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IMPACT OF MOBILE NUMBER PORTABILITY (MNP) AMONG MOBILE SUBSCRIBERS

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ABSTRACT

The invention of science and technology has made greater change in the life of people, especially in IT sector. Revolution in IT sector is highly influence the telecommunication industry. In this scenario telecommunication sector is very important in all over the world. The Indian telecom industry is one of the fastest growing in the world and India will have billion plus mobile users. Telecom sector continued to emerge as the prime engine of economic growth, contributing to nearly 2% of the Indian GDP. Driven by various policy initiatives, the Indian telecom sector has achieved a phenomenal growth during the last few years and is poised to take a big leap in the future.

KEY WORDS: *telecommunication industry , economic growth , Indian telecom sector.*

1.1INTRODUCTION

Mobile phones are really changed the way of life of human being. If has even reached to such a stage that human being cannot live without mobiles even for a moment. The mobiles of today can do multiple functions. They can send text messages, they can makes audio and video calls and they have a host of facilities.

Even if customers are not satisfied with present connection they can change their existing network to another network without changing the number. Changing the mobile number create a problems to subscribers especially when a lot of contact exist as if how far to be inform to all contact numbers. Mobile number portability is a techniques to solve this problem. Mobile number portability allows the mobile service subscribers to retain the existing mobile number when they move from one service provider to another service provider with in a same licensed area.

Telecom regulatory authority of India (TRAI) introduced Mobile number portability (MNP) facility firstly in Haryana in December 2010 and thereafter introduced across India in 20_{th} January 2010. With the implementation of MNP, subscribers get a larger choice and being able to switch between service providers easily. MNP facility is available for both prepaid and postpaid customers across mobile operator within the same telecom circle.

1.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

A number of companies operated in telecom sector with large number of competitive offers. Each companies introduced various schemes and services to their customers. They have introduced MNP scheme to mobile subscribers for changing their connection without changing their mobile number if they are not satisfied with existing connection. This study is extended to understand the switching behavior, perception and satisfaction of subscribers after mobile number porting. Opinion of different subscribers is also collected to reach at a reasonable conclusion.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Today, mobile phone has become inevitable in one's life. Mobile number portability is a powerful tool in the hands of the customers to bargain better quality services and fair tariff offers from their existing mobile operators. Under MNP, if the subscribers are not satisfied with the service provider, they can change their service provider to while retaining their existing mobile number. But in India this facility has got poor response comparing to other countries because of very little demand and lack of knowledge. This study makes an attempt to analyze the awareness level, opinion and use of MNP facility among different mobile phone subscribers.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the awareness level of MNP among different customers
- To examine the factors influencing the porting decision of mobile users
- To analyze how far the customers are satisfied after availing MNP facility
- To study the impact of MNP among various subscribers of different network providers.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

MNP is a scheme introduced to enhance market share. This study provides the knowledge about the effect of cost efficiency, technological advancement and customer care services to subscribers.

This study highly relevant and will be useful to mobile subscribers for making informed decision regarding porting from one operator to another.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research method is used for this study and data were collected from a well drafted questionnaire.

SAMPLE SIZE

Sample of 50 subscribers of different network providers has been used for this study.

SOURCE OF DATA

- **PRIMARY DATA**

This study is conducted by collecting information from 50 subscribers in Manjeri municipality by using drafted questionnaire.

- **SECONDARY DATA**

This study also used secondary data from various books, periodicals, website and review regarding researches conducted earlier.

TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data is analyzed by using simple analysis techniques such as percentage, average, and mean deviation method. The analyzed data is presented with tools like tables, diagrams and diagrams.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has been limited by a number of obstacles. They are:

- The shortage of time and money will limit the number of samples in to minimum.
- The advanced statistical tools are not used for analysis.
- Lack of awareness of customers about their schemes.
- Lack of cooperation from subscribers.

INDUSTRIAL PROFILE AND COMPANY PROFILE

2.1 INDUSTRY PROFILE

INDIAN TELECOMMUNICATION:

Indian Telecom industry is one of the fastest growing telecom markets in the world. The Indian telecommunication industry, with 638 million telephone (landline and mobile) subscribers and 584 million mobile phone connections as of March 2010. India is ranked third worldwide in terms of having the largest telecommunication network, after China and USA. With 42 the ongoing investments into infrastructure deployment, the country is projected to become the second largest telecom market globally in next few years.

TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA (TRAI)

The entry of private service providers brought with it the inevitable need for independent regulation. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was, thus, established with effect from 20th February 1997 by an Act of Parliament, called the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997.The main aim is to regulate telecom services, including fixation/revision of tariffs for telecom services which were earlier vested in the Central Government. The TRAI Act was amended by an ordinance, effective from 24 January 2000, establishing a Telecommunications Dispute Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) to take over the adjudicatory and disputes 45 functions from TRAI. TDSAT was set up to adjudicate any dispute between a licensor and a licensee, between two or more service providers, between a service provider and a group of consumers, and to hear and dispose of appeals against any direction, decision or order of TRAI.

