

“A Study of ‘Consumer and Telecom Service Provider’s Interface’ In Pune City”

Tushar Funde, Student, Rajgad Institute of Management Research Development, Dhankawadi, Pune. E-mail id : tusharfunde11@gmail.com

Rohan P. Dahivale, Assistant Professor, Rajgad Institute of Management Research Development, Dhankawadi, Pune. E-mail id : rohandahivale@rediffmail.com

ABSTRACT

Telecom industry is a crucial factor to realize the socio-economic objectives in India. The Indian Telecom industry is passing through a vibrant transitional phase and clearly undergoing the operation of market forces of demand and supply. The booming telecom industry has been attracting large amount of investments in India & is an important tool for socio- economic development for a nation.

The numbers of subscribers are very rapidly increasing and there is need to study the interface between telecom service providers and customers. To achieve the customer satisfaction there is need to analyze the customer’s perception so as there should not be gap between the telecom service provider’s performance and customer’s perception.

The challenges in front of telecom service providers include attracting their subscribers by providing high quality of services with competitive charges for services. With the increase in the cost of acquisition of new customers, telecom service providers continually seek new ways to gain, retain and increase their existing subscriber base.

This study investigates the interface and may provide the telecom manager useful guidelines to understand their customer behavior. The study uses a survey of Pune city customers.

Keywords : consumer behavior, telecom service provider, brand image, service delivery, network experience

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To investigate the ‘consumer and service provider’ interface.
- 2) To study the brand image of service providers according to consumers.
- 3) To analyze the service delivery experience of consumers.
- 4) To understand the network experience about the service providers.

RESEARCH PROBLEM/STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The number of telecom service providers and their subscribers are rapidly increasing. There is cut throat competition among service providers to retain existing customers and gaining new ones. To achieve customer satisfaction there is need to study behavior of consumers. There is facility of 'number portability' so now customers can easily change their existing service provider. The area of study includes network experience, service delivery experience of consumers also the brand image of the existing service providers.

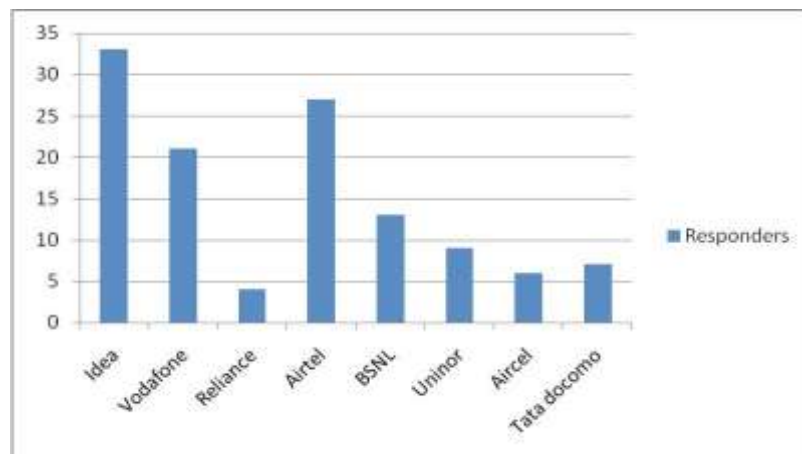
RESEARCH DESIGN

S. no.	Parameter	Description
1	Type of research	Descriptive Research
2	Research Instrument	Structured Questionnaire
3	Survey period	15 May to 15 July 2014
4	Type of product	Telecom Service
5	Universe	Population of Pune City
6	Population	All People who using telecom service in Pune City
7	Sampling Method	Non Probability Convenience Sampling
8	Primary sources	Questionnaire, observation, interview and field survey
9	Secondary sources	Book, Journal, Articles, Magazines
10	Measurable scale used	Nominal, Ordinal, Interval scale.
11	Rating Scale	Likert Scale 1 to 7 (1= Worst, 7 = Excellent)
12	Total Responders	120

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Q. 1) Your Mobile Service Provider's Name.

	Idea	Vodafone	Reliance	Airtel	BSNL	Uninor	Aircel	Tata docomo	Total
Responders	33	21	4	27	13	9	6	7	120
Percentage	27.5	17.5	3.3	22.5	10.8	7.5	5.0	5.8	100 %

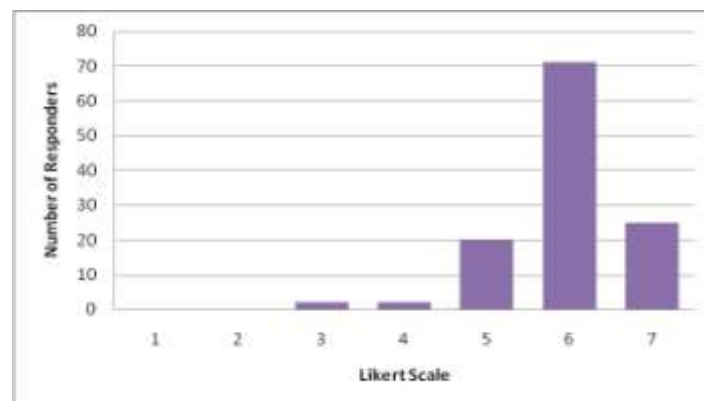


Interpretation :

In our survey we found that Idea, Ariel, Vodafone are top 3 Service Providers in Pune city.

