



---

## **Appreciation of the Brand Personality of Reliance Jio**

**Dr Swapna Datta Khan**, Assistant Professor,  
Army Institute of Management, Kolkata.

### **Appreciation of the Brand Personality of Reliance Jio**

#### **Abstract**

Brand management and positioning are crucial to enable a brand to effectively connect with the mind of the customer, especially if there are many players in a sector. Brand personality helps shape the impression of the image a brand would like to make in a certain customer base.

In the Indian Telecom Sector, Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited, operates a national Long-Term Evolution (*LTE*) network with coverage across all 22 telecom circles. Reliance Jio aims to enable a digitally empowered India by creating not just a cutting-edge voice and broadband network, but also a powerful ecosystem on which a range of rich digital services will be enabled – a unique green-field opportunity. It is intriguing to note that Reliance Jio grew by 40.69% in the year 2019 - 20. It would thus be interesting to observe the kind of manner in which the brand connects with the Indian consumer, and its personality dimensions, therein and this study endeavours to do the same.

**Key words: Brand Personality, Personality Dimensions, Reliance Jio**

#### **Introduction**

“Branding” as a practice started in 2700 BC when Egyptians branded their livestock to differentiate the ownership. A company’s branding efforts enable to distinguish the company’s products from those of its competitors in the consumers’ minds through effective marketing and communication methods.[1]It is also said that brands display a sense of “personality”, as it evolves. [2]



---

In India, there are four telecommunication major players in the sector of “Wireless Operators”: VI (originally Vodafone Idea Limited), Airtel, Jio, BSNL Mobile. Jio, which was soft launched in December 2015 stands at an impressive 35.43% market share. As a part of the branding efforts, Bollywood actor Shahrukh Khan was appointed as Brand Ambassador and the location based Pokemon Go game was launched in collaboration with Jio in December 2016. [3], [4]

### **Research gap, objective and methodology**

As Jio aggressively gains market share in India, it would be motivating to note the dimension(s) of the personality of the brand that Jio continues to evolve into, and this is the Research Gap identified in the paper. The objective of the study, is thus to identify the dimensions of Brand Personality of Reliance Jio. A theoretical model, quoted by Haaften and originally designed by Aaker, 1997, is considered, wherein the Brand Personality is described by five dimensions and fifteen sub dimensions as mentioned in Figure 1. Available literature is then perused for contributions that link the Jio brand to the said sub dimensions. Discussions are detailed after any relevant observations and conclusions are drawn thereafter. [5] The identification of the said dimensions will be able to guide the positioning efforts and brand related marketing communications of players in similar sectors. For the purpose of this research paper, Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited will be referred to “Reliance Jio” or just “Jio”.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Building the Brand and the Creation of Brand Personality**

A product or a service may be given an outward communication (a brand identity) such as a name, a design, a font, a vision or a lyric to differentiate it from its competitors in the mind of its customers. The brand identity delivers meaning at four levels: attributes, benefits, values, personality. Apart from differentiation of the product from its competitors, the brand identity enables organize inventory and accounting records and aids legal protection of the company. [1], [6]

In the editorial of the Journal of Marketing Management, Volume 36, [7], it was mentioned that brand management is a fast-evolving science, especially due to social media and digital marketing and instantaneous information proliferation. It is also mentioned consumers assume individuated brand meanings, suited to what is most relevant to them. [7] Customers subconsciously tend to perceive a brand as a living being, giving it a “personality” and identifying with it. [8] A brand thus gets metaphorized to a living person with human personality traits like: Demographic: Age, Gender, Race, Social Class; Lifestyle: Activities, Interest, Opinion; Personality traits: Extroversion, Sentimentality, Agreeableness [5] Brand Personality is thus a set of human characteristics associated with a brand. As per Jennifer Aaker, a brand’s personality would display traits as described by the framework, as listed in Figure 1. [9], [10]

