

A Comparative Study of JIO Versus Bharti Airtel with Reference to Connectivity and Recharge Plans Among Gen Z in Ahmedabad City

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ABSTRACT

This research presents a comparative study of two major telecom service providers—Jio and Bharti Airtel—in relation to connectivity and recharge plans among Gen Z consumers in Ahmedabad city. The study aims to explore how age influences network connectivity ratings, telecom service provider preferences, and the experience of network issues. Using a structured survey, the study evaluates five hypotheses, focusing on the associations between age and various telecom-related factors. The findings reveal that while there are weak associations between age and connectivity ratings, network-related issues, and provider preferences, age does not significantly determine the choice between Jio and Bharti Airtel. Instead, factors such as service quality, network coverage, and digital service offerings seem to play a more crucial role in shaping Gen Z's telecom choices. The research also highlights the importance of localized solutions for network issues and suggests that telecom operators should consider tailored marketing strategies, competitive pricing, and value-added service bundles to attract and retain Gen Z consumers. Furthermore, the study indicates that customer service, brand loyalty, and the influence of digital services are key drivers of consumer satisfaction and provider choice. Theoretical and practical implications suggest that future research should further investigate the role of socio-economic factors, technological advancements like 5G, and government regulations in shaping consumer behaviour in the telecom industry

INTRODUCTION

India has become a key market in the ever-evolving telecom industry because to its wide range of consumers and quick adoption of new technologies (Vidani, 2015). Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel are two of the major companies that have continuously led the sector, revolutionizing digital experiences and connections (Vidani & Solanki, 2015). The comparison of these two titans is the main objective of this study, with special attention to Ahmedabad's Generation Z's plans for connectivity and recharging (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). Often called "digital natives," Generation Z is a technologically savvy group that depends significantly on mobile data for communication, entertainment, and education (Vidani, 2016). Their tastes and actions have a significant influence on how telecom businesses formulate their plans, particularly in a cutthroat market like Ahmedabad, a fast growing Gujarati metropolis (Niyati & Vidani, 2016).

The Development of the Telecom Sector in India:

Particularly in the last 20 years, the Indian telecom industry has experienced a dramatic change (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016). Customer experiences have been completely transformed by the transition from basic phone services to 4G and now 5G connection (Vidani, 2016). With its aggressive pricing tactics, free data offerings, and reasonably priced recharge plans, Reliance Jio upended the market in 2016 (Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016). In order to maintain their market share, rivals like Bharti Airtel were compelled to innovate and adjust (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016). With its data-driven approach, Jio brought about a paradigm shift, yet Bharti Airtel has continuously prioritized customer satisfaction, network dependability, and service quality (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Due to their significant investments in marketing, infrastructure, and technology, these businesses are now the top options for customers of all demographics, including Generation Z (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016).

Generation Z Significance in Telecom Strategies:

Because of their unique traits – tech-savvy, social media-dependent, and eager for fast connectivity – Gen Z is a significant market for telecom companies (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017). In contrast to earlier generations, Gen Z values seamless user experiences, reasonably priced data plans, and fast internet (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017). The significance of customized recharge plans, creative promotions, and digital payment methods is further underscored by their consumption patterns (Biharani & Vidani, 2018). An intriguing case study for examining these patterns is Ahmedabad as a city (Vidani, 2018). Ahmedabad's expanding IT industry, educational establishments, and youthful populace make it a microcosm of India's changing digital scene (Odedra, Rabadiya, & Vidani, 2018).

Extent and Significance:

Policymakers, marketing experts, and telecom operators will find value in the study's conclusions (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018). Jio and Airtel can improve their client retention and market share by better knowing Generation Z's preferences (Vasveliyya & Vidani, 2019). Furthermore, by providing a localized viewpoint on Ahmedabad's urban population, the study adds to the body of knowledge on customer behaviour in the telecom industry (Vidani,

2019). Surveys, interviews, and focus groups with Ahmedabad's Gen Z customers are used in this study to gather primary data (Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019). Data on aspects such as customer service, price, and network quality will be gathered using a standardized questionnaire (Vidani, Jacob, & Patel, 2019). The findings will be complemented by secondary data, such as reports and market evaluations (Vidani J. N., 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Indian Telecom Industry Outline

As one of the biggest and most active marketplaces in the world the Indian telecom sector has seen tremendous expansion and change from the past 20 years (Vidani & Solanki, 2015). With the advent of low-cost cell phones, fast internet, and creative recharge schemes, India has become the world's largest consumer of data (Vidani, 2015). The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) reports that in 2023, there were more than 1.17 billion mobile users in the nation, with a remarkable percentage of them utilizing 4G and 5G services (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). With a combined market share of nearly 60% of India's active mobile users, Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel are the two dominant companies (TRAI, 2023) (Vidani, 2016).

