

Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty Towards Telecommunication Services – Airtel and Jio

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ABSTRACT

Customer satisfaction and loyalty have become decisive factors in the highly competitive Indian telecom sector. This study examines customer satisfaction and its influence on loyalty towards the services of Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio, two leading service providers that have significantly transformed communication patterns in India. The research aims to understand customer perceptions regarding service quality, pricing, network coverage, internet speed, customer support, promotional offers, and overall value for money. A structured questionnaire was administered to telecom users to assess their satisfaction levels and loyalty intentions. The findings reveal that affordable pricing, wide network coverage, consistent data speed, and prompt grievance handling are major determinants of customer satisfaction. While Jio attracts customers through competitive tariffs and data-centric plans, Airtel retains customers through perceived network reliability and service quality. The study further highlights that satisfied customers are more likely to continue using the same provider, recommend services to others, and resist switching despite competitive alternatives. The results emphasize that emotional connection, trust, and perceived service consistency strengthen long-term loyalty beyond mere pricing advantages. The study concludes that telecom companies must focus on continuous service improvement, personalized engagement, and effective complaint resolution to sustain competitive advantage and enhance customer retention in a dynamic market environment.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Telecom Services, Airtel, Jio, Service Quality, Pricing Strategy, Network Coverage, Customer Retention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The telecommunications industry has become an essential part of everyday life. Mobile networks are no longer limited to voice communication; they now support internet connectivity, digital payments, entertainment streaming, online education, and business operations. In a highly competitive telecom market like India, service providers constantly strive to attract and retain customers by offering better network coverage, affordable pricing, innovative plans, and improved customer support. Among the major players in the Indian telecom sector, Airtel and Jio have emerged as dominant service providers. The entry of Jio into the market brought a revolutionary shift in pricing strategies and data usage patterns, while Airtel has continued to maintain its reputation through network strength and service quality improvements. In such a dynamic and competitive environment, customer satisfaction and loyalty have become critical determinants of long-term success. Customer satisfaction reflects how well a company's services meet or exceed customer expectations. Loyalty, on the other hand, represents the likelihood of customers continuing to use the same service provider and recommending it to others. This study focuses on analysing customer satisfaction and loyalty towards Airtel and Jio, based on data collected from 125 respondents.

1.2 Need for the Study

The telecom industry is characterized by intense competition, rapid technological advancements, and constantly changing customer expectations. With mobile number portability and multiple service options available, customers can easily switch between service providers. Therefore, retaining customers has become as important as acquiring new ones. Understanding customer satisfaction helps telecom companies identify areas of strength and weakness in their services. Factors such as network coverage, call quality, internet speed, pricing, customer service, and value-added services directly influence customer perceptions. If these factors are not properly addressed, customer dissatisfaction may lead to reduced loyalty and increased switching behaviour. This study is needed to evaluate how customers perceive Airtel and Jio services and to determine whether satisfaction levels translate into loyalty.

The findings can provide insights that help telecom providers enhance service quality, improve customer retention strategies, and maintain competitive advantage.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to examining customer satisfaction and loyalty towards Airtel and Jio telecommunication services. The research focuses on: Measuring customer satisfaction level, identifying factors influencing satisfaction, Assessing customer loyalty levels. The study is based on responses collected from 125 customers. It primarily considers user perceptions related to network quality, pricing, customer service, internet performance, and overall experience. The research does not cover other telecom service providers, nor does it analyse technical or financial performance data of the companies. The focus remains strictly on customer perception and behavioural loyalty.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study is conducted with the following objectives:

- To measure the level of customer satisfaction with Airtel and Jio services.
- To identify the key factors influencing customer satisfaction in Airtel and Jio.
- To assess the level of customer loyalty towards Airtel and Jio.

These objectives aim to provide a clear understanding of how satisfaction influences customer retention and brand preference.

1.6 Hypothesis of the Study

Based on the objectives, the following hypotheses are formulated:

OBJECTIVE – 1: To measure the level of customer satisfaction with Airtel and Jio services.

H₀ – There is no significant difference in customer satisfaction level with telecom services (Airtel/Jio) among respondents.

H₁ – There is significant difference in customer satisfaction level with telecom services (Airtel/Jio) among respondents

OBJECTIVE – 2: To analyse the key factors influencing customer satisfaction in Airtel and Jio.

