

Perceptions of the BSNL Customers on the Quality of Services - An Empirical Analysis (A Comparative Analysis of Urban and Rural Customers on Land and Mobile services)

O .Pragathy* and G.V Chalam

*Dept. of Commerce & Business Administration, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar-522 510.
Corresponding Author: ORUGANTI PRAGATHY*

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ABSTRACT :The action of helping or doing work for someone is a Service. How accurate a result is to the target is Quality which is an indicator. Quality of Service (QoS) is especially important for the new generation of Internet applications and other consumer services. The mobile cellular service providers may offer to customers just as the land line with Broad Band Service Providers may offer QoS. A crucial part of Quality of Service in land and mobile communications is a grade of service involving requirements for supporting quality aspects like availability, accessibility, integrity, performance, reliability, regulatory and security. To implement the quality of service the existing models are best effort, integrated service and differentiated services.

The customer relationship management and customer satisfaction both are the marketing terms that measures how products/services supplied by a company meet or surpass a customers' perceptions and expectations. The customer relationship management and customer satisfaction both are the marketing terms that measures how products/services supplied by a company meet or surpass a customers' perceptions and expectations. Therefore, the management must show its commitment to an ongoing organization-wide education and training program by the eminent personalities in marketing. In addition to enhancing employee technical skills, communication skills, and negotiation skills with customer's boosts motivation and commitment of employee and reward customer orientation, managing a successful CRM implementation requires an integrated and balanced approach to technology, process, and people.

Keywords: Perception, Quality of Services, Customer Loyalty, Customer Retention, Prepaid and Post-paid Services, CRM Strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION

The telecommunication services are not only made available to sustain the growth in the economy, but also the quality and cost of these services come up to the requirements of a modern economy [1]. The telecom sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of the Indian economy and today India's network of more than 100 million telephones is one of the largest in the world..Keeping these difficulties in view, the Central Government led by A.B.Vajpai, the then Prime Minister decided to allow private people to establish basic telecommunication companies. [2]. In the year 2003-04, the company's focus was expected to be would be not only consolidating the gains but also to focus on new areas of enterprise, such as joint ventures for projects outside India, entering into national long distance operation, widening the cellular and CDMA-based WLL customer base, setting up internet and allied services on an all India basis [3]

“Quality is free, but it is not a gift”. This sums up the opinion that effective permanent quality improvement is difficult to achieve, but more than pays for itself in increased productivity [4]

$Q = P/E$ (Where Q = quality, P = performance and E= expectations.

The dimensions of the quality is: performance, feature, reliability, durability, serviceability, aesthetics, reputation and response[5].

In the wake of gathering the information, the subsequent stage in the research procedure is to investigate the information utilizing appropriate insights and research instruments. In present research, the information was gathered with the help of a reliable questionnaire on the perceptions of the selected respondents on Customer Relationship Management in Urban Rural areas in Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh. Investigation of information implies the arrangement of gathered information in a sequenced way and output will be presented in the form of “findings and conclusions”. Thus, after gathering the

information, they were prepared, considered, and examined by the researcher under the accompanying targets. To fulfil the objectives of the study and analyse the level of customer satisfaction towards BSNL landline, mobile services, and primary data was collected, analyzed and presented under the sequence of dependent variables as stated above. In order to make the study comparable, appropriate independent variables, like generation, education, occupation, income, place of residence is selected.

The main objective of this study is to assess the level of customer satisfaction on the services of land line and mobile services, region wise in Guntur District. For measuring the customer satisfaction of the landline telephone services the dependent variables, viz., reasons of opting these BSNL land and mobile services, quality of landline instrument, additional facilities provided with the landline instrument, the affordability with the current rental plans, clarity of billing system, network services and its coverage, complaint system, handling of the complaints, switch over to other services, value added services, overall satisfaction of the subscriber with various schemes of landline services (like offers, tariffs, connectivity and entertainment options) and satisfaction with the internet services have been used. The customer satisfaction with the mobile services has been measured with help of the variables, like satisfaction towards various offers of prepaid services.

