

Analysis Of Marketing Strategies Adopted By Cellular Service Providers In Garhwal Region Of Uttarakhand State As Perceived By Retailers

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Abstract: *In this study a closer look has been laid down towards the cellular service segment of telecommunication industry operating in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand state from the stand point of competition and the marketing strategies adopted by them. As many private operators have entered into the cellular segment to provide their services. It has brought heavy competition into the market therefore cellular service providers are facing challenges to satisfy their customers in the light of cutthroat competition and the changing market conditions. These cellular service providers are continuously striving for their survival and steady growth. They have to find out new marketing strategies to market their services in the better way. Keeping these marketing strategies challenges of cellular service providers as a point of view this study has being carried out. For this purpose three major companies i.e. BSNL, AIRTEL and IDEA were selected for the study and 105 retailers (15 retailers from each district) from each of these companies were selected as samples, who were interviewed with a structured questionnaire. Therefore total sample size is 315 from uttarakhand Circle offices based in entire seven district of Garhwal region. Retailers were taken as respondents for the reason that consumers generally buy a product from retailers and they are in face to face contact with their retailers, therefore retailers can perceive very well about effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the marketing strategy implemented by the organization. Further these retailers are also continuously striving for distinction in the way they provide service to its customers therefore retailer's discernment about products and services offered by its organization also plays an important role in sustainability and growth of cellular service providers. Retailer's perception in this perspective is imperative. Therefore, an effort is being made to study the perception of retailers regarding the marketing strategies adopted by Cellular service providers. Chi-square test was taken as statistical tools for data analysis.*

Keywords: *Cellular services, Consumer, Marketing strategy, Marketing mix, Perception.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The progress of mankind is associated with the communication. It plays an important role in the life of human being. It is like a blood in human being side by side it is an integral part of growth and efficiency of cellular service providers. This is the technology that gave a person the power to communicate anytime and anywhere. Due to advancement in technology now communication becomes very easy and faster. Today we all are using cellular service network on the other hand many cellular service operators have entered into

the cellular segment to provide their services. It has brought heavy competition into the market and cellular service providers are facing challenges to satisfy their customers in the light of cutthroat competition and the changing market conditions. They are striving for their survival and steady growth. Therefore cellular service providers have to find out new marketing strategies to market their services in the better way. On the other hand retailers of these organizations are also continuously striving for their sustainability and growth. Customer generally buy a product from retailers therefore these retailers know very well about effectiveness, efficiency

and impact of the marketing strategy in sales volume implemented by the organization. Therefore retailer's perception about products and services offered by the organization also plays an important role in sustainability and steady growth. Retailer's perception in this perspective is imperative. Keeping in view the marketing strategies drawbacks of these cellular service providers and the tough competition in cellular service segment, an effort is being made to study the perception of retailers with regards to marketing strategies adopted by Cellular service providers i.e. BSNL, AIRTEL and IDEA operating in Garhwal region (seven districts) of uttarakhand state. Moreover, the present study is also being carried out to find out some suggestion regarding the strategies adopted by cellular service providers for marketing their cellular services in a better way. Chi-square test was taken as statistical tools for data analysis.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to give the reader insight awareness about impact of marketing strategies adopted by cellular service providers operating in this highly competitive market on the other hand it will also assist the cellular service providers in monitoring and analyzing their marketing strategy and a comparative picture will be available not only to cellular service providers but also to the business organization. Moreover the purpose of this study is also to get a better understanding about the market of Garhwal region, in order to formulate a strategy for this market in better way. This study also investigates similarities and differences in adoption of marketing strategies and how retailers perceive them. Increase in demand and the poor quality of existing telecommunications landline services, cellular service providers will be benefited from the research, the ways to improve their quality of service and to support more users in their system.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As far as pre-research is concern, very few study has being carried out in this field. Some of the related literatures have being studied, which are as follows.

Peter McBurney, et al. (2002) in their article "Forecasting demand for new telecommunication services: an introduction" explained that while developing marketing strategies marketers should consider a fifth P i.e Permission along with conventional four Ps of marketing mix. Further this argument is supported by the fact that most of the telecom services of various countries has regulated this by telecommunications specific laws and agencies to more or less extent.

V. G. Sabu 2003) in his doctoral entitled "A study on marketing strategies of BSNL in telecommunication services - A comparative study with private sector telecommunication service providers in Kerala" concluded that there is significant difference between the product differentiation strategies, pricing strategies of BSNL and private sector mobile telecom service providers in Kerala.

Reshma doiphode (2011) in her study entitled "Marketing strategies of cellular phone companies in Nanded district" has made a small attempt to study the marketing strategies of cellular companies i.e. Vodafone and Idea in Nanded District (Head Office) of Maharashtra. It has been concluded that there is no significance difference between marketing strategies of IDEA and VODAFONE.

