INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSIONS

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES

APPENDIX/ANNEXURE

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BOOKS

- Bowersox, Donald J., Closs, David J., (1996), "Logistical Management." Tata McGraw, Hill, New Delhi.
- Hunker, H.L. and A.J. Wright (1963), "Factors of Industrial Location in Ohio" Ohio State University, Nigeria.

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- Garg, Sambhav (2011): "Business Ethics" Paper presented at the Annual International Conference for the All India Management Association, New Delhi, India, 19–22 June.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

- Always indicate the date that the source was accessed, as online resources are frequently updated or removed.

WEBSITES

- Garg, Bhavet (2011): Towards a New Natural Gas Policy, Political Weekly, Viewed on January 01, 2012 http://epw.in/user/viewabstract.jsp

A STUDY ON CUSTOMER PREFERENCE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS DATA CARD SERVICE PROVIDERS WITH REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The important aspect in the marketing field is to analyze the customer needs and thoughts. It is essential to know the customer preference before marketing any product. Customer preferences are changing day to day as per their needs. So it is important to analysis the customer preference and attitude to market a product. The main function of marketing is to analyze the customer's mindset and then advertising about the product begins. The customer satisfaction is the fundamental thing in any business organization. The Research work "A study on customer preference and attitude towards data card service provider reference to Coimbatore city", analysis the customer preference and attitude towards data cards especially AIRTEL, BSNL, RELIANCE and MTS. The research design is a descriptive research design and primary data have been collected through questionnaire. The statistical tools used are Simple percentage analysis, Rank analysis, Weighted Mean, Chi – Square and ANOVA. The findings from the analysis were discussed in detail and suggestions have been given.

KEYWORDS
customer preference, data card service.

INTRODUCTION

Exchange of information becomes the necessity of life to a common man. In the modern world an individual tends to communicate anything to everything right from the place where he/she stands. Even while riding vehicle he / she wants communicate within a fraction of second at quick speed with clear voice, without any disturbance. Like line crossing, out of order, etc. most of which lack in the connection given by the department of tele-communication. Internet emerges as a boon quench such a thirst, by providing facilities, which a common man cannot imagine. Internet Services can effectively provided by data cards. Day by day many new competitors enter the market with new attractive schemes, provide additional facilities, add new features to existing ones, reduce the charges, introduce varieties of data card models a healthy competition that benefits the subscribers. Hence in this context, it is important to study the functioning of data card service provider and the utilization of their services by the customers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Mr. Bhatt (2008),** in his study titled "**A Study of Data Card Usage Among the Post Graduate Students**" analyzed that it is important for net users, service providers, content developers, equipment manufacturers, as well as for parents and young people alike that the key characteristics of Data Card technology is well understood so that the risks associated with its potentially damaging or disruptive aspects can be mitigated. This paper has tried to compare the usage difference by gender with respect to the difference manufacturing and service provider companies.

2. **Mr. Kumar (2008),** in his study titled "**Customer Satisfaction and Discontentment vis-a-vis BSNL Landline Service: A Study**" analyzed that at present, services marketing plays a major role in the national economy. In the service sector, telecom industry is the most active and attractive. Though the telecom industry is growing rapidly, India's telecom density is less than the world's average telecom density as most of India's market is yet to be covered. This attracts private operators to enter into the Indian telecom industry, which makes the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) more alert to run its business and survive in the market

3. **Dr. EniolaSamuel (2006)**,in his study titled "**Customer Satisfaction In The Mobile Telecommunications Industry In Nigeria**" This study aimed at investigation the overall customer satisfaction of the mobile telecoms industry in Nigeria, factors influencing satisfaction and the relationship between satisfaction and demographics. The results obtained in this research indicated that 57% of the respondents were satisfied and 5% highly satisfied. The combination of network quality, billing, validity period and customer support (mobile services attributes) showed strong relationship with satisfaction while age, gender, location and employment variables showed weak relationship.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Scope of the study is among the mobile customers of AIRTEL, RELIANCE, BSNL and MTS as they are the leading data card suppliers in Tamilnadu. The growing competition in the global market is showing that it is becoming increasingly important for companies to grow with the expectation of their customers and gain new customers. As data card usage is increasing day to day, gaining knowledge about customers' behavior is substantively important which can only be examined by analyzing the role of various factors affecting purchasing behavior of data card among customers and processes. And also analyzing about the major four data card suppliers in Tamil Nadu it will be easy to find the best data card service provider. This research study will be useful for AIRTEL, RELIANCE, BSNL and MTS to understand the expectations and requirements for customers and can serve them in a better way.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In our country the growth of service marketing especially in telecommunication industry is in its infancy stage, as compared to the industrially advanced countries. It is for the fact that the economy of our country has been in the developing stage. There are various internet services provider's in our country and they are playing an essential role in fulfilling the needs of the customers. However the following questions may arise about customer preference and satisfaction.