Customer Relationship Management

Customer relationship management and multichannel customer management are seen as two connected disciplines in nowadays marketing research. The customer interface services are very important for providing satisfactory telecom services and better customer relationship [6]. Business success is not determined by the producer but by the customer. Customer satisfaction is the prime function of marketing [7]. A.E.R. (National Council for Applied Economic Research), "knowing the customer, his wants, needs, habits, attitudes and going competition have now become of paramount importance. Business and Government will have to become customer driven and customer oriented [8]. Consumers' behavior can be considered as one of the key factors and indicator of company's future profits [9]. "Longitudinal study of the stability of consumer expectation of services" indicates that prior consumer expectations of a service measured after a service encounter, is affected by the type of experience. Through cognitive dissonance tension reduction methods, consumers tend to shift their prior expectations to ensure their overall evaluation the experiences(10)

The discrepancy between customers' expectation and perception towards the quality of services using SERQUAL instrument. The quality of service (QoS) refers to several related aspects of telephony and computer networks allow

the transport of traffic with special requirements.[11]

Need for Study:

Telecommunications occupy centre stage in a fast-developing country. That would alone make it an interesting area to study. The complex situation faced by state owned BSNL with its drop from near monopolistic number one position to a loss making fifth position makes the need for study more significant. BSNL is presently losing market share and incurring financial losses. Company is seriously planning to come out of bureaucratic mould and reorient the organization structurally and operationally to enhance customer relations and to exploit its largest subscriber 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.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The aim of the present study is specifically designed with the following objectives:

- To evaluate the customers' perception of CRM practices of BSNL with respect to Land-line and Mobile pre-paid & post-paid services in urban and Rural wise
- To suggest the measures for the improvement of quality of services in the communication sector in general and BSNL in particular.

Research design:

The research design for the study is of descriptive and analytical. As research into consumers' behavior has evolved, several different psychological theories have been applied to the relationship between expectation, perceived performance, confirmation or dis-confirmation and the resultant consumer's satisfaction. The sources of data collected from both primary as well as secondary sources. Primary data collected through a structured questionnaire method. The major sources of secondary data will be Annual reports, management journals, business magazines, newspapers, Telecom journals like Telstar, Tele spark, Manuals and Annual dairies, etc.

Selection of Study Area:

Since the researcher belongs to Guntur city and further also working in BSNL organization. As an employee it is my bound duty to know the feedback from the customers to tune our activities to satisfy our customers. Keeping in mind the researcher purposefully chosen Guntur Telecom District as the area of study. Further it is also easy to collect the primary information about their perceptions on the Quality of services rendered to them. Besides the findings of the present study will be useful for the policy matter to offer new schemes/change the existing product, strategic formulation etc.,

Data Analysis and interpretation

The collected information through survey by using a structured questionnaire/schedule is tabulated and presented in the in respective tables. To precise the collect data relevant statistical tool are used where relevant the earlier study are taken to confirm/defer with the findings.

Statistical tools used

The statistical tools used for the analysis of this particular study were simple percentage, mean standard deviation, Chi square tests by using SPSS software version 20 and Excel.

Limitations of the study

As the data is collected from the selected respondents whose opinions/feedback depends on their level of understandings, purpose of usage, time of usage etc., So the findings cannot be generalized.

Period of study:

The study pertains to a period of 10 years, 2010-2011 to 2019-2020. I have selected the sample respondents those who have been owned land and mobile services irrespective of plans.

Sample Size Calculation

The sample size of the respondents from the population calculated with the help of Yamane’s formula with 95% confidence level and 5% margin error.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n is sample size, N Population size and e sampling of error

Sample Method

The sampling method used for this particular study is convenience sampling

Selection of Sample Respondents:

A sample size of researcher has chosen 2150 from Guntur District, out of these, 540 customers are from land line and 1100 from various areas in of prepaid mobile services and 510 post-paid customers from Guntur town and as well as surroundings of Guntur. In India BSNL is the oldest Telecom Organization and as such majority of the sample consumers had the BSNL land line or more than 20 yrs. This may be because of the service they are enjoying to the sentimental attachment towards as the organization that has been around for many years. The response rate and segment wise sample data is mentioned as follows:

Sl. No	Description	No.s
1	No. of outlets approached	100
2	No. of outlets surveyed	50
3	No. of customers surveyed:	2150
4	No. of customers, who returned completed questionnaire	2105
5	No. of usable questionnaires	2000
6	Response rate of usable questionnaires as % of questionnaires received	90%

The Guntur SSA has been divided in to 11 SDCA’s; the samples have been collected from each SDCA as mentioned below.

