

A Comparative Study of SMS Package with Special Reference to AIRTEL, IDEA, VODAFONE and TATADOCOMO



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Abstract:

Short Message Service (SMS) is used worldwide by many corporations in order to communicate with consumers. The objective of this study is to investigate the use of SMS in young consumers and their responses to SMS as a potential communication vehicle by the companies. The results reveal that SMS, in general, has a positive acceptance by young consumers as a communication tool since it is an integral part of their life and seems to be an effective tool by enterprises in reaching consumers. 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. In telecom industry, service providers are the main drivers; whereas equipment manufacturers are witnessing growth. In this light, the present study deals with consumer preferences and their satisfaction level towards the mobile phone service providers available in Hyderabad. The results derived from the study indicate that the factor that induces the consumers to buy a particular mobile phone operator is call tariffs followed by network coverage and brand image. Mobile Number Portability (MNP) was launched in India on 25th November, 2010 in the state of Haryana.

Keywords - Call tariffs, Indian telecom industry, Mobile phone services, Short message Service (SMS), Value added services.

Introduction to SMS Messaging (Short Message Service)

Receiving messages between mobile phones. SMS first appeared in Europe in 1992. It was included in the GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) standards right at the beginning. Later it was ported to wireless technologies like CDMA and TDMA. The GSM and SMS standards were originally developed by ETSI. ETSI is the abbreviation for European Telecommunications Standards Institute. Now the 3GPP (Third Generation Partnership Project) is responsible for the development and maintenance of the GSM and SMS standards. One major advantage of SMS is that it is supported by 100% GSM mobile

phones. Almost all subscription plans provided by wireless carriers include inexpensive SMS messaging service. Unlike SMS, mobile technologies such as WAP and mobile Java are not supported on many old mobile phone models.

Objectives:

- To know the customers are attracting with different types of SMS packages.
- To study the various ways through which the companies competing with SMS packages.
- To study factors influencing while choosing SMS packages in different companies.
- To know the reasons for maximum usage of SMS

Need for the Study:

SMS increases the amount of voice calling by providing a mechanism for voice mail notification to the handset. It provides a convenient, low-cost mechanism for non-voice communication. It issues immediate alerts about emergencies and critical situations, for example, to alert a network administrator as soon as the Internet link is down and to send important information to key customers or suppliers, thereby ensuring that the information is received by the right person, immediately. The basic need to study the customers and attracting them with different types of SMS package and the factors influence while choosing SMS package among different companies.

Scope of the Study:

The study of the short message service has been taken from 100 respondents. The survey has been conducted through questionnaire in Hyderabad and Secunderabad from the following categories: Students, Employees, Businessmen and Homemaker

Company Profile:

Bharti Airtel Limited commonly known as Airtel is an Indian telecommunications company that operates in 19 countries across South Asia, Africa and the Channel Islands. It has launched in Delhi 1995. It operates a GSM network in all countries, providing 2G or 3G Services depending upon the country of operation. **Idea cellular**, a part of Aditya Birla group, is one of India's leading GSM mobile services operator. It has been launched in the year **1996** This Telecom Company has licenses to operate in all 22 service areas. **Vodafone** Group is a British multinational mobile network operator headquartered in Newbury, Berkshire, United Kingdom. Vodafone is the world's largest mobile telecommunication network company, based on revenue, and has a market value of about £71.2 billion (November 2009). **TATA DOCOMO** is Tata Tele services Limited's (TTSL) telecom service on the GSM platform arising out of the Tata group's strategic alliance with Japanese telecom major BTT DOCOMO IN NOVEMBER 2008. Tata DOCOMO has been allotted spectrum in 18 telecom circles.

Literature Review:

The references for the literature review used for the problem in hand are as follows: **Seth et al (2008)** analyzed that there is relative importance of service quality attributes and showed that responsiveness is the most importance dimension followed by reliability, customer perceived network quality, assurance, convenience, empathy and tangibles. **Liu (2002)** found that the choice of a cellular phone is characterized by two attitudes: attitude towards the mobile phone brand on one hand and attitude towards the network on the other. **Samuvel (2002)** observed that most of the respondents consider size, quality, price, instrument servicing are an important factors for selecting the handset while majority of the respondents are satisfied over the payment system, quality of services, coverage area and the process of attending the complaints regarding their mobile service provider. **Nandhini (2001)** examined that attitude of the respondents using cell phones was not influenced by either education or occupation and income. **Kalpana and Chinnadurai (2006)** found that advertisement play a dominant role in influencing the customers but most of the customers are of opinion that promotional strategies of cellular companies are more sale oriented rather than customer oriented. **Haque (2007)** suggested that price, service quality, product quality & availability, and promotional offer play a main role during the time to choose telecommunication service provider.

Research Methodology:

Sample Size: A sample size of 100 is drawn from the respondents selected randomly.

