



A study of user's preference level towards the selection of cellular connectivity with special reference to cross sections in Patna

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Abstract : *The present Tele-communication market is very volatile as result of the incoming of so many service providers and their respective marketing strategies. The general behavioural pattern and preference parameters of users towards telecom services is very unpredictable because of different offers provided by the various telecom brands available in the market. This is a study undertaken with the objective of assessing the orientation and level of preference towards the different tele-communication service providers.*

Keywords: *Tele Communication, Consumer, Consumer preferences, Consumer satisfaction, Customer behaviour.*

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Introduction:

In the Era of information explosion, people are to be provided with quick and timely access to information. Indian telecom industry is one of the fastest growing telecom markets in the world. Exchange of information has become a necessity of life to a common man. In the modern world an individual tends to communicate anything and everything to the relevant ones right from the place where he/she is positioned. Communication helps the marketer to gain awareness about market performances, consumer preferences and their satisfaction level towards the services offered by them.

Objectives of the study :

The aim of research was to achieve the following objectives:

1. To enquire the criteria for preferences towards cellular connectivity.
2. To estimate the satisfaction level of the users of cellular services.
3. To find out the major source of information relating to the cellular service.
4. To identify the opinion regarding leader of cellular services.

Hypotheses of the study :

The hypotheses of the present research were as follows:-

1. Age does not influence the preference for cellular connectivity.
2. Network is the most preferred criteria for brand selection.
3. Customers of Airtel are most satisfied.
4. Brand ambassadors do influence the preference for cellular services.
5. Income profile has got nothing to do with the acceptance of cellular services.
6. Gender of the customer influences the choice of the cellular services.

Methodology of the study :

The entire study was conducted on the basis of Primary and Secondary data collection. Primary Data was collected, gathered and compiled on the basis of structured schedule consisting of different types of questions like Demographic Questions, Open and Closed Ended Questions, Multi Choice Responses and Ranking Questions .Instrument used for the purpose of data collection was the Questionnaire. The sample unit of the survey was the users of Telecom services in Patna and the Sample size was 250. Method of sampling used was Stratified Random Sampling.

Limitations of the Study :

Some of the major limitations that were identified by us during our research study were as follows:

1. The geographical limitation of the survey was confined to Patna.
2. Some of the respondents i.e., occupational groups as well as especially female respondents were not comfortable enough in providing their personal information like their address, contact no., income profile, etc.

3. Some of the respondents were not able to co-operate due to their office timing as they were busy with their respective work.
4. Some statements given by the respondents may be biased as they may prefer one company.

Theme of the research:

Consumer :

A consumer is an individual who purchases or has the capacity to purchase goods and services offered for sale by marketing institutions in order to satisfy personal or household needs, wants or desires.

According to a statement made by Mahatma Gandhi, 'consumer refers to the following, A consumer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an outsider to our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him'. So the consumer is like the blood of our business and also a satisfied customer is a word of mouth advertisement of a product / services.

Customer Satisfaction :

Every human being is a consumer of different producers. If there is no consumer, there is no business. Therefore, consumer satisfaction is very important to every business person. According to Philip Kotler consumer satisfaction is defined on, "personal feeling of pleasure resulting from comparing a product's pursued performance in relation to his /her expectations". Consumer attitude measurements are taken on either potential buyers or existing client's buyers in order to identify their characteristics.

Importance of consumer satisfaction :

The need to satisfy customer for success in any commercial enterprise is very obvious. The income of all commercial enterprise is derived from the payments received for the products and services supplied to its customers. If there is no

customer there is no income and there is no business. Then the core activity of any company is to attract and retain customers. It is therefore no surprise that Peter Drucker the renowned management Guru, has said "to satisfy the customers is the mission and purpose of every business". Satisfaction of customer is essential for retention of customers and for continuous sales of the products and services of the company to customers.

Consumer behaviour :

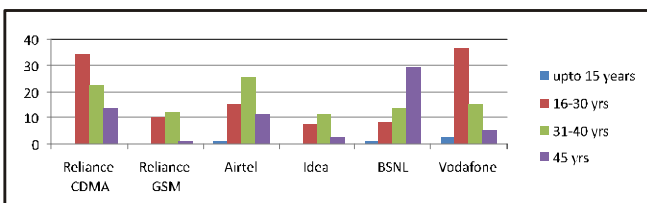
The term consumer behaviour may be defined as the behaviour that consumer displays in searching for purchasing, using, evaluating, producing, services and ideas which they expect will satisfy their needs. In other words; it is a study of physiological, social, physical behaviours of all potential customers as they become aware of evaluation, purchase and consumption and tell others about products and services.

Consumer Preferences :

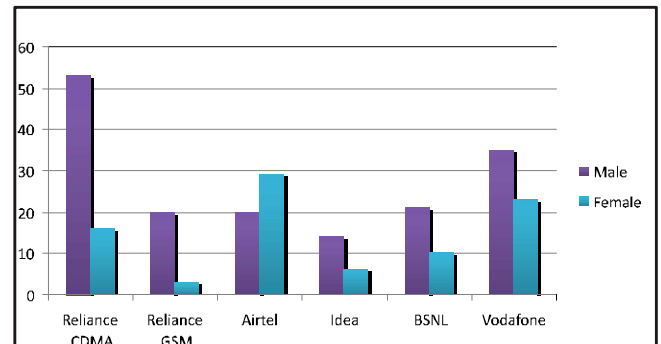
Analyzing consumer preferences ahead of time affords a competitive advantage, eliminates excessive spending and helps generate a solid following. Determining consumer choices calls for strategic thinking, organization and initial investment. In addition, it requires vision, creative thinking, advertising ability, research analysis and time. For your efforts, you are better off to advertise your product ahead of time, while benefitting from the data you collect, before placing the product on the market and to acquire a good long-term marketing plan.

