



## A Study on Pre-Paid and Post Paid Customers' delight over Customer Care Post Purchase Services With Special Reference To Mobile Phone Network Service Providers in Coimbatore City

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**ABSTRACT**

The objective of this paper is to understand the factors influencing customer delight over customer care services rendered by mobile network providers in Coimbatore city. This study was carried out to determine post and pre-paid customer delight over various customer care services. The study used 100 primary data of mobile network subscribers who are currently located in and around Coimbatore city and the data were collected using a structured questionnaire. A structured focus group discussion was carried out and, as a result of the discussion, seventeen customer care services were chosen for use in the questionnaire. The statistical results of the study revealed that levels of delight differ amongst pre-paid and post paid consumers only over some definite customer care services, also ranked the most and least delighted attitude perceived on customer services related to customer queries/complaints. Further, it is suggested that future researches on various segments in the same field in other geographical locations be conducted for the purpose of validating this study as well as bringing out more interesting facts and figures.

**KEYWORDS**

Customer delight, Customer care services, Post purchase services

**INTRODUCTION**

Customer delight is astonishing a customer by surpassing his or her expectations, consequently crafting a hopeful exciting response at the time of purchase or after the purchase. Customer delight is encouraging incident of any business since the customers have received a product or service that considerably exceeds what they had at first expected. This evergreen concept preponderates in the service providers' long term survival, ensuring profitable market share, etc. Also reality shows companies are as much as trying to visualize this concept incredibly to keep hold of their customers by proffering delightful services during and after the purchase in the form of handling customer queries instantly. So, the major strategic way of retaining the customers for a longer time is the customised customer care services or post purchase complaint handling/services. Needless to say, this is a must in all industries including telecommunication services, especially mobile phone network services.

In India, Mobile phone networking communication has made tremendous growth since inception. In telecommunication services today, almost more than ten brands of mobile phone network providers are serving effectively to meet customers needs. But, in reality, telecommunicators are meeting aggressive competition every day. To survive, earn good market share, ensure profit, these companies need to address customers' day to day queries, will systematically during and after their purchase. In case not done, there may be chances of customer which, in turn, result in customer switching brand, company this is facing survival crisis. Hence, many mobilephone network companies are taking effective steps to delight their customers even after the purchase was over or by serving their customers in the form of care services or additional services such as query handling, services on repeat purchase, value added services or customer complaint handling and providing the solutions as soon as possible.

But, in reality, even though mobile network brands are taking steps to delight their customers, still the level of delight among customers over customer care services differ with respect to the kind of services or offers, likes or dislikes of the

service and also sometimes with respect to types of mobile networks, for example; post paid and prepaid customers. Further, many previous researchers addressed the issue of customer satisfaction, delight over mobile network related services in low context and higher context countries. But very few studies have attempted to study about customer attitude to customer care services while making their complaints/queries related to various services. Hence, the present study addresses two important aspects:

1. The most top and the least delighted attitude perceived by the customer on customer care getting dissatisfied services during complaint handling.
2. Pre-paid and Post-paid customers' perception of the most delightful customer care services during complaint handling.

**History of cellular phones in India**

1992- Telecommunication sector in India liberalized. Private sector allowed participation.

1993- Telecom industry gets an annual foreign investment of Rs 20.6 million.

1994- License for providing cellular mobile service granted by the Government of India to metropolitan cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai.

1995- 19 more telecom circles get mobile licences.

1995 (August) – Kolkata becomes the first metro to have a cellular network.

1997- Telecom Regulatory Authority of India is set up.

1998- Annual Foreign Investment –Rs 17,756 million invested.

2000- Amendment of TRAI act

2003-CDMA networks launched

2004- Calling party pays introduced

2005-Life time validity service issued

2008-Fresh licenses issued

2009-Tariff wars amongst operators.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Chaubey et al. (2011)** studied the mobile user's behavior and service uses among Uttarkhand customers. They had recorded their poor awareness of additional features provided in the mobile phone services with level of education, income, customer's thinking impacting their purchase and usage satisfaction.

**Rajpurohit and Vasita (2011)** highlighted in their research that most of the customers were satisfied with the services of mobile phone service providers which meant that value added offers, customer care services by the respective mobile phone service providers fulfilled their expectations.