Q. 2) Advertisements & Promotions of my operator provide true, relevant & complete information.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	0	0	2	2	20	71	25	120
Percentage	0	0	1.6	1.6	16.7	59.2	20.9	100 %

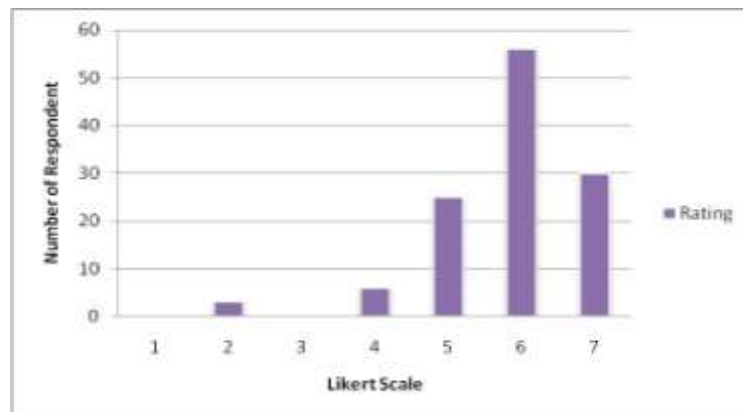


Interpretation :

Advertisement & promotion activities are important in conveying various offers and plans from operators to consumers. In our survey we found that operators provide necessary relevant information to consumers.

Q.3) My operator provides variety of offers that suits my needs.

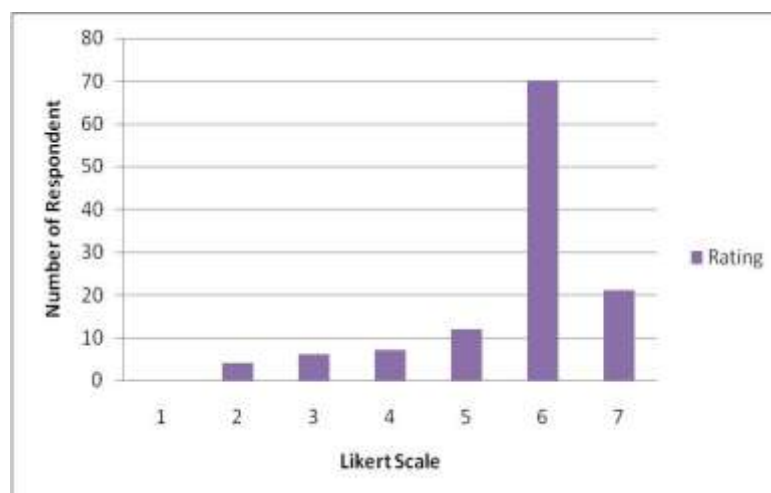
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	0	3	0	6	25	56	30	120
Percentage	0	2.5	0	5.0	20.9	46.6	25	100 %

**Interpretation :**

All consumers' choice is special. Customer's choice is individually separate from other customer for example calling, SMS plans, and data service, night plans etc. Operator generally provides customized service. In our survey we found that the level of experience to the consumer is 'near to excellent' and at likert scale 6.

Q.4) I feel valued being associated with my operator.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	0	4	6	7	12	70	21	120
Percentage	0	3.3	5.0	5.8	10.0	58.3	17.5	100 %

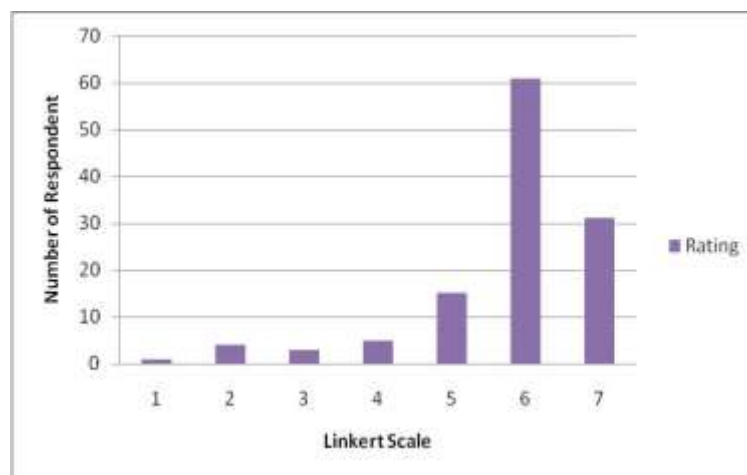


Interpretation :

Service Providers represents name or brand. There are top brands associated with results in consumer feel proud in being associated with their operators.