Analysis and Interpretations :

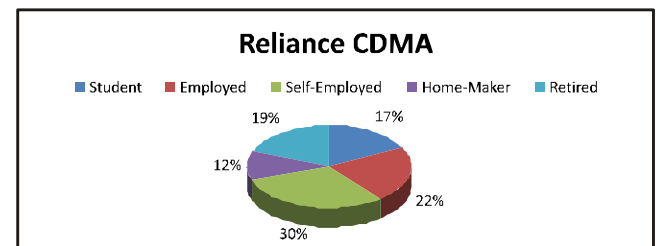
1. Age wise preference: 15-30 yrs of age group has maximum preference towards cellular connectivity.



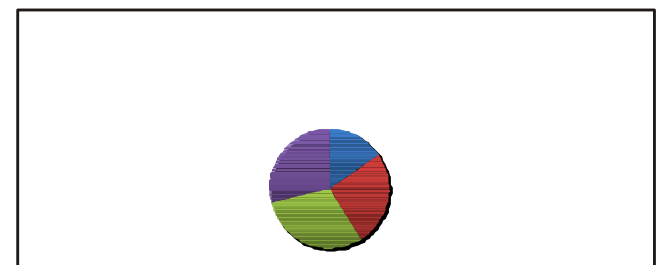
2. Gender wise preference level: Female were the most preferred group as compared to males.



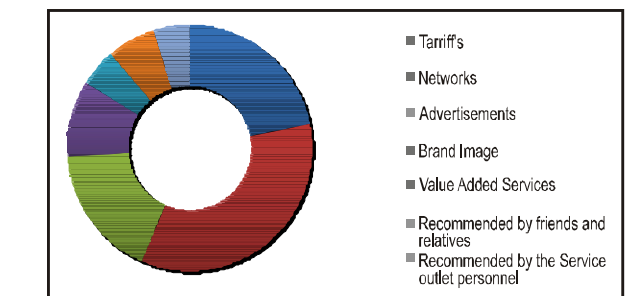
3. Occupation wise preference level: Reliance CDMA was the most preferred group amongst the self employed.



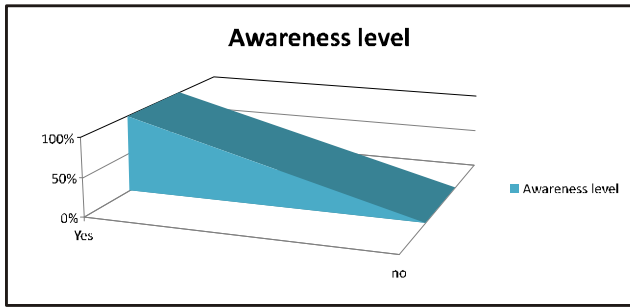
4. Income Profile: People in income group of 50,000-75,000 was the most preferred group.



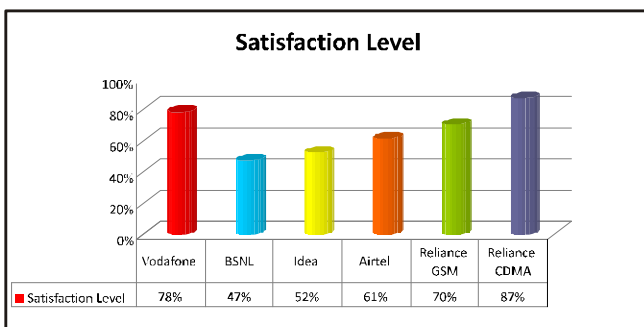
5. Reasons behind preference of the connections: Networks followed by tariffs were found to be the reasons behind the preference of any cellular connections.



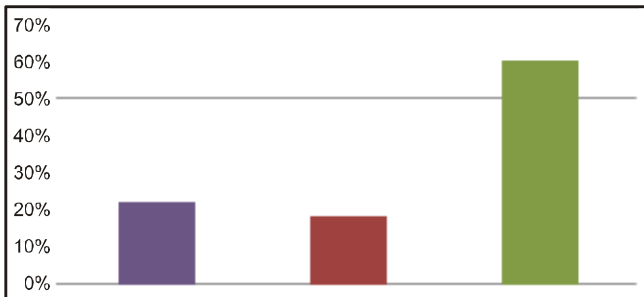
6. Awareness Level: All respondents taken into consideration were familiar with the services.



7.Satisfaction Level towards Various Telecom Brands: Reliance CDMA followed by Vodafone were the most satisfactory brand.



8. Influence of opinion leader for cellular services:Brand ambassadors were the most influencing opinion leader.



Findings :

Based on the analysis and interpretations the following findings can be summarized:

1. Contrary to the hypotheses it was found 15-30 years of age group has maximum preference towards cellular connectivity.
2. Network coverage and tariffs provided are the most important considerations for the preference of any telecom service. This

hypotheses was proved.

3. Contrary to the hypotheses it was observed that most satisfactory brand was Reliance CDMA followed by Vodafone.

4. Overwhelming number of respondents were influenced by Brand Ambassadors. This hypotheses was proved.

Suggestions:

With relation to the findings, there are major suggestions which are as follows:-

- Customers should be made aware about the use and benefits of voice mail service.
- More and more offers should be introduced time to time.
- Up gradation and quick response from the customer care centres should be ensured.
- The process involved in taking new connection should be simplified and made easier.

Conclusions:

As the Indian telecom sector has witnessed a complete transformation in the last decade, there has been a reduction in the urban-rural digital divide. The study is an attempt to explore and understand the issues related with user's preference towards cellular connectivity. It was found that Reliance in CDMA service and Airtel in GSM service stands to be the present market leaders in Patna. It can also be said that Telecommunication makes the world a global village.

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