H₀ – There is no significant difference in the influence of customer satisfaction factors between Airtel and Jio users.

H₁ – There is significant difference in the influence of customer satisfaction factors between Airtel and Jio users.

OBJECTIVE – 3: To assess the level of customer loyalty towards Airtel and Jio.

H₀ – There is no significant difference in the level of customer loyalty between Airtel and Jio Customers.

H₁ – There is significant difference in the level of customer loyalty between Airtel and Jio Customers

2. PAST STUDIES (REVIEW OF LITERATURE)

1.K. Nanje Gowda (2010) “Customer satisfaction in telecommunication services a case study of airtel services in Bangalore district” examines customer satisfaction in Bharti Airtel services in Bangalore, highlighting the rapid growth and competitiveness of India’s telecom industry. The study emphasizes that service quality, pricing, and network availability strongly influence customer satisfaction. Findings suggest that Airtel’s strong network coverage, affordable plans, and rural outreach contributed to its growth. It also concludes that better pricing strategies, improved service quality, and effective promotions can further strengthen customer loyalty.

2.Anil Kumar Singh (2014) “Factors Affecting Customer Loyalty in telecom sector” explores the key factors that influence customer loyalty in the telecom sector, especially in the Indian context. The study finds that service quality, perceived value, and customer habits (inertia) play a major role in shaping satisfaction and loyalty. While switching cost does not directly drive loyalty, it strengthens the link between satisfaction and loyalty, whereas inertia slightly weakens it. Overall, the research suggests that telecom companies should focus on improving service quality and understanding customer behaviour to retain users effectively.

3. Niranjan Agarwala (2014) “Customer satisfaction in the telecom sector in India A study on Assam and North East Circle” studies customer satisfaction in the telecom sector with special focus on the Assam and North-East Circle. The research points out that earlier studies were limited in scope and did not provide detailed comparisons across operators or locations. It highlights gaps in understanding issues like billing, network quality, and value-added services in the region. Overall, the study aims to offer a clearer and more comparative view of customer satisfaction among telecom users in Assam and the North-East.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the study titled “*Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty towards Telecommunication Services – with special focus on Airtel and Reliance Jio*”, a quantitative research methodology was adopted. The study is descriptive in nature and is based on primary data collected from 125 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The sampling method followed was convenience sampling, targeting telecom users of Airtel and Jio. The collected data was analysed using statistical tools such as frequency analysis to understand demographic profiles and One-Way ANOVA to test the differences in customer satisfaction, influencing factors, and loyalty levels between the two service providers. The hypotheses were framed and tested at a significant level using F-values and p-values to draw meaningful conclusions.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Frequency Analysis: Frequency analysis is a statistical method used to study how often different values occur in a dataset. It helps in organizing raw data into a meaningful form by counting the number of times each value appears. It is mainly used in statistics to summarize data, identify patterns, and make comparison.

Table 4.1: Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Below 18	2	1.6	1.6	1.6
18 - 25	103	82.4	82.4	84.0
26 - 35	11	8.8	8.8	92.8
36 - 45	2	1.6	1.6	94.4
46 - 60	2	1.6	1.6	96.0

Above 60	5	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	125	100.0	100.0	

INFERENCE:

- From the above table, we inferred that the age **below 18 years** respondents is **2** and the percentage is **1.6%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the age from **18-25 years** respondents is **103** and the percentage is **82.4%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the age from **26-35 years** respondents is **11** and the percentage is **8.8%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the age from **36-45 years respondents** is **2** and the percentage is **1.6%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the age from **46-60 years** respondents is **2** and the percentage is **1.6%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the age above **60 years** respondents is **5** and the percentage is **4.0%**

Table 4.2: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	25	20.0	20.0	20.0
Female	99	79.2	79.2	99.2
Prefer not to say	1	.8	.8	100.0
Total	125	100.0	100.0	

INFERENCE:

- From the above table, we inferred that the **Male** respondents are **25** and the percentage is **20.0%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Female** respondents are **99** and the percentage is **79.2%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Prefer not to say** respondents are 1 and the percentage is **0.8%**

Table 4.3: Educational Qualification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Below 10 th	3	2.4	2.4	2.4
10 th /12 th Pass	9	7.2	7.2	9.6
Undergraduate (UG)	51	40.8	40.8	50.4
Postgraduate (PG)	54	43.2	43.2	93.6
Professional Degree	3	2.4	2.4	96.0
Diploma	1	.8	.8	96.8
Others	4	3.2	3.2	100.0
Total	125	100.0	100.0	