Q.5) My operator is trustworthy and reliable.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	1	4	3	5	15	61	31	120
Percentage	0.8	3.3	2.5	4.2	12.5	50.8	25.8	100 %

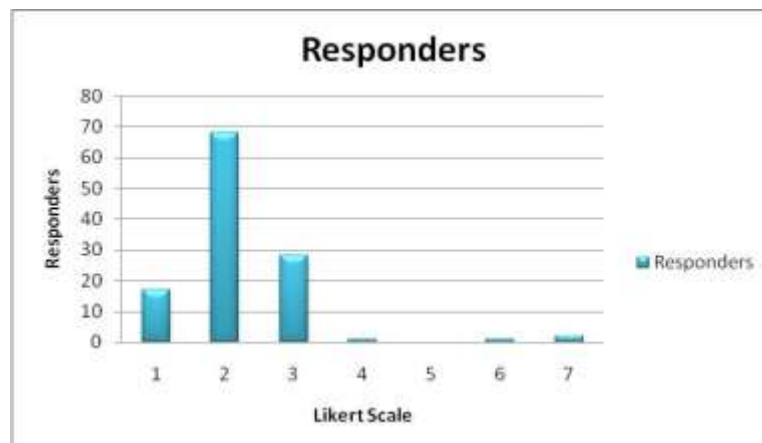


Interpretation:

Recently number portability is easily available for consumer, so they can easily switch to other service providers. In this scenario we found that most of the consumer feels that their operator is trust worthy and reliable. In our survey we found that operators are reliable and trustworthy.

Q.6) My operator is transparent and keeps me fully updated.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	17	68	28	1	0	1	2	120
Percentage	14.1	56.6	23.3	0.8	0	0.8	1.6	100 %

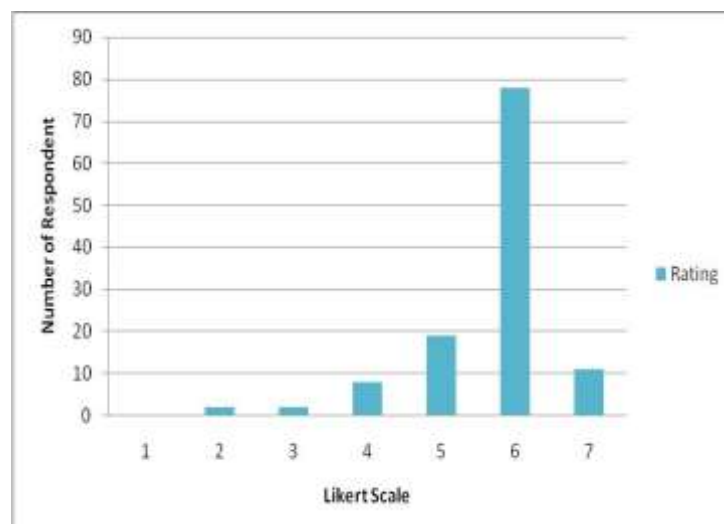


Interpretation :

There are various service offered by service providers like net pack, SMS pack etc. service providers need to be transparent in the area of new plans, bill shades and service outage etc In our survey we found that, service providers need to improve in this service and be more transparent.

Q.7) My operator consistently delivers all services.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	0	2	2	8	19	78	11	120
Percentage	0	1.6	1.6	6.6	15.8	65	9.1	100 %

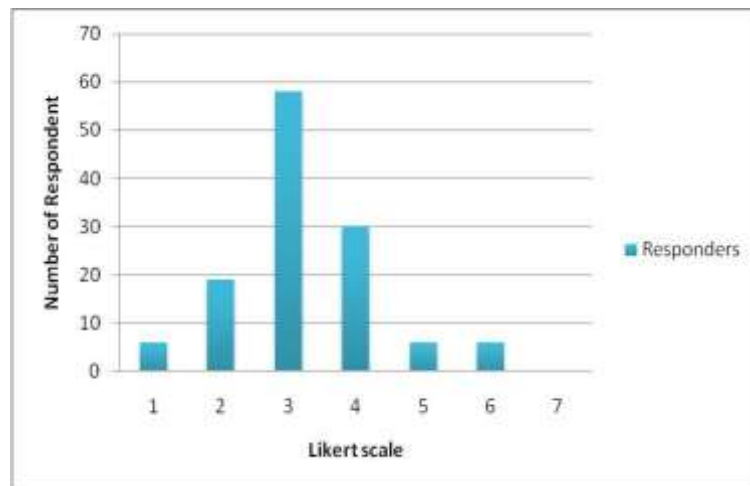


Interpretation:

Service as per commitment or as promised by provided by service

providers **Q.8) Pricing is competitive and provides value for money.**

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	6	19	58	30	6	6	0	120
Percentage	5.0	15.8	48.3	25	5.0	5.0	0	100 %