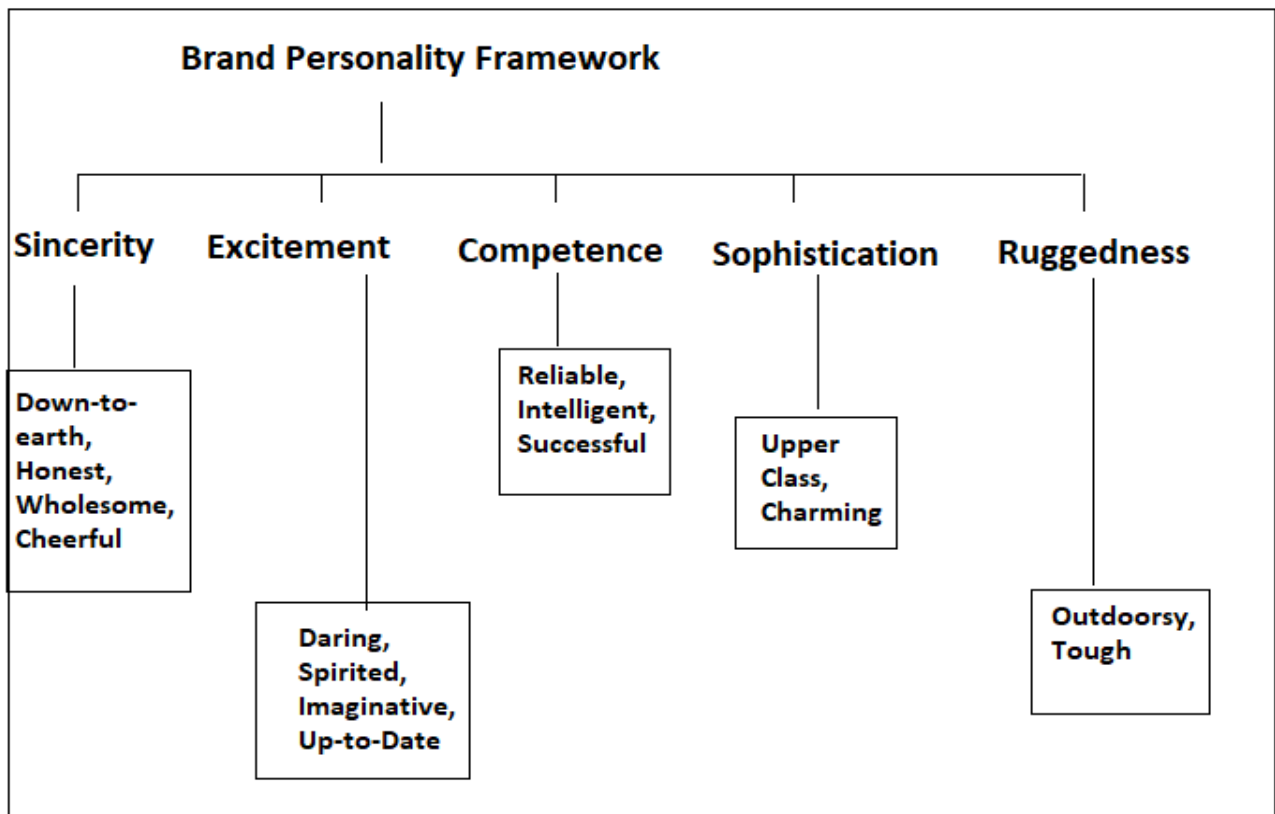


Figure 1: The Brand Personality Framework (Source: [9])



---

In her study, Starcevic, 2016 commented that the concept of Brand Personality is used as a appropriate means of differentiation, in the light of other forms of differentiation losing their standing. She however emphasized on the need for practical guidelines to implement the concept of Brand Personality to achieve optimal marketing results. An important part of the brand image is based on the concept of viewing the brand as a person and a brand personality is basically the summarization of the consumer perception of the brand. Brand Personality divides its originators into features connected to the product and features not connected to the product. Features connected to the product include the product's appearance, packaging, price. Features not connected to the product include the average consumer profile, corporate image, promotional activities. There is a need to differentiate between the terms Brand Personality (which consists of personality traits) and the concept of brand as a person (which includes personality traits and also includes demographics, cognitive abilities and physical characteristics. [8]

In their paper, Davies, Rojas-Méndez, Whelan, Mete, & Loo, 2018 studied the evolving concept of Brand Personality. Initially, the significant factors were five: Sincerity, Competence, Excitement, Sophistication, Ruggedness. However further research reduced the number of significant personality traits to four, eliminating Ruggedness. In their work, there was a further evolution of the personality traits that were finalized as: Sincerity, Competence and Status, as shown in Figure 2. [11]

