Perception Of Service Quality Impacting Technical Quality And Overall Customer Satisfaction With Mobile Network Services In Erode District

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
(empty)	In this era of sophisticated communications and technologies of the various mobile network service providers in India, by and large, the majority of the people have chosen Airtel, Jio, Vodafone/Idea or BSNL. Both developed and developing nations' economies heavily rely on telecommunication service providers. At 1.17 billion users (wireless + wire line subscribers) as of August 2022, India has the second-largest telecom industry worldwide. Overall, India has a tela-density of 85.15 percent, with tela-densities in 58.44 percent of the rural market, which is largely untapped, and 134.71% of the urban market. It puts enough pressure on mobile service providers to put all of their resources and efforts into meeting and, ideally, exceeding customers' expectations. Naturally, this makes it difficult to attract people to them; therefore, the only way to accomplish this is to make high-quality services easily accessible. to determine how Erode's mobile network service satisfaction and technical quality are affected by customer perceptions of service quality. Non-probability sampling is used in the study, with thirty-six (306) respondents chosen as samples. The review utilizes measurable techniques like Elucidating Measurements, Corroborative Element Investigation, and Primary Condition Demonstrating. The outcomes demonstrate that the telecom service providers are adhering to the specifications; Nonetheless, new development strategies can be planned to increase customer satisfaction. The telecom industry's rapid expansion over the past few years has been aided by competitive prices, increased accessibility, the introduction of Mobile Number Portability (MNP), expanding 3G and 4G coverage, shifting subscriber consumption patterns, government initiatives to increase India's domestic telecom manufacturing capacity, and a supportive regulatory environment. **Key Words:** Telecommunication, Service Provider, Service Quality, Technical Quality, Satisfaction, etc...

1. INTRODUCTION

Telecommunication service providers play a important role in the economies of both the developed and developing countries, in this age of advanced communications and technologies. It has been envisioned and anticipated that India's telecom industry will play a significant role in determining the country's development towards its objective of becoming a developed country in the view of the rest of the world by the year 2022. It is observed that there is a stiff competition between many service providers in India, and the authors chose to look at two of them, namely Airtel, Jio also other players like Vodaphone/Idea and BSNL, who are close competitors and they fall into these categories and they contribute equally in magnitude towards providing Landline, Mobile Services and Broadband services. As for any commodity, the most crucial factor that determines survival of any product in the market is level of customer satisfaction. Another element that should be taken into account is that clients are growing more and more knowledgeable about service quality and are also aware of it. The vast majority of individuals in India have selected Airtel, Jio, Vodafone/Idea, or BSNL out of the many mobile network service providers. There has

been a lot of research on many facets of service quality over the past few years, providing both researchers and practitioners with a solid conceptual foundation. Depending on the context of the transaction, a customer's happiness may be viewed as cumulative or transaction-specific.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Meena Suguanthi. G, **(2017),** opened up her study with the customer centered premise, where the customer is equated to being the heart of an industry. The emphasis only gets stronger, when it comes to Telecommunication industry, which is completely a service oriented industry, where customers' satisfaction is at the helm of the business. The study was undertaken within the confines of Sathyamanagalam, in the state of Tamil Nadu, using a structured questionnaire approach, and about 100 customers were sampled for this study. Using the background from literature, the researchers built a customer perception model incorporating several variables into the model. They are: a) interest; b) accuracy; c) warranty; d) distinction; e) appreciation; and f) sensed network quality. SPSS, statistical software package was used for the analysis of the data, and it was found that perceived quality, perceived value and company image mattered a great deal among the customers, and the data was also found to be statistically significant.

Shamsudin and others, (2020) 80 This study is zeroing in on the client discernment towards administration quality in the media transmission industry in Malaysia. The penetration rate in Malaysia has increased to more than 100%, indicating that each Malaysian has at least one telecommunications provider-registered account. Because they are only fishing for a small number of fish in a small area, the telecommunications industry is becoming increasingly competitive. The questionnaire was used to collect data through random sampling in this quantitative study. Smart PLS was used to analyze 150 usable respondents. The outcomes show that client is more worries on the help quality and trust instead of brand picture and cost. Customer satisfaction was not positively influenced by price or brand image. One strong reason is that the services and packages offered are almost identical in price and cover nearly all common areas. The outcome can be involved by the specialist organization for their persistent short and long haul methodology.