1. What are all expectations by the customer's regarding service provided by the data card service provider?
2. Whether the service provided by data card service provider is satisfying the customers?
3. Are the facilities available adequate to satisfy the customers?

4. What are the factors motivate the customers to buy a particular brand?

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

1) To find out the customer preference towards various data cards
2) To find out the customer attitude towards various data cards.
3) To find out the most preferred data card of the consumers.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

1) To Study about the awareness among the customers about internet and data card.
2) To Study about purchase decision behavior of the customer.
3) To study about the factor influencing the buying of data card.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

TYPE OF RESEARCH: DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH

The research was descriptive in nature, researcher attempt to obtain a complete and accurate description of situation. After analyzing the data the researcher attempts to predict the result of action. Descriptive study is a comparative design that throws light on specifying objects techniques of collecting the information taking out sample processing, analyzing and question of report of finding.

SAMPLING DESIGN

It is a definite plan for obtaining sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or procedure the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample. It consists of selecting the study and selection of the sample. In this study, convenience sampling design was used which purely depends on the viewpoints of researcher.

SAMPLING METHOD

The sampling method adopted for the study was non-probability sampling. The respondents were chosen on the basis of convenience. In other words sampling procedure adopted was non-probability convenience sampling.

SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size for the study was determined. A sample of 200 respondents was chosen for administering the questionnaire.

SAMPLE AREA

The area for the study was conducted in Coimbatore city.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED IN THE STUDY

The collected data is tabulated and analyzed using

1. Simple percentage Analysis
2. Rank Analysis – Mean Calculation
3. Chi – Square Analysis
4. ANOVA

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

➢ It is inferred that 25.5% of the respondents are using the Internet Services once in a day, 26.5% are using twice in a day and 48% are using regularly.

➢ It is inferred that 31% of the respondents are customers of Airtel, 15.5% are customers of BSNL, 19% are MTS customers, 23.5% are Reliance customers and 11% are customers of others.

➢ It is inferred that 46.5% of the respondents are using internet for 10 hrs to 15 hrs or > 500 MB in a month ,33.5% of the respondents are using internet for 15 hrs to 30 hrs or > 500 MB to   1 GB,17% of the respondents are using the internet for 30 hrs to 45 hrs or > 1 GB to 2.5 GB and 3% of the respondents are using the internet for 45 hrs & above or 2.5 GB and above

➢ It is inferred that in a month,39% of the respondents are spending Rs.300 to Rs.350 for using internet, 38% of the respondents are spending Rs.350 to Rs.500 for using internet,20.5% of the respondents are spending Rs.500 to Rs.800 for using the internet for and 2.5% of the respondents are spending Rs 800 and above for using internet .

➢ It is inferred that 48% of the respondents spent Below Rs 1500 for initial setup of data card, 38.5% of the respondents spent Rs1500 to 2500 for initial setup,6.5% of the respondents spent Rs2500 to 3500 for initial setup and 7% of the respondents spent more than Rs 3500 for initial setup .

➢ It is inferred that 21% of the respondents are using the data card from 1-6 months, 33.5% of the respondents using the data card from 7-12 months, 30.5% of the respondents using the data card from 1-one and a 1/2 years and 15% of the respondents are using the data card for more than one and a 1/2 years.

➢ It is inferred that 34% of the respondents are using post paid connection and 66%   are using prepaid connection

➢ It is inferred that 40.5% of the respondents are influenced through TV advertisement to by the data card, 27.5% of the respondents are influenced through friends & family to by the data card, 21% of the respondents are influenced through magazine & newspaper to by the data card and 11% of the respondents are influenced through others to by the data card**.**

➢ It is inferred that 83.5% of the respondents are satisfied with the physical attributes and 16.5% of the respondents are not satisfied with the physical attributes.