**Marina Dobrota and Ana Nikodijević (2012)** found in their study that customer experience, familiarity of recent models of mobile phones is a noteworthy determinant of higher level of satisfaction. Further, customers' delight differ according to the customer's usage and frequency of usage.

**Md. Ashaduzzaman et al. (2011)** studied Grameen phone users delight and revealed that almost every person was extremely satisfied with Grameen phone services.

**PatternMd. Nur-E-Alam Siddique et al. (2012)** found in their study that most of the time customer care services of Grameen phone was not successful which resulted in unpleasant experiences among Grameenphone customers of Bangladesh.

**Shekhar Srivastava and Ashish Bhatnaga (2012)** highlighted in their research that by understanding the subscribers' needs, promptly addressing their complaints/problems/queries or well backed by excellent customer service support will create the loyal customers and ensure customer delight. And the companies need not worry about customer churn.

**Anantha Raj et al. (2013)** studied the Malaysian customers' satisfaction of services rendered by the Cellular Telecommunication Service Providers in Malaysia and found that though service quality dimensions positively influenced customer satisfaction in terms of loyalty and attitudes, there was also a fissure between the perceived satisfaction and expectation (P-E) on all of the service quality dimensions.

**Kamrul Hasan and Abu Syeed Muhammed Abdullah (2013)** who studied the level of satisfaction among stayers and switchers of mobile phone services specifically found that switchers were more satisfied than stayers with respect to two factors: one was value added services and another one service prices. Furthermore, their study revealed that customers were satisfied over network coverage, faster internet service, customer service, price of SIM/RIM card, help line services and news, sports and other value added services.

**Srivastava and Ashish Bhatnagar (2013)** studied the impact of customer care services on customer satisfaction of mobile phone subscribers in Uttar Pradesh of India. Results of the study revealed that major market share holders were Airtel, Vodafone followed by Reliance and BSNL. Almost majority of the subscribers were dissatisfied with customer care services and their executives' responses towards queries of the mobile phone subscribers as well. They found out that there is close connection between subscribers' overall satisfaction and customer care services.

**Remedios, Richard (2013)** pointed out that almost more

than fifty five percent of the respondents were satisfied where as a few of the customer were highly satisfied with their mobile phone service providers' services, further combination of services like network quality, billing, validity period and customer care support showed strong relationship with satisfaction while demographic variables showed weak relationship with higher level of satisfaction of mobile phone services.

**Ode Egena (2013)** found a close connection between service delivery quality and customer satisfaction. Service delivery and reliability had a positive connection with customer satisfaction.

**Falilat Ajoke Abdul et al. (2014)** found out that quality customer care service, network quality, pricing practices had a close connection with customer satisfaction.

**Muthamizh Vendan Murugavel (2014)** examined the factors influencing the customers to change their mobile service providers often. He found out that cost and network coverage factors have been ranked as the significant factors influencing the customers to change their mobile service operators using MNP service.

**Niranjan Baig Meerja (2014)** pointed out that in recent days, in order to delight mobile phone customers, companies need to provide facilities like 2G, 3G, 4G technology and customer care services.

**Shartsood and Reetusood (2015)** found that customers in Punjab are not highly satisfied with the offers by cellular phone operators.

**Research Gap:** Research gap is a research question or problem which has not been answered appropriately at all in a given field of study. So far researchers conducted the research about customers' satisfaction on services provided by mobile network service providers but this research is mainly focusing on customers' delight of services provided by the mobile network service providers.

#### OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The prime objective of the study is to know the top most and least delighted customer care services and to determine whether customer delight among pre or post paid subscribers of mobile network, with respect to customer care services differ or not.

This research is basically descriptive in nature which includes survey of one hundred mobile phone network subscribers in and around coimbatore city. By considering previous literature, research objectives, research questionnaire were framed. The structured questionnaire consists of demographic details, mobile network subscribed and seventeen customer care services. In order to get response on seventeen services offered by various mobile network providers, there was a focus group discussion that was carried out among the final year MBA students who are mobile network subscribers as well as who had experienced with customer care services with respective mobile network service providers.