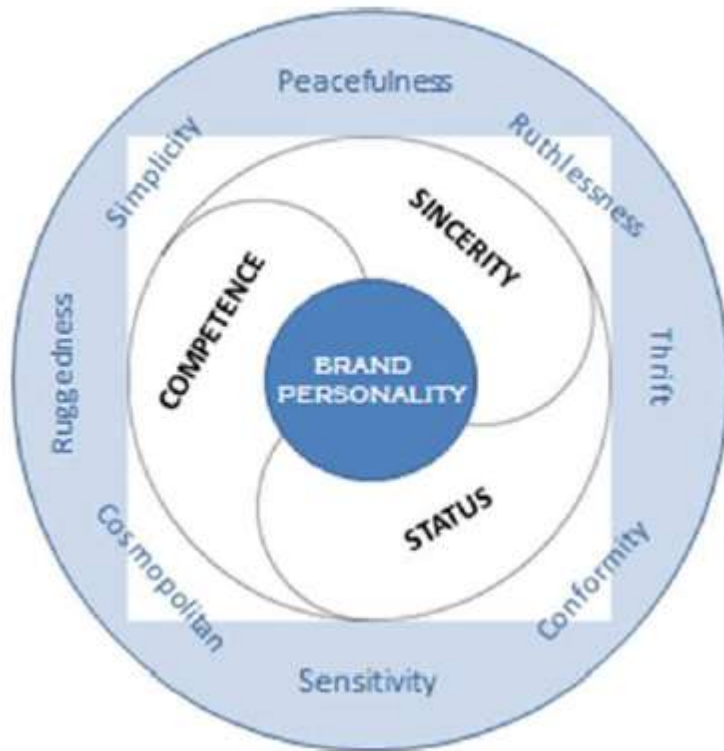


Figure 2: A Model of Brand Personality (Source: [11])

Avis, Forbes, & Ferguson, 2013 questioned the effectiveness of the Brand Personality Five Factor Model to measure and analyze brand personality. Critics of the Brand Personality Five Factor Model argued that the descriptor items are subjective and modify their meaning as per the product or sector, brand perceptions are indistinct from category perceptions and lack of clarity regarding the descriptor items. They also questioned the salience of the descriptor items used in the model. In their research, rock images, which do not have comparable antecedents, have distinct Brand Personalities, which is illogical. [12]



---

## A study of the attributes of Jio that provide an insight into its Brand Personality as a telecommunications player

**Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited** also called “Jio”, is a subsidiary of Jio Platforms and is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. It operates a national level telecom network over only 4G (and above) devices across 22 telecom circles. Jio owns spectrum in 850 MHz and 1800 MHz bands in 10 and 6 circles respectively. Jio connections are not compatible with 2G and 3G telephones and use voice over LTE (Long Term Evolution) to provide higher quality voice service. Jio has a network of more than 250,000km of fibre-optic cable over which it will partner with local cable operators to get enhance connectivity for its broadband services. In 2015, Jio has launched its simplistic feature phone, named LYF, which is an affordable 4G and above smart phone. Besides this, Jio provides free WiFi Hotspot services in many cities in India, including Kolkata. Jio also provides WiFi internet to spectators at 6 cricket stadiums inclusive of Eden Gardens, Kolkata. In August 2018, Jio launched the Jio Giga Fibre which would enable high-speed broadband, landline and Direct-TO-Home services at affordable rates. [4]

India’s telecommunications industry is worth INR 40,877 crore with 1151.81 million wireless subscribers and enabling 17% share in the world’s internet usage. Among the telecom players, Reliance Jio’s market share has risen by 40.69% over the last two financial years. [13] Jio has 408.77 million subscribers, much more than its competitors, Airtel, Vi, BSNL Mobile. [3]

*Discussion: Jio’s state-of-art network infrastructure and the compatibility with only 4G and above smart phones (Personality Trait identified: “up-to-date”). Jio offers services above that of other providers and has a faster growing market share. (Personality Trait identified: “successful”)*

Jio claims in its mission to provide end-to-end digital solutions to shape the future of the nation, by creating cutting-edge voice and broadband network over a powerful ecosystem, which shall enable a wide range of digital services. On its e Home page, Jio writes “Jio’s vision is to



---

transform India with the power of digital revolution - to connect everyone and everything, everywhere – always at the highest quality and the most affordable price.”[14]

Nair, 2019 in her report Jio had unprecedented offers when it had entered the market. The price of Jio products and services are undoubtedly less than that of its competitors. Jio’s urban and rural penetration were both commendable; their browsing speed and lack of call-drops also spoke of a superior network. The marketing of Jio shifted its model from the traditional 4Ps (Price, Product, Place, Promotion) to the 4Es (Excitement, Engagement, Exclusivity, Emotion) as they worked on positioning the brand “Jio”. Jio, thus is so successful and competitive, that it is referred to as an “Industry Disruptor” like Amazon. [15]

*Discussion: Jio is exclusively successful in its offerings. Jio redefined marketing efforts using the 4E model and focussed positioning. (Personality Trait identified: “daring”, “imaginative”, “successful”)*