INFERENCE:

- From the above table, we inferred that the **Below 10th** respondents are **3** and the percentage is **2.4%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **10th/12th Pass** respondents are **9** and the percentage is **7.2%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Undergraduate (UG)** respondents are **51** and the percentage is **40.8%**

- From the above table, we inferred that the **Postgraduate (PG)** respondents are **54** and the percentage is **43.2%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Professional Degree** respondents are **3** and the percentage is **2.4%**
- From the above we inferred that the **Diploma** respondents are **1** and the percentage is **0.8%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **others** respondents are **4** and the percentage is 3.2%

Table 4.4:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Student	53	42.4	42.4	42.4
Self - employed	11	8.8	8.8	51.2
Private Sector Employee	50	40.0	40.0	91.2
Government Employee	6	4.8	4.8	96.0
Homemaker	4	3.2	3.2	99.2
Retired	1	.8	.8	100.0
Total	125	100.0	100.0	

Occupation/Profession

INFERENCE:

- From the above table, we inferred that the **student** respondents are **53** and the percentage is **42.4%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Self – Employed** respondents are **11** and the percentage is **8.8%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Private Sector Employee** respondents are **50** and the percentage is **40.0%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Government Employee** respondents are **6** and the percentage is **4.8%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Homemaker** respondents are **4** and the percentage is **3.2%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Retired** respondents are **1** and the percentage is **0.8%**.

Table 4.5: Income

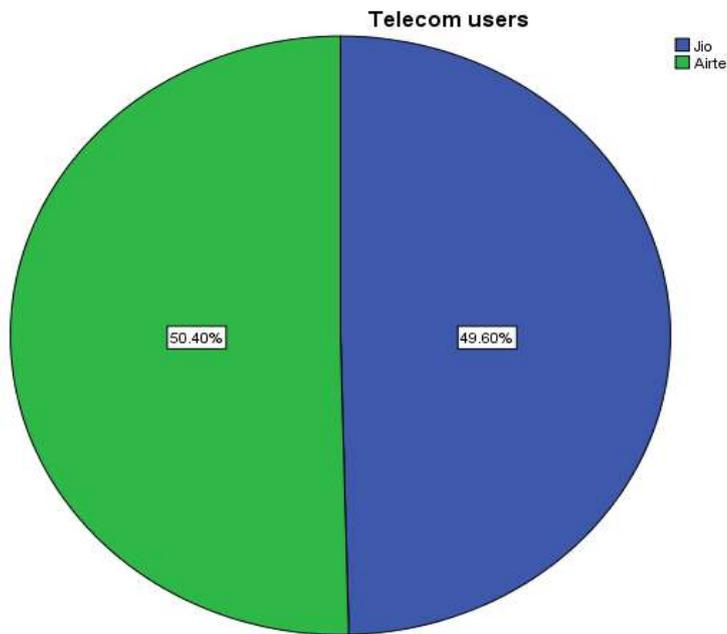
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No personal Income (Student/Dependent)	54	43.2	43.2	43.2
Below 15000	10	8.0	8.0	51.2
15,001 - 30,000	48	38.4	38.4	89.6
30,001 - 50,000	5	4.0	4.0	93.6
50,001 - 75,000	3	2.4	2.4	96.0
75,001 - 1,00,000	3	2.4	2.4	98.4
Above 1,00,000	2	1.6	1.6	100.0
Total	125	100.0	100.0	

INFERENCE:

- From the above table, we inferred that the **No personal Income\ (Student/Dependent)** respondents are **54** and the percentage is **43.2%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Below 15,000** respondents are **10** and the percentage is **8.0%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **15,001 – 30,000** respondents are **48** and the percentage is **38.4%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **30,001 – 50,000** respondents are **5** and the percentage is **4.0%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **50,001 – 75,000** respondents are **3** and the percentage is **2.4%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **75,001 – 1,00,000** respondents are **3** and the percentage is **2.4%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Above 1,00,000** respondents are **2** and the percentage is **1.6%**

Table 4.6 : Telecom users

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Jio	62	49.6	49.6	49.6
Airtel	63	50.4	50.4	100.0
Total	125	100.0	100.0	



INFERENCE:

- From the above table, we inferred that the **Jio** respondents are **62** and the percentage is **49.6%**
- From the above table, we inferred that the **Airtel** respondents are **63** and the percentage is **50.4%**

4.2 Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics is a branch of statistics that uses data from a sample to make conclusions, predictions, or generalizations about a larger population. Since studying an entire population is often difficult or expensive, researchers collect data from a smaller group (sample) and use inferential methods to estimate or test conclusions about the whole population.

