



An Empirical study on the Employee satisfaction of selected Telecom Service Providers in India

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Abstract:

Telecom services are the need of modern day society. The companies in the telecom sector are facing cut throat competition in the market. The major players are spending big budgets to train their employees so that the learned employees stay for a longer period of time with the company. So the importance of employee satisfaction is increasing day by day. In the present study employee satisfaction in telecom sector has been measured by asking the employees about satisfaction for employee retention, Employee training and increase in skills, Employee Incentives, Team Building and communication. The same has also been studied in this paper. The correlational and regression has been applied.

Introduction:

Employee satisfaction is one of the most important elements for the success of any organization and the telecom sector is no exception. Also employee satisfaction has been used as measure of the non-financial measure of the organization. So in the current research employee satisfaction has been taken as one of the elements. The employee satisfaction depends upon the various factors such as Employee retention, Employee training and increase in skills, Employee Incentives, Team Building and communication.

Literature Review:

In this section the various learning and growth initiatives that have been undertaken by various companies within the Indian telecom industry has been reviewed.

The official web page of Tata Teleservices lists the various employee engagement activities that are carried out by the company for growth, where training is given a priority. The employees are trained by means of innovative workshops, e-learning sessions, customized training choices and developed through various career progression and advancement policies. The leadership programs are carried out through Tata Management Institute which is considered to be of high strategic value (Rodrigues, 2009)

As a visionary, Bharti Learning systems was founded to train the Bharti group of companies on continuous learning and capability. Later it was changed to Centum Learning systems and now it is providing training solutions to more than Bharti group across the globe with 90 locations. Their core idea of training is to create a global Indian manager. It's supported by the content, certification standards, assessment methodologies which are of global focus. Simultaneously partnerships are created with different agencies like government for vocational training, industry linkages for placements, international training providers for content development and so on. Airtel sales university is established by Centum and managers are trained for outsourcing to even other countries based on their requirement (Scherer, 2010).

Amit Gupta, Dhar, & Kushwah, (2010) also discusses about the effectiveness of training and conducted an on the job skill evaluation assessment analysis in Airtel. They conducted this assessment between the trained group and a non-trained group of sales cum service department and identified that training was the prime reason for results and knowledge transfer than the other group. It also signifies the specific skill assessment methods used in Airtel for the same.

On a substantial note, Bharti Airtel's average training days per employee per year in the year 2010 was 48 days as per the Business Today data cited in a special edition of Employee Training and Development by (Noe & Kodwani, 2012). The number of days is quite good as it was in the second place out of Indian companies and next to Microsoft which stood first. It is important to mention that it was the only telecom company listed amongst the other IT companies. Another fact is that in the previous years, Airtel was not part of the list. This shows that the learning initiatives have increased in Airtel in the recent years so that it is able to rule the telecom industry.

As innovation is inevitable for the growth perspective of an organization, TATA group which is known for its many firsts, have their unique TATA group Innovation Forum which includes people of similar mindset across all the companies in the group. Regular workshops, yearly events, and innovation platforms are provided for the same which carries remarkable exposure and experience to the innovation fanatics, as the company has a rich heritage across several domains (Kuratko, 2013)

While the digital media, HR Zone's interview with the learning and capability manager of Vodafone, Helen Jackson, asserts that the company uses global Learning Management systems to transform their employees. She lists the future trends or initiatives in learning as any device learning compatibility; similar to social learning, community sharing and learning within the company, Just-in-Time learning, on the job – relearning and so on. She also accepts that the line managers are the leading drivers for learning and insists that learning culture need to be created across the organization. She gives due importance to easily accessible, relevant and contextual learning in alignment to the organizational objectives (Lawrence, 2013).

As an advancement of the initiatives, the business news article in The Hindu reported the Vodafone's plans to expand its capacities and also invest in a high end technology center in India. It stated that the company is in the process of expanding its customer service centers creating nearly 15,000 job opportunities for the young talent after providing them the required skills and training in the next 2 years. It is also interested in the government's initiatives like 'Digital India' and 'Make in India' as a second largest telecom provider of India next to BhartiAirtel's. Its increase in the revenue, customer base and data traffic is a proof of its growth and Vodafone India is the third largest contributor in terms of revenue among the Vodafone group across the world (Pandey, 2014).

