

**CONTEMPORARY ISSUES FACED BY BSNL
MANGEMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KERALA
TELECOM CIRCLE**

Dr Sreekumar D Menon*

Dr John V Daniel**

Mr. Ramesh Krishnan S***

Abstract

BSNL ,a public sector undertaking telecom company came in to existence on first October 2000 from Department of Telecommunications . BSNL is providing telephone connections in rural areas as per the government policy . It is the world's 7th largest telecommunication company providing wide range of telecom services in India. IT is spread over 26 telecom circles .Kerala is one among from such circles.

Currently BSNL has 25.95 million land line,16.13 million BB connection and 99.67 million mobile connections all over India . In Kerala 2496034 nos: land lines, 654544 nos: BB connections and 32857837 nos: mobile connections were working.

In all over India majority of the revenue of BSNL is from BB, Data circuits and land lines. The lines/cable maintenance is mainly carried out by casual labours who are working in the department since long back. Since their wages are very low, they are not working sincerely.

* **PhD, MPhil, MSc MBA ,PGDLL&AL PGDMM,PGDPM&IR, MIMA, Faculty Member ,Regional Telecom Training Centre, Kaimanam, Trivandrum**

** **PhD MSc,MBA,Sub Divisional Engineer,BSNL, Kaimanam, Trivandrum**

*** **MTech,MBA,PGDM,Assistant Professor Iahia college of Engineering & Technology Moovattupuzha, Kaimanam, Trivandrum**

In most of the BSNL tower site, generators are not working properly and stand by batteries in damaged conditions/ poor back up. The frequent power failure badly affect smooth functioning of mobile services.

Because of these two reasons revenue is decreasing day by day . In turn customer satisfaction is very poor in both land line and mobile services. Large number of disconnections of landline phones in the last few years is a matter of great concern for BSNL.

BSNL being a Mini Ratna PSU does not have the autonomy / authority to procure the needed equipment on its own. Delay in finalization of Tenders and getting necessary approvals for procurement of equipment from the controlling Ministry are a major bottleneck in growth of BSNL to forge ahead in a competitive market. Accordingly, BSNL has suffered a total financial loss of Rs. 39,200/- Crores up to 31.03.2015.

Keywords: Casual labours, management, land line, broadband, battery.

Introduction

A public limited telecom company (BSNL) facing a lot of contemporary issues in management. For administrative convenience BSNL is divided in to several circles. Kerala telecom circle is one among them.

The major share of revenue of BSNL is getting from land line connections. At present management is facing a lot of problems in proper maintenance of this lines due to several reasons. Some of them are underground cable damage by water authority, PWD ,Electricity board, local administration etc. Lack of maintenance materials and non cooperative attitudes of casual workers are predominant among them.

The other share of revenue is from mobile customers. Management is facing some problems like unable to replace the damaged batteries from BTS locations in various places across the state, poor quality of speech due to signal etc. Other contemporary issues faced by BSNL is tough

competitions from private operators in mobile sector such as High speed BB connections by Asianet and other private operators..

Further, BSNL is facing the recurring financial loss of Rs. 1200 Crores per annum on the payment of license fee and Rs. 1750 Crores towards USO contribution. It is understood that certain authorities in Govt. believe that Rural Operation of BSNL are in fact profitable. It is with this laughable and irresponsible attitude that recommendation of TRAI for paying a compensation of Rs.750 Crs. for the period upto July, 2014 has not been yet implemented, whereas BSNL has been incurring the expenditure even with borrowing at high interest cost. Similarly, Rs. 18,500 Crs. were arbitrarily and in an unfair manner taken away from BSNL. Even after the Govt. decision of refund of Rs. 4700 Crores towards BWA Spectrum. BSNL is still dragging its feet on refund of BWA Spectrum and pending charges about Rs.3600Crs. BSNL has been requesting to DoT for financial support in order to make its wired line services/rural telephony financially viable by compensating the losses of Rs. 44,000 Crores incurred by BSNL due to difference in ADC which was admissible to BSNL earlier.

