

**AN OVERVIEW OF THE AIRTEL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS PREPAID PLANS  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE DISTRICT**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Telecommunication industry is a cornerstone for economic growth and modernization, acting as a key driver for connectivity, innovation, and access to information. Airtel, a leading telecom provider with over 387.326 million customers as of July 2024. The research was conducted to understand the reasons customers choose Airtel, their satisfaction of available plans, and factors influencing this satisfaction. A sample of 240 Airtel prepaid customers in Coimbatore district was selected using a convenient sampling method. Results indicate that most customers choose Airtel primarily for its brand image, high-speed 4G and 5G internet services, and network quality. Additionally, the study found that most respondents have a medium level of satisfaction regarding Airtel's plan offerings. Notably, a significant relationship exists between family income and satisfaction levels, suggesting that higher income influences greater satisfaction of plan options.

**Keywords:** Satisfaction, Customers, Telecom plans

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Airtel**

India is the world's second largest telecommunication market, third highest number of internet users in the world. It has the highest data usage per smartphone at an average of 9.8 GB per month. Since its inception in 1997, TRAI has completed 25 years of long journey in successfully regulating the Telecom and Broadcasting sectors. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) plays a pivotal role in shaping and enhancing the telecom and broadcasting sectors in India. TRAI aims to ensure fair competition among service providers, which is essential for consumer choice and quality of service. The digital revolution in India is marked by significant advancements in technology and increased connectivity, which have transformed the way people communicate, access information, and utilize services. The expansion of telecom infrastructure and broadcasting capabilities has made significant contributions to initiatives like Digital India, which aims to empower citizens through digital literacy and access to electronic services, and Smart Cities, which leverage technology to enhance urban living. At the middle of the year 2024, the wireless subscribers base stood at 1,169.61 million. The Jio service provider has 488.63 million subscribers followed by Bharti Airtel 284.03 million subscribers, Vodafone Idea 126.72 million subscribers, and BSNL 29.61 million subscribers. Jio leads the telecom market with approximately 40.68% of the total subscriber base. Bharti Airtel follows

closely with about 33.12%. Vodafone Idea holds approximately 18.46%, while BSNL accounts for about 7.59% The overall telecom sector's gross revenue stands at ₹3.36 trillion for FY24.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Navnita Dhruw , Dr Monica Sainy (2023) in their research article entitled “Customer Satisfaction Towards Telecommunication Service Provider: A Study on Bharti Airtel” reveals that strategies to improve service quality, optimize network performance, optimizing pricing strategies, strengthen customer support and leverage technological innovations to deliver superior services.
2. Dr. Manju Khosla (2023) in their research paper titled, Customer Satisfaction of Mobile Phone Service Providers: A Study of Students at the University of Delhi, India, majority of the respondents were satisfied with their service providers especially (Airtel, Vodafone,Idea & Reliance Jio ) according to this study Airtel is in second place.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Customers may have varying levels of satisfaction based on their location, usage patterns, and demographics (such as age, income level, etc.). For instance, urban users may be more satisfied of the high-end data plans, international roaming plans, and specialized entertainment packages, while rural customers might be more focused on basic prepaid plans or affordable voice services. Satisfaction levels can also vary between new users and long-term customers. New users may have a steeper learning curve about Airtel's offerings, while existing customers may already be familiar with the available options. To understanding the level of customer satisfaction about the plans offered by Airtel is a multifaceted challenge. The key influencing factors include marketing efforts, customer interactions, service quality, promotions, competitor activity, and the overall digital literacy of Airtel’s customer base. Regular surveys, customer feedback, and data analytics can help Airtel assess the effectiveness of its communication strategies and identify areas for improvement. This raises the questions: What is level of Satisfactions on the plans offered by Airtel? What factors influence their level of Satisfaction?

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1.To find the purpose for choosing Airtel company
2. To measure the level of satisfaction on the prepaid plans offered by Airtel

## METHODOLOGY

The study mostly depends on primary data collected through interview schedule from 240 Airtel Prepaid customers in Coimbatore district by implementing convenient sampling technique. Annual reports of the

company and Articles from magazines, journals as well as websites form the secondary source. Data was analyzed using Garrett Ranking method, Anova and Multiple Regression Analysis.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study relies on the view of Airtel prepaid customers of Coimbatore District. Caution may be taken while generalizing the results.

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

#### Reason for Choosing Airtel

A customer may have various reasons to choose Airtel. The prime reason for choosing Airtel to identify using Garrett Ranking.