According to **GeofreyMumba's study from 2021 (p. 82),** customers in the current telecom industry continually demand improved assistance and product delivery. Even though mobile service quality is improving, Zambia's mobile telecom industry still has many quality service gaps. Meanwhile, there has been an increase in client protests with respect to disappointing help. The purpose of this study was to compare the Quality of Service (QoS) parameters set by the National Regulatory Authority (ZICTA) to the QoSthat customers of various service providers received. The essential focal point of the examination was on the Call Arrangement Time (CST), Call Drop Rate (CDR), Call Arrangement Achievement Rate (CSSR), Mean Assessment Score (MOS)/Sound Voice Quality, Fruitful SMS Rate (SSR), and SMS Conveyance Time. According to the findings of the study, each and every one of Zambia's mobile telecom service providers has either failed to meet the minimum requirement outlined in the guidelines for quality of service or has provided their services in inconsistent ways.

According to MeenuSingla and Others, 2022) 86, a company's expansion is dependent on the quality of its customer service. Associations are being constrained to zero in on assist quality with supporting shopper steadfastness and, hence, the affiliation's long efficiency. The SERVQUAL model and five service quality dimensions—Tan (tangibility), Rel (reliability), Assu (assurance), Emp (empathy), and Resp (responsiveness)—are used in the current study to attempt to predict service quality. The five districts of Punjab—Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Mohali, and Patiala—were chosen as the sample for the study due to the competitive environment, large population, and concentration of industry. 580 people's information has been gathered through a survey. Service quality (SQ) has a significant and beneficial effect on CS, and tangibility, assurance, and empathy are strongly correlated with customer satisfaction.

Christian Friday Akpan and colleagues, (2022) 85, in light of an example of cell phone clients in the metropolitan city of Enugu in the eastern piece of Nigeria. From among the four Nigerian mobile phone companies—MTN, GLO, Airtel, and 9mobile—the respondents were chosen at random. To take part in the study, respondents probably involved the portable help for something like one year. Eventually, out of the 300 duplicates of the polls that were given out, 250 were viewed as usable, which prompted a 83% reaction rate. All of the items were modified to fit the context of the current study. According to the findings, a telecom provider's reliability has the greatest statistical impact on customer satisfaction. Dependability showed an amazing negative relationship with faithfulness, demonstrating that an organization supplier's responsiveness affects client reliability. The implications for theory and practice are discussed.

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since liberalization the Indian market being open to even the Foreign Service providers, has seen the expansion of the country's market in the mobile service sector, beyond the conventional urban middle class consumers who play a key role in most markets, but has opened the same to both the both urban and rural areas, comprising of all the economies, breaching the hierarchies. It places enough pressure on the mobile service providers to completely focus all their resources and energies towards meeting the expectations of customers, preferably exceeding them. Of course this comes with the challenges towards attracting the customers towards them, and this can only be done by making available high quality of services. This entails a rise in the price of acquiring new clients, keeping them once they've been won over, and subsequently growing their subscriber base. In an environment of fierce competition, retaining customers would be the primary focus, and this can only be accomplished when providers are able to scale up their service quality. All of the mobile companies are fully engaged in these activities. As a result, rather than focusing solely on technical quality and customer satisfaction, it is crucial to evaluate the service quality provided by Airtel, Jio, Vodafone/Idea, BSNL, and others in terms of five service quality dimensions: tangibleness, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

➢ To analyze how customer perceptions of service quality affect the technical quality and overall satisfaction with mobile network services in the Erode Districts.