The Geographical area of this study is confined with Coimbatore city. The respondents of the study were asked to rate their delight level about customer care services/query handling related to various customer complaints etc., in five point likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). In order to prove the framed objectives, Statistical techniques such as simple percentage analysis, mean analysis, Standard Deviation and independent sample t test have been applied.

#### Limitations of the study

The research is conducted in the Coimbatore city and this may not represent the opinion of customers of other cities in India. Most of the respondents were not maintaining proper knowledge of various services provided by their service provider, so they were unable to provide exact information. Some of the respondents were using the service for the first time

from their service provider and they were not able to properly differentiate among their services. The liking or loyalty of the respondents to a particular service provider might have made them to respond in a biased manner.

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Demographic profile		Frequency and Percentage		Mobile Network		Frequency and Percentage	
Gender	Male	67	67.0	Mobile Plan	Prepaid	81	81.0
	Female	33	33.0		Postpaid	19	19.0
Age	18-30	54	54.0	No of Mobile Network	1	47	47.0
	30-40	36	36.0		2	25	25.0
	40-50	10	10.0		> Two	28	28.0
Marital Status	Married	54	54.0	Duration of Service used	1 Year	36	36.0
	Unmarried	46	46.0		2years	29	29.0
Occupation	Employee	38	38.0	Reason For Selection	3 years	13	13.0
	Business	5	5.0		>3 years	22	22.0
	Student	44	44.0		Coverage	30	30.0
	Others	13	13.0		Offers	53	53.0
Education	SSLC	8	8.0	Monthly Re-charge	Cost	11	11.0
	HSC	9	9.0		Others	6	6.0
	Diploma	10	10.0		100Rs	36	36.0
	UG	43	43.0		200Rs	22	22.0
	PG	30	30.0		300Rs	33	33.0
Monthly Income	Below 10000	19	19.0	Above 300rs	9	9.0	
	10000 to 15000	43	43.0				
	15000rs to 20000rs	31	31.0				
	Above 20000rs	7	7.0				

Source: Primary data

**Demographic Profile:** Compared to female respondents, male respondents were more which accounted for nearly 67%. Almost 54% of the respondents were in the age group 18-30 years and were married, which accounted for 54%. As regards this occupation, almost 44% of respondents had students and 43% of the respondents had completed their undergraduate. Nearly 43% of the respondents had income ranging between Rs10001 -Rs15000.

**Mobile network:** Majority of them (81%) were prepaid customers of different mobile networks. Almost 47% of the respondents had only one mobile network connection, 36% of them were using the same mobile network since one year of the survey conducted, 53% of them selected their mobile network because of its offers and almost 36% of them had a monthly recharge for Rs 100.

**MOST TOP AND LEAST DELIGHTING ATTITUDE PERCEIVED BY THE RESPONDENTS**

S.No	Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean	S.D
1	I am delighted because customer care neatly handling the general queries and services	100	3.8300	1.05462

S.No	Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean	S.D
2	I am delighted with Customer care positive handling of caller tunes services	100	3.2800	1.14662
3	I am delighted with Customer care energetically handles services related SMS charges	100	3.2700	1.25412
4	I am delighted with customer care wholehearted efforts on frequent mobile advertisement queries	100	3.2500	1.16667
5	I am delighted with Customer care energetically handling activation and deactivation services	100	3.2300	1.16216
6	I am delighted with Customer care convincingly handling network coverage services	100	3.2100	1.32798
7	I am delighted with Customer care timely service on customer queries	100	3.1300	1.13400
8	I am delighted with Customer care oomph towards value added service	100	3.0900	1.25606
9	I am happy with customer care interests in handling network innovativeness queries	100	3.0800	1.24462
10	I am happy with speed and accuracy of Customer care complaints handling system	100	3.0800	1.30019
11	I am satisfied with customer care concerned way of handling problems and complaints	100	3.0800	1.08879
12	I am happy with Customer care energetically handling queries related call rate charges	100	3.0700	1.24117
13	I am happy with Customer care cordial response towards unauthorized deduction of amount	100	3.0700	1.17426
14	I am delighted with customer care whole hearted support on recharge related queries	100	2.9700	1.21817
15	I am happy with Customer care information regarding special offers	100	2.9500	1.25025
16	I am happy with Customer care interactive system timing	100	2.8500	1.16667
17	I am delighted with Customer care enthusiastically handles mobile internet services	100	2.7000	1.12367