BSNL has continued to render services in nonviable rural remote and difficult areas. Whereas, the Private Operators have liberty to approach TDSAT against Govt. decisions. For example Private operators have gone to TDSAT against the CAFs related penalties and have been given relief. Such reliefs have not been made applicable by DoT to BSNL.

The ITS officers who are not joined in BSNL yet and under deemed deputation from the date of formation of BSNL. This is affecting the development, growth and welfare of BSNL.

BSNL is operating in a very stiff competitive environment with sharp reduction in tariffs in order to serve the people of the Country as a responsible PSU. BSNL is maintaining the rural network with very low tariff for serving the rural India. In addition to this reimbursement of ADC charges is also withdrawn which has adversely effected the financial position of BSNL. The fixed expenses of the company are also increasing year after year.

Vision and Mission

Like other Telecom operators the PSU have its own vision :To become the largest telecom service provider in Asia and have its Mission: To provide world class state –of-art technology telecom services to its customers on demand at competitive prices and to provide world class telecom infrastructure in its areas of operation and to contribute to the growth of the country's economy.

Objectives of the study

- 1, To be a leader among the telecom service providers.
- 2, To provide quality and reliable fixed telecom services to our customers and thereby increase customers' confidence.
- 3, To provide mobile telephone services of high quality and win back customers' confidence.

Scope of the study

Kerala Telecommunication circle is the first circle in the country making profit every year .In India as whole only few circles were making profit. Among them, Kerala circle is the topper.

BSNL is facing a lot of contemporary issues like labour problem for maintaining land line, poor performance of mobile services etc. Exodus of customers from BSNL to other operators by MNP and closure of landlines. reduction in connections leads to leakage of revenue.

The scope of this study is to analyze the problem and make suitable suggestions for overcoming the present contemporary issues faced by management.

Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The responses of the casual labours, BSNL customers (both land line and mobile) and from employees of the organization across Kerala as the source of secondary data. Questionnaires were distributed among them and collected the responses. The following analysis reveals the conclusion/ suggestions for overcoming the contemporary issues.

1) **Analysis of data of casual labours**a) **Based on Age group**

Age group	Male	Female	percentage
18-27 yrs	-	-	-
28-37yrs	53	3	56
38-47 yrs	28	1	29
48-57yrs	12	1	13
Above 57 yrs	2	-	2
total	100	0	100

It is observed that majority of the casual labours are in the age group of 28-37 years and all are males.

b) **Based on marital status**

items	No of participants	percentage
married	99	99
Unmarried	01	01
Total	100	100

It is observed that 99 % of the employees are married

c) **Based on Qualification**

Serial no	qualification	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Up to class X	76	76
2	Plus 2or diploma	20	20
3	Degree and above	4	4
total		100	100

It is found that 76% of respondents are studied up to class X only.

d) **Number of dependants**

No of dependants	No of participants	percentage
1-2 members	11	11
3-4 members	75	75
More than 4	14	14

total	100	100
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It is observed that 75% of the labours have 3 to 4 dependents in their family

e) How long you have been working in DOT/BSNL?

Serial no	No of years	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 5 years	13	13
2	5-10 yrs	40	40
3	Above 10 yrs	47	47
total		100	100

It is observed that 47% of the participants having more than 10 years of service in department.

f) Are you satisfied with your present job?(about job satisfaction)

Item	No of respondent	percentage
Yes	15	15
No	85	85
total	100	100

It is observed that 85 % of the casual labors are not satisfied with their job.

g) Are you satisfied with your wages?(wage satisfaction)

Item	No of respondents	percentage
yes	03	03
No	97	97
total	100	100

It is observed that 97% are not satisfied with wages

h) Are you working sincerely to BSNL?

Item	No of respondents	Percentage
yes	7	7
No	80	80
occasionally	13	13
total	100	100

It is observed that 80% of the respondents are not sincere to the organization.

i) Is your job is sincere in BSNL?(about job security)

item	No of participants	percentage
yes	4	4
No	96	96
total	100	100

It is found that 96 % of the participants have believes that their job is not secure.

j) How many hours have you been working effectively for the department?