OBJECTIVE – 1: To measure the level of customer satisfaction with Airtel and Jio services.

H₀ – There is no significant difference in customer satisfaction level with telecom services (Airtel/Jio) among respondents.

H₁ – There is significant difference in customer satisfaction level with telecom services (Airtel/Jio) among respondents

Table 4.7: ONE – WAY ANOVA

Customer Satisfaction		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F -Value	P-Value
I am satisfied with the overall service provided by my telecom operator (Airtel/Jio).	Jio	62	2.10	.844	.107	1.560	.214
	Airtel	63	1.90	.875	.110		
	Total	125	2.00	.861	.077		
The network coverage of my telecom service meets my expectations.	Jio	62	2.29	.755	.096	6.128	.015
	Airtel	63	1.94	.840	.106		
	Total	125	2.11	.815	.073		
The internet speed provided by my telecom operator is satisfactory.	Jio	62	2.13	.757	.096	1.570	.213
	Airtel	63	1.94	.948	.119		
	Total	125	2.03	.861	.077		
I am satisfied with the call quality of my telecom service.	Jio	62	2.15	.807	.102	2.880	.092
	Airtel	63	1.90	.777	.098		
	Total	125	2.02	.798	.071		
Overall, my experience with my telecom operator has been pleasant	Jio	62	2.06	.650	.083	5.390	.022
	Airtel	63	1.78	.728	.092		
	Total	125	1.92	.703	.063		

INFERENCE:

From the above table, it shows that Jio has higher mean satisfaction scores than Airtel across all variables. The **highest mean (2.29)** was for network coverage (Jio), and the **lowest mean (1.78)** was for overall experience (Airtel). The **highest standard deviation (.948)** was for internet speed (Airtel), while the **lowest standard deviation (.650)** was for overall experience (Jio). **Significant differences** were found in network coverage ($p = .015$) and overall experience ($p = .022$), while other factors were **not significant**. Hence, **H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted**, indicating a significant difference in customer satisfaction between Airtel and Jio.

OBJECTIVE – 2: To identify the key factors influencing customer satisfaction in Airtel and Jio.

H_0 – There is no significant difference in the influence of customer satisfaction factors between Airtel and Jio users.

H_1 – There is significant difference in the influence of customer satisfaction factors between Airtel and Jio users.

Table – 4.8 ONE-WAY ANOVA

Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F- value	P - value
Affordable tariff plans influence my satisfaction with my telecom service.	Jio	62	2.31	.861	.109	1.422	.235
	Airtel	63	2.10	1.103	.139		
	Total	125	2.20	.992	.089		
Good network availability plays an important role in my satisfaction.	Jio	62	1.89	.680	.086	.554	.458
	Airtel	63	1.79	.722	.091		

	Total	125	1.84	.700	.063		
Quality of customer care services affects my satisfaction level.	Jio	62	2.19	.743	.094	6.093	.015
	Airtel	63	1.86	.780	.098		
	Total	125	2.02	.777	.070		
Value-added services (OTT subscriptions, offers, etc.) increase my satisfaction	Jio	62	2.13	.778	.099	.535	.466
	Airtel	63	2.02	.942	.119		
	Total	125	2.07	.863	.077		
Transparency in billing and recharge plans improves my satisfaction	Jio	62	2.11	.770	.098	3.226	.075
	Airtel	63	1.86	.820	.103		
	Total	125	1.98	.803	.072		

INFERENCE:

From the above table, it shows that Jio has higher mean scores for all influencing factors. The **highest mean (2.31)** was for affordable tariff plans (Jio), while the **lowest mean (1.79)** was for good network availability (Airtel). The **highest standard deviation (1.103)** was observed for affordable tariff plans (Airtel), and the **lowest standard deviation (.680)** for good network availability (Jio). Only customer care services ($p = .015$) show a **significant difference**; all other factors are **not significant ($p > 0.05$)**. Hence, **H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted**, indicating a significant difference in influencing factors between Airtel and Jio users, mainly in customer care services.