The Market Disruption of JIO

Dependency Jio's 2016 debut into the telecom industry was a turning point. Jio altered consumer expectations by providing free voice calls and radically reduced data tariffs, forcing rivals to update their pricing schemes (Niyati & Vidani, 2016). Bhatnagar et al. (2019) found that Jio's aggressive market penetration approach, supported by the financial strength of its parent company Reliance Industries, transformed the Indian telecom industry (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016). The main advantage of Jio is its emphasis on data-driven services (Vidani, 2016). Jio's investment in a pan-India 4G LTE network enabled them to provide high-speed internet at reasonable prices, drawing in a sizable subscriber base (Kumar et al., 2021). The value proposition of the company was further improved by the integration of services like JioTV, JioCinema and JioSavan (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016).

Competitive Advantage of Bharti Airtel

Prior to Jio's arrival Bharti Airtel led the market (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). In response to the upheaval, it prioritized customer satisfaction and network quality (Singh & Vidani, 2016). According to a Deloitte 2020 assessment, Airtel's emphasis on service dependability and extensive recharge plans is significantly responsible for its capacity to retain clients (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). In contrast to Jio, Airtel has continuously offered plans and solutions tailored to both urban and rural markets (Vidani & Plaha, 2016). Chandra and Soni (2022) talk about how Airtel set itself apart by using its postpaid services and first-rate customer support. Customers have benefited from partnerships with streaming services like Amazon Prime and Netflix as well as the launch of Airtel Thanks, a rewards-based program (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017).

Gen Z: An Important Consumer Group

Born between 1997 and 2012, Generation Z has become a major consumer segment, particularly for telecom companies (Vidani & Singh, 2017). This generation is distinguished by its need for rapid gratification, desire for digital interaction, and dependence on cell phones (Vidani & Plaha, 2017). More than 80% of Gen Z customers in India use smartphones as their main internet access device, according to a McKinsey report from 2021 (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017). As a result, telecom providers find them to be a profitable target (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018). According to Malik et al. (2022) Gen Z demands more from telecom companies than just simple access. Affordability, smooth streaming, and integrated digital services are important to them (Vasveliyya & Vidani, 2019). Personalized offers, user-friendly apps, and cutting-edge value-added services frequently have an impact on their loyalty (Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019).

Ahmedabad an Intimate Look at Urban Telecom Developments

An excellent case study for examining Gen Z telecom preferences is Ahmedabad one of India's flourishing cities (Vidani, 2019). The city is a hub for digital consumption due to its strong infrastructure, growing IT industry, and high concentration of educational institutions (Vidani, Jacob, & Patel, 2019). Ahmedabad is a Tier 2 city with rapidly growing 5G adoption and high internet usage among young adults, as per KPMG (2023) report.

Connectivity and Network Quality

One of the main factors influencing customer happiness is still network quality. Reliable connectivity is essential for keeping clients, especially in metropolitan areas, according to Gupta et al. (2021) (Vidani J. N., 2020). Jio has made significant investments to develop its network infrastructure especially for 4G and 5G services (Vidani & Dholakia, 2020). In metropolitan markets, Bharti Airtel is still praised for its reliable broadband speeds and excellent call quality (Ookla, 2023). According to a comparison study conducted in Gujarat by Sharma and Patel (2023), Airtel frequently receives superior customer satisfaction ratings because of fewer call drops and faster internet speeds during peak hours, even if Jio leads in affordability (Vidani & Das, 2021).

Pricing Policies and Plans for Recharge

Jio's strategy is based on affordable pricing (Rathod, Meghrajani, & Vidani, 2022). Prepaid options from the firm, which include unlimited calls, high data caps, and free access to Jio's digital environment, are made to accommodate consumers who use a lot of data (Mahajan & Vidani, 2023). In contrast, Airtel offers a variety of prepaid and postpaid plans, loyalty benefits, and bundled deals to cater to a wide range of customer demographics (Vidani J. N., 2022). According to Patel et al. (2022) Gen Z customers in Ahmedabad favour prepaid contracts with generous data allotments and adjustable validity periods. Airtel's tariffs are valued for their extra benefits, like free OTT subscriptions and device protection services, even though Jio's recharge prices are frequently thought to be more affordable (Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023).