Number of Samples (Segment-wise)

Area	Urban customers			Total
	Land line	Pre-paid	Post-paid	
Guntur	300	600	300	1200
Rural Customers				
Tenali	40	75	30	145
Mangalagiri	20	50	30	100
Ponnur	20	50	30	100
Bapatla	20	50	30	100
Repalle	20	25	20	65
Narasaraopet	30	25	10	65
Chilakaluripeta	10	25	10	45
Vinukonda	10	25	10	45
Piduguralla	10	25	10	45
Dachepalli	10	25	10	45
Macherla	10	25	10	45
Total	200	400	200	800

Analysis on Perceptions of the Customers

Customer’s feelings, perceptions, preferences, opinions on level of satisfactions and their expectations on various issues, transactions and procedures of BSNL services on

Customer Relationship Management are discussed in the following paragraphs. In view of the overall analysis of the selected respondent's perceptions on various issues and statements pertinent to BSNL Services, such as :

- Complaint Handling
- Switching to other services and
- Recommendations to others etc.,

- Reason for Preferring BSNL
- Reception of CSC staff
- Expectations of BSNL Services
- Quality of services
- Network services

- Affordability of Prices
- Awareness of services,

Table.1: Reasons for Preferring BSNL- Opinion of the Respondents- Region wise

Reasons	Area	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypothesis
Public Organization	Urban	1200	3.7913	.90448	.02611	1.289	0.203	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.7400	.84769	.02997			
Brand Image	Urban	1200	3.8600	.90839	.02622	1.778	0.076	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.7867	.90079	.03185			
Long Service	Urban	1200	4.0675	.82876	.02392	2.365	0.019	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.9775	.84136	.02975			
Wide Coverage	Urban	1200	4.0725	.80485	.02323	3.000	0.003	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.9588	.86775	.03068			
Voice of Nation	Urban	1200	3.9183	.99036	.02859	.529	0.600	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.8950	.95005	.03359			
Connecting India	Urban	1200	3.9075	1.02266	.02952	.592	0.559	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.8808	.96312	.03405			

Sources: Field Survey In Significant at 5% level

Table-1 depicts the perceptions of the customers on reason for preferring BSNL services, out of all the independent attributes, 'wide coverage' which got the highest mean values in both region respondents. The calculated p-value is 0.003

which is more than the standard significant value at 1% level of significant i.e. (p>0.01). The distribution is significant. Therefore, there is a significant difference between opinions of the respondents on 'wide coverage'.

Table-2: Reception of CSC staff - Perceptions of the Respondents- Region-wise

Type of receiving	Region	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypotheses
Warm welcome with care	Urban	1200	3.8442	.94638	.02732	3.226	0.002	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.6988	1.04612	.03699			
Cordial nature with us	Urban	1200	3.8417	.94992	.02742	3.061	0.003	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7038	1.04036	.03678			
Very pleasant manners	Urban	1200	3.8067	1.08256	.03125	2.643	0.009	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.6725	1.15517	.04084			

Functional relations	Urban	1200	3.9038	.95860	.02767	-1.391	0.174	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.8467	.85756	.03032			
Point to point	Urban	1200	3.9975	.72303	.02087	-.314	0.756	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.9875	.68049	.02406			

Sources: Field Survey In Significant at 5% level

Table-2 depicts the nature and way of receiving the customers by the CSC staff, The calculated p-values are more than the standard significant value at 5% level of significant i.e. (p<0.05) the attributes **Warm welcome with care** ‘**Cordial nature with us**, **Very pleasant manner**’ got the highest mean values both urban and rural areas respectively. Hence, the distribution is

significant. So, there is a significant difference between opinions of the respondents of all the above statements.

Table-3: Expectations on BSNL Services –Opinion of the Selected Respondents – Region-wise

Expectations	Region	N	Mean	Std D	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypotheses
Very quick disposal	Urban	1200	3.9892	.69001	.01992	1.111	0.275	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.9525	.76549	.02706			
Clarify the doubts	Urban	1200	3.9483	.75794	.02188	.316	0.753	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.9375	.74786	.02644			
Show process	Urban	1200	3.9850	.72816	.02102	.076	0.940	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.9825	.71262	.02519			
	Rural	800	4.1000	1.07422	.03798			

Sources: Field Survey Significant at 5% level

Table-3 depicts the mean and standard deviation of region wise respondents on **expectations of BSNL services**. The distribution is insignificant. Therefore, there is no

significant difference between opinions of the respondents of all the above statements.

