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A STUDY ON CUSTOMERS' BRAND PREFERENCE OF SMART PHONE IN MADURAI DISTRICT

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Abstract:
India is considered as the second largest consumer market in the World. The Indian consumer markets has been developed and changed in terms of their preference, taste, culture, education, income, occupation and media exposure and influence. There are huge difference in consumer preference for the durable and shopping goods due to change in technology as well as many influencers around them. Branding has always been an important aspect of marketing. Brand is a powerful differentiator in a highly competitive market place. India since LPG reform has been the favourite destination for the telecom service providers and its related companies. This study deals with preference of the consumers towards the smart phone brands. The research was performed to explore with regards to the brand preference of the customers residing at Madurai District, Tamil Nadu. The responses were collected from 100 respondents from different locality. The respondents were of different age group which includes private employees, government employees, home makers, young population etc. The respondents were requested to convey their views regarding the brands currently used, price, features, brand requirements, satisfaction level, benefits acquired etc., The collected data were tabulated, coded and evaluated using SPSS software and excel. Tools like chi square test, one-way ANOVA, correlation and frequency tabulation were used.

Introduction:
India is the world's fastest growing industry in the world in terms of number of wireless connections. According to the world telecommunications industry, it is estimated that India will be having 3.600 billion mobile users by 2022. The projections made by several leading global consultancies indicate that the total number of cellular users in India will be exceeding by the total subscriber count in the China by 2022. Mobile phones evolved over five different generations, the latest of which is still being rolled out and adopted by users. By the time most of us will have switched to 5G. By the end of 2023 December 5G would reach every nook and corner of India. In the recent times, we have seen that the Indian telecommunications sector has undergone a major process of changes because of significant Government policies reforms. India is familiar for the use of both the GSM (global system for mobile communications) and CDMA (code-division multiple access) technologies in the mobile sector. Branding has always been an important aspect of marketing. Brand is a powerful differentiator in a highly competitive market place. According to the recent statistics it is known that the markets in the developed countries like US, UK etc. have already been exhausted and have been exploited to their full capacity. Thus, it is very clear that the developing countries like India with large populations will play a major role in the expansion of the cellular industry if products are priced and marketed in accordance with the customer requirements. They are the basis of consumer relationship and bring consumers and marketers closer by developing a bond of faith and trust between them. The promise of brand is consistent with reliable quality, service and overall psychological satisfaction.

Objectives:
1. To identify the customer's profile of particular brand usage by their gender, age, locality and education level.
2. To determine the brand preference of smart phone.
3. To assess the customer's perception on brand preference.
4. To determine what people, expect from various mobile phone brands.

Review of literature:

Nushrat Nahida Afroz, (2011) This study aims to explore the brand preference towards smartphones among students. In recent times smartphones plays a significant role among the users to meet up their numerous objectives by operating their desired smart phone. 200 copies of questionnaire were given to the respondents for evaluation and analysis. The findings of the study indicated positive correlation among the variable i.e. battery backup, camera resolution, durability and price have significant impact on the overall preferences of the consumers. The result derived from cross tabulation and likelihood ratio entails that these above factors are influenced the customer brand preference and there exist a strong relationship between these factors and brand preference.

Deepa Guleria (2015) The related study conducted in Himachal Pradesh with a sample size 80 smartphone users to highlight the change in the usage and applicability of the technology from the traditional handsets to the new emerging smartphones across multiple brands, applications and prices. The study identifies factor which are responsible for building consumer preference for smartphone and various usability features. This study will indicate suggestive inferences to help the companies during selecting, targeting and positioning process of marketing their smartphones.

Singh and Goyal (2009) This study observed that there is a variation in the importance given by different age and gender groups to select factors while buying mobile handsets in India. It was found that users aged between 18 and 30 years are less price sensitive than consumers of others groups, rather they consider Physical appearance, brand, value- added features and core technical features more important than others. The mature customer on other hand, are more price sensitive**.**

Surendra Malviya et.al (2013) The major objective of this research is to identify the key factor while have a dominating effect on the consumer's mind while making a purchase of smartphone. The data were collected from 100 respondents. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted using Chi-Square, Reliability Analysis, Factor analysis, Confirmatory factor analysis. It was found that data is reliable for factor analysis. The measurement model suggested from factors price, brand preference, social influence and features having a dominant influence on the purchase decision of consumers in Indore.

Mohad Azam Osaman et.al (2009) The purpose of this exploratory study is to better understand the current dynamics of the Malaysian market for smartphone and usage behavior of consumers. This paper presents a result of a survey on the trend of smartphone from the perspective of trend of end consumers. The data was collected from 1814 respondents across major cities in Malaysia. The statistics presented provides fundamental information regarding the trends in the smartphone market and usage behaviours in Malaysia. Such information is useful for academics for the development of the future work in the field. Whereas for smartphone manufactures application development and other stakeholders, they are able to plan their direction in the Malaysian smartphone market.

Hypothesis Testing:

H0 - There is no significant relationship between age of the respondents and mobile brand preference.

H0 - There is no significant relationship between monthly income of the respondents and price of the current mobile brands, amount spent on mobile service per month.