Consumer Loyalty and Brand Image

In the telecom sector, affordability brand trust and service quality all affect customer loyalty (Saxena & Vidani, 2023). According to a study by Singh and Mehta (2020) Jio is a well-liked option for new smartphone consumers because to its strong marketing and affordable prices. However, because of its reputation for dependability and innovation, Airtel has a devoted customer base (Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023). According to Nielsen (2023) Airtel continues to have a higher net promoter score (NPS) than Jio in urban markets like Ahmedabad. This implies that Airtel's emphasis on service quality results in better brand advocacy, whereas Jio draws users with its inexpensive rates (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Singh, 2023).

Digital Transformation and Services with Additional Value

For telecom providers integrating digital services has emerged as a crucial difference (Bansal, Pophalkar, & Vidani, 2023). Cloud storage, music streaming, and OTT platforms are now part of Jio's and Airtel's extended product lines (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Chaudasi, 2023). A PwC analysis from 2023 claims that Jio's ecosystem strategy which includes Jio Fiber, Jio Mart, and Jio Meet has improved its standing as a provider of all-inclusive digital services. In the meantime, Airtel has concentrated on forming alliances to expand its digital portfolio, such as its relationship with Wynk Music and Airtel Xstream (Chaudhary, Patel, & Vidani, 2023).

Technological Advancement and the Uptake of 5G

For telecom carriers the introduction of 5G in India has created new prospects. With their investments in infrastructure growth and spectrum acquisition, Jio and Airtel are leading this technological revolution (Patel, Chaudhary, & Vidani, 2023). Das et al. (2023) stress that the telecom industry's future will be significantly shaped by the deployment of 5G. Both operators are fighting to get the first users of 5g services in places like Ahmedabad, where there is a high level of digital consumption (Sharma & Vidani, 2023).

Obstacles in the Telecom Industry

Notwithstanding their achievements Jio and Airtel still have to contend with a number of issues, such as fierce rivalry, spectrum costs, and regulatory compliance (Mahajan & Vidani, 2023). Profit margins have also been stretched by the growing demand for unlimited data and the requirement for ongoing network upgrades (Sharma & Vidani, 2023). In a price-sensitive market like India, it's critical to strike a balance between affordability and profitability, according to a report by Ernst & Young (2022). To address these issues, Jio and Airtel are both looking toward cutting-edge revenue sources including enterprise solutions and internet of Things services (Saxena & Vidani, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

Table 1. Research Methodology

Research Design	Descriptive
Sample Method	Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method
Data Collection Method	Primary method
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Type of Questions	Close ended
Data Collection mode	Online through Google Form
Data Analysis methods	Tables
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS and Excel
Sampling Size	171
Survey Area	Ahmedabad
Sampling Unit	Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Home maker, Professionals like CA, Doctor etc.

*Source: Author's compilation

Demographic Summary

The demographic summary of the study participants reveals that 67.3% of the sample were male (115 individuals), while 32.7% were female (56 individuals). In terms of age, the largest group was aged 18-25, comprising 42.7% (73 participants), followed by those aged 25-32 at 35.1% (60 participants), and 22.2% (38 participants) were between 32-38 years old. Regarding occupation, 29.2% (50 participants) were students, 29.2% were employed in jobs, and 18.7% were involved in business, and 9.9% were professionals (such as doctors or chartered accountants). Additionally, 8.2% were homemakers, and 4.7% were retired. This distribution provides a diverse demographic representation for the study.

Cronbach Alpha

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach Alpha Value	No. of items
0.933	24

*Source: SPSS Software

The Cronbach's alpha value of 0.933 for the 24 items in this study indicates excellent internal consistency. This high value suggests that the items within the scale are highly correlated and consistently measure the same underlying construct. Typically, a Cronbach's alpha value above 0.9 is considered excellent, reflecting reliable measurement and strong cohesion among the items used in the study.