Table.4: Quality of services - Perceptions of the Respondents – Region-wise

Opinion	Region	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypotheses
Quality of Services	Urban	1200	3.8433	.68618	.01981	.027	0.979	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.8425	.67695	.02393			

Sources: Field Survey Significant at 5% level

Table-4 depicts the mean and standard deviation on the **Quality of services in BSNL**. All the respondents are accepted the qualitative services of BSNL. The distribution

is insignificant. Therefore, there is no significant difference between opinions of the respondents,

Table-5: Awareness on Network services- Perceptions of the Selected Respondents - Region wise

Opinion	Region	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypothesis
Network services	Urban	1200	3.7913	.96246	.02778	-.582	0.566	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.7667	.89927	.03179			

Sources: Field Survey

Significant at 5% level

Table-5 depicts the mean and standard deviation of **Awareness on Network services in BSNL** of the selected respondents in region-wise. All the respondents are

accepted on the awareness of network services in BSNL. The distribution is insignificant.

Table.6. Price Affordability - Perceptions of the Respondents -Region-wise

Perceptions	Region	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypothesis
Very attractive	Urban	1200	3.8438	.99998	.02887	-2.392	0.020	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.7433	.86184	.03047			
Fair and affordable prices	Urban	1200	3.7963	1.08301	.03126	-2.954	0.004	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.6625	.92645	.03275			
Comparatively Good	Urban	1200	3.7788	.95503	.02757	-1.975	0.052	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.6967	.87935	.03109			
Beneficial	Urban	1200	3.8575	.91777	.02649	-1.603	0.112	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.7917	.88779	.03139			
Add on Facilities	Urban	1200	4.0792	.81145	.02342	3.032	0.003	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.9638	.86653	.03064			

Sources: Field Survey In Significant at 1% level

Table-6 depicts mean and standard deviation on **price affordability in BSNL**, out of 5 attributes, the calculated p-values are more than the standard significant value at 5% level of significant on “**fair and**

affordable prices & 'Add on facilities'. The distribution is significant. Therefore, there is a significant difference between opinions of the region wise respondents.

Table-7: Awareness about the services- Perceptions of the Selected Respondents - Region wise

Source	Region	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypothesis
Electronic and Print media	Urban	1200	3.8213	.78773	.02274	-.608	0.544	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.8000	.75167	.02658			
e-Marketing & Tele-marketing, etc	Urban	1200	3.6975	.94762	.02736	-.175	0.862	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.6000	.93653	.03311			
Through Leaflets	Urban	1200	3.9308	.90833	.02622	3.824	0.000	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7713	.92330	.03264			
Hoardings	Urban	1200	3.8767	.99530	.02873	3.478	0.001	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7188	.99417	.03515			
Others	Urban	1200	3.8425	.98835	.02853	3.017	0.003	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7075	.97500	.03447			

Sources: Field Survey

Significant at 5% level

Table-7 depicts the values of the mean and standard deviation on **awareness about the services** of BSNL of the selected respondents' region-wise. The calculated p-values of the attributes on '**Through leaflets' 'Hoardings' and others** p-values are less than the standard significant value

at 5% level of significant, i.e. (p<0.05). The distribution is significant. Therefore, there is a significant difference between opinions of the respondents

Table-8: Solving complaints- Perceptions of the Respondents - Region wise

Response	Region	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypothesis
Effective/Efficient	Urban	1200	3.8500	.91068	.02629	-1.293	0.197	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.7967	.89917	.03179			
Responsive	Urban	1200	4.0817	.80656	.02328	3.197	0.002	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.9600	.87284	.03086			
Somewhat better	Urban	1200	4.0650	.80601	.02327	2.617	0.010	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.9650	.88162	.03117			
Take too delay	Urban	1200	3.9267	.96802	.02794	.211	0.834	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.9175	.93904	.03320			
Habitual reminding culture	Urban	1200	3.8925	.99719	.02879	-.073	0.942	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.8892	1.00857	.03566			

Sources: Field Survey Significant at 5% level

Table-8 depicts the mean and standard deviation of the way of problem solving in BSNL of the selected respondents' region-wise. The p value is less than the standard significant value at 5% level of significant i.e. ($p < 0.05$) with significant distribution on 'Responsive'. So,

the distribution is significant. Therefore, there is a significant difference between opinions of the respondents.