**Table:1 Reason for Choosing Airtel – Garrett Ranking**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Total garrett score</b>	<b>Average score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Brand Image	8442	70.35	<b>I</b>
Network Quality	7065	58.88	<b>III</b>
High speed I F 4G&5G	7764	64.70	<b>II</b>
Variety of plans	5755	47.96	<b>V</b>
Low tariff rates	6479	53.99	<b>IV</b>
Availability of free SMS	5319	44.33	<b>VI</b>
Customer care Services	4267	35.56	<b>VIII</b>
Enhanced service quality	3818	31.82	<b>IX</b>
Value added services	4731	39.43	<b>VII</b>

Table 1 reveals that respondents have selected Airtel Company due to its “Brand Image” followed by High-speed Internet Facility 4G&5G, Network Quality, Low tariff rates, Variety of plans, Availability of free SMS, Value added services, Customer care Services and Enhanced service quality. Hence the influence that the customers have given the best preference to Brand Image.

**Table: 2 Level of Satisfaction on Airtel Prepaid Plans**

Level of Satisfaction	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Low	36	15
Medium	162	68
High	42	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Primary Data*

Table 2 shows that 36 (15 per cent) respondents have low level of satisfaction, 162(68 per cent) respondents have medium level of satisfaction and 42(17 per cent) respondents have high level of satisfaction on the prepaid plans provided by Airtel.

**Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Anova test is carried out to know whether there exists a significant difference between select variables – Area of Residence, Age, Members in the Family, Earning Members in the Family, Educational Qualification, Occupation and Respondent Monthly Income – and the level of satisfaction.

**Ho: There does not exist a significant difference between the select personal variables and level of satisfaction**

**Table:3 Select Personal Variables and Level of Satisfaction (ANOVA)**

Variables		N	Mean	F	Sig
Area of Residence	Rural	82	2.0732	.218	.804
	Semi urban	116	2.0000		
	Urban	42	2.0000		
	Total	240	2.0250		
Age	Below-25	66	1.9394	1.210	.302
	26-42	130	2.0154		

	Above 42	44	2.1818		
	Total	240	2.0250		
Members in the family	Up to 3	62	2.0645	.234	.792
	4	120	2.0333		
	5 and above	58	1.9655		
	Total	240	2.0250		
Earning members in the family	1	70	1.9429	.607	.547
	2	96	2.0833		
	3 and above	74	2.0270		
	Total	240	2.0250		
Non Earning Members in the family	1	52	2.1923	1.445	.240
	2	134	1.9851		
	3	54	1.9630		
	Total	240	2.0250		
Educational Qualification	No Formal Education	10	2.2000	1.364	.243
	Up to HSC	-	-		
	Diploma	34	1.8824		
	Under Graduate	92	2.0000		
	Post Graduate	54	2.0370		
	Professional	10	2.6000		
	Others (specify)	40	2.0000		
	Total	240	2.0250		

Occupation	Agriculture	26	2.0769	1.432	.209
	Business	22	1.9091		
	Employee	90	2.0444		
	Professionalist	34	2.0588		
	Retired	10	2.6000		
	Students	46	1.9565		
	Other specify	12	1.6667		
	Total	240	2.0250		
Respondent Monthly Income	Up to 3213	58	1.8966	.968	.383
	3214-51437	146	2.0685		
	Above 51437	36	2.0556		
	Total	240	2.0250		
Family Income	22653	36	2.0556	3.104	.049**
	22654-59396	144	1.9306		
	ABOVE 59396	60	2.2333		
	Total	240	2.0250		

*Source: Primary Data*

**\*\*Significant**

Table 3 reveals that among the personal variable selected there exist a significant difference between the select variable Family Income and level of awareness on the plans offered ( $P < 0.05$ ), whereas there does not exist a significant difference between select variables namely Area of Residence, Gender, Age, Marital Status, Type of Family, Members in the Family, Earning Members in your Family, Non-earning members in the family, Educational Qualification, Occupation, Respondent Monthly Income, and level of satisfaction on plans offered ( $P > 0.05$ ).

#### **DETERMINING FACTOR OF AIRTEL PREPAID CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

To determine the collective influence of the twelve select variables namely type of family, earning members in the family, educational qualification, occupation, monthly income, family income, period of

using Airtel network, tariff plan prefer most, on services on the level of customer satisfaction of Airtel prepaid customers, multiple regression test has been employed. Levels of confidence chosen are one and five.