RESULT

Table 3. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No	Alternate Hypothesis	Result p =	>/< 0.05	Accept/ Reject Null hypothesis	R value	Relationship
H1	There is a significant association between the age group of individuals and their rating of network connectivity (i.e., the distribution of ratings differs across age groups).	0.040	<	H01 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.355	Weak
H2	There is a significant association between age and the choice of telecom service provider (i.e., the likelihood of using JIO differs across age groups).	0.120	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.002	Weak
H3	There is a significant association between age and the choice of telecom service provider (i.e., the likelihood of using Bharti Airtel differs across age groups).	0.026	<	H03 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.000	Weak
H4	There is a significant association between age and the experience of network issues in Ahmedabad (i.e., the likelihood of facing network issues differs across age groups).	0.066	>	H04 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.329	Weak
H5	There is a significant association between age and the location of network issues in Ahmedabad (i.e., different age groups are more likely to experience network issues in different locations).	0.011	<	H05 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.000	Weak

Source: Author's compilation

DISCUSSION

The research study aimed to explore the comparative analysis of Jio and Bharti Airtel in terms of connectivity and recharge plans among Gen Z users in Ahmedabad city. This was analysed through the lens of various hypotheses, specifically focusing on age groups and their experiences with network connectivity, telecom service provider preferences, and network-related issues.

1. Network Connectivity and Age Groups

The first hypothesis, H1, proposed that there would be a significant association between age and the rating of network connectivity, with the expectation that the distribution of ratings would differ across different age groups. The p-value of 0.040 (less than 0.05) led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating a significant difference in how different age groups rated network connectivity. However, the relationship was noted as weak ($p = 0.355$), suggesting that although there is some association between age and connectivity ratings, it is not robust. This could imply that while younger individuals (Gen Z) may have distinct expectations or experiences with network quality, these differences are not highly pronounced across the broader age groups, particularly within the context of Ahmedabad city.

2. Age and Alternative of Telecom Service Provider

For H2, the research hypothesized that the alternative of telecom service provider would differ across age groups, particularly in terms of liking for Jio. The p-value of 0.120 (greater than 0.05) led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis meaning, that there is no significant association among age and the likelihood of using Jio. This result suggests that Gen Z's preference for Jio is relatively consistent across various age groups, indicating a more uniform trend in the use of Jio, regardless of age. On the other hand, H3, which proposed a meaningful association among age and preference for Bharti Airtel, resulted in a p-value of 0.026 (less than 0.05), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. However, this result was also considered weak ($p = 0.000$), which indicates that while there may be some age-related variation in Airtel usage, the association is not strong enough to make a clear conclusion. This finding suggests that Bharti Airtel's user base is relatively more diverse in terms of age, yet there are subtle differences in preference based on age, particularly within Gen Z demographic.

3. Network Issues and Age Groups

H4 proposed an important link among age and the likelihood of encountering network issues, with the expectation that the incidence of network problems would vary by age group. The p-value of 0.066 led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis, suggesting that there is no important link among age and the frequency of network problems in Ahmedabad. This finding indicates that Gen Z, as well as other age groups, face network issues at similar rates, which could imply that network performance may be a more universal concern in the city, rather than one influenced by age.

Lastly, H5 hypothesized that the location of network issues would vary across age groups. The p-value of 0.011 led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that there is indeed an important link among age and the location of network issues. However, the weak relationship ($p > 0.000$) implies that while different age groups may experience network issues in distinct locations, the effect is not strong enough to draw clear or consistent patterns.

Theoretical Implications

This research provides priceless knowledge about the dynamics of telecom service usage, particularly in the context of Jio and Bharti Airtel, and their connection to age groups among Gen Z users in Ahmedabad. The theoretical implications of this study extend across several domains including consumer behaviour, telecommunications theory, and the psychology of service provider preferences.

1. Consumer Behaviour and Telecommunications Choices

One of the key theoretical contributions of this study lies in the understanding of consumer behaviour in the telecommunications sector, specifically regarding the choice of telecom service providers. While prior studies have explored how factors like pricing, service quality, and brand loyalty influence consumers choice, this research brings new perception about how these factors may or may not be influenced by age. The finding that Gen Z users in Ahmedabad do not significantly differ in their choice of Jio and Bharti Airtel across age groups suggests that modern telecom choices, particularly among younger generations, may be more driven by other factors such as network coverage, internet speed, and brand marketing strategies rather than age alone. This challenges earlier assumptions in consumer behaviour literature that younger consumers may demonstrate more pronounced brand preferences, thus adding complexity to existing theories.