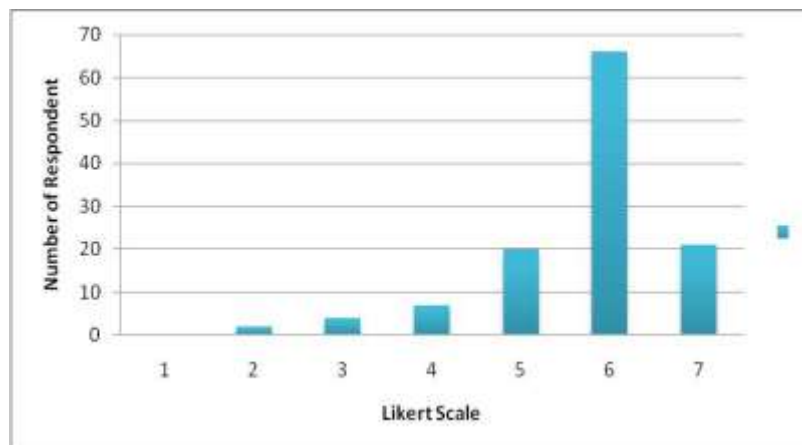
**Interpretation:**

There is variation in prices provided by telecom operators. Variation is there in message pack, net pack and local or STD calling rates. This price changes drastically from operator to operator.

We found that price must be competitive and should provide value for consumer money.

Q.9) My current tariff plan is clear and easy to understand.

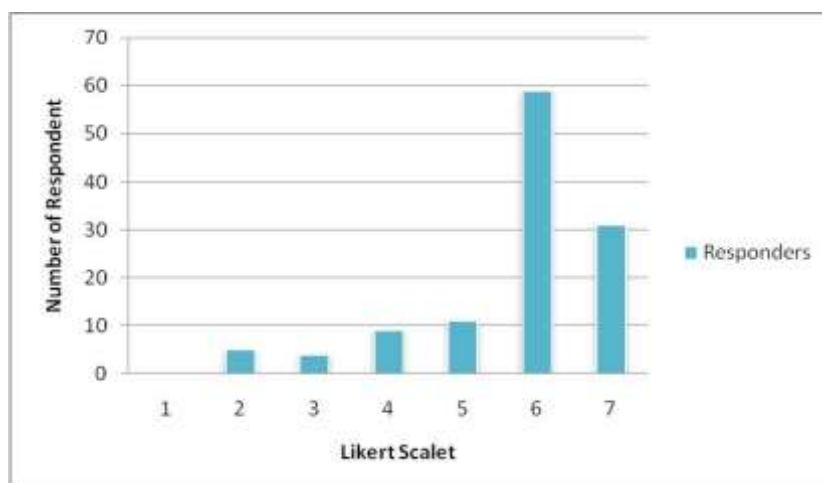
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	0	2	4	7	20	66	21	120
Percentage	0	1.6	3.3	5.8	16.7	55	17.5	100 %

**Interpretation:**

Consumers are very much clear about their current tariff plan.

Q.10) My experience about 'purchase or change' in service.

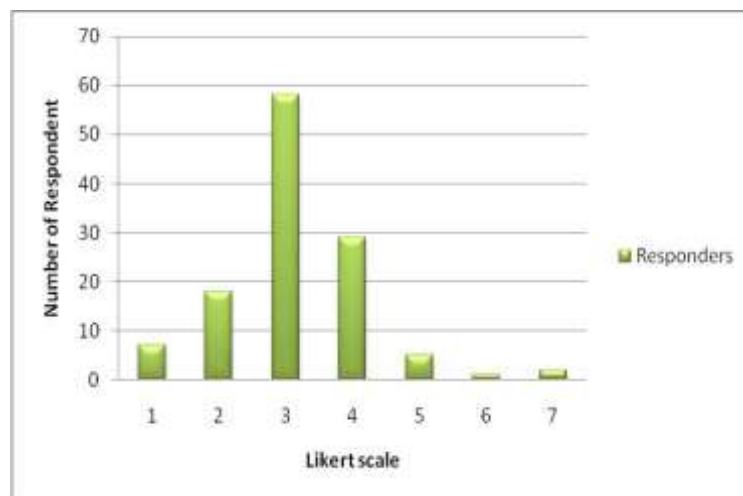
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	0	5	4	9	11	59	31	120
Percentage	0	4.2	3.3	7.5	9.1	49.1	25.8	100 %

**Interpretation :**

Service providers are keen to sell their additional plans to consumer. In our research we found that service providers better service in purchasing or change in service.

11) My operator's quality of Indoor Network Coverage.