Table.9: Reasons for Switching-off Services - Perceptions of the Respondents – Region-wise

Reasons	Region	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypothesis
Poor coverage's	Urban	1200	3.9433	.88832	.02564	4.500	0.000	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7563	.94364	.03336			
Better service provider	Urban	1200	3.8767	.99530	.02873	3.478	0.001	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7188	.99417	.03515			
High tariff and prices	Urban	1200	3.8400	.99174	.02863	2.881	0.004	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7113	.97034	.03431			
Attractive schemes and plans	Urban	1200	3.8425	.98835	.02853	3.017	0.003	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7075	.97500	.03447			
Other reasons	Urban	1200	3.7588	.96546	.02787	-2.634	0.010	Accepted
	Rural	800	3.6483	.88545	.03131			

Sources: Field Survey Significant at 1% level

Table-9 depicts the mean and standard deviation on reasons for switching off services to other service providers of the selected respondents region wise. All the statements p value is more than the standard significant value at 5% level of significant i.e. ($p < 0.05$) with

significant distribution except the last attribute as other reasons is insignificant difference between opinions of the respondents.

Table-10: Are you suggested the BSNL to others? - Perceptions of the Selected Respondents - Region wise

Opinion	Region	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error	t-value	Sig Value (2-tailed)	Hypothesis
Recommendation to others	Urban	1200	3.9308	.90833	.02622	3.743	0.000	Rejected
	Rural	800	3.7750	.91811	.03246			

Sources: Field Survey Significant at 5% level

Table-10 presents the mean and standard deviation of the selected respondents on **suggestions to others about BSNL services**. The calculated p-value less than the standard significant value at 5% level of significant, i.e. ($p < 0.05$). The distribution insignificant. Therefore, there is a significant difference between opinions of the respondents.

3. FINDINGS:

- While prefer the BSNL services, the respondents are dissatisfied about the coverage of network services in both urban and rural areas
- Major part of the region-wise customers are dissatisfied about the reception of the customer service staff.
- BSNL is in line with the expectations of both urban and rural customers. The BSNL services are reached their expectations.
- All the respondents are satisfied about the quality of services
- The respondents are having an awareness about the Network services in BSNL
- The respondents are expected an affordable prices and additional facilities. In pricing point of view, the customers are dissatisfied about both statements.
- The customers are not in a position to know the services of BSNL through hoardings, leaflets.
- It has been identified that lack of responsiveness is traced while solving the complaint system in BSNL
- Almost 80% of the respondents are willing to switch over to other service providers at any time due to various reasons, like poor coverage, high prices, no new offers, etc.
- Both urban and rural customers are not recommending the BSNL service provider to the others which is a creepy and glaring response.

4. CONCLUSIONS:

- ❖ It is concluded that organization has to provide best connectivity. Connectivity emerges as an important area of concern for customers across the companies' understudy.
- ❖ It is concluded that the staff of CSCs should stand for qualitative services to the customers as well as concerned with them in a positive approach

attitude. Politeness and empathy backed by real-time information can win the mind and hearts of the customers.

- ❖ It is also found that involvement of top management is essential for resolving all the hurdles and conflicts of the customers.
- ❖ Telecom companies must improve their infrastructure, which includes special lounge for their customers in rural areas also.
- ❖ It is concluded that if the organization is forgotten that the consumer is God and does not act responsive, the survival of the BSNL is at stake. Here, there is a need for BSNL to take care of complaint registration, acknowledgement, and resolution of public complaints.
- ❖ The majority of the customers from the rural areas find it difficult to visit cities for the re-dresser of their grievances BSNL pays immediate special attention to recognize customer's expectations.
- ❖ It is perceived that BSNL is meant for government officials which limits the prospects of BSNL being considered by common man. Therefore, perception makeover through brand re positioning by targeting the different categories of the customers should be done to increase the customer base

5. SUGGESTIONS:

- BSNL has to provide huge number of towers in Guntur SSA and their former glory must be maintained.
- BSNL has to give proper training to the staff that is performing duties in Customer Service centers. Efficient and amicable staff to be posted in public dealing seats which results the customers admiration is on the rise in Guntur Telecom district.
- The organization must enhance their quality of services by improving tangible as well as intangibles aspects of their services even though they have satisfied.
- An affordable pricing strategy should be updated which leads the retention of existing customers. A hidden charge leads to a mistake that can easily get your claim denied is to fail and ultimately exits from the service provider
- Organization needs to know about the means by which the customers have got awareness of the services in order to reach maximum number of potential

customers and wide publicity and marketing strategies have to be imposed to attract the rural customers.

- The staff has to be trained the in-complaint handling procedure and intimate its delicacy. Diligence and sincerity should be shown in resolving complaints expeditiously.
- The organization has to invent the customers' need to find possible reasons to leave the company. To avoid the switching over to other services, BSNL has to bring attractive strategies/offers.
- Top management has intervened immediately to know the facts from the customers and the issued of war footing must be addressed as early as possible otherwise BSNL position will be occupied by other competitors.

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