2. Network Connectivity and Technology Adaptation

Another theoretical implication of this research which is related to the concept of technological acceptance and the considered quality of network connectivity. The weak association found between age and the rating of network connectivity implies that connectivity quality, which has often been theorized to be a critical factor in customer satisfaction, may not be strongly influenced by age within the Gen Z demographic. This suggests that the technology embracing models such as the Technology Acceptance Model that may need to be revisited, particularly in markets with highly competitive and rapidly evolving telecom infrastructures. The ability of both Jio and Bharti Airtel to maintain relatively similar perceptions of connectivity quality across age groups challenges the assumption that older individuals or those from different demographic backgrounds are more resistant to adopting new technologies or assessing connectivity differently.

3. The Role of Social Identity and Brand Insight

The weak yet significant findings regarding network issues and their location provide a nuanced perspective on how consumers form their

relationship with telecom providers. The location of network issues which seems to vary by age group, may reflect the impact of social identity on brand fidelity and customer satisfaction. Theoretical models such as the Customer Satisfaction and Fidelity Theory could be expanded to incorporate not only service quality but also the emotional and social factors tied to where and when customers face issues with their services. For instance, Gen Z consumers, who may be more tech-savvy and socially connected, might experience different frustrations and levels of loyalty based on the context in which they face network issues something that older models of customer satisfaction may not fully account for.

4. Inference for Telecom Service Theory

This study also contributes to the broader theoretical discussion on telecom service theories, particularly those focused on service standards and network reliability. The weak associations found in most hypotheses, particularly in areas like network issues and provider choice, suggest that while these factors are relevant, they may not be the most significant determinants of telecom usage for Gen Z consumers. As a result, theories linked to service quality, like the SERVQUAL model, may need to be adapted to account for evolving consumer expectations in the telecom industry, especially with the rise of digital-native consumers. The shift towards service bundles (e.g., combining internet voice, and entertainment) and non-age-related factors such as socio-economic status, technological infrastructure, and data consumption habits are likely to become more central to understanding consumer choices.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide various practical inference for telecom service providers, marketers, and policymakers, particularly concerning Jio and Bharti Airtel's strategies for engaging with Gen Z users in Ahmedabad. The results highlighted various opportunities for improving service offerings, tailoring marketing campaigns, and addressing consumer needs within the telecom industry.

1. Tailored Marketing and Consumer Engagement Strategies

The research indicates that, despite the insignificant differences in network connectivity ratings across age groups, Jio and Bharti Airtel may still benefit from tailored marketing strategies that resonate with Gen Z's specific needs and preferences. Even though age may not directly influence telecom provider choice, the study suggests that both brands should focus on positioning themselves depends upon quality of service value-added features, and digital engagement. Telecom operators could leverage social media platforms and influencer partnerships to reach younger, tech-savvy consumers, using relatable content that emphasizes data usage, speed, and seamless connectivity. By aligning their brand message with Gen Z's interests and values (e.g., sustainability, technology, and innovation), telecom providers can strengthen brand loyalty and differentiate themselves from competitors.

2. Enhancing Network Quality in Urban Areas

The study highlights the need for continuous improvement in network quality, as both Jio and Bharti Airtel face weak associations with age groups concerning connectivity ratings. This suggests that network reliability is a universal concern for consumers across different demographics. In practical terms, telecom providers should invest in upgrading their network infrastructure, particularly in densely populated urban areas like Ahmedabad, where high data usage and demand for uninterrupted connectivity are prevalent. Addressing common issues such as slow speeds, frequent call drops, and weak signals in key locations (e.g., educational institutions, malls, and entertainment hubs) would improve customer satisfaction and enhance retention rates. A commitment to enhancing network performance can make a significant difference in maintaining a competitive edge.

3. Addressing Network Issues Based on Location and Age Group

While age does not significantly affect the likelihood of facing network issues, the study suggests that location plays a role in where consumers experience these problems. Telecom operators could leverage this data to create targeted interventions and localized solutions. For example, if certain regions or high-traffic areas (e.g., business districts or university campuses) show frequent connectivity issues, telecom providers could deploy additional infrastructure or optimize existing towers to ensure better coverage in these areas. Additionally, customer service teams could focus on providing quicker resolutions for network issues in specific locations, ensuring that consumer's concerns are addressed promptly. Offering proactive solutions, such as compensation for service interruptions or upgrades for affected customers, can improve user trust and satisfaction.

