
39	Co provides error free records			0.81							
1	Quick services					0.96					
2	Quality of service					0.99					
3	Excellent roaming facility					0.98					
4	Uninterrupted service					965					
10	Staff well educated and able to provide required services						0.85				
11	Easy availability of recharge cards						0.83				
12	Ambience in the relationship center						0.86				
13	Provision for demanded services						0.88				
5	Fair and reasonable rates							0.95			
6	No billing error							0.97			
7	Error rectification is easy							0.96			
34	I enjoy challenges of figuring out new technologies								0.64		
46	Employees are courteous								0.62		
54	Round the clock service								0.71		
9	Employees are well dressed									0.8	
19	Secrecy of information									0.81	

Table 4. Key Factors Representing Customer Relationship Management Practices in Selected Telecom Companies

F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Empathy with Customers	Technological Dimensions	Ambience Tangibility	Reliability Dimensions	Dimension Responsiveness	Quality of Service
1.requiredand desired attention	1. Online transactions are not safe	1. Excellent infra-structure	1.meeting time limits	1. Quick service	1. Prompt service
2.personal attention	2.technology control life	2.tangible facilities	2.customer care in problem solving	2.quality of service	2.willing to help
3.best at heart	3.language barrier	3.profesional look	3.first service deliver	3.continuous service	3. Customer service is first.
4.need based service	4.not user friendly	4.tangible material and components	4.timely service		
5.flexi hours of working	5. Use of new technology	5.clean and tidy	5.error free records		
6.round the clock service					
No of items - 6	No of items - 5	No of items - 5	No of items - 5	No of items - 3	No of items - 3
Loading range 0.632-0.806	Loading range 0.755-0.860	Loading range 0.835-0.869	Loading range 0.702-0.843	Loading range 0.740-0.809	Loading range 0.737-0.758
Reliability statistics cronbach's alpha 0.935	Reliability statistics cronbach's alpha 0.939	Reliability statistics cronbach's alpha 0.955	Reliability statistics cronbach's alpha 0.930	Reliability statistics cronbach's alpha 0.916	Reliability statistics cronbach's alpha 0.863

named as Empathy with Customers, Technological Dimensions, Ambience and Tangibility, Reliability Dimensions, Dimension Responsiveness, and Quality of Service. The attributes that are grouped under Factor 1 are collectively termed as Empathy with Customers. These are the empathetic areas of CRM, which are common expectations of every customer while using a specific service.

The second factor is designated as Technological Dimensions on the basis of the loaded variables. The data set of the Factor 2 loading indicates the following product features- the company fulfills its promises in time, has sincere interest in solving problems, the company provides the required services, the company provides services on time as promised, the company maintains error free records. This is an indicator that the company gives at most priority to the customers (in satisfying and retaining them).

The Factor 3 shows significance for Ambience and Tangibility services. This factor suggests that the process of service contains ambience and tangibility. This factor includes the following variables : the company keeps the customers' informed, the employees provide prompt service, the company employees are willing to help, the company employees are never too busy to respond. This component of service augmentation or “augment part” of the service makes it mandatory for the company to provide services on a tangible and ambience basis to the customers.

The Factor 4 is named as Reliability Dimensions, which includes the following : the company gives me the required and desired attention, the company has my best interests at heart, and the employees understand my needs. In this competitive world, a customer not only seeks best or in time services, but also looks for reliable services.

Factor 5 clearly indicates the combination of three attributes such as quick services, quality of service is good, and online payment facilities are good. This factor is termed as Dimension Responsiveness . This factor is termed as customers' confident factor which is built over a period of time due to consistency in performance and transparency in customer services.

Convenient operating hours and round the clock services are the two major attributes which influence the quality of services. Customers not only need best services or timely services, they also worry about how 'good' the service is. Factor 6 clearly indicates the Quality of Services a customer needs from the service provider.

The six factors explained above are factors which every customer needs or expects from the service provider. The service providers need to be careful about these key issues while designing their service formats. It enables the service providers to satisfy and retain the customers by maintaining good customer relationship management with the customers. The derived factors are finally listed below :

- F-1 : Empathy with Customers,
- F-2 : Technological Dimensions,
- F-3 : Ambience and Tangibility,
- F-4 : Reliability Dimensions,
- F-5 : Dimension Responsiveness, and
- F-6 : Quality of Services.

Conclusion

Indian telecom companies need to delight the customers by designing exclusive benefit strategies. They should also ensure and check whether their benefit strategies are actually designed for improving loyalty among customers. To embrace CRM, the telecom companies must shift their focus from a product oriented view to a customer-oriented view - something that requires architecture - that is able to change the organizational culture and operation as well to bring about closer cooperation between CRM and the various stakeholders. This enables the service provider to improve satisfaction levels of the customers and increase the loyal customer base. Thus, it has become inevitable for telecom companies to not only to adopt CRM strategies, but also to change the CRM practices according to their customers' requirements.

The current research topic aimed at analyzing CRM practices adopted by both public and private sector telecom companies (BSNL and Airtel) to increase customer satisfaction, delight, and customer advocacy to turn outstanding services into outstanding profitability. In this study, it is observed that both organizations' focus on the customer was increasing day by day so as to retain the customer and increase one's market share. It was found that BSNL, a public sector organization, has improved a lot after the emergence of private players in terms of uninterrupted services, customer satisfaction, retention, and providing customized products at par with other private players.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The study is limited to the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Hence, the results cannot be generalized for the whole country. Although every care was taken to avoid biased opinions of the respondents by preparing a lucid questionnaire, still, the respondents might have given biased opinions that may affect the results of the study. The data collected for the study is limited to the select service sector organizations, and is not applicable to the whole service sector industry.

Though a number of studies have been conducted on customer relationship management (CRM), there is ample scope for further research in the critical areas like customer retention, customer delight excitement, and customer loyalty. The impact of customer relationship management may be examined by taking an enlarged sample by considering both public and private sector organizations, (or) only public sector organizations, (or) only private sector organizations. The study mainly focused on the selected service sector organizations such as BSNL and Airtel. We mainly focused on these sectors because of cut-throat competition and rapid growth in these sectors. One could use more than three organizations and the study can be extended to modern organizations, such as banking, insurance, hospitality, health care, personal care, transport & tourism, educational services, IT, and many more areas in retaining the existing customers and also to attract the new and potential customers.

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