H0-There is no significant relationship between occupation and usage of mobile phone.

Research Methodology:

Sources of Data

Primary data – The Primary data were collected using self-Administered questionnaire.

Secondary data – The Secondary data were collected from the research Papers and articles published in different Journals.

Type of Research – Descriptive Research **Sampling Design** – Simple Random Sampling

Sample area – Customers residing at Madurai district, Tamil Nadu.

Sample size – The sample size of this study is 100 respondents

Statistical tools – SPSS tools like Kruskal –Wallis test, Friedman test, Mann Whitney test and frequency table.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Age of the respondent

S. No	Age	Frequency	Percentage
a	Below 20 years	13	13.0
b	20 to 25 years	28	28.0
c	26 to 30 years	25	25.0
d	31 to 35 years	22	22.0
e	36 to 40 years	7	7.0
f	Above 40 years	5	5.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that 28% of respondents belongs to the age group of 20 to 25 years, 5% of respondents belongs to the age group above 40 years.

Gender of the respondent

S. No	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
a	Male	49	49.0
b	Female	51	51.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that 51% percentage of respondents are female and 49% of respondents are male.

Marital status of the respondent

S.No	Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
a	Single	33	33.0
b	Married	67	67.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that 67% of respondent's status are single and 33% of respondent's status are married.

Occupation of the respondent

S.No	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
a	Government sector	12	12.0

ISSN: 2278-4632
Vol-13, Issue-08, No.02, August: 2023

b	Private sector	22	22.0
c	Business	9	9.0
d	Student	50	50.0
e	House Maker	7	7.0
Total	100		100.0

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred 50% of respondents employed in private sector, 7% of respondents were house Makers.

Type of family

S.No	**Type of Family**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	Nuclear	41	41.0
b	Joint	59	59.0
Total	100		100.0

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that 59% of respondents live in joint family and 41% of respondents live in nuclear family

Education

S.No	**Educational Qualification**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	10th	2	2.0
b	HSC	1	1.0
c	Diploma	12	12.0
d	UG	55	55.0
e	PG	30	30.0
Total	100		100.0

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that 55% of respondents have completed UG, 1% of respondents have completed their HSC.

Monthly Income

S.No	**Monthly Income**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	Rs.10000 -Rs. 20000	38	38.0
b	Rs. 20001 - Rs.30000	33	33.0
c	Rs.30001 - Rs. 40000	21	21.0
d	Rs.40001 - Rs.	6	6.0

ISSN: 2278-4632
Vol-13, Issue-08, No.02, August: 2023

	50000		
e	Above 50001	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that 38% of respondent's monthly income is Rs.10000 -Rs. 20000, 2% of respondent's monthly income is above Rs. 50001.

Mobile brands

S.No	**Mobile Brands Currently Used**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	Nokia	13	13.0
b	Samsung	11	11.0
c	Sony	22	22.0
d	Moto G	14	14.0
e	Lenovo	15	15.0
f	Micromax	6	6.0
g	Redmi	6	6.0
h	Vivo	4	4.0
i	Oppo	9	9.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that, 22% of respondents use Sony mobile brand and only 4% of respondents use Vivo mobile brand

Preference of choosing mobile phone

S.No	**Preference in choosing a mobile phone**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	Better features	32	32.0
b	Price	42	42.0
c	Suggested by friends and family	26	26.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that, 42% of respondent's preference is price and 26% of respondents were suggested by friends and family.

Often used features in mobile phone

S.No	**Features used**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**

ISSN: 2278-4632
Vol-13, Issue-08, No.02, August: 2023

	often in mobile phone		
a	Calls	37	37.0
b	online bill payments	9	9.0
c	social media	53	53.0
d	Document Editing	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation
From the above table, it is inferred that, 53% of the respondents often used mobile feature is social media, 1 % of the respondents less used mobile feature is document editing.

The brand meets my requirements better than any other brand

S.No	**This brand meets my requirements better than any other brand**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	Strongly Agree	19	19.0
b	Agree	71	71.0
c	Neutral	9	9.0
d	Disagree	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation
From the above table, it is inferred that, 71% of the respondents agree with current brand meets the requirement than any other brand, 1% of the respondents disagree with current brand meets the requirements than any other brand.

In future current mobile brand will be my first choice

S.No	**In future current mobile brand will be my first choice**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	Strongly Agree	22	22.0
b	Agree	55	55.0
c	Neutral	20	20.0
d	Disagree	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0	

ISSN: 2278-4632
Vol-13, Issue-08, No.02, August: 2023

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that 55% of the respondents agree with in future current mobile will be there first choice, 3% of the respondents disagree with current mobile will be there first choice in future.

Brand pricing

S.No	The brand is reasonably priced	Frequency	Percentage
a	Strongly Agree	39	39.0
b	Agree	52	52.0
c	Neutral	8	8.0
d	Disagree	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that, 52% of the respondents agree with the currently used brand is reasonably priced, 1% of the respondents disagree with currently used brand is reasonably priced.