OBJECTIVE – 3: To assess the level of customer loyalty towards Airtel and Jio.

H_0 – There is no significant difference in the level of customer loyalty between Airtel and Jio Customers.

H_1 – There is significant difference in the level of customer loyalty between Airtel and Jio Customers.

Table – 4.9 ONE WAY – ANOVA

Customer Loyalty		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	F Value	P Value
I prefer to continue using my current telecom operator.	Jio	62	2.05	.711	.090	5.596	.020
	Airtel	63	1.75	.718	.090		
	Total	125	1.90	.728	.065		
I am unlikely to switch to another telecom service provider.	Jio	62	2.37	.873	.111	3.941	.049
	Airtel	63	2.06	.859	.108		
	Total	125	2.22	.876	.078		
I trust my telecom operator to provide consistent service quality.	Jio	62	2.26	.700	.089	7.227	.008
	Airtel	63	1.87	.889	.112		
	Total	125	2.06	.821	.073		
I feel emotionally attached to my telecom service provider.	Jio	62	2.60	.931	.118	4.564	.035
	Airtel	63	2.24	.946	.119		
	Total	125	2.42	.952	.085		
I consider myself a loyal customer of my telecom operator	Jio	62	2.45	.739	.094	20.522	.000
	Airtel	63	1.84	.766	.097		
	Total	125	2.14	.810	.072		

INFERENCE:

From the above table, it shows that Jio customers exhibit higher loyalty across all dimensions. The **highest mean (2.60)** was for emotional attachment (Jio), while the **lowest mean (1.75)** was for preference to continue (Airtel). The **highest standard deviation (.946)** was seen in emotional attachment (Airtel), and the **lowest standard deviation (.700)** in trust (Jio). All factors are statistically **significant ($p < 0.05$)**. Hence, **H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted**, indicating a significant difference in customer loyalty between Airtel and Jio, with Jio showing higher loyalty levels.

5. FINDINGS

Objective 1: Customer Satisfaction (Airtel vs Jio)

- Jio shows slightly higher satisfaction than Airtel.
- Network coverage and overall experience show significant differences.
- Other factors (service, speed, call quality) are similar.
- Overall, Jio performs better in satisfaction.

Objective 2: Factors Influencing Satisfaction

- Affordable plans and customer care matter most.
- Only customer care shows a significant difference.
- Jio scores slightly higher on most factors.
- Other factors are almost similar for both.

Objective 3: Customer Loyalty

- Jio customers show higher loyalty.
- They are more likely to stay, trust, and feel attached.
- All loyalty factors show significant differences.
- Jio clearly leads in customer loyalty.

6. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION:

Recommendations:

Reliance Jio: Focus on Stability, Not Just Speed: Users love the data plans but are frustrated by occasional "call drops" or speed fluctuations. Jio should invest more in network densification (more towers in congested areas) to match Airtel's stability. Humanize Customer Support: As a digital-first company, Jio relies heavily on automated systems. Improving the "human touch" in customer service can help convert price-sensitive users into long-term loyalists.

Bharti Airtel: Bridge the Value Gap: Airtel is perceived as "premium" but also "expensive". To retain the younger demographic (who are more likely to switch for a better deal), Airtel should introduce more aggressive "loyalty rewards" or data-heavy bundles for Gen-Z. Expand Rural Reach: While Airtel is strong in cities, Jio's rural penetration is a threat. Airtel needs to optimize its 5G rollout in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities to ensure it doesn't lose the next wave of internet users.

Conclusion:

The research reveals both players dominate the market but for fundamentally different reasons. Jio has firmly established itself as the undisputed king of affordability and high-volume data, successfully turning high-speed internet into a daily commodity rather than a luxury, which has allowed it to capture the hearts of the youth and rural segments. On the other hand, Airtel remains the top choice for those who prioritize network stability and a more premium service experience, maintaining a stronger emotional bond with long-term users who value consistency over the lowest price. This creates an interesting loyalty gap: while Jio wins on price satisfaction and sheer accessibility, Airtel continues to enjoy deeper brand trust and a reputation for reliability, particularly in urban areas where users are less willing to compromise on quality for cost.

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