Source: Primary data

**MOST TOP AND LEAST DELIGHTED CUSTOMER CARE COMPLAINT HANDLING SERVICES:**

Pre and postpaid customers were requested to give their pleasure level about customer care complaint handling services with respect to subscriber's complaints about various services offered by the respective mobile network services providers. On the basis of mean analysis and result of the study formulated of the seventeen situations, it was found out that the most delighted customer care complaint handling services are general queries and services (3.83), caller tune complaints services (3.28), SMS charges (3.27), frequent mobile phone advertisements (3.25) and activation and deactivation services (3.23). Further, it can be understood that, the least delighted complaint handling services were mobile internet services (2.7), customer interactive system timing (2.85), special offer complaints (2.95), recharge related queries(2.97). Delight level among the pre and post paid customers were comparatively low when it came to the complaint handling of queries related to unauthorized deduction.

**PRE-PAID AND POST- PAID CUSTOMERS OPINION OF DELIGHTFULL CUSTOMER CARE SERVICES**

					Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
Group Statistics					F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Mobile plan	N	M	SD							
1	Prepaid	81	3.7778	1.11803	EVA	11.360	.001	-1.023	98	.309
	Postpaid	19	4.0526	.70504	EVNA			-1.348	42.195	.185
2	Prepaid	81	3.2716	1.18335	EVA	1.992	.161	-.150	98	.881
	Postpaid	19	3.3158	1.00292	EVNA			-.167	30.933	.869
3	Prepaid	81	3.2346	1.29684	EVA	.749	.389	.380	98	.705
	Postpaid	19	3.1053	1.48678	EVNA			.349	24.820	.730
4	Prepaid	81	3.3457	1.17431	EVA	2.392	.125	2.090	98	.039
	Postpaid	19	2.7368	.99119	EVNA			2.322	31.047	.027
5	Prepaid	81	2.9877	1.29898	EVA	2.953	.089	.620	98	.537
	Postpaid	19	2.7895	1.03166	EVNA			.715	32.854	.480
6	Prepaid	81	3.0494	1.22374	EVA	.513	.476	-.506	98	.614
	Postpaid	19	3.2105	1.35724	EVNA			-.474	25.312	.639
7	Prepaid	81	3.0247	1.23466	EVA	1.438	.233	.926	98	.357
	Postpaid	19	2.7368	1.14708	EVNA			.970	28.637	.340
8	Prepaid	81	3.0370	1.10050	EVA	.244	.622	-.813	98	.418
	Postpaid	19	3.2632	1.04574	EVNA			-.840	28.140	.408
9	Prepaid	81	3.1728	1.11569	EVA	.740	.392	-1.372	98	.173
	Postpaid	19	3.5789	1.34643	EVNA			-1.220	24.124	.234
10	Prepaid	81	2.9877	1.25990	EVA	1.937	.167	-1.376	98	.172
	Postpaid	19	3.4211	1.12130	EVNA			-1.480	29.654	.149
11	Prepaid	81	3.1852	1.22588	EVA	.385	.536	-1.403	98	.164
	Postpaid	19	3.6316	1.34208	EVNA			-1.326	25.515	.197
12	Prepaid	81	2.6420	1.05248	EVA	4.748	.032	-1.067	98	.289
	Postpaid	19	2.9474	1.39338	EVNA			-.897	23.047	.379
13	Prepaid	81	2.9877	1.30857	EVA	.674	.414	-1.475	98	.143
	Postpaid	19	3.4737	1.21876	EVNA			-1.542	28.581	.134
14	Prepaid	81	2.9630	1.24944	EVA	.601	.440	-2.125	98	.036
	Postpaid	19	3.6316	1.16479	EVNA			-2.220	28.560	.034
15	Prepaid	81	3.1111	1.11803	EVA	.940	.335	-.342	98	.733
	Postpaid	19	3.2105	1.22832	EVNA			-.323	25.460	.749
16	Prepaid	81	3.0000	1.15109	EVA	.617	.434	-1.234	98	.220
	Postpaid	19	3.3684	1.25656	EVNA			-1.168	25.561	.254
17	Prepaid	81	2.8395	1.16680	EVA	.031	.861	-.185	98	.854
	Postpaid	19	2.8947	1.19697	EVNA			-.182	26.621	.857