The select variables have been regressed on the customer satisfaction index and the following regression equation has been framed to ascertain the impact of the variables on the customer satisfaction of the Airtel prepaid customers:

$$CS = a + b_1 TOF + b_2 EMIF + b_3 EQ + b_4 OCC + b_5 MI + b_6 FI + b_7 PUA + b_8 TP + b_9 AOP + b_{10} AOS + b_{11} POP + b_{12} UOS + e$$

Where,

- CS - Customer Satisfaction
- a - Intercept Term
- b<sub>1</sub>... b<sub>12</sub> - Regression Coefficients
- TOF - Type of Family
- EMIF - Earning Members in the Family EQ - Educational Qualification
- OCC - Occupation
- MI - Monthly Income
- FI - Family Income
- PUA - Period of Using Airtel
- TP - Tariff Plan Preferred
- e - Error term

**Table 4**

**Determinants of Customers Satisfaction of Airtel Prepaid Customers Multiple Regression Analysis**

Variables	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	t value	'P' Value
(Constant)	0.183	0.173	1.059	0.290
Type of Family	-0.038	0.042	-0.902	0.368
Earning Members in the Family	-0.056	0.033	-1.694	0.091
Educational Qualification	-0.053	0.014	-3.828	0.000**
Occupation	0.034	0.014	2.478	0.014*
Monthly Income	-0.051	0.039	-1.304	0.193
Family Income	0.079	0.033	2.386	0.018*
Period of using Network	0.161	0.035	4.648	0.000**
Tariff Plan Preferred	-0.098	0.026	-3.742	0.000**
Awareness on Plans	0.182	0.044	4.182	0.000**
Awareness on Services	0.335	0.047	7.099	0.000**
Preference on Plans	0.193	0.046	4.179	0.000**
Utilization on Services	0.252	0.047	5.372	0.000**

**Dependent Variable:** Level of Customer Satisfaction

**Model Summary**

R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Standard Error of the Estimate
0.830	<b>0.689</b>	0.679	0.34634

**ANOVA**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P value
Regression	103.976	12	8.665	72.235	0.000**
Residual	47.021	392	0.120		
Total	150.998	404			

**Source:** Primary Data

\*\* Significant at One Per cent Level

\* Significant at Five Per cent Level

It is revealed that among the twelve select variables, nine variables namely educational qualification (  $P < 0.01$ ), occupation (  $P < 0.05$ ), family income (  $P < 0.05$ ), period of using Airtel network (  $P < 0.01$ ), tariff plan preferred (  $P < 0.01$ ), awareness on plan (  $P < 0.01$ ), awareness on services (  $P < 0.01$ ), preference on plan (  $P < 0.01$ ), utilization on services (  $P < 0.01$ ) have a significant impact on the level of customer satisfaction of Airtel Prepaid customers. The variables namely type of family, earning members in the family and monthly income does not have any impact on the level of customer satisfaction of Airtel prepaid customers ( $P > 0.05$ ).

The F value of 72.235 is significant ( $P < 0.01$ ) which means that the regression equation framed to assess the impact of select variables on the level of customer satisfaction of Airtel prepaid customer is a excellent fit. The value of R<sup>2</sup> reveals that 68.90 per cent of variation in the level of customer satisfaction of prepaid customers is due to the select variables.

**Suggestions for Enhancing Customer Satisfaction of Airtel's Prepaid Plans**

To effectively enhance customer awareness of Airtel’s prepaid plans and services, the company needs to leverage a multi-channel communication strategy that blends both traditional and digital methods. Below are some suggestions, including those you have mentioned, as well as additional ideas to make the communication more effective and engaging:

\*Include a QR code or short links that customers can scan or type in to get more details or even recharge



directly.

\*Airtel should create advertisements that cater to regional preferences and languages, thus ensuring that it resonates with customers across urban, semi-urban, and rural areas. Regional celebrities or influencers can be used to build a stronger connection with local audiences.

\*Invest in TV commercials that are short, creative, and engaging, focusing on the simplicity and benefits of Airtel's prepaid plans, and air them during peak times (prime-time news, cricket matches, etc.).

\*Use digital screens in malls, metro stations, and airports to display dynamic content about plan features, real-time updates on offers, and attractive deals.

## **CONCLUSION**

Despite the competitive nature of the telecommunications industry, Airtel has managed to carve out a substantial presence in the market. The current study reveals that the majority of respondents exhibit a medium level of satisfaction regarding the plans offered by Airtel. Additionally, the findings indicate a positive correlation between family income and the level of satisfaction of these plans, suggesting that higher-income families tend to have a greater satisfaction of Airtel's offerings. To build on these findings, future research could expand the geographical scope of the study and include an investigation into Airtel's value-added services, which may provide further insights into consumer preferences and satisfaction."