5. METHODOLOGY

The term "research" simply means the pursuit of knowledge. The descriptive nature of research design. This piece of research is wholly dependent on the primary information gathered for researching the aforementioned goals among diverse people within the Erode municipal borders. However, the secondary materials gathered contributed to further strengthening the research project. Taking into account people's convenience, accessibility, and availability, the research employed the non-probability sampling method. According to Bryman and Bell (2007)1, convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and quota sampling are the three types of non-probability sampling. A sample that is convenient for the researcher is called a convenience sample. Comfort testing plays a surprisingly critical effect, which is a dangerous part of this sort of non-likelihood examining in light of the fact that it makes it difficult to sum up the outcomes. The main areas of Erode District are divided into five zones—North, South, East, West, and Central—for administrative convenience. Each zone has four wards. Each ward had approximately 20 respondents, and Airtel Network utility was taken into account. Then, there were 500 people who took part in the study: five zones, four wards from each zone, and twenty people from each ward. The information were gathered from these respondents utilizing organized survey. Out of the 400 surveys gathered 94 were dismissed because of inadequacy. As a result, the study had 306 valid questionnaires. For the purpose of data analysis, thirty-six (306) responses were chosen. The study makes use of statistical techniques like structural equation modeling, confirmatory factor analysis, and descriptive statistics.

6. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Initially, demographic characteristics of the network users are analyzed followed by descriptive statistics explaining the mean, SD and reliability of the constructs followed by the CFA model measuring the construct, convergent and discriminant validities of the constructs and finally, the path model analysis (SEM) computing the direct effect between service quality constructs (independent) and perception on technical quality (dependent-1) as well as overall satisfaction (dependent-2).

Table shows demography of the network users grouped in accordance with their age, gender, marital status, level of education, occupation, and monthly income.

Table 1: Demography of the respondents

Sl.	Demography	Frequency (306 Nos.)	Percentage (100%)
1.	**Age**		
	20 to 29 years	75	24.5
	30 to 39 years	82	26.8
	40 to 49 years	111	36.3
	Above 50 years	38	12.4
2.	**Gender**		
	Male	182	59.5
	Female	124	40.5

3.	**Marital Status**			
	Married	204	66.7	
	Unmarried	102	33.3	
4.	**Educational Qualification**			
	Graduate	64	20.9	
	Post Graduate	136	44.4	
	Professionals	57	18.6	
	Others (Schooling / ITI / Diploma / Technical Edu, etc.)	49	16.0	
5.	**Occupation**			
	Government Sector	89	29.1	
	Private Sector	104	34.0	
	Self Employed	113	36.9	
6.	**Monthly Income**			
	Below Rs.20,000	55	18.0	
	Rs.20,001 to Rs.30,000	78	25.5	
	Rs.30,001 to Rs.40,000	142	46.4	
	Above Rs.40,000	31	10.1	

A maximum of 36.3% of respondents are between the ages of 40 and 49, 268.8% are between the ages of 30 and 39, 24.5 percent are under 30, and 12.4 percent are over 50. The majority of respondents are male (59.5%), while 40.5% are female. The majority of respondents (66.7%) are married, while 33.3% are not married. Only 44.4 percent of respondents are postgraduates, 20.9 percent are undergraduates, 18.6 percent are professionals, and the remaining 16% have additional qualifications like formal education. ITI/Diploma/ Technical Education respectively. More than one third (36.9%) of the respondents are self employed and 34% are working in private sector and the remaining 29.1% are working in government organizations. Nearly half (46.4%) of the respondents are earning between Rs.30001 and Rs.40000, 25.5% of the respondents are earning Rs.20001 to 30000 per month, 18% have income below Rs.20000 and the remaining 10.1% are earning above 40000.

6.1. Descriptive Statistics
In the Table 2. descriptive statistics measuring mean, SD, and reliability based on Cronbach's alpha are shown for all Service Qlituay constructs measuring Technical Quality and Customer Satisfaction with Services Offered by Different Networks.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of Service Quality and Satisfaction