Nasit, Alpesh A., (2011) in their study entitled "An empirical study on Marketing strategy of telecom sector in Gujarat State" explained promotion mix and product mix like advertising media, sales promotion offers, talk time scheme, GPRS/Internet, tariff/ call charges, and value added services were mostly affecting on buying decision making process of customers.

M.Sathish, K.Santhosh Kumar, K. J. Naveen, V. Jeevanantham (2011) in their study entitled "A Study on Consumer Switching Behaviour in Cellular Service Provider" A Study with reference to Chennai" found that call rates is the main factor that plays most important role in switching the service provider whereas other factors like network coverage, value added service, Consumer care and advertisement plays the least important role. They further suggest that cellular service providers must focus more on increasing network stability, setting tariff rate while the managers of cellular service providers must concentrate on building corporate image in order to increase loyalty among these consumers.

Sarika .r.Lohana (2012) in her research paper entitled "Customer respond and Satisfaction against Marketing strategies of selected Cellular service providers in Nanded city" studied customer's marketing strategies awareness and their perception against marketing strategies of cellular services and concluded that customers are much more about marketing strategies of AIRTEL compare to BSNL cellular service provider in Nanded city of Maharashtra.

Kavaldeep Dixit, Neha Jain (2014) in their study entitled topic "Analysis of Marketing Strategies of Idea Cellular as Perceived by its Employees" concluded that customers switched from Idea to competitors because of weak network and high rates of VAS. Idea employees perceived that their organization focused on advertisement, direct marketing, personal selling, and events to drive sales. These tools influenced customers purchase decision and thus bought sales and revenue to company.

Chang-Gyu, et al.(2014) in their study entitled "Marketing strategy on social commerce based upon Marketing mix" studied the factors of the marketing mix in the context of social commerce for building marketing strategies and concluded that there is significant differences in s-commerce sales in terms of the type of product and price-related factors.

Ravi sarathy, Elitsa.r.Banalieva (2014) in their article entitled "Economic development and marketing strategies: A comparative lens" have analyzed the opportunities and challenges that emerging market companies faces under socialistic and capitalistic economy in terms of deploying various marketing strategies and finally suggest that companies can adapt to the evolution from socialism to capitalism in their countries through the implementation of more sophisticated marketing strategies that can ensure a sustainable competitive advantage.

Tej Singh¹, Akshay kumar satsangi (2015) in their study entitled "Consumer satisfaction in Indian telecom industry: A case study of Bharti Airtel" concluded maximum satisfaction of consumers is from social networking services provided by Bharti Airtel at Agra. Finally explained that maximum consumer were satisfied because most of them uses service like short message services, chatting, downloading, 3G services, scheme/plan, mode of payment, recharge options and customer care services etc.

IV. RESEARCH GAP

The above literature reveals that most of the researches were based on elements of marketing- mix strategy and were also conducted in very limited area. Moreover these researches were related to consumers or employees perception. Keeping these point aside there are various other factors that are yet to be studied. The retailers of the service provider assist in customer support. When a channel is indirect, the company sends the products to a distribution centre and the distribution centre distributes to their major distributors and each distributor will send the products to retailers which will be made accessible to the local or global customers depending on how big the company is. Perception of retailers is also important in formulating a strategy for a market segment because a consumer generally buy a product from retailers therefore they know very well about effectiveness, efficiency and the impact of the marketing strategy implemented by the organization in their sale volume and sales volume of the retailers indicates the consumer volume for particular product and consumer volume indicates the impact of marketing strategy adopt by a particular cellular service provider. Moreover retailers are in face to face contact with their customer. Customers are not aware of marketing strategies of a company but the retailers while selling a product can perceive the reason for buying that particular product and consumer buying behavior in a better way. Moreover they are also update with the information which an organization wants to convey to customers therefore retailer's perception in this perspective is imperative.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Keeping in view the above research gap following are the objective of the research.

- ✓ To analyze the marketing strategies adopted by cellular service providers as perceived by retailers.
- ✓ To suggest some effective measures for improving the present scenario of marketing strategies in cellular service segment of telecom industry.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is related with primary as well as secondary data of cellular service providers .Three leading cellular service providers have being taken for study purpose i.e. BSNL, IDEA & AIRTEL . Total 105 retailers (15 retailers from each district) of each cellular service provider's were

selected as respondents, who were interviewed with a structured questionnaire therefore the total sample size is of 210 retailers from the entire seven district of Garhwal region. Chi-square test was taken as statistical tools for data analysis.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Ho: Retailers' sales volume and consumers' buying behaviour depends on the marketing strategy adopt by cellular service providers.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to financial constraint and time limitation, the study is confined to Garhwal region of uttarakhand. More over only three cellular service companies were selected as sample i.e. BSNL, IDEA & AIRTEL.