Gupta, Raghav, & Dhakad, 2019, in their paper analyzed the effect of the entry of Jio on the telecommunication sector in India and the economy of the market. The entry of Jio into the telecommunication sector of India introduced the concept of large amounts of high-speed data at various affordable rates, with free voice calling. The subscriber list of gained 100 million users in less than 6 months of launch, which is supposed to exceed the proliferation of Facebook and WhatsApp. The entry of Jio also vastly increased the sale of 4G smart phones. As Jio brought in affordable, high-speed data, start-ups (especially Internet-related start-ups) emerging in a technologically connected nation used this data to develop themselves. Thus, with the launch of Jio, though the economic structure of the market remained the same, the level of competition has grown tremendously. In their report, Gupta, Raghav, & Dhakad, 2019 also mentioned that the customer care services of Jio were more relaxed as compared to those of its competitors. [16]

*Discussion: Jio created a “tsunami” in the market with its entry and facilitated the growth of other ventures also. A point to note is that the growth of Jio is in spite of lack of quality in*



---

*customer care. (Personality Trait identified: “daring”, “spirited”, “successful”, “imaginative”, “tough”)*

Kumar, Singh, & Singh, 2019, in their paper, appraised Jio and its attributes. Apart from what has been already mentioned, they emphasized that the launch of Jio enabled the advent of affordable communication and inexpensive smart phones. Jio also had Jio Money, a platform for digital cash. [17]

*Discussion: Jio enabled affordable connectivity and also had digital cash. (Personality Trait identified: “up-to-date”, “tough”)*

Bhosale, Raverkar, & Mullaji, 2020, in their research discussed the 7Ps (Product-Price-Place-Promotion-Process-Physical Evidence-People) of the marketing of Jio. Of the last P, People, they said that Jio has a firm governance that has created a sound socio-economic eco-system that enables the workers to give their best. [18]

*Discussion: Here Jio is viewed upon as an employer who respects his workers, providing them with space and resources to perform. . (Personality Trait identified: “reliable”, “wholesome”)*

Laddha & Trivedi, 2017, in their paper analyzed the consumer perception of Jio as a brand. Apart from the already mentioned attributes, they said that Jio is financially dependable, its products are innovative and Jio has a deep sense of organization. [19]

*Discussion: Jio is financially dependable with robust innovative products. (Personality Trait identified: “reliable”, “wholesome”, “imaginative”)*

Holla, 2017 performed Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) examination of Jio. He had said that national roaming in all states of the nation was possible only with the Jio sim. He has described Jio as the provider of next generation of end-to-end connectivity. [20]



*Discussion: Jio has the ability to provide end-to-end connectivity to its customers. (Personality*

*Trait identified: “wholesome”, “outdoorsy”)*

### Findings and Conclusions

The Personality Traits identified are: “up-to-date”, “successful”, “daring”, “imaginative”, “spirited”, “tough”, “reliable”, “wholesome”, “imaginative”, “outdoorsy. The said personality traits could be imposed as in the Aaker’s Model (1997) as depicted as shown in Figure 3.

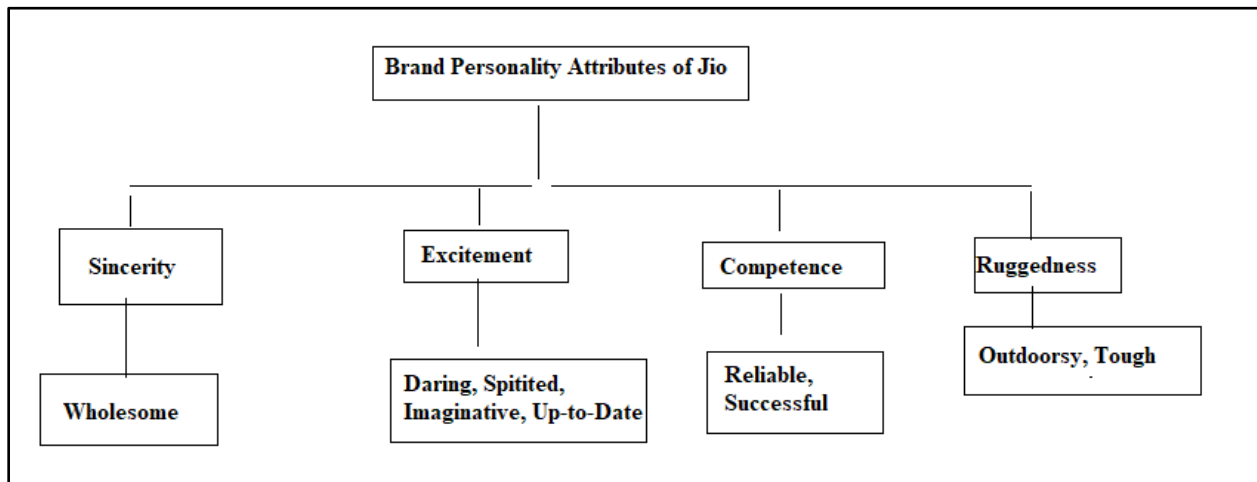


Figure 3: The Brand Personality Framework of Jio (Research Output)