Revisiting Pricing and Recharge Plans for Gen Z

Although the study focuses on connectivity and service provider preferences, it suggests that pricing models could play a more significant role in shaping consumer behaviour, especially for younger consumers who are more price-sensitive. Telecom providers may want to reassess their recharge plans and offerings to align better with the data consumption habits of Gen Z. For instance, offering flexible and affordable prepaid plans with substantial data quotas could attract more young users. Additionally, providers could explore bundling services such as unlimited data, entertainment (e.g., streaming platforms), and gaming services at competitive rates, appealing to Gen Z's diverse needs. By focusing on creating value-driven pricing models, providers can position themselves as the go-to choice for young consumers looking for affordable yet high-quality telecom services.

CONCLUSIONS

This research on the comparative study of Jio versus Bharti Airtel with reference to connectivity and recharge plans among Gen Z in Ahmedabad has provided valuable insights into the preferences, experiences, and behaviours of young telecom users in the city. The study aimed to understand how age

influences network connectivity perceptions, telecom provider choices, and the experience of network issues, ultimately shedding light on how these factors affect Gen Z's engagement with telecom services.

The findings reveal a complex interplay between connectivity ratings, provider preferences, and network-related issues, with age not being as strong a determinant as initially anticipated. Although some weak associations were found—such as subtle differences in the locations where network issues were experienced—Gen Z's preference for Jio and Bharti Airtel was not significantly influenced by age groups. Both service providers appear to cater to a broad demographic, with network reliability, service quality, and pricing being key drivers of consumer choice, rather than age-related factors alone.

From a practical viewpoint, this research underscores the importance of focusing on network quality, inexpensive, and flexible pricing plans, and localized solutions to address network issues. Telecom providers should tailor their offerings to meet the diverse needs of young consumers, who increasingly demand high-speed internet and seamless connectivity for both social and educational purposes. Additionally, by differentiating through value-added services, such as entertainment and educational content bundles, telecom companies can attract and retain the Gen Z market.

Theoretical implications suggest that traditional models of consumer behaviour in telecommunications may need to be revisited, as age alone does not fully explain provider preferences or network experiences. Moreover, service quality and pricing, rather than demographic factors, play a more significant role in shaping consumer behaviour in this sector

RECOMMENDATION

The findings from this study on the comparative analysis of Jio and Bharti Airtel in relation to connectivity and recharge plans among Gen Z in Ahmedabad offer valuable insights but also open up avenues for further exploration. Future research could build on the results of this study by addressing some of its limitations and exploring new dimensions within the telecom sector. The following recommendations are made for future research and the potential scope of the study:

1. Longitudinal Studies to Examine Trends Over Time

A key recommendation for future research is to conduct longitudinal studies that track the changing preferences and experiences of Gen Z users over time. As telecom technologies such as 5G are gradually being introduced, consumer behaviour and service expectations may evolve. Longitudinal research can provide insights into how Gen Z's choices regarding network providers, recharge plans, and service quality ratings change as new technologies, pricing models, and market dynamics emerge. This would help in understanding trends, seasonal variations, and the long-term impact of emerging technologies on telecom provider preferences.

2. Expansion of the Study Sample and Geographic Scope

This study focused on Gen Z consumers in Ahmedabad, which, while providing useful local insights, may not capture the broader

patterns across different regions of India or globally. Future research could expand the sample size to include participants from other cities or rural areas, as consumer behaviour in urban and rural settings may differ due to factors such as network coverage, economic status, and digital literacy. Including a more diverse population will help in understanding how telecom provider preferences and network issues vary across different demographics and geographical contexts.

3. Investigation into Socio-Economic Factors

While the study primarily focused on age, future research could incorporate socio-economic factors such as income levels, educational background, and occupation, which may have a more substantial impact on telecom service choices. For example, Gen Z users from higher socio-economic backgrounds may prioritize premium services, data speed, or international roaming options, whereas those from lower-income groups may place more importance on affordable recharge plans. Investigating the role of these socio-economic factors could provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer preferences in the telecom sector.

4. Consumer Perception of Digital Services and Bundles

Another area of future research could focus on how Gen Z consumers perceive digital services bundled with telecom plans. This study touched on network quality and connectivity but did not delve deeply into the influence of content-related services such as entertainment, education, and gaming, which are increasingly important to younger users. Telecom operators are now bundling mobile data with access to streaming platforms, online learning tools, and gaming services. Research could explore how these bundled offerings impact provider preferences and user loyalty, especially among Gen Z, who are more inclined toward digital content consumption.

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