INDIAN GOVERNMENT ACTS FOR REGULATION OF TELECOM INDUSTRY

The various telecom related acts by the Department of Telecommunications India are:

- Indian Telegraph Act 1885: This act empowered the government of India to take control of the existing telegraph lines and lay down the necessary infrastructure for further expansion of telecommunications in India.
- Indian Telegraph (amendment) Rules 2004: This act set the guidelines for the set up and development of public telecom services in India.
- Indian Wireless Act 1993: According to this act wireless telecom services could be set up only after due licensing from the telegraphy authority of India.
- Information Technology Act 2000: The act defines the information technology based communications in India. Telecom Industry of India was shown e-commerce way through this act in a legal manner.
- Communication Convergence Bill 2001: This bill declared the establishment of Communications Commission of India to regulate the transfer of all form of communication including broadcasting, telecommunications and multimedia.

TELECOM SECTOR POLICIES

- A Communication Convergence Bill was introduced in the Parliament in 2001.
- Unrestricted entry is allowed in National Long Distance Service (NLD)
- Also the International Long Distance Services (ILDS) have been kept opened.
- Cellular operators have the permission of providing all types of service, as voice and non-voice messages, data services etc.
- The New Telecom Policy revised in 1999 encourages participation of private companies in services as Global Mobile Personal Communication by Satellite (GMPCS) Service, digital Public Mobile Trunked Service (PMRTS) and Voice Mail/ Audiotex/ Unified Messaging Services.
- To fulfill Universal Service Obligation (USO) funding and administration, several measures are being taken.
- To initiate Community Phone Service, an announcement has been made.

- Guidelines regarding the Multiple Fixed Service Providers (FSPs) have been announced.
- For establishing International Internet Gateways, which include both Satellite and Landing Stations, the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have been permitted.
- The Government of India also has set up various guidelines to establish Internet telephony (IP).

GROWTH IN THE INDIAN TELECOM SECTOR

The state owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is the pioneer in the telecom market of India. The Indian telecommunication policies were further modified to introduce more private telecom players in the market. Several private companies as Bharti Airtel, Reliance Communications, Tata Indicom, Aircel, Vodafone and Idea Cellular joined the Indian market. As of the figures of March, 2011, the mobile phone sector in India registered 20.21 million numbers of new users a month. The overall density in the telephone sector has increased to 70.89% as indicated by the recent figures of March 2011.

GROWTH OF TELECOM MARKET

India is the world's second-largest telecommunications market, with over 1.18 billion subscribers as of November 2017. The wireless segment (98.03 per cent of total telephone subscriptions) dominates the market. It has also been growing at a brisk pace. During FY07-17, wireless subscriptions witnessed a CAGR of 21.64 per cent to reach 1,170.2 million. India is also the second largest country in terms of internet subscribers. The country is now the world's second largest smartphone market and will have almost one billion unique mobile subscribers by 2020. Revenues from the telecom equipment sector are expected to grow to US$ 26.38 billion by 2020.

India's telecommunications market is expected to experience further growth, fuelled by increased non-voice revenues and higher penetration in rural market. Telecom penetration in the nation's rural market increased to 56.94 per cent by November 2017. The emergence of an affluent middle class is triggering demand for the mobile and internet segments.

Strong policy support from the government has been crucial to the sector's development. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) cap in the telecom sector has been increased to 100 per cent from 74 per cent.

COMPANIES IN TELECOM SECTOR:

1. VODAFONE INDIA

With total subscribers of 193.8 million, Vodafone has become the second largest Best Telecom Companies in the country. The organization aims to deliver best in class services to the customers. Vodafone offer affordable plans with high benefits. When it comes to trust worthy networks, Vodafone is ranked the best by the user. Vodafone India Limited Vodafone Essar, formerly known as Hutchison Essar is a cellular operator in India that covers 23 telecom circles in India based in Mumbai. Vodafone Essar is owned by

Vodafone 67% and Essar Group 33%. It is the second largest mobile phone operator in terms of revenue behind Bharti Airtel, and third largest in terms of customers. Vodafone crossed 100 million subscribers in India as on march 2010. Despite the official name being Vodafone Essar, its products are simply branded Vodafone. It offers both prepaid and postpaid GSM cellular phone coverage throughout India with good presence in the metros.

2. BHARATI AIRTEL

Airtel is the leading telecom company in India with the total of 229.5 million subscribers. It has experienced tremendous growth in the last few years. Airtel is recognized as highly reliable telecom company that renders its services in a productive manner.