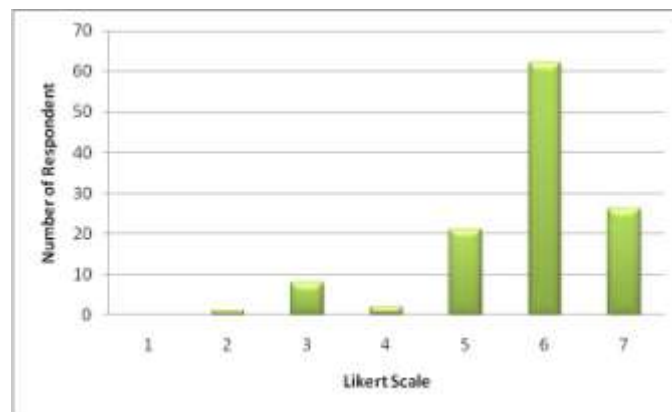
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	7	18	58	29	5	1	2	120
Percentage	5.8	15	48.3	24.1	4.2	0.8	1.6	100 %

**Interpretation:**

There is scope of improvement in quality of indoor network coverage as we found that service providers are lacking in this area of service.

Q.12) My operator's quality of Outdoor Network Coverage and also while travelling or roaming.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	0	1	8	2	21	62	26	120
Percentage	0	0.8	6.6	1.6	17.5	51.6	21.6	100 %

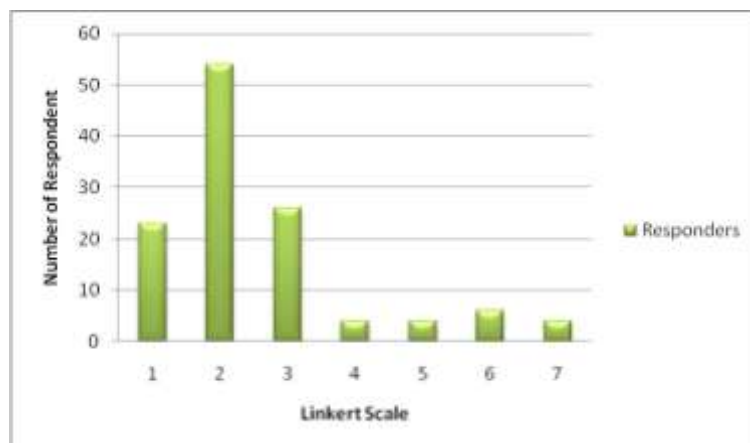


Interpretation :

In our survey we found that, consumer are happy about the operator's quality of outdoor network coverage.

Q.13) Call Connectivity Experience.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	23	54	26	4	4	6	4	120
Percentage	19.1	45	21.6	3.3	3.3	5.0	3.3	100 %

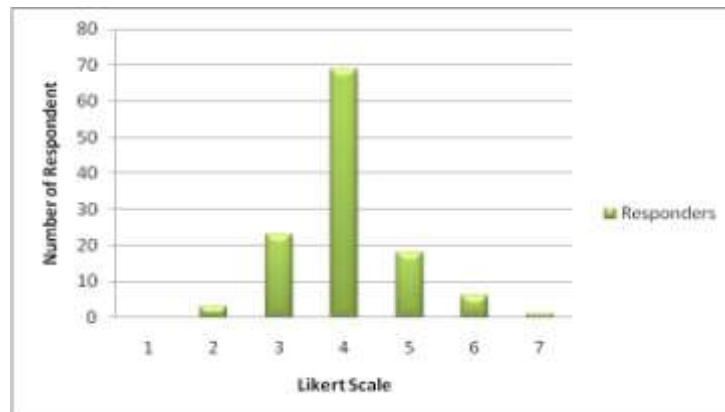


Interpretation :

Many times consumers face problem like long time to connect, frequent beeps while trying to dial etc. this also includes people period like New Year's event or festival days. We found that there is need to improve in this area.

Q.14) Call Quality Experience.

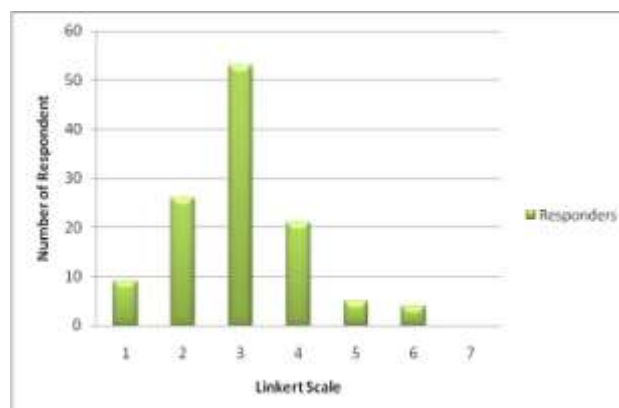
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	0	3	23	69	18	6	1	120
Percentage	0	2.5	19.1	57.5	15	5.0	0.8	100 %

**Interpretation:**

Consumer do face problem like no call drops, free from disturbance, echo, cross connections etc. we found that consumer are not that much satisfactory about call quality provided by operator.