However on analyzing the training practices by the Indian telecom leaders like Airtel, Vodafone, Idea with reference to their sustainability aspect, (Patil & Chettarjee, 2014) derived at the following inferences. It was observed that Bharti Airtel topped the list compared to Vodafone and Idea in terms of attributes such as importance given for training, knowledge cum skill management, impact of training initiatives and also the association of training parameters. The market share of Airtel is itself a proof that its learning and growth aspect helps it to sustain in the market with competitive edge against the other players.

As per an interview published in ET Telecom that belongs to the Economic Times group, by Airtel Chief HR Officer, Sandeep Gandhi, reports that Airtel Academy the training division of Airtel has taken some unique initiatives which proves them to be talent ready at all times. Airtel academy has tie ups for corporate programs with IIM Ahmedabad and XLRI in India; and internationally with Harvard Business School, Duke University and Stanford College for leadership development programs (Khan, 2014).

E-learning, Job sharing, Job rotation, High visibility assignment, Apprenticeship are some of the maximum existing employee developmental practices in the public sector telecom companies such as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd (MTNL) as mentioned in a case study conducted in NCR region (Dhingra & Gakhar, 2014)

It is also understood that as an industry- institute tie up initiative, BITS Pilani has collaborated with many companies including Idea Cellular to mutually get benefitted to each other in terms of high standards, specific vocational training and innovation (Infokerala, 2015). Idea Cellular

has their own in-house university called Gnanodaya and new leadership initiatives such as ‘Step up’ and ‘Turning Point’. Similarly they have P&L Leadership Development program called ‘Cutting Edge’ (IdeaAnnualReport, 2013).

But, according to the learning and development details in the corporate web page of (VodafoneIndia, 2016), four abilities are focused - the business, functional, interpersonal and leadership as per the individual’s role. The company’s e-learning initiatives are tied up with Harvard University’s e-learning platforms. They have several leadership programs like Building Leaders of Tomorrow (BOLT), Young Leaders Program, Globe Inspire Program, and Leadership Acceleration Program at the national and international level to create future leaders within the organization. The company also believes in complementing the formal training with networking, coaching and mentoring initiatives. Sampling Plan: 60 middle level employees were approached to gain the answers for the initiatives taken for employee satisfaction however only 50 middle level employees fill the form completely.

Descriptive Analysis: The descriptive analysis helps to get the overview of the collected data and the respondents included in the sample. As shown in the figure below the age wise distribution of the respondents show that most of the middle level managers (44 %) are in the age group of 31- 40 years .

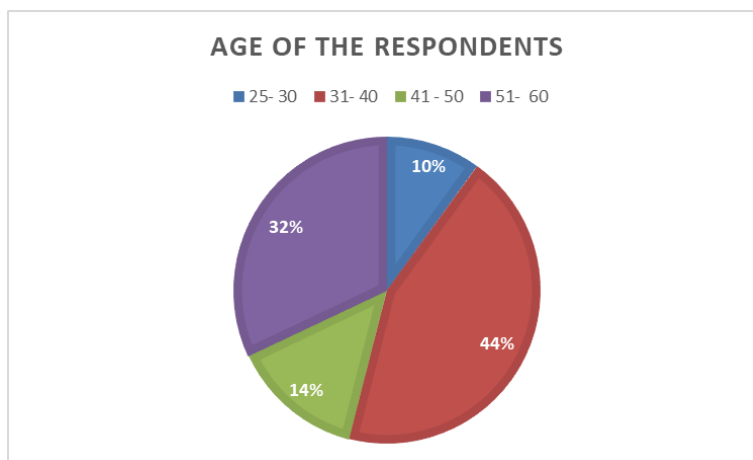


Figure 1: Age wise distribution of the respondents

Similarly, the results also show that in terms of educational qualification most of the managers are post graduate (54 %) and 40 % are graduate. The work experience of most of the middle level managers working in the telecom sector ranges from 1 – 5 years, whereas around 30 % of them have more than 10 years of experience in the sector.

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
25- 30	5	10.0	10.0	10.0
31- 40	22	44.0	44.0	54.0
Valid 41 – 50	7	14.0	14.0	68.0
51- 60	16	32.0	32.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 1: Age of the respondents

The department wise distribution of the managers included in the sample shows that 38 % of them were in the customer service department, 26 % in the human resource department, 26 % in finance and rest of the 10 % in other administrative works. Similarly, among the 50 managers surveyed 38 % of them have annual income of 5 – 10 lakhs whereas 26 % earn more than 10 lakh per annum.