BASIS SELECTED FOR MARKETING AT RETAIL SHOPS IN THE STUDY

- ✓ Marketing on the basis of glowing sign boards.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of call charges charts.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of free SIM card.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of rate cutter tariff chart.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of internet data package rate charts.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of discount schemes chart.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of availability of recharge coupon.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of free applications.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of retail network.
- ✓ Marketing on the basis of social networking services.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION

The present chapter deals with the testing of null hypotheses laid down in the study. For this purpose analysis and interpretation of marketing strategies of cellular service providers as perceived by its retailers has been done on chi-square test and percentile basis, which is shown in the following tables.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	45	43	55	52	54	51	154
NO	60	57	50	48	51	49	161
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary data

Table 1: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Glowing Sign Boards

The Table No.1 reveals that in AIRTEL company 55 (52%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of glowing sign boards influence the customer and affect their sale volume on the other hand 50(48%) out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of glowing sign boards does not affect their customer behaviour and sale volume whereas in BSNL company 54 (51%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of glowing sign boards affect their sale volume and customer on the other hand 51(49%) out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of glowing sign boards does not affected their customers and sales volume, further in case of IDEA only 45 (43%) out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of glowing sign

boards affect their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	50	48	56	53	49	47	155
NO	55	52	49	47	56	53	160
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 2: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Call Charges Chart

Table No.2 reveals that in AIRTEL company 56(53%) retailers out of 105 perceived that call charges chart at their shop affect their sales volume and buying behaviour of customers and 49(47%) retailers out of 105 perceived that call charges chart at their shop does not affect their sales volume and the buying behaviour of customers whereas in case of BSNL company 49 (47%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of call charges chart affect their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers and 56 (53%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of call charges chart does not affect their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers. Further in case of IDEA only 50(48%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of call charges chart at their shop affect the buying behaviour of customer and their sale volume and 55(52%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of call charges chart does not affect their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	53	50	61	58	51	49	165
NO	52	50	44	42	54	51	150
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 3: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Free Sim Card

Table no.3 reveals that in Airtel company 61(58%) retailers out of 105 perceived that free SIM card at their shop affects their sales volume and buying behaviour of customers and 44(42%) retailers out of 105 perceived that free SIM card at their shop does not affects their sales volume and the buying behaviour of customers whereas in case of bsnl company 51 (49%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of free SIM card affect their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers and 54 (51%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of free SIM card does not affect their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers. Further in case of idea only 53(50%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of free SIM card at their shop affect the buying behaviour of customer and their sale volume and 52(50%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of free SIM card does not affect their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	45	43	68	65	44	42	157
NO	60	57	37	35	61	58	158
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 4: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Rate Cutter Tariff Chart

Table no.4 reveals that in AIRTEL company 68(65%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of rate cutter tariff chart at retail shop affects their sales volume and buying behaviour of customers and 37(35%)

retailers out of 105 perceived that rate cutter tariff chart at their shop does not affects their sales volume and the buying behaviour of customers whereas in case of BSNL company 44(42%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis rate cutter tariff chart affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers and 61(58%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis rate cutter tariff chart does not affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers, further in case of IDEA only 45(43%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of rate cutter tariff chart affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	62	59	70	67	69	66	201
NO	43	41	35	33	36	34	114
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 5: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Internet Data Package Chart

Table no.5 reveals that in AIRTEL company 70(67%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of internet data package chart at retail shop affects their sales volume and buying behaviour of customers and 35(33%) retailers out of 105 perceived that internet data package chart at their shop does not affects their sales volume and the buying behaviour of customers whereas in case of BSNL company 69(66%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis internet data package chart affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers and 36(34%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis internet data package chart does not affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers, further in case of IDEA only 62(59%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of internet data package chart affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers and 43(41%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of internet data package chart does not affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	66	63	83	79	67	64	216
NO	39	37	22	21	38	36	99
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 6: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Discount Schemes Chart

Table no. 6 reveals that in AIRTEL company 83(79%)retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of discount schemes chart at retail shop affects their sales volume and buying behaviour of customers and 22(21%) retailers out of 105 perceived that discount schemes chart at their shop does not affects their sales volume and the buying behaviour of customers whereas in case of BSNL company 67(64%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis discount schemes chart affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers and 38(36%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis discount schemes chart does not affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers, further in case of IDEA only 66(63%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of discount schemes chart affect

their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers and 39(37%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of discount schemes chart does not affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	51	49	74	70	47	45	172
NO	54	51	31	30	58	55	143
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 7: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Availability Of Recharge Coupon