Q.15) Data service experience.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Responders	9	26	53	21	5	4	0	120
Percentage	7.5	21.6	44.1	17.5	4.2	3.3	0	100 %

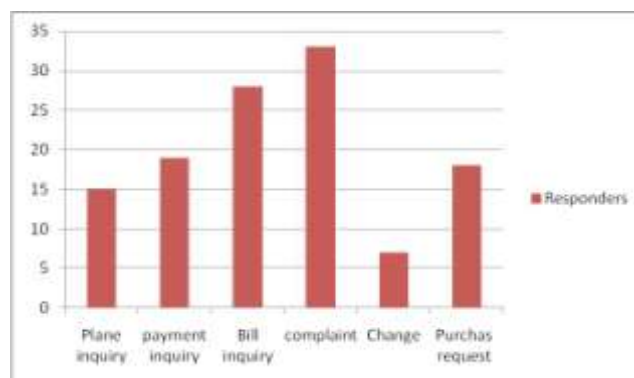


Interpretation:

Especially in evening and Saturday, many of the consumers do face problem like lack of connectivity in call and internet service.

Q.16) In Past 6 months, for which issue(s) have you contacted the operator?

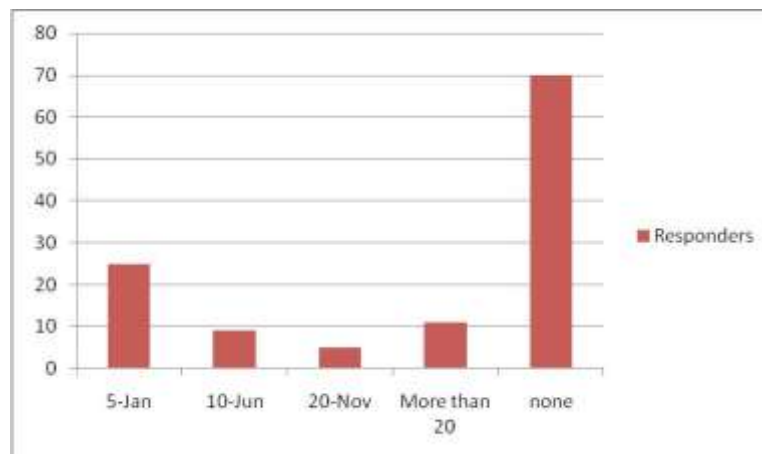
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
	Plane inquiry	payment inquiry	Bill inquiry	complaint	Change	Purchas request	
Responders	15	19	28	33	7	18	120
Percentage	12.5	15.8	23.3	27.5	5.8	15	100 %

**Interpretation:**

In our survey we found that, maximum times consumer are contacting their operators for the purpose of their complaints followed by Bill enquiry.

Q.17) How many times have you approached your operator in the past 6 months?

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
	1-5	6-10	11-20	More than 20	none	
Responders	25	9	5	11	70	120
Percentage	20.8	7.5	4.2	9.1	58.3	100 %

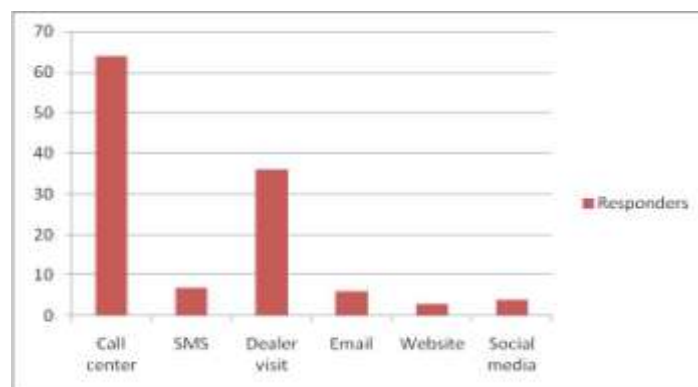


Interpretation:

In our survey we found that frequency of consumer of meeting their operator is less.

Q.18) Which channel (s) you used?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
	Call center	SMS	Dealer visit	Email	Website	Social media	
Responders	64	7	36	6	3	4	120
Percentage	53.3	5.8	30	5.0	2.5	3.3	100 %

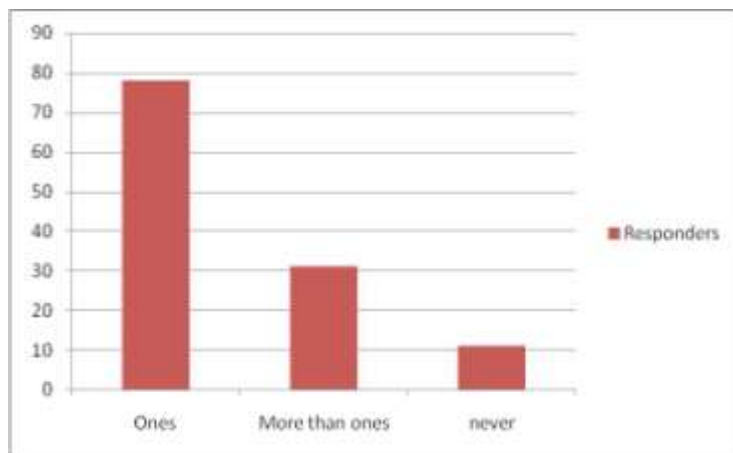


Interpretation :

Consumer are using the option of call center to contact their operator followed store and dealer visit and SMS.