The company has spread its business in several fields and now engaged in providing wireless services, 4G, broadband. Airtel is ranked at second place amongst Top Telecommunication Operators in India. Bharti Airtel Limited Bharti Airtel Limited, a group company of Bharti Enterprises, is among Asia's leading integrated telecom services providers with operations in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. It is known for being the first mobile phone company in the world to outsource everything except marketing and sales. Bharti Airtel Limited is the largest cellular service provider in India, with more than 135 million subscriptions as of May 2010.

3. RELIANCE JIO INFOCOM LIMITED

Reliance Jio render its services to more than 100 million subscribers and has its headquarters in Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra. Reliance Jio is owned by Anil Ambani and is wholly owned subsidiary of Reliance Industries. The telecom company provides wireless 4G LTE service network at an affordable rate; this is the basic reason why Reliance Jio is one Top 10 Telecommunication Companies in India.

4. BSNL

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has around 93.29 million subscribers. It has it's headquarter located in New Delhi. BSNL is one of the oldest telecom companies in India and since then the company is delivering its best in class services in the country.

BSNL offers services like India Account Card Calling (ACC), Free Phone Service (FPH), Virtual Private Network (VPN), Tele-voting, Premium Rate Service (PRM), Telephone Card (Prepaid card) etc. It has managed to gain fourth position in the of Top 10 Telecom Operators List.

5. AIRCEL

Aircel is another best Telecommunication company in the list of Best Telecom Companies in India. Aircel started its operations in the year 1999 and is now one of the Best Telecom Companies in India. Aircel has over 81.2 million subscribers and its' headquarter is located in Gurgaon.

Aircel offer 2G, 3G, 4G and voice plans that are affordable. Aircel was commenced by C Sivasankaran. Aircel is leading Tamil Nadu market and has its presence in North-East, Odisha, Assam telecom circles.

6. IDEA CELLULAR

Idea Cellular is the largest telecom operator in India. Idea is owned by the Aditya Birla Group and has over 157.8 million subscribers. The firm has spread its business in several areas such as broadbands, 2G, 3G, wi-fi, Dongel etc. Idea cellular is the best telecom company in the Northern and the Central region. Idea offers cheap plans and hence ruling the Indian market. Idea Cellular Limited Idea Cellular is a wireless telephony company operating in all the 22 telecom circles in India based in Mumbai. It is the 3rd largest GSM Company with over 67 million subscribers in India behind Airtel and Vodafone and ahead of state run player BSNL. The company is part of the Aditya Birla Group. It provides wireless and long distance voice and

internet services to consumer and enterprise markets. IDEA Cellular is a publicly listed company, having listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and the National Stock Exchange (NSE) in March 47 2007.ss A frontrunner in introducing revolutionary tariff plans, IDEA Cellular has the distinction of offering the most customer friendly and competitive Pre Paid offerings, for the first time in India. The company has operations in Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh (W) & Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh (E), Madhya Pradesh &Chattisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra & Goa, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala with the planned expansion into Mumbai, Bihar & Jharkhand.

7. TATA TELECOM SERVICES

Tata Telecom Services is recognized to be one of the Largest Telecommunications Companies in India. Tata Telecom Services/Tata Docomo has over 68.6 million subscribers. Tata Docomo is a joint venture between Tata Teleservices and NTT Docomo.

This company is amongst the Top Telecommunication Operators in India. The company operates its services in 19 telecom circles. This telecom operator offers services on GSM and CDMA platform.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mobile number portability is not very old term even though it's very hot and interesting topic to do research and investigation into from different perspective for strategy makers and researchers. Many studies has been conducted and going on in many countries. Researchers have focused majorly on implementation of MNP, switching cost, government policies and regulations, benefit to the operators and customers as well, competition in the market and steps taken by operators to retain existing customers and to attract other operators and consumers take up towards MNP

MULLER (1990) in his research focuses that the success of the mobile commerce can be attributed to the personal nature of the wireless devices. Adding to this are its unique features of voice and data transmission and distinct features like localization, feasibility and convenience. The sustained growth of the mobile commerce around the world has been more because of the transfer of technology according to the needs of local geography

BUEHLER &HAUCAP (2004) examined the consequences of introducing mobile number portability (MNP). They found that MNP leads to abolishment of switching cost, and hence is good thing for customers. As telephone numbers no longer identify networks MNP may result in customer ignorance. They also discussed role of termination charges on customer bills.

SHI, CHIANG &RHEE (2006) explained wireless number portability is a telecommunication regulatory policy that requires cellular phone service providers to allow customers who switch service subscription to retain their original phone numbers. The MNP leads to lowering of the switching cost for a consumers. Thus, the aim of the policy is to have fair competition with level playing ground for smaller service providers. They found the policy may result in market concentration due to discriminatory pricing scheme for the calls connected across two networks. Consumers who subscribes to an operator with larger subscriber base would stand to gain. By lowering the barriers of switching, MNP creates a market condition conducive for a larger network to gain market share.