Hours of working	No of respondents	Percentage
1-4 hours	51	51
4-6 hours	32	32
Above 6 hours	17	17
total	100	100

Survey shows that 84 % of the labours are not working above six hours daily

k) Are you getting your wages on time?

Opinion	No of respondents	percentage
yes	-	0
No	65	65
sometimes	35	35
total	100	100

65% of the respondents telling that they are not getting their wages in time.

l) Is the section officer guiding you to execute the work?

opinions	No of respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	12
no	70	70
Sometimes	18	18
total	100	100

70% of the labours informed that section officers not guiding them to do the work .

m) Are you getting moral support from the department officials for executing the work?

Opinion	No of respondents	Percentage
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Yes	62	62
No	30	30
Occasionally	8	8
total	100	100

62% of the respondents have the opinion that they are getting moral support from department.

n) Are you getting materials for your day to day work?

opinion	No of participants	Percentage
Yes	53	53
No	40	40
Some times	7	7
total	100	100

53% of the workers are telling that they are getting materials for their day today activities.

o) If you get a chance in other firms having handsome wages ,will you be ready to quit BSNL?

opinions	No of respondents	percentage
yes	40	40
No	38	38
Not yet decided	22	22
total	100	100

40% of the labours are willing to quit the department if they get a handsome salary and 22% not decided yet .

p) Do you think that BSNL will be able to over come the present crisis.

opinions	No of respondents	percentage
yes	43	43
No	42	42
sometimes	15	15
total	100	100

43 % of the labours have optimism that BSNL will recover from the present crisis were as 42% have no belief in it.

q) Will you be able to work sincerely, if there is hike in wages?

opinion	No of participants	Percentage
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Yes	61	61
no	24	24
Not yet decided	15	15
total	100	100

61% of the labours have willingness to work sincerely if there is a hike in their wages.

r) Will you able to work sincerely, if the section officer guides you in executing the work?

Opinion	No of respondents	percentage
yes	63	63
No	37	37
Total	100	100

63% of the labours are willing to work sincerely if section TM guides them in executing the work.

s) Whether policies influences the development of BSNL ?

opinions	No of respondents	Percentage
Yes	65	65
no	20	20
Some times	15	15
total	100	100

65% have the opinion that policies influences the development of BSNL

t) Whether indifferent nature of staff influence the development of BSNL?

Opinions	No of respondents	Percentage
Yes	61	61
no	26	26
Some times	13	13
total	100	100

61 % of the labours have the opinion that indifferent nature of the staff influence the development of BSNL

Analysis of employees' details

1) Based on Age

Age group	male	female	percentage
18-27	4	1	5
28-37	12	2	14
38-47	24	5	29
48-57	40	6	46
Above 57	4	2	6
total	84	16	100

46% of the employees are in the age group of 48-57 and 29% are in the age group of 38 to 47 yrs

2) Based on sex

sex	No of respondent	Percentage
Male	69	69
female	31	31
total	100	100

Majority of the employees are male

3) Marital status

status	male	female	Percentage
Married	65	29	94
unmarried	4	2	6
total	69	31	100

94% of the employees are got married.

4) Opinion about achievement of mission and vision of BSNL

opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Yes(agree)	78	78
No (disagree)	16	16
No comments(neutral)	6	6
total	100	100

78 % of the respondents have the opinion that wants to achieve the mission and vision of BSNL

5) Opinion about achieving growth to become a profitable organization

opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
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Yes (agree)	81	81
No (disagree)	15	15
No comments	4	4
total	100	100

81% of the employees have the opinion to achieve the growth and become a profitable organization.

6) Opinion about providing quality and reliable services to customers to win the confidence of the publics.

opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Agree(yes)	82	82
Disagree(no)	13	13
No comments	5	5
total	100	100

82% of the employees have the opinion that wants to win the confidence of the public by giving quality and reliable service.

7) Opinion about providing customer friendly mobile services

opinion	No of respondents	Percentage
Agree (yes)	76	76
Disagree(no)	20	20
No comments	4	4
total	100	100

Majority of the employees have the opinion that we have to provide customer friendly mobile services.