Q.19) How many times did you need to follow up for the same issue?

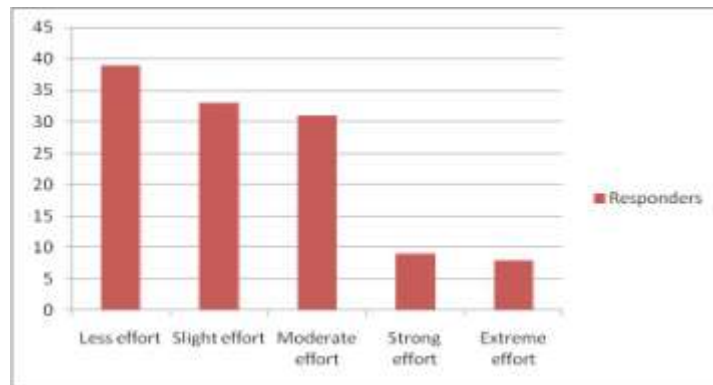
Scale	1	2	3	Total
	Ones	More than ones	never	
Responders	78	31	11	120
Percentage	65	25.8	9.1	100 %

**Interpretation :**

For the follow up purpose of the same issue or complain, consumer experience is good as maximum customers need to contact just once.

Q.20) On a scale of 1-5, rates the amount of effort you had to put to solve your queries/ requests/complaints.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	Total
	Less effort	Slight effort	Moderate effort	Strong effort	Extreme effort	
Responders	39	33	31	9	8	120
Percentage	32.5	27.5	25.8	7.5	6.6	100 %

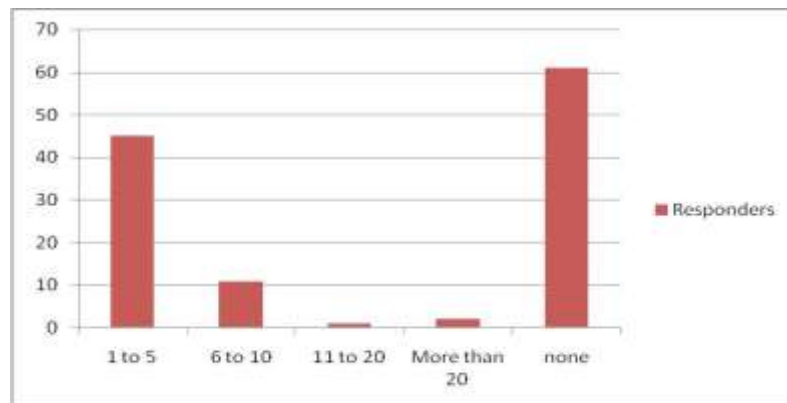


Interpretation:

The amount of effort consumer put to solve their queries or requests are slight effort.

Q.21) How many times you have raised complaints in past 6 months ?

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
	1-5	6-10	11-20	More than 20	none	
Responders	45	11	1	2	61	120
Percentage	37.5	9.1	0.8	1.6	50.8	100 %

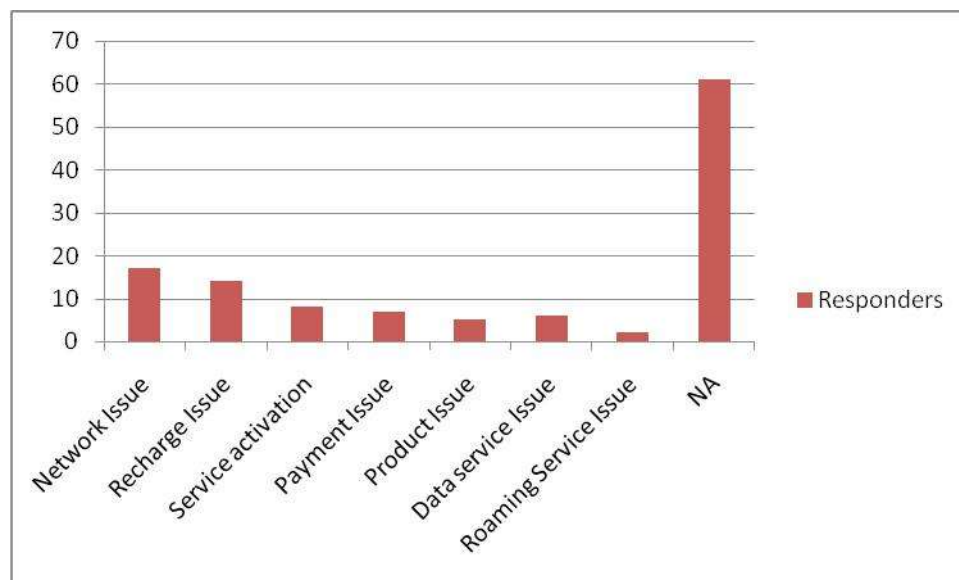


Interpretation :

In our survey we found that many consumers have never raised any sort of complaints in past 6 months.