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Graduate	20	40.0	40.0	40.0
Post Graduate	27	54.0	54.0	94.0
Diploma	2	4.0	4.0	98.0
Other	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 Educational qualification

During the survey the middle level managers were also asked about the current situation of learning and skill improvement in their respective companies. When asked about whether their organization promotes training and development of the employees, most of the managers said yes, while around 40 % said No and some of the managers were not sure.

Work Experience	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-1 years	3	6.0	6.0	6.0
1-5 years	23	46.0	46.0	52.0
6-10 years	9	18.0	18.0	70.0
Valid More than 10 years	15	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Work Experience of Respondents

Similarly, in terms of availability of the latest technology in their organization, around 46 % said they have access to latest technology whereas similar percentage of managers said that is not available in their organization. In term of number of training session conducted in their organization for employees, 36 % of them said twice a year whereas around 22 % said only once a year.

Income	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 5 lakhs	11	22.0	22.0	22.0
5 – 10 lakhs	19	38.0	38.0	60.0
Valid 10 – 15 lakhs	7	14.0	14.0	74.0
Above 15 lakhs	13	26.0	26.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Income of the respondents

Results shows that the telecom companies are focusing in learning and training of the employees however enough opportunities and resources has not been provided for the same. The telecom companies should spend on research and development so that the learning process can be promoted in the organization which will eventually improve the overall performance of the organization.

Inferential Analysis

On the basis of the literature review various elements of the learning and skill improvement process in the telecom sector has been identified and the primary data for the same has been collected among 50 middle level managers in the selected telecom companies. On the basis of the data inferential analysis has been conducted using the correlation and regression analysis.

(a) Employee Retention

Retention of the talented employees in the organization can positively affect both the financial and non-financial performance of the organization. Frequent entry and exist of the employees can lead to increase in the cost of human resource management and also the cost of training. To examine the process of the employee retention in the telecom sector the middle level managers were asked about their strategies followed by them to retain the employee and the regression analysis has been conducted to find the impact of each of the strategy in the employee retention. For the regression analysis the employee retention was taken as the dependent variable and the various strategies for employee retention as the independent variation.

The correlation analysis was performed prior running the regression model and the Pearson correlation analysis shows variables included in the model are positively and significantly correlated so the regression analysis can be conducted.

As the value of the R^2 (adjusted) is 0.90 which indicates that the 90 % variation in the explained variable is due to the change in the explanatory variable and remaining variation is due to some other factors Also the F statistic shows significant result at 1 % suggests that the cumulative impact of the explanatory variables is significant. The Durbin- Watson result rejected the existence of the strong autocorrelation in the variables.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.202	.158		-1.285	.206
I ensure that the working environment is open & trustworthy	.273	.058	.278	4.715	.000
I ensure that the organization provides scope for better career development plans for the employees.	.320	.059	.340	5.409	.000
I ensure that the employees receive the right amount of recognition for my work.	.235	.065	.235	3.603	.001
I ensure that there is effective policy for retaining the talented employees in the organization.	.261	.064	.273	4.056	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: Employee retention
Adjusted R² : 0.90
F statistic : 0.000
D-W : 2.06

Table 5: Regression results for employee retention in telecom sector

The regression coefficient represents the effect of each explanatory variable on the explained variable. Results indicate that all the variables in the model shows positive and significant impact on the employee retention. This shows that the middle level managers are able to retain the employees in the organization using these strategies. The coefficient of effective policy (0.261) means that if effective policy in the organization increases by one unit the employee retention increases by 0.261 units keeping all other factors constant.

(b) Employees Training and improvement in skills

Training and development in the organization and the growth and the learning are positively related. Similarly the positive relation can be found between the learning of the employees and the performance of the organization. So the training and skill development are the main elements of the learning process. To examine the same in the telecom companies the inferential analysis has been conducted. The inferential is expected to examine the existence of the employees training in the telecom sector.

For the inferential analysis both the Pearson correlation and the multiple regression has been performed . Results from the correlation analysis has shown that variables included in the model are significantly and positively related to each other. Since the variables are correlated further analysis can be conducted to see the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variables. For the regression analysis purpose the training and the skill improvement of the employees has been taken as the dependent variable and the various steps taken by the management as the independent variables.