Source: Primary data

\*EVA - Equal Variance Assumed

\* EVNA – Equal Variance Not Assumed

(1). I am delighted because customer care neatly handling the general queries and services. (2). I am delighted with Customer care positive handling of caller tunes services. (3). I am delighted with Customer care convincingly handling network coverage services. (4). I am delighted with Customer care energetically handling activation and deactivation services. (5). I am happy with Customer care information regarding special offers. (6). I am happy with customer care interests in handling network innovativeness queries. (7). I am delighted with customer care whole hearted support on recharge related queries. (8). I am satisfied with customer care customer concerned way of handling problems and complaints. (9). I am delighted with customer care wholehearted efforts on frequent mobile advertisement queries. (10). I am happy with Customer care energetically handling queries related call rate charges. (11). I am delighted with Customer care energetically handles queries on SMS charges. (12). I am delighted with Customer care enthusiastically handles mobile internet services. (13). I am happy with speed and accuracy of Customer care complaints handling system. (14). I am delighted with Customer care oomph towards value added service. (15). I am delighted with Customer care timely service on customer queries. (16). I am happy with Customer care cardinal response towards unauthorized deduction of amount. (17). I am happy with Customer care interactive system timing.

### FINDINGS:

An independent sample t test was performed to know pre-paid and post paid customers' delight level on customer care services of mobile network which was currently hold by them. The results of the study revealed that, out of seventeen situations experienced by the respondents, only for two situations, their opinion significantly differing. Specifically, Comparing to postpaid customers, pre –paid customers were more delighted with customer care services in relation with activation and deactivation complaints whereas postpaid customers were more delighted with customer care services in relation with value added service complaints.

### SUGGESTIONS

It is found that pre –paid customers were more delighted with customer care services in relation with activation and deactivation complaints. This shows that the activation and deactivation services delivered to the post paid customers are comparatively poor. Hence, it is suggested that all the network service providers in the study area should make necessary steps to settle down the activation and deactivation complaints of post paid customers as quickly as possible.

It is found that Post paid customers were more delighted with customer care services in relation with value added service complaints. Hence, it is suggested that all the network service providers in the study area may have to concentrate on ensuring the quick handling of value added service complaints in order to increase the delight level of the pre paid customers.

### CONCLUSION:

Current research on Pre-paid and Post-Paid customers delight on customer care post purchase services brings out interesting facts and figures about the level of delight on customer care services at the time of subscribers' communication or queries/complaints related to various services offered by the respective mobile network providers in Coimbatore city. Men subscribers were more participative than women subscribers who give clues to the competition of the Mobile phone users segment in Coimbatore city which is dominated by male. Young people like students and those married which have a nominal education background were the major mobile network subscribers; prepaid users were more in number than post paid users and the reason for using specific mobile network was due to offers and promotional schemes. General queries, caller tune complaint services, SMS charges, request for stoppage of frequent mobile phone advertisements and uncertainty of activation or deactivation services were the most which satisfied/delighted customers' regarding their queries or complaints. It means these customers enjoyed im-

mediate responses to those complaints or queries which, in turn, resulted in extreme satisfaction

On the other hand, customer care services did not meet the customer expectations fully. Subscribers receiving poor response regarding special offers, recharge related issues and unauthorized deductions resulted in them lower level of happiness. The study also found that comparing to post-paid customers, pre –paid customers were more delighted with customer care services in relation to activation and deactivation complaints as for the rest of the services, the customer delight level was almost the same among both kinds of subscribers. The mobile network providers may reset the services which are not delighting their customers; otherwise there may be a possibility of customers switching to some other brands. However, the present study is limited to a particular geographical location. Hence it is suggested that future research extends this kind of study to other geographical locations

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