8) Opinion about VRS implementation in BSNL

opinion	No of respondents	Percentage
Agree	22	22
disagree	70	70
No yet decided	8	8
total	100	100

70% of the employees are against VRS implementation in BSNL

9) Opinion about business Diversification in BSNL

opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Agree	76	76
disagree	22	22
Not yet decided	2	2
total	100	100

76 % of the employees supporting business diversification in BSNL

10) Opinion about salary and benefit based on performance and output

opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Agree	72	72
disagree	20	20
No comments	8	8
total	100	100

72% of the employees are agreeing that salary should be given based on performance and output.

11) Opinion about providing AMC for external plant.

opinion	No of respondents	Percentage
Yes(agree)	83	83
No(disagree)	16	16
Neutral (no comments)	1	1
total	100	100

83% of the respondents have the opinion that external plant should be given for AMC

12)Opinion about medical re impressments through external government insurance company

opinion	No of respondents	Percentage
Agree	79	79
disagree	15	15
No comments	6	6
total	100	100

79% of the employees have the opinion that medical re impressments should be through government insurance company.

Analysis of customers/general publics

1) Age Group

Age group	Male	Female	percentage
18-27	6	1	7
28-37	24	3	27
38-47	40	2	42
48-57	15	1	16
Above 57	7	1	8
total	92	8	100

42 % of the respondents are in the age group of 38-47 and 27 % of them are in the age limit of 28-37.

2) Marital status

status	male	female	percentage
married	77	7	84
Unmarried	15	1	16
total	92	8	100

82% of the respondents were married.

3) Sex of the respondents

Sex of the male	No of respondent	percentage
Male	92	92
Female	8	8
total	100	100

92 % of the respondent were male.

4) Educational Qualifications

Serial number	Qualifications	No of respondents	percentage
1	Up to class X	12	12
2	Plus 2/diploma	8	8
3	Degree and above	80	80
total		100	100

80 % of the respondents were having qualifications degree and above

- 5) Are you a BSNL customer? If yes write your opinion for the following
- a) About service quality of BSNL

Serial no	Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
1	Very good	10	10
2	Good	30	30
3	Bad	60	60

60% of the respondent have opinion that service quality of BSNL is bad.

- b) About maintenance of various services

Serial no	opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
1	Very good	5	5
2	good	10	10
3	Bad	85	85

85% of the respondents have the opinion that service maintenance is bad

- c) Opinion about customer services

Serial no	opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
1	Very good	41	41
2	good	20	20
3	bad	39	39
total		100	100

61% of the respondents have the opinion that customer service is ok

- d) Opinion about Tariff structures

Serial no	opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
1	Very good	45	45
2	good	5	5
3	bad	50	50
total		100	100

Regarding BSNL tariff, opinion is 50-50

- 6) Comparison of BSNL with other operator
- a) About reliability

Serial no	opinion	Number	of	Percentage
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		respondents	
1	Very good	50	50
2	good	15	15
3	bad	35	35
total		100	100

65% of the respondent has the opinion that BSNL is reliable

b) About affordability

Serial no	opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
1	Very good	70	70
2	good	12	12
3	bad	18	18
4	total	100	100

82% of the respondent have the opinion that BSNL is affordable

c) Opinion about quality of service

Serial no	opinion	No of respondent	percentage
1	Very good	30	30
2	good	31	31
3	bad	39	39
4	total	100	100

61 % supporting the service quality ,39 % telling that it is bad.

7) Whether politics influence the development of BSNL

Serial no	opinion	No of respondents	Percentage
1	yes	31	31
2	no	40	40
3	sometimes	29	29
4	total	100	100

40 of the respondent have the opinion that politics will not influence the development of BSNL.29 % telling that some time in influences

8) Whether indifferent nature of the staff influence the development of BSNL

Serial no	opinion	No of respondent	percentage
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1	yes	45	45
2	no	30	30
3	Some times	25	25
4	total	100	100

45% have the opinion that indifferent nature of the staff influence the development of BSNL.