Sl. No.	Constructs	Code	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	**Reliability**				
	Providing service as promised	Rel1	3.30	1.237	
	Dependability in handling customer service problems	Rel2	3.36	1.229	0.749
	Performing services at the first time	Rel3	3.40	1.219	
2.	**Responsiveness**				
	Prompt services to customers	Res1	4.08	.999	
	Willingness to help customers	Res2	4.13	.888	
	Readiness to respond to customers requests	Res3	4.29	.820	0.752
	The response to consumers' complaints are always taken quickly	Res4	4.08	.912	
3.	**Assurance**				
	Employees who instill confidence in customers	Asu1	4.31	.567	
	Making customers feel safe in their transactions	Asu2	4.90	.325	
	Employees who are consistently courteous	Asu3	4.92	.303	0.774
	The company gives individual attention to customers.	Asu4	4.48	.648	
4.	**Empathy**				
	Giving customers individual attention	Em1	3.85	1.167	
	Employees that treat consumers with compassion	Em2	3.36	1.090	0.763
	Intent on serving the needs of the customer	Em3	3.50	1.228	
5.	**Tangibility**				
	Modern Equipment	Tan1	4.20	.927	
	Visually appealing facilities	Tan2	4.45	.886	
	Employees who have a neat, professional appearance	Tan3	4.61	.698	0.836
	Visually appealing materials associated with the service	Tan4	4.09	.541	
6.	**Technical Quality**				
	The company provides adequate network coverage.	Tqu1	3.04	1.151	
	Employees have Technical knowledge & skills in solving customer problems.	Tqu2	3.32	0.874	0.839

	The company updating the features of the equipments to its customers	Tqu3	3.04	1.184	
	The data, wifi and internet services have excellent connectivity and speed.	Tqu4	3.86	0.764	
7.	**Satisfaction**				
	Service quality	Sat1	3.78	1.344	
	Price	Sat2	3.16	1.176	0.830
	Service Availability and distribution	Sat3	3.41	1.241	

Table 2. reveals the mean (SD) of reliability ranges from 3.30 (1.237) to 3.40 (1.219), followed by the Responsiveness based mean (SD) ranges from 4.08 (0.999) to 4.29 (0.820), Assurance ranges from 4.31 (0.567) to 4.92 (0.303), Empathy ranges from 3.36 (1.090) to 3.85 (1.167), Tangibility from 4.09 (0.541) to 4.61 (0.698), Technical Quality from 3.04 (1.151) to 3.86 (0.764) and Satisfaction from 3.16 (1.176) to 3.78 (1.344). All dimensions, including reliability (0.749), responsiveness (0.752), assurance (0.774), empathy (0.763), tangibleness (0.836), technical quality (0.839), and satisfaction (0.830), have reliability scores that are higher than the threshold of 0.7. (**Nunally, J.C**).

6.2. CFA MODEL
The constructs of service quality perception, technical quality, and network user satisfaction are consistently measured using confirmatory factor analysis. Figure 1 displays the modified model, with a summary indicating model fitness and a goodness of fit index.

Table 3: Construct, Convergent and Reliability of the Constructs

|	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR (H)	Empathy	Reliability	Tangibility	Tech_ Qual	Responsiveness	Assurance	Satisfaction
Empathy	0.758	0.511	0.366	0.762	**0.715**						
Reliability	0.767	0.532	0.049	0.890	-0.037	**0.729**					
Tangibility	0.850	0.592	0.047	0.942	0.106	0.120	**0.769**				
Tech_Qual	0.851	0.594	0.114	0.961	-0.206	-0.222	-0.158	**0.771**			
Responsiveness	0.763	0.518	0.113	0.965	-0.155	0.071	0.053	0.336	**0.720**		
Assrance	0.847	0.600	0.114	0.981	0.099	0.120	-0.216	0.338	0.243	**0.774**	
Satisfaction	0.840	0.638	0.366	0.983	0.605	0.157	0.120	-0.225	-0.100	0.137	**0.799**
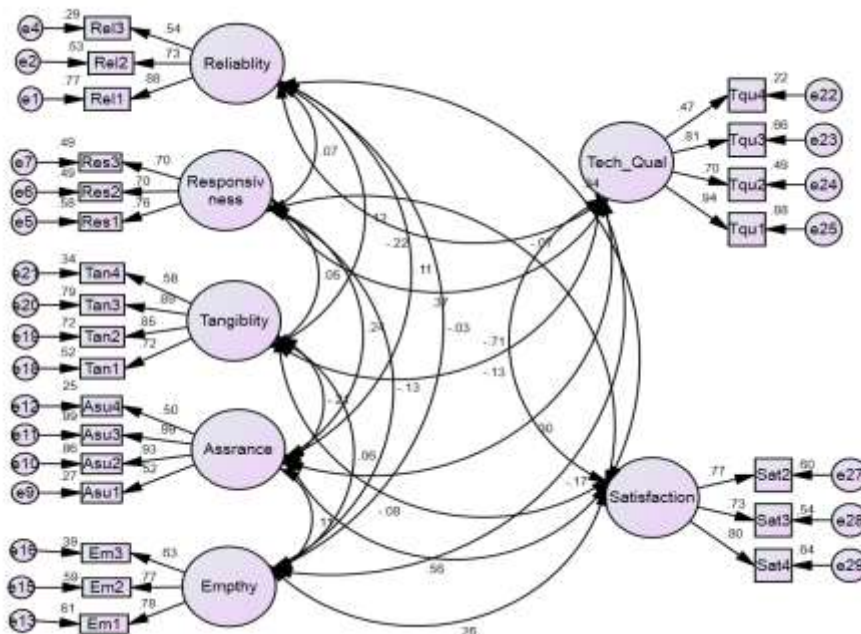
Figure 1.CFA MODIFIED MODEL