➢ It is inferred that 61.5% of the respondents will definitely prefer high phone book memory, 28% of the respondents will probably prefer high phone book memory,9% of the respondents will definitely not prefer high phone book memory and 2% of the respondents will not probably prefer high phone book memory.

➢ It is inferred that 72.5% of respondent are having 24X7 customer services and 27.5% are not having 24X7 customer services.

➢ It is inferred that 22.5 % of the respondents are highly satisfied with the 3G facility,43 % of the respondents are satisfied with the 3G facility of the data card, 21.5% of the respondents are neither satisfied not dissatisfied with the 3G facility of the data card and 6% of the respondents are dissatisfied with 3G facility of the data card and 7% are highly dissatisfied with the 3G facility of the data card

➢ It is inferred that 52% of respondent are not satisfied with the billing amount according to the usage and 48% are with the billing amount according to the usage.

➢ It is inferred that 26.5% of the respondents will definitely recommend about data card to others, 62% of the respondents will probably recommend about data card to others,6% of the respondents will definitely not recommend about data card to others and 6% of the respondents will not probably recommend about data card to others.

➢ It is inferred that 34.5% of the respondents will buy the same data card in future,62% of the respondents will not buy the same data card in future and 43% of the respondents may will buy the same data card in future.

➢ It is inferred that 34% of the respondents prefer Airtel data card in future, 12.5% prefer BSNL data card in future, 21.5% of the respondents prefer MTS data card in future, 17% of the respondents prefer Reliance data card in future, and of the respondents prefer other data cards in future.

➢ It is inferred that 31.5 % of the respondents are highly satisfied with the data card,40 % of the respondents are satisfied with the data card, 15.5% of the respondents are neither satisfied not dissatisfied with the data card and ,7% of the respondents are dissatisfied with the data card and 6% are highly dissatisfied with the data card.

➢ It is inferred Airtel holds rank 1,Reliance holds rank 2,MTS holds rank 3, Others holds rank 4 and BSNL holds rank 5 as per the customer preference
➢ It is inferred Net Speed holds rank 1, Price holds rank 2, Easy handling holds rank 3, Availability in store holds rank 4, Signal Strength holds rank 5, Installation process holds rank 6, Tariff plan holds rank 7, User friendly holds rank 8, Offer/Discounts holds rank 9 and Durability holds rank 10 as per customer preference
➢ It is inferred Reduce network traffic holds rank 1, High net speed holds rank 2, Reduce Charges holds rank 3, Others holds rank 4 and Access in all areas holds rank 5 as the expectation of customers in future
➢ It is inferred that the customers give first priority to high phone book memory, second priority to Micro SD card slot (Expandable Memory), Third priority to Support SMS (high Storage capacity) and fourth priority to Support SMS(High Storage capacity) as the additional feature expected at the time of purchase
➢ It is inferred that the customers give first priority to price, second priority to net speed, third priority to user friendly, fourth priority signal strength and fifth priority periodical offers
➢ It is inferred that there is no significant relationship between the age and monthly average hours of Internet used by the respondents.
➢ It is inferred that there is significant relationship between the occupation and monthly expenditure of internet usage by the respondents.
➢ It is inferred that there is no significant relationship between the age and data card brand used by the respondents.
➢ It is inferred that there is a significant relationship between the data card brand used by the respondents and the satisfaction level of the data cards.
➢ It is inferred that there is significant relationship between the data card brand and durability used by the respondents

SUGGESTIONS

➢ To survive in such a competitive market, knowledge about the product is a must. For this there should be sustained efforts in making the consumer aware about the quality and its benefits. Companies should deliver attractive advertisements which contain information regarding its offers and discounts. Companies got a good tariff plan and other offers comparing with other service providers, but the customers are unaware about it. So effective advertisements only can serve the purpose tariffs.
➢ The company should provide free gift and some discounts in order to increase the customer preference of the data card.
➢ Device installation and registration on site should be easier to work so that customers need not to give more papers at the time of purchasing a new connection.
➢ Company should come with some good and effective plans to make the customer satisfied.
➢ BSNL and MTS have to offer additional features to attract more customers.
➢ MTS have to improve the customer service provided.

CONCLUSION

The study on the customer preference on various data cards is a study which was carried out to find out the preference and satisfaction of customer in choosing the data card and the scope for data card in the market. The factors that affect the customer decision making in the purchase of internet data card was also found out. The study also intended to know the awareness of customers about the internet data card. The objective of the study is achieved by analyzing the questionnaires filled by the customers of data card in Coimbatore city.

