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A Study on Factors Influencing Purchase of Mobile Handsets

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ABSTRACT

In this era of cut throat competition, no company can survive in the market place without knowing its product's strengths and weaknesses. It has to fortify (Strengthen) itself against threats from the environment and exploit its strengths for increasing profits. In order to do so, the company has to conduct regular surveys to know the customer's opinions, needs, and preferences. This helps the company to manufacture the product according to customer's expectations. It has now become more important for the customer confidence and higher positioning of buyer perception. Thus, Surveys becomes genuine key to success. The Mobile handsets segment is dominated by 3 major player's viz. NOKIA, SAMSUNG, SONY ERICSSON. Besides these, there are players like – MOTOROLA, LG, & HAIER etc. The expanding Indian market, the growing size of the middle class and the rise in aspirations of the youth along with opening up of the Indian economy have collectively influenced the steady growth of the mobile handsets in India. In the last 5 to 6 years, the craze for mobile handsets over the telephones has picked up and one can find today even girls crazy for a mobile not only in the Metros but in small towns and cities also. In last decade Indian mobile phone industry has witnessed a dramatic growth. Cheap mobile handsets, affordable airtime rates, low initial cost and affordable monthly rentals made it easy for anybody to go mobile. As per latest statistics India has around 140 million mobile subscribers.

This Study has been done to understand the Mobile Handset changing pattern of the consumer with respect to the gender and time period, also different factors which influence the consumer to purchase a particular handset. Authors have taken the help of Chi-Square to determine the above.

Keywords: Cell Phone, Consumer, Purchase, Gender, Frequency.

Introduction

The **Cellular telephone** (commonly "mobile phone" or "cell phone" or "hand phone") is a long-range, portable electronic device used for mobile communication. In addition to the standard voice function of a telephone, current mobile phones can support many additional services such as SMS for text messaging, email, packet switching for access to the Internet, and MMS for sending and receiving photos and video. Most current mobile phones connect to a cellular network of base stations (cell sites), which is in turn interconnected to the public switched telephone network (PSTN) (the exception is satellite phones. Cellular telephone is

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also defined as a type of short-wave analog or digital telecommunication in which a subscriber has a wireless connection from a mobile telephone to a relatively nearby transmitter. The transmitter's span of coverage is called a cell. Generally, cellular telephone service is available in urban areas and along major highways. As the cellular telephone user moves from one cell or area of coverage to another, the telephone is effectively passed on to the local cell transmitter. A cellular telephone is not to be confused with a cordless telephone (which is simply a phone with a very short wireless connection to a local phone outlet). A newer service similar to cellular is personal communications services (PCS).

The Global Cellular Mobile Industry

The global mobile phone industry is based on many different manufacturers and operators. The industry is based on advanced technology and many of the manufacturers are operating in different industries, where they use their technological skills, distribution network, market knowledge and brand name. Four large manufacturers of mobile phones are today dominating the global mobile phone industry; Nokia, Sony Ericson, Samsung and Motorola. In addition to these companies there are many manufacturers that operate globally and locally. The telecom industry is one of the fastest growing industries in India. India has nearly 200 million telephone lines making it the third largest network in the world after China and USA. With a growth rate of 45%, Indian telecom industry has the highest growth rate in the world. Much of the growth in