Table 3 shows the validity and reliability of the Service Quality on Satisfaction level. The results reveals the constructs achieved reliability more than the specified threshold (Hair et.al., 2010). Figure 1 shows the convergent reliability proves high with the average variance extracted (AVE) recording more than 0.50 (recommended level) for all items after elimination of some items and retaining rest of the items in the model. In this connection, after elimination of one item from Reliability (Rel4), one item from Empathy (Em4) and one item from Satisfaction (Sat1) the final model proved construct, convergent and discriminant validities to further proceed with the path model analysis. The discriminant validity falls below the stated threshold (MSV AVE). In order to do path analysis, it was found to be reliable and valid to use the influence of service quality on technical quality and satisfaction model.
Hypotheses

Prior to declaring and testing the hypotheses in the study, it is vital to ascertain the R-square of a model that explains to what extent the service quality (exogenous)constructs predicts the Technical Quality (1st Endogenous) and Satisfaction (2nd Endogenous) constructs of the composed model.

6.3. SEM MODEL

A group of statistical methods known as structural equation modelling (SEM) are employed to quantify and examine the connections between latent and observable variables. It explores linear causal relationships between variables while also taking measurement error into account. Regression analyses are similar but less effective than this method
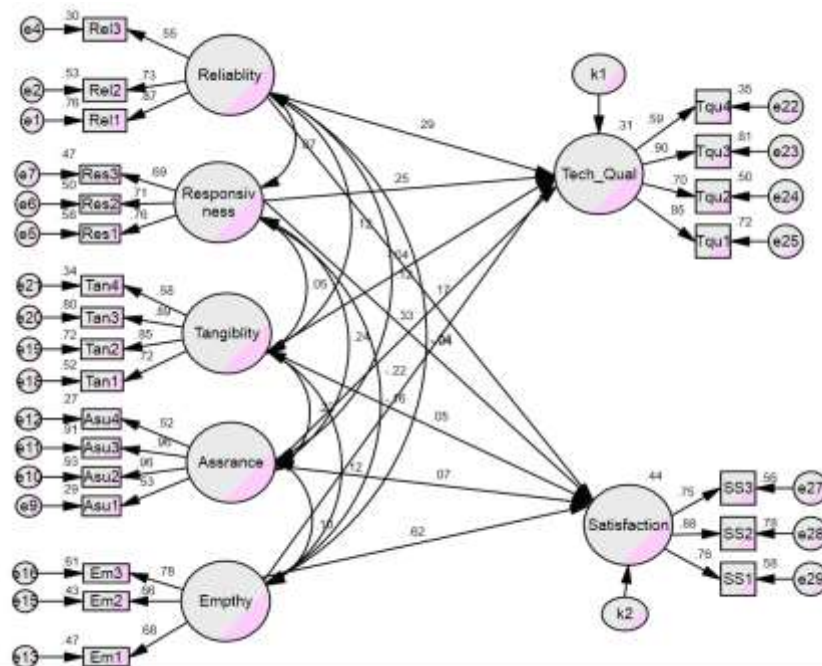

Figure 2. Technical Quality and Customer Satisfaction Are Directly Correlated with Service Quality.