Data Collection:

Structured Questionnaire method is used to collect primary data. The secondary data for the study was obtained from Books and Websites

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 1: The Usage of SMS Packages in Mobile Phones

USAGE OF SMS PACKAGES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	100	100
NO	0	0
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: From the above analysis it is observed that out of 100 respondents 94% use SMS packages and 6% does not use SMS package

Table 2: Preference of Customers towards a Particular SIM

SIM PACKAGES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
IDEA	18	18
VODAFONE	20	20
AIRTEL	32	32
TATADOCOMO	22	22
ANY OTHER		
BSNL	3	3
RELIENCE	2	2
UNINOR	1	1
VIRGIN	1	1
AIRCEL	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: From the above table, it is observed that out of 100 respondents 18% are using Idea as their service provider, 20% of respondents are using Vodafone SIM package, 32% are using Airtel package and 22% are using Tata Docomo.

Table 3: Respondent's Preference for "CALL v/s. MESSAGE"

OPINION TOWARDS CALL v/s. MESSAGE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
MESSAGE	80	80
CALL	20	20
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: From the above interpretation it is to be observed that out of 100 respondents 80% of the respondents prefer messaging a person rather than making a call where as 20% of the respondents prefer to make a call rather than messaging.

Table 3: Preference for different SMS Packages

TYPE OF SMS PACKAGES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
DAILY PACKAGE	15	15
WEEKLY PACKAGE	17	17
MONTHLY PACKAGE	68	68
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: It is observed that from the above analysis out of 100 respondents, 15% of the respondents prefer daily SMS package, 17% of the respondents prefer weekly SMS package, 68% of the respondents prefer monthly SMS package

Table 5: Tariff Charges for SMS Packages

TARIFF CHARGES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
ABOVE 7	8	8
Rs.11-26	44	44
Rs.36-51	29	29
Rs.77-88	15	15
100 ABOVE	4	4
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: It is observed that from the above analysis out of 100 respondents 8% of the respondents are use Rs.7 above SMS packages, 44% of the respondents are using Rs. 11-26, 29% of the respondents are using Rs.36- Rs.51, 15% of the respondents are using Rs. 77-Rs.88 and 4% of the respondents are using Rs.100 above

Table 6: Opinion of Respondents towards Service Charges Levied by the Telecom Companies

OPINION ON SERVICE CHARGES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
HIGH	35	35
MODERATE	12	12
LOW	16	16
REASONABLE	37	37
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: From the above analysis it is observed that out of 100 respondents 35% of the respondents say that the cost levied by the telecom companies is high, 12% of the respondents say that the cost levied by the telecom companies is moderate 16% of the respondents say that the cost levied by the telecom companies is low and 37% is for reasonable.

Table 7: Awareness of Mobile Number Portability

AWARENESS OF MNP	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	70	70
NO	30	30
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: From the above analysis it is observed that out of 100 respondents 70% of the respondents are aware about the concept of MNP and 30% of the respondents are non-aware about the concept of MNP.

Table 8: MNP'S effect on existing Mobile Phones

SIM PACKAGES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	35	35
NO	28	28
MAYBE	37	37
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: From the above statement it is known that out of 100 respondents 35% say that there is considerable effect of MNP on the existing mobile phones, 28% say that there is no effect of MNP on the existing mobile phones and 37% are unsure about the effect of MNP on the existing mobile phones.

Table 9: Usage of Dual SIM

USAGE OF DUAL SIM	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
AIRTEL & VODAFONE	26	26
IDEA & TATADOCOMO	16	16
AIRTEL & TATADOCOMO	17	17
NOT USING	41	41
TOTAL	100	100

Interpretation: It is to interpret that from the above statement out of 100 respondents 26% of the respondents are using Airtel & Vodafone as their dual SIM package, 16% of the respondents are using Idea & Tata Docomo for dual SIM, 17% of the respondents are using Airtel & Tata Docomo and 41% of the respondents are not using dual SIM package.

Findings & Conclusions:

- From the above analysis and interpretation the following findings can be made:
- 100% of the respondents using SMS package. According to this research, 32% of the respondents prefer that Airtel is the most preferred service provider and 68% of the respondents prefer to monthly package
- It is found that 80% of the respondents prefer that sending a message to a person is easy when compared to making a call that for time consuming,
- .It is found that 36% of the respondents opt a SIM package for attractive offers and that 44% of the respondents spend Rs. 11-26 on their SMS package.
- Majority of the respondents are opting for Airtel for calls as their service provider because it is providing better offers at cheaper rates with better network connection. Some of the respondents view their opinion as Idea is best for SMS package when compared to other network.
- Vodafone provides attractive offers compared to other network package.
- It is found that 70% of majority are aware of MNP concept.

Suggestions:

- Validity period of the SIM package should be for longer time and that the talk time provided should be more when compared to other packages.
- To reduce the service charges of Tata Docomo and to improve the quality of customer care should be improved. Vodafone and Tata Docomo offers are attracting but need to overcome from their network problem.
- The service providers need to launch new packages in every network and there is a need to overcome from the problems like bulk SMS, group SMS etc.
- A combination of low messaging and reduced call rates pack can be introduced for the benefit of the customers.
- Tata Docomo is better for making a call where as it has launched first time “pay per second” package.
- 40% of the customer’s are not using dual SIM package. Awareness should be increased so that the customers may be at a beneficial position.

- Customer care services play an important role in retaining consumers. Therefore, customer care services should be improved and there should be provisions of taking feedback from consumers so that necessary steps can be taken in this direction.

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