Table No.7 reveals that in AIRTEL company 74(70%)retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of availability of recharge coupon at retail shop affects their sales volume and buying behaviour of customers and 31(30%) retailers out of 105 perceived that availability of recharge coupon at their shop does not affects their sales volume and the buying behaviour of customers whereas in case of BSNL company 47(45%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis availability of recharge coupon affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers and 58(55%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis availability of recharge coupon does not affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers, further in case of IDEA only 51(49%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of availability of recharge coupon affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers and 54(51%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of availability of recharge coupon does not affect their sale volume and the buying behaviour of customers.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	83	79	87	83	71	68	241
NO	22	21	18	17	34	32	74
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 8: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Free Applications

Table no.8 reveals that in AIRTEL company 87(83%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of free applications affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour whereas in case of BSNL company 71(68%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of free applications affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour, further in case of IDEA only 83(79%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of free applications affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	73	70	77	73	71	68	221
NO	32	30	28	27	34	32	94
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 9: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Retail Network

Table No.9 reveals that in AIRTEL company 77(73%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of retail networking affect their sale volume and customers buying behaviour and 28(27%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of retail networking does not affect their sale volume and consumers buying behaviour whereas in case of BSNL company 71(68%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of retail networking

affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour whereas 34(32%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of retail networking does not affect their sale volume and consumers buying behaviour, further in case of IDEA only 73 (70%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of retail networking affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour and 32(30%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of retail networking affect their sale volume and consumers buying behavior.

S.N.	IDEA	%	AIRTEL	%	BSNL	%	TOTAL
YES	81	77	86	82	79	75	246
NO	24	23	19	18	26	25	69
TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315

Source: Primary Data

Table 10: Marketing Strategies On The Basis Of Social Networking Services

Table no.10 reveals that in AIRTEL company 86(82%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of social networking services affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour and 19(18%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of social networking services does not affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour whereas in case of BSNL company 79(75%) retailers out of 105 perceived that marketing on the basis of social networking services affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour and 26(25%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of social networking services does not affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour further in case of IDEA only 81(77%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of social networking services affect their sale volume and customer's buying behaviour and 24(23%) retailers out of 105 retailers perceived that marketing on the basis of social networking services affect their sale volume and customer's buying behavior.

In Table no.11 the researcher has prepared a summary of the above strategy perceived by the retailers based on average rounded up to the nearest figure.

	MEAN VALUE OF MARKETING STRATEGIES OF CELLULAR SERVICE PROVIDERS							TOTAL MEAN	OVERALL %
	S.N.	IDEA MEAN	%	AIRTEL MEAN	%	BSNL MEAN	%		
PERCEPTION OF RETAILERS	YES	61 (64)	59	72 (64)	68	60 (64)	57	193	61
	NO	44 (41)	41	33 (41)	32	45 (41)	43	122	39
	TOTAL	105	100	105	100	105	100	315	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 11: Summary Of Marketing Strategies Of Cellular Service Providers

In overall most of the retailers i.e.(61%) have perceived that marketing based on the above strategies affects their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers whereas (39%) retailers have perceived that marketing based on the above strategies does not affects their sale volume and buying behaviour of customers. Chi-square has being applied to summary table at two degree (3-1)(2-1)of freedom, level of significance at 0.5. Calculated chi-square value is less than the table value (5.991> 3.629) therefore null hypothesis is accepted and it is proved that marketing strategies adopted by cellular service providers affected the sale volume of retailers and buying behaviour of customers.

VI. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that retailers' sales volume and customer's buying behaviour depends on the marketing strategy of cellular service providers. Massive customers were affected by the marketing strategy adopted by cellular service providers. It is also concluded that marketing the product or service on the basis of availability of network, market segmentation, free SIM card, low call rate, low price internet data package, discount schemes, free voice call, free applications, service quality and social networking services affects the buying behaviour of customers. In overall (61%) retailer have perceived that marketing strategies has positive impact on the sale revenue of cellular service providers and (39%) retailer perceived that marketing strategies adopted by cellular service providers have less impact on the sale revenue of cellular service providers.

VII. IMPLICATIONS

- ✓ Marketing strategies of all the cellular service providers must be customer centered and flexible.
- ✓ Perception of retailers also plays an important role in formulating marketing strategies.
- ✓ Retailer network and distributors will also assist in business sustainability and growth.
- ✓ BSNL cellular service provider has to find out some more new marketing strategies to market their services in the better way because in overall only 60(57%) retailers have perceived that marketing on the basis of above analyzed strategies has affected their sale volume.

Short time period marketing strategy must also be implemented, analyzed and evaluated time to time.

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