Table4: Prediction of Service quality constructs on Technical Quality and Satisfaction (Path analysis)

Direct Effect			R-Square	Variance
Reliability	→	Tech_Qual		
Responsiveness	→	Tech_Qual		
Tangibility	→	Tech_Qual	0.31	31%
Assurance	→	Tech_Qual		
Empathy	→	Tech_Qual		
Reliability	→	Satisfaction		
Responsiveness	→	Satisfaction		
Tangibility	→	Satisfaction	0.44	44%
Assurance	→	Satisfaction		
Empathy	→	Satisfaction		

According to Table 4, the direct effect of the exogenous service quality constructs, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy, and Tangibility, on predicting the endogenous technical quality construct has a moderate direct effect of 31% variance while predicting the model. On the other hand, the exogenous service quality constructs predict 44% of variance on predicting the endogenous customer satisfaction, which is considered to be an adequate level.

Table5: Regression weights proving direct effect between Exogenous (Service Quality) and Endogenous (Technical Quality and Satisfaction) Constructs

Exogenous	Effect	Endogenous	Estimates	SE	CR	P	Relationship
Reliability	→	Tech_Qual	.120	.028	4.273	***	Proved
Responsiveness	→	Tech_Qual	.145	.042	3.482	***	Proved
Tangibility	→	Tech_Qual	.028	.041	.682	.495	Not Proved
Assurance	→	Tech_Qual	.484	.108	4.469	***	Proved
Empathy	→	Tech_Qual	.127	.038	3.300	***	Proved
Reliability	→	Satisfaction	.165	.058	2.851	.004	Proved

Responsiveness	→	Satisfaction	.054	.088	.612	.541	Not Proved
Tangibility	→	Satisfaction	.072	.093	.773	.440	Not Proved
Assurance	→	Satisfaction	.246	.206	1.195	.232	Not Proved
Empathy	→	Satisfaction	.792	.107	7.434	***	Proved

Direct Effect of Service Quality and Technical Quality

From the Table 5.declared hypothesis supports the direct effect between Reliability and Technical Quality (β=0.120, CR=4.273, P=0.000) indicating relationship is observed significant at 0.05 probability level. Likewise, the relationships between the other four constructs viz. Responsiveness and Technical Quality (β=0.145, CR=3.482, P=0.000), Assurance and Technical Quality (β=0.484, CR=4.469, P=0.000) and Empathy and Technical Quality (β=0.127, CR=3.300, P=0.000) are found to be significant at 0.05 probability level. Whereas, direct effect between Tangibility and Technical Quality (β=0.028, CR=0.682, P=0.495) is not proved significant at 0.05 level.

Service Quality and Satisfaction

The declared hypothesis supports the direct effect only between two factors, 1) Reliability and Satisfaction (β=0.165, CR=2.851, P=0.000), 2) Empathy and Satisfaction (β=0.792, CR=7.434, P=0.000), indicating relationships are observed significant at 0.05 probability level. Whereas, the relationships between the other three constructs viz. Responsiveness and Satisfaction (β=0.054, CR=0.612, P=0.541), Tangibility and Satisfaction (β=0.072, CR=0.773, P=0.440) and finally, Assurance and Satisfaction (β=0.246, CR=1.195, P=0.232) are not found to be significant at 0.05 probability level.