From the study it was found that the maximum respondents are using Airtel data card. The prominent factors are signal strength internet speed, tariff plan, easy handling of the internet data card and also the price. Though the Airtel has got very good customer services and many attractive factors, it become the market leader in the internet data card segment.

Improving the signal strength and internet speed of RELIANCE data card and restructure the tariff plans in order to suite the pocket of average Indian customer can make an impact in this segment. The MTS and BSNL Company should go for mass advertising and awareness drive about internet data card. They should take step to improve the awareness of the customer and prospective customer regarding their products and services and to improve the quality of data card.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

• The data collected for the   study are qualitative being subject to the personal bias of the respondents.
• The data card of Airtel, Reliance, BSNL and MTS are in its initial of adaptation among the customers, so it takes time to know the actual impact it made and the factors influencing switching among consumers of   Tamilnadu.
• The study is based only for the major four companies due to the complexity.

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ANNEXURE
TABLES

Variable	ATTRIBUTES	F	%	Variable	ATTRIBUTES	F	%
GENDER	Male	102	51	NET SETTER TYPE	Same data card service	127	63.5
	Female	98	49		Others	73	36.5
BASIS OF AGE	15-25	96	48	ATTRIBUTE TO BUY THE DATA CARD	Schemes	47	23.5
	25-35 Yrs	78	39		Network	67	33.5
	Above 35	26	13		Speed	82	41
OCCUPATION	Student	83	41.5		Others	4	2
	Govt	9	4.5	AVERAGE HOURS OF USAGE OF INTERNET -MONTH	10 hrs to 15 hrs	93	45.5
	Private	67	33.5		15 hrs to 30 hrs	67	35.5
	Self employee	31	15.5		30 hrs to 45 hrs	34	16
	Others	10	5		45 hrs & above	6	3
USAGE OF INTERNET SERVICES	Yes	162	81	AVERAGE EXPENDITURE FOR INTERNET IN A MONTH	Between Rs.300 to Rs.350	78	39
	No	38	19		Between Rs.350 to Rs.500	75	37.5
PURPOSE FOR DATA CARD SERVICES	Personal use	76	38		Between Rs.500 to Rs.800	43	21.5
	Business	26	13		Rs. 800 and above	4	2
	Both	98	49	INITIAL SETUP OF INTERNET IN A MONTH	Below Rs 1500	96	48
FREQUENCY OF CONNECTION TO INTERNET IN PER DAY	Once in a day	51	25.5		Between Rs 1500 to 2500	77	38.5
	Twice in a day	53	26.5		Between Rs2500 to 3500	13	6.5
	Regularly	96	48		Rs 3500and above	14	7
Variable	ATTRIBUTES	F	%	Variable	ATTRIBUTES	F	%
REASON FOR USING DATA CARD	Portable	44	22	TENURE OF USAGE OF DATA CARD	Between 1 to 6 months	42	21
	Cost	69	34.5		Between 7 to12 months	67	33.5
	Goodwill	76	38		Between 1 to 1 .6 years	61	30.5
	Others	11	5.5		Above 1 year and 6 months	30	15
RESPONDENTS BASED OF THE DATA CARD BRANDS	Airtel	63	31.5	CURRENT OFFERS TO DATA CARDS	Yes	135	67.5
	BSNL	35	17.5		No	65	32.5
	MTS	35	17.5	NEW TECHNOLOGY INHERITED	Yes	89	44.5
	Reliance	47	23.5		No	111	55.5
	Others	20	10				
NET CONNECTION IN DATA CARD	Post paid	68	34	SATISFACTION LEVEL- Price	Highly Satisfied	108	54.0
	Pre paid	132	66		Satisfied	72	36
DATA CARD SERVICE PROVIDER	Friends &Family	55	27.5		Neutral	14	7.0
	TV	81	40.5		Dissatisfied	2	1
	Magazine& Newspaper	42	21		Highly Dissatisfied	4	2
	Others	22	11	SATISFACTION LEVEL- Net Speed	Highly Satisfied	43	21.5
PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES	Yes	167	83.5		Satisfied	84	42
	No	33	16.5		Neutral	52	26
SCHEMES AND PROMOTIONS	Free gift	22	11		Dissatisfied	15	7.5
	Free Usage	94	47		Highly Dissatisfied	6	3
	Discounts	84	42	SATISFACTION LEVEL-EASE of Access	Highly Satisfied	53	26.5
FEATURE– HIGH PHONE BOOK MEMORY	Definitely	123	61.5		Satisfied	55	27.5
	Probably	55	27.5		Neutral	28	14
	Definitely not	18	9.0		Dissatisfied	19	9.5
	Probably not	4	2		Highly Dissatisfied	45	22.5
Variable	ATTRIBUTES	F	%	Variable	ATTRIBUTES	F	%
FEATURE– MICRO SD CARD SLOT (EXPANDABLE MEMORY)	Definitely	69	34.5	SATISFACTION LEVEL- Mode of Payment	Highly Satisfied	31	15.5
	Probably	94	47		Satisfied	65	32.5
	Definitely not	31	15.5		Neutral	59	29.5
	Probably not	6	3		Dissatisfied	36	18.0
FEATURE– SUPPORT SMS(HIGH STORAGE CAPACITY)	Definitely	80	40.0		Highly Dissatisfied	9	4.5
	Probably	59	29.5	(24X7) SERVICES	Yes	145	72.5
	Definitely not	52	26.0		No	55	27.5
	Probably not	9	4.5	3G FACILITY PROVIDED	Highly Satisfied	45	22.5
FEATURE– Make and receive voice calls	Definitely	50	25.0		Satisfied	86	43
	Probably	65	32.5		Neutral	43	21.5
	Definitely not	38	19.0		Dissatisfied	12	6
	Probably not	47	23.5		Highly Dissatisfied	14	7
NET BILLING ACCORDING TO THE USAGE	Yes	104	52	SATISFACTION LEVEL OF THE DATA CARD	Highly Satisfied	52	26
	No	96	48		Satisfied	86	43
RECOMMENDING THE DATA CARD TO OTHERS	Definitely	53	26.5		Neutral	33	16.5
	Probably	124	62		Dissatisfied	15	7.5
	Definitely not	12	6		Highly Dissatisfied	14	7
	Probably not	11	6	CHOICE OF DATA CARD TO BUY IN FUTURE	Airtel	68	34
CHOICE OF SAME DATA CARD TO BUY IN FUTURE	Yes	69	34.5		BSNL	25	12.5
	No	45	22.5		MTS	34	17
	May be	86	43		Reliance	43	21.5