Following table shows that the explanatory variables included in the model are able to explain 89 % of the change in the explained variables. F statistic rejects the null hypothesis of every regression coefficient being zero. Autocorrelation of the variable tested using the D-W test and it show that the strong autocorrelation does not exists.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.207	.161		-1.285	.205
I ensure that the employees are satisfied with the training provided for their current job	.273	.064	.279	4.290	.000
I ensure that the job gives the opportunity to learn to all the employees.	.235	.071	.229	3.299	.002
I ensure that the adequate training is given to the employees which is required to do their job.	.330	.077	.337	4.285	.000
I ensure that the employees have all the tools and resources required to do their job.	.253	.062	.253	4.063	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: Employee training and increase in skills
Adjusted R² : 0.89
F statistic : 0.000
D-W : 2.1

Table 6: Regression results for employees training and learning in telecom sector

Similarly, the results from the regression coefficient suggests that each independent variable included in the model have significant and positive impact on employees training and improving skills as the p value of each variables is less than 0.05. Highly significant results for each variable can be due to the specific sample selection. The results could have been different if similar data was collected from the junior or lower level employees. The coefficient of ensuring the availability of the tools and resources can be interpreted as; if availability of the tools and the resources increases by one unit the employees training the skills improve by 0.235 units given that other things are held at constant. all other thing at constant.

(c) Employee satisfaction

Satisfaction of the employees increases both the productivity of employee as well as their engagement with the organization. This factor will eventually help the organization to achieve its organizational objectives (both the financial and non-financial). Various earlier scholars have also shown that employee satisfaction has significant impact on the employee's performance. In the current analysis to examine the employee's satisfaction (according to the middle level manager) the inferential analysis has been conducted. Employee satisfaction has been taken as the dependent variable and the possible factors affecting the employee satisfaction as the explanatory variable. Prior conducting the regression analysis the correlation analysis was conducted and it was found that most of the variables were significantly and positively correlated with each other.

Results from the linear regression analysis are presented in the following table . As the adjusted R square comes out to be 0.91 indicates that 91 % of change in the explained variable is because of the change in the explanatory variable and also the cumulative effect is significant as shown by the F statistic.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.269	.150		-1.789	.080
I ensure that there is adequate safety & health standard for the employees.	.273	.069	.258	3.939	.000
I conduct the survey every six months to measure the job satisfaction level of the employees.	.099	.063	.098	1.556	.127
I ensure that the employees get proper reward and recognition for their hard work.	.297	.077	.294	3.858	.000
I ensure that there is two-way feedback system, employees to supervisors and supervisors to employees.	.436	.073	.421	5.942	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee satisfaction

Adjusted R² : 0.91

F statistic : 0.000

D-W: 2.2

Table 7: Regression results for employee satisfaction in the telecom sector

The individual effect of the independent variables is shown by the regression coefficient and the results show that all the variables have positive and significant impact on the dependent variable except for the variable “conducting survey to examine the employee satisfaction” which do not show statistically significant result even at 10 % significance level. The coefficient of feedback system (0.436) can be interpreted as, with one unit increase in the feedback system the employee satisfaction increases by 0.436 units holding all other factor at constant. In a similar way other variable can also be interpreted.

(d) Employee incentive

Employee’s incentive has been taken as one of the elements to measure learning and growth prospects in the telecom sector. Employee incentive can be one of the major factors of the employees’ encouragement towards learning process in the organization. Without proper incentive the employees are not expected to participate in any kind of learning process or growth. The incentive can be both in the financial term such as hike in pay or bonus or in terms of non-financial terms such as the reward and recognition in the organization.

In the current research also to find the impact of various factors in the employee incentive the regression analysis was conducted. Employee incentive has been taken as the dependent variable and the various factors such a promotional opportunity, equal wage pay, yearly bonus and various insurance scheme has been taken as the independent variable. The correlation also shows the positive and significant association among the variables.