KISIOGLU &TOPCU (2011) states, telephone numbers, specifically which are ported do not identify the network it belongs to, though the difference is small in the terms of call pricing i.e. the calls terminating within same networks are lower priced as compared to calls terminating in different networks. This has a negative net effect on the surplus of mobile customers.

BUEHLER, DEWENTER & HAUCAP (2006) also examined the causes and effect of mobile number portability and provided a survey of its implementation in Europe. Competitive effect, cost of introducing MNP and charges were examined. Difference on the porting process influence the use of MNP across the countries.

SHI, ZHOU &LIU (2010) reviewed the implementation of mobile number portability (MNP) in global context. The authors found that influencing factors of users' switching intention in China has an analogous situation with Korea having same MNP policy. The results of this research showed that customer satisfaction and switching costs have significant effects on users' porting behavior

SHIN &KIM (2008) investigated switching barriers under the mobile number portability (MNP) in the U.S mobile market. In the USA's context customer satisfaction, switching barriers, and demographics significantly affect subscribers' intent to switch with lower switching costs and increased competition among providers.

DONG HEE (2007) conducted a study on a sample of 684 mobile subscribers in the USA, focused on subscribers' perception and behaviors on MNP. The number portability was made mandatory to wireless carriers as FCC believed it to be positive for customer benefits through increased competition in the industry. Subscribers perceived switching barrier to be high in this research, discouraging subscribers from porting. Operators developed new subscriber lock-in strategies that make subscribers stay with them

CHWEYA (2013) found that MNP implementation is intensifying competition among industry players. Customers have been worried over service quality issues and especially delays in the porting process.

GANS, J.S., AND KING (2000) investigate the effects of consumer ignorance of relevant pricing and suggest that MNP may deteriorate the customer's price information. It has been also noted that regulators face difficult practical decisions of MNP when and how to implement it, and how reap this benefits.

SUMMARY

"Impact of mobile number portability among mobile subscribers" is conducted to make an analysis on customer switching behavior, perception and satisfaction level after mobile number porting. This study is conducted among mobile subscribers of different network providers in Manjeri municipality.

The first chapter deals with an introduction to study, scope of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research methodology and limitations of the study. The second chapter deals with the company profile and industrial profile of the study.

The third chapter about the review regarding the researchers conducted earlier and fourth chapter contain analysis and interpretation of the primary data collected through questionnaire and also contain the graphical presentation of analysis result.

FINDINGS

1. In this project it find that some network operators who has strong market strength i.e., Jio, idea, Vodafone etc.
2. As per the above data and interpretation most of the respondents were men between 20-30 years.
3. In this study most of the respondents are graduated.
4. Around 92% respondents were using prepaid connection.
5. Most of the respondents are satisfied with their current connection.
6. Customers are switching to new operator because of the tariff plans, network coverage, call cost etc.
7. Majority of the subscribers are aware about MNP
8. 56% respondents are ported subscribers and 44% respondents not ported their number.
9. Most of the respondents have spent on mobile in a month between Rs100-200.
10. Majority of the respondents are like to change their connection to Jio.
11. 68% respondents are aware about the procedure of MNP.
12. The source of awareness about the MNP is mainly from friends and retailers.
13. Most of the respondent's opinion is that MNP is secured their number.
14. This study tells that the Jio and idea subscribers are more.

SUGGESIONS

1. Operators should offer long term loyalty benefits over a period of time.
2. Research findings suggest that different groups have different switching behavior. Age, gender, education and marital status have significant dependency on those who switch.
3. In case of any call drop, subscribers will have to send an SMS for getting their money back.
4. Operator should give the advertising on TV, radio and newspaper with attractive packages, which leads to use of MNP.
5. The operator should provide offers and value added pack which helps subscribers move to the best connection.
6. The operator should provide SIM card with free of cost along with additional talk.
7. The porting period should be made shorter as this would encourage people in to applying for MNP.
8. The operators should give proper awareness about MNP.
9. They should provide tariff plans, free SMS, free data packs for a period of time.
10. Service provider should set up a customer care cell to seek feedback from subscribers opting for change.

CONCLUSION

The MNP is a very good strategy introduced by the TRAI. This system helps the customers to switch over to another, if they are not satisfied with the current network service provider. MNP is a policy and economical issue rather than technical or regulatory one. Most of the subscribers are satisfied with new service providers after porting their mobile number.

This study concluded that there is a visible impact on MNP among different service providers. They have to give more attention to retain their existing customers.

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