Usage of mobile phone

S.No	The usage of mobile phone is for your	Frequency	Percentage
a	Personal use	47	47.0
b	Professional use	28	28.0
c	Educational use	24	24.0
d	Others	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0	

Interpretation

From the above table, it is inferred that, 47% of the respondents' usage of mobile phones is for personal purpose, 1% of the respondents' usage of mobile phones is for other purpose.

Amount spent on mobile service per month

Amount of money you spend on mobile service per month S.No	Amount of money you spend on mobile service per month	Frequency	Percentage
a	50-100rps	1	1.0
b	100-200rps	12	12.0
c	200-300rps	45	45.0
d	300-400rps	38	38.0
e	400-500rps	2	2.0
More than	2	2.0	

500rps		
Total	100	100.0

Interpretation

Form the above table, it is inferred that, 45% of the respondents spend 200-300rps for mobile service per month, 1% of the respondents spend 50-100rps for mobile service per month.

Hypotheses Testing

Relationship between age of the respondents and mobile brand preference

Kruskal- Wallis Test - Test Statistics S.No		**Preference in choosing a mobile phone**
1	Kruskal-Wallis H	.918
2	Df	4
3	Asymp. Sig.	.922

H0 – There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and mobile brand preference

H1- There is significant relationship between the age of the respondents and mobile brand preference.

Inference

From the above table, p value is found to be 0.922 which is greater than 0.05. Hence null hypothesis (H0) is accepted and alternate hypothesis (H1) is rejected. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between age of the respondents and mobile brand preference.

Association between monthly income of the respondents and price of the current mobile brand amount spent on mobile service per month.

Friedman Test

S.No		**Mean Rank**
1	Monthly Income	1.46
2	price of current mobile brand	1.95
3	Amount of money you spend on mobile service per month	2.59

Test statistics

N	**82**
Chi-Square	68.212
Df	2

 ISSN: 2278-4632
Vol-13, Issue-08, No.02, August: 2023

Asymp. Sig.	.000

H0 – There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and mobile brand preference
H1- There is significant relationship between the age of the respondents and mobile brand preference.

Inference

From the above table, p value is found to be 0.000 which is lesser than 0.05. Hence alternate hypothesis (H1) is accepted and Null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between monthly income of the respondents and price of the current mobile brand, amount spent on mobile service per month.

Association between occupation of the respondents and usage of mobile phone.
Mann- Whitney Test

Ranks The usage of mobile phone is for your	**Occupation**	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**
	Government sector	12	12.04	144.50
	House wife	7	6.50	45.50
	Total	19		

Test Statistics

S.No	**The usage of mobile phone is for your**	
1	Mann-Whitney U	17.500
2	Wilcoxon W	45.500
3	Z	-2.422
4	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.015
5	Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.036[b]

H0 – There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and mobile brand preference
H1- There is significant relationship between the age of the respondents and mobile brand preference.

Inference

ISSN: 2278-4632
Vol-13, Issue-08, No.02, August: 2023

From the above table, p value is found to be 0.015 which is lesser than 0.05. Hence alternate hypothesis (H1) is accepted and null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between occupation of the respondents and usage of mobile phones.

Findings

- 51% of the respondents are female
- 67% of the respondents are married
- 50% of the respondents are employed in private sector.
- 59% of the respondents lives in nuclear family
- 55% of the respondents have completed their HSC.
- 38% of the respondent's monthly income is Rs.10000- Rs.20000
- 22% of the respondents use Sony mobile brand.
- 42% of the respondent's preference of mobile purchase is price.
- 53% of respondents the most preferred feature in mobile phone is social media.
- 64% of the respondents attracted towards television channels.
- 54% of the respondents spend 2hrs- 3hrs using mobile per day.
- 50 % of the respondents agree with the statement, mass media triggers to purchase a new mobile brand
- 79% of the respondents agree with the statement, information searching is easier in mass media compared to social media.

Suggestions:

This study reveals that, demographic factors of consumer have an influence on brand choice and brand switching of mobile phone. Demographic factors such as gender, age, monthly income, occupation, and education influence the attitudes governing brand choice and brand switching for the customers of mobile phone. It was found that although the choice of a mobile phone is a subjective choice situation, there are some general factors that seem to guide the choices. The studies show that price and technical problems are the basic reason to change mobile phone among the respondents. Some of the reasons for switching brand are operating system, No 4g, Poor battery life, No Wi-Fi, Small Display etc., So the mobile phone organizations should consider the drawbacks of their brand and make necessary changes to develop and improve their sale.

Conclusion:

The consumers considered usage ease and processing speed as major factors building preference followed closely by technological needs and applications. Thus, Smartphone companies must focus mainly on usage ease, processing speed, applications and technological needs so as to build strong preference for Smartphone and give an edge to a particular brand. The consumers mainly use their Smartphone for making calls, messaging (e.g. WhatsApp, messenger etc.) and internet browsing. Thus, the Smartphone companies must focus mainly on providing more information about their product through internet and mass media. Even emphasis on improvising retailer and company sources should be made for generating more awareness among consumers. The consumers ranked acquired knowledge and communication improvement as most important benefits derived by Smartphone users. Thus, the Smartphone companies must emphasize on delivering convenience and facilitate multitasking.

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