According to the results around 92 % of the change in the explained variable is due to the change in the explanatory variable. F statistic shows that the cumulative impact of the explanatory variable on the explained variable is significant as the F value is highly significant strong autocorrelation in the variables was rejected by the Durbin Watson test.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.164	.142		-1.153	.255
I ensure that various promotional opportunities are provided to the employees.	.175	.058	.175	3.038	.004
I ensure that there is no discrimination in salary paid to employees	.271	.067	.272	4.056	.000
I ensure that yearly bonus schemes are provided to the employees.	.300	.066	.297	4.565	.000
I ensure that , apart from fixed salary other benefits are provided to the employees such as health insurance, travel expenses, holiday packages etc.	.329	.067	.342	4.886	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: Employee Incentives
Adjusted R² : 0.92
F statistic : 0.000
D-W : 2.0

Table 8: Regression results for employee incentives in telecom sector

Impact of each explanatory variable on the explained variable was examined by the regression analysis. Results from the regression coefficient show that all the explanatory variables included in the model have positive and significant effect on the explained variable and the coefficients are highly significant. The coefficient of yearly bonus (0.300) can be interpreted as, if yearly bonus in the organization increases by one unit the employee incentives improves by 0.300 given that other things are held constant.

(e) Team Building

Team building among the employees can have positive impact on the overall performance of the employees and it is also considered to be one of the main motive of the managers in the organization to focus on team performance as compared to the individual performance. So to examine the team building environment in the telecom sector the inferential analysis has been performed. For the regression analysis team building was taken as the explained variable and the various possible factor affecting the team building as the independent variables. Prior conducting the regression, correlation analysis was performed using the Pearson correlation. Results show significant and positive relation between majority of the variables.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.175	.135		-1.295	.202
I ensure that the supervisors support the lower level employees to perform their job.	.297	.066	.308	4.506	.000
I ensure that the proper support and guidance is provided to the employees from the higher level.	.122	.046	.122	2.657	.011
I promote and encourage the employees to work as a team.	.355	.069	.361	5.128	.000
I ensure that various activities are conducted in the organization to improve the bonding among the employees.	.292	.066	.290	4.408	.000

Table 9: Regression results for team building in telecom sector

The regression results are shown in the above table as per the results 93 % of the variation in the explained variable is due to the explanatory variables in the model. The cumulative impact of these independent variable is also significant. The Durbin Watson test show that autocorrelation in the variables do not exists .

Results from the regression coefficients shows that all the explanatory t variables included in the model have significant and positive impact on the explained variable and all the variables are significant at either 1 % of 5 % significance level. The coefficient of the supervisor support can be interpreted as, with one unit increase in the support from the supervisor the team building environment in the telecom industry increase by 0.297 units holding all the factor constant. Similar interpretation can be given for the remaining variables.

(f) Communication

Lastly communication has been included as one of the major elements of the learning and growth in the telecom sector. Data for the communication was also collected among the middle level managers in the selected telecom companies and inferential analysis was conducted to examine whether the independent variables in the regression model have significant impact on the explained variable or not. Prior running the regression model, correlation among the variables was tested using the Pearson correlation. Results f show that most of the variables in the model are positively and significantly and correlated.

Results from the regression analysis are shown in the following table. As the results shows that the explanatory variables in the current model are responsible for 87 % of the variation in the dependent variables whereas remaining variation is due to other factors. The cumulative impact of these independent variable is also significant as the F statistic is highly significant at 1 %. The existence of strong correlation among the variables is rejected by the result from the Durbin Watson test.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.542	.193		-2.810	.007
I ensure that there is good communication from managers to employees in the organization.	.252	.055	.260	4.549	.000
I ensure that the people in every department communicate sufficiently with one another.	.300	.060	.295	4.987	.000
I ensure that the employees in organization can directly communicate with the top level management.	.353	.062	.356	5.660	.000
I ensure that the company clearly communicates its goals and strategies to the employees.	.303	.058	.310	5.218	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: Communication
Adjusted R2 : 0.87
F statistic : 0.000
D-W : 2.3

Table 10: Regression results for communication in telecom sector

Impact of each explanatory variables on the explained variable is given by the regression coefficient in the above table. As the results show all the explanatory variable have positive and significant impact on the explained variable which is communication in this case. The coefficient of direct communication between the employees and the top management level (0.353) can be interpreted as, with one unit increase in the direct communication the overall communication process in the organization improves by 0.353 units keeping all other variables at constant.

Conclusion:

The employee is asked about the satisfaction for employee retention, Employee training and increase in skills, Employee Incentives, Team Building and communication. As per the results all the factors included in the model have positive and significant impact on the employee satisfaction. All the coefficient are significant at 5 % significant level. The most important factor is employee satisfaction. The variable namely the effective policy is ranked highest to serve the employee retention. Results showed that supervisor support is needed for team building. Yearly bonus matters a lot for employee performance. Employees can be retained by opting effective policy.

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