RANK ANALYSIS – MEAN CALCULATION

DATA CARD FEATURES THAT IS EXPECTED BY THE CUSTOMERS IN FUTURE	MEAN VALUE	RANK	RANK OF DATA CARD BRANDS	MEAN VALUE	RANK
Reduce Charges	3.01	3	Airtel	2.68	1
High net speed	2.89	2	BSNL	3.22	5
Reduce network traffic	2.77	1	MTS	2.72	2
Access in all areas	3.18	5	Reliance	3.18	3
Others	3.17	4	Others	3.21	4

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS
PERSONAL FACTOR AGE AND MONTHLY AVERAGE HOURS OF INTERNET USAGE

Personal Factor Age & monthly average hours of Internet usage	Chi – Square Analysis (Calculated Value)	P value (Expected Value)	Significant/Not significant	Hypothesis Accepted/ Rejected
	10.56	12.59	Not Significant	Accepted

There is a no significant relationship between the age and monthly average hours of Internet used by the respondents.

PERSONAL FACTOR OCCUPATION AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENDITURE FOR INTERNET USAGE

Occupation & Monthly Expenditure of Internet usage	Chi – Square Analysis (Calculated Value)	P value (Expected Value)	Significant/Not significant	Hypothesis Accepted/ Rejected
	32.21	21.06	Significant	Rejected

There is a significant relationship between the occupation and monthly expenditure of internet usage by the respondents.

ANOVA
PERSONAL FACTOR AGE AND DATA CARD BRAND

Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F- Ratio	5% F-Limit
Between Sample	342.66	4	85.66	0.803	3.48
Within Sample	1066.67	10	106.66		

There is no significant relationship between the age and data card brand used by the respondents.

DATA CARD BRAND AND SATISFACTION LEVEL

Sources of variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square(MS)	F- Ratio	5% F-Limit
Between Sample	722	4	180.5	7.88	2.87
Within Sample	458.08	20	22.9		

There is a significant relationship between the data card brand used by the respondents and the satisfaction level of the data cards.

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