Q.22) Regarding which issue you raised the complaint?

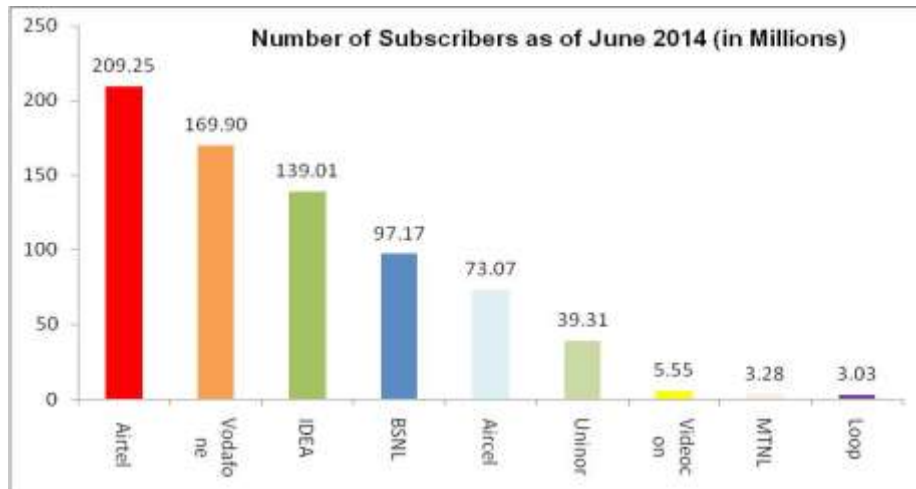
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
	Network Issue	Recharge Issue	Service activation	Payment Issue	Product Issue	Data service Issue	Roaming Service Issue	NA	
Responders	17	14	8	7	5	6	2	61	120
Percentage	14.1	11.66	6.6	5.8	4.2	5.0	1.6	50.8	100 %

**Interpretation:**

Nearly 50% of the total responders never raised the complaints till date.

Maximum complaints raised by consumers are about network issues followed by recharge issues and service activation issues.

SECONDARY DATA INTERPRETATION



[Source: <http://www.coai.com/>]

Interpretation:

GSM SUBSCRIBER FIGURES JUNE-2014	
1	Total number of GSM Subscribers as of June 2014 - 739.57 million
2	The GSM Subscribers increased by 6.48 million in June 2014 (0.88% increased from previous month)
3	Maximum GSM Subscribers - Airtel - 209.25 million

CONCLUSION

This study investigates the interface between consumer and telecom service providers. Researchers found that the brand image of the service providers is near to excellent according to consumer's perception as maximum customers feel proud and feel that their operators are reliable and trustworthy. There is scope of improvement in call connectivity and service delivery area in pricing, indoor network coverage, call quality, connectivity & data service.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- 1) Time period of the report was limited for two month only.
- 2) Some data is confidential due to we cannot take actual figure for to do proper research study.
- 3) The sample of 120 respondents may constitute a limitation due to its smallest nature of sample.

REFERENCES

- 1) A.Churchill, G., & down, J. a. (2007). *marketing research methodological foundation* (Ninth ed.). Thomson south western.
- 2) Leon.G.Schiffman, kanak, L. L., & Ramesh kumar, s. p. *consumer behaviour* (Third ed.). Dorling kindersley pvt ltd.
- 3) M.S.Raju, & Dominique, x. (2009). *consumer behaviour,concept and application*. new delhi: vikas publishing house.
- 4) R.Nair, S. (1995). *consumer behaviour in indian perspection*. delhi: Himaliya publication house.
- 5) <http://www.coai.com>
- 6) <http://www.trai.gov.in>
- 7) Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2006). *Consumer Behaviour* (10th Ed.). Thomson Learning
- 8) Deaton, Angus; Muellbauer, John, *Economics and consumer behavior*, Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1980. ISBN 0-521-22850-6
- 9) Howard, J., Sheth, J.N. (1968), *Theory of Buyer Behavior*, J. Wiley & Sons, New York, NY.
- 10) Kardes, Frank R.; Cronley, Maria L.; Cline, Thomas W., *Consumer Behavior*, Mason, OH : South-Western, Cengage Learning, 2011. ISBN 978-0-538-74540-6
- 11) Laermer, Richard; Simmons, Mark, *Punk Marketing*, New York : Harper Collins, 2007. ISBN 978-0-06-115110-1 (Review of the book by Marilyn Scrizzi, in *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 24(7), 2007)