9) Whether trade union activities influences functioning of BSNL

Serial no	opinion	No of respondents	Percentage
1	yes	40	40
2	no	26	26
3	Some times	34	34
4	total	100	100

40% of the customers have the opinion that trade union activity influence the functioning of the BSNL.

Findings

Some of the major findings are:

- 1 Majority of the people who participated in the surveys are male and are got married.
- 2 Labours are no satisfied with their wages as they are getting a small amount and getting not in time.
- 3 Indifferent nature of the staffs and policies of the company influences the development activities.
- 4 Customers are not satisfied with the present services of BSNL in both land line and mobile.
- 5 Majority of the staffs are not supporting implementation of VRS in BSNL
- 6 Majority of the staffs supporting diversification of BSNL, providing salary as per performance /output ,medical reimbursement through government insurance company etc .

Suggestions

- Only a motivated workforce, a committed management and faster decision process in finalization of Tenders, procurement of equipment and clearance of associated bottlenecks can help BSNL in its growth and increase of its Market Share.

- A strong and growing BSNL can keep the Telecom Prices in check and will not permit free rein to private operators to form cartels and fleece the Public. But for the P S Us like BSNL the customers would have never got Telecom Services so cheap as of now. BSNL is not allowing to offer matching tariff to those creamy customers to stop churning.
- Poor After-Sales Service in Broadband Connections/ Irresponsible Call Centers / Poor Revenue Collection and strengthening of Marketing & Sales units of BSNL. These services have been outsourced to different vendors, who have no fear of losing their contract and they are not carrying out their job satisfactorily bringing bad name to BSNL. A committed management can take adequate care to solve these problems due to provision of inadequate service by these vendors/ outsourcing agents
- Huge amounts of dues are pending for recovery from the customers to the tune of several thousand crores of Revenue. Proper monitoring of franchisees / retailers, who should have all available brands of BSNL, is required. More and more retailers / outlets of BSNL are also required in the market. BSNL should create teams to bring enterprise business by way of door to door marketing and should concentrate to provide quality service.
- Various illogical interests being paid by BSNL to Govt. of India, which is directly affecting the viability of BSNL BSNL should be exempted from paying building tax, paying excise duty on SIM cards, paying exorbitant electricity bills by applying the logic of low usage of power instead of electricity being charged on the basis of power plant capacity,
- VTMs revised penalty charges and heavy charges being paid to municipality and panchayat for erecting towers whereas they are not charging anything from electricity companies. Govt. should issue Instructions to all Govt. Departments/Autonomous Bodies where the Govt. of India bears the cost of telephone expenditure for taking the telecom services from BSNL only to support BSNL as it has done in case of National Carrier Air Line.

*Land, building, A&P, Cable, experienced workforce are our assets. All these assets are to be gainfully deployed to fetch additional revenue. There are vacant lands and large vacant space in buildings. These spaces are to be commercially exploited to get hundreds of crores additional revenue every year. Formation of special task force for this purpose will speed up to achieve the objective. Commercial hoardings in CSC's and other BSNL buildings, commercial advertisement in the telephone bills will also fetch additional revenue

*The main weakness lies in its structure itself i.e. the Management believes and possesses a work culture which does not suit the need of the hour. There is no denial that the dependency on other Departments/ Organizations like Planning Commission, Department of Electronics, Department of Expenditure, Department of Telecommunications and Department of Public Enterprises delays the decisions. BSNL has to be given the freedom to decide its own issues. After all, it is the BSNL Management which is responsible and accountable to the Public whereas others are not. In this background, BSNL needs to be given the full autonomy in decision making both on functional and financial front. In the process of decision making, innovative ideas and bold initiatives need not be distrusted and overcome by the age old DoT systems and procedures of ensuring safety and propriety. In the modern management concept, it is also necessary to decentralize the administrative and financial powers for not only reducing the burden on the top management but also to give adequate freedom to the lower formations. Unfortunately, a typical DoT work culture is still continuing in BSNL, which tends to keep the powers centralized

References

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