Thus, Jio leans much on the sides of “Excitement” and “Ruggedness”. It is a durable telecommunication network with offerings that have taken the telecommunication sector by storm. The path ahead is strong due to its “Wholesomes” and “Competence”. However, to keep in pace with the developments of the telecommunication infrastructure, Jio must regularly revise and reinvent itself.



---

## References

- [1] "Brand," 20 Feb 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brand>.
- [2] E. Tarver, "Brand Personality," 20 Jul 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/brand-personality.asp>.
- [3] "List of telecom companies in India," 20 Feb 2021. [Online]. Available: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_telecom\\_companies\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_telecom_companies_in_India).
- [4] "Jio," 20 Feb 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jio>. [Accessed 23 Feb 2021].
- [5] R. v. Haaften, "Rovaha | Corporate branding," [Online]. Available: <https://www.van-haaften.nl/branding/corporate-branding/116-brand-personality>. [Accessed 23 Feb 2021].
- [6] P. Kotler and K. L. Keller, "Building Strong Brands," in *Marketing Management*, Pearson Education, Inc., 2012, pp. 241 - 323.
- [7] Editorial, "Fresh perspectives on brand management," *JOURNAL OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT*, vol. 36, no. 11 - 12, p. 973–980, 2020.
- [8] S. Starcevic, "Why we need to extend the classical model of brand personality: The practical value of brand personality measuring tool for marketers," in *Proceedings of the XII Convibra International Online Conference – Business at Instituto Pantex de Pesquisa*, Sao Paulo, Brasil, 2016.
- [9] J. L. Aaker, "Dimensions of brand personality," *JMR, Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 347 - 356, Aug 1997.
- [10] P. Kotler and K. L. Keller, "Brand Personality," in *Marketing Management*, Chennai, Perason India Education Services Pvt. Ltd., 2017, pp. 170 - 172.
- [11] G. Davies, J. I. Rojas-Méndez, S. Whelan, M. Mete and T. Loo, "Brand personality: theory and dimensionality," *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 115-127, 2018.
- [12] M. Avis, S. Forbes and S. Ferguson, "The brand personality of rocks: A critical evaluation of a brand personality scale," *Marketing Theory*, p. 1–25, 06 Dec 2013.
- [13] "Telecommunications in India," 01 Feb 2021. [Online]. Available: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications_in_India).
- [14] "Jio," 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.ril.com/OurBusinesses/Jio.aspx>. [Accessed 24 Feb 2021].
- [15] P. Nair, "Jio's marketing revolution via 'datagiri'," ET Brand Equity.com, 13 Mar 2019. [Online]. Available: <https://brandequity.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/marketing/jios-marketing-revolution-via-datagiri/68375006>.
- [16] A. Gupta, K. Raghav and P. Dhakad, "The Effect on the Telecom Industry and Consumers



- 
- after the Introduction of Reliance Jio," *International Journal of Engineering and Management Research*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 118 - 137, Jun 2019.
- [17] D. Kumar, M. Singh and G. Singh, "APPRAISAL OF JIO," *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 130 - 135, Feb 2019.
- [18] V. S. Bhosale, D. P. Raverkar and N. H. Mullaji, "RESEARCH PAPER ON SEVEN P'S OF SERVICES PROMOTING AND VICTORY PROMOTING METHODS AT RELIANCE JIO, KHED," *International Journal of Advance and Innovative Research*, vol. 7, no. 1 (VI), pp. 103 - 107, Jan - Mar 2020.
- [19] S. Laddha and A. Trivedi, "CUSTOMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS BRAND RELIANCE JIO," *Asia Pacific Journal of Research in Business Management*, vol. 8, no. 6, pp. 113 - 130, Jun 2017.
- [20] R. Holla, "A STUDY ON SWOC ANALYSIS OF RELIANCE JIO," *International Journal of Engineering Research and Modern Education (IJERME)*, vol. II, no. 1, pp. 42 - 47, 2017.
- [21] NDTV Profit Team, "Reliance JioGigaFiber: Fixed Line Fiber Broadband Service Announced. 5 Things To Know," NDTV, 05 Jul 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://www.ndtv.com/business/jiogigafiber-reliance-industries-ril-broadband-service-to-change-the-way-we-watch-tv-1878278>.