Table 6: Goodness of Fit index

	CMIN	CMIN/DF	RMR	GFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	PCLOSE
Model	850.781	3.667	0.065	0.826	0.849	0.803	0.834	0.094	0.000

Table 6.shows goodness of fit index stated by Hu and Bentler (1999), where, GFI, CFI, NFI, TLI > .90, CMIN/DF<.3, GFI>.90, RMR and RMSEA < 0.05 and PCLOSE>0.05. The overall goodness of fit summary for the CFA and SEM model shows CMIN=850.781, CMIN/DF=3.667, RMR=0.065, GFI=0.826, NFI=0.849, TLI=0.803, CFI=0.834, RMSEA=0.094 and PCLOSE=0.00achieved moderate fitness level

7. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

7.1. Descriptive Statistics

It is understood that 36.3% are in the age of 40 to 49 years, 26.8% in 30.30 years, 24.5% belong to upto 30 years and 12.4% are above 50 years. 59.5% are male and 40.5% are female. 66.7% married and 33.3% unmarried. 44.4% are post graduates, 20.9% under graduates, 18.6% professionals and 16% possess other qualifications. 36.9% are selfemployed, 34% are working in private sector, 29.1% are government employees. 46.4% are earning between Rs.30001 and Rs.40000, 25.5% have income of Rs.20001 to 30000 per month, 18% earn below Rs.20000 and 10.1% are earning above 40000 per month.

7.2. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics demonstrated that all means are found to have recorded above the mid range (3.0), indicating that all statements relating to service quality and satisfaction were found to have been either agreed or strongly agreed by the customers towards the services provided by the select companies.It is further noted that all service quality and satisfaction constructs computed using Cronbach's alpha demonstrated to have achieved reliability recording greater than the criterion (0.7) stated by Nunally, J.C. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Path Analysis (SEM) are also used to determine the role that service quality plays in predicting both technical quality and overall satisfaction.

7.3. CFA Model

After elimination of few items from the constructs that helped the CFA Model to achieve the Construct, Convergent and Discriminant validities supporting to further conduct path analysis.

7.4. Path Model Analysis (SEM)

Customer perception of mobile network services accurately predicted technical quality with a variance of 31%. The highest levels of prediction were found for responsiveness, empathy, and reliability, followed by assurance. Customers didn't think that Tangibility was important. In addition, a 44% variance was predicted due to the direct effect of service quality on overall customer satisfaction with mobile network services. Customers viewed dependability and empathy as crucial aspects of service quality that increased their levels of satisfaction.

8. DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Regression results accepts null hypothesis with respect to the relationship between perception on Tangibility based Service Quality and Overall satisfaction, which confirms customers do not significant perceive the tangibility or physical aspects which is already in place. According to Randheer et al. (2011), who noted that customers place less emphasis on the tangible or outward appearance of the telecom providers' offerings, the result is consistent with that explanation.
It is recommended that prompt services with absolute reliability are the crucial elements mostly attract the customers which assure customer retention.

Result proves Assurance and Technical Quality are significant whereas, assurance based service quality and Satisfaction did not achieved the relationship. It is observed from earlier studies by **Bloemer, and Kasper, (1995)** stated "Assurance" proves to have significant difference with respect to customer perception on service quality.
Employee knowledge is conceptualized based on assurance, the ability to instigate confidence and trust becomes significant which needs to be maintained by the select telecom service providers at all times.
Result proves significant relationship between Reliability as well as Empathy based Service Quality and Technical quality as well as satisfaction. The significance of Reliability and Empathy that have influence on satisfaction, proposed that improving strategies related to customer relationship and in depth realization of motivation can significantly improve the reliability and empathy among customers.
Telecom companies should make sure that customer service agents' training and performance evaluations include relational components that enable them to comprehend and articulate client requirements.
In general, it will be suggested that improved strategies for service quality management be developed on the basis of the findings, particularly in the areas of assurance, empathy, and responsiveness. Preparing programs should be made explicitly to give representatives the capacities they need to all the more likely serve clients and, at last, to remain cutthroat on the lookout.

9.CONCLUSION

It is evident from the summary of the results proves the telecom service providers are performing up to the standards, however, new development strategies can be framed to enhance the customer satisfaction. The decision-makers of the respective companies must pay immediate attention to improving the service quality and acting as a tough competitor within the market, satisfying all customers with good features, more excellent customer service, and value for the money paid, in order to achieve overall satisfaction. This may support the companies not only retain its customers but also bring in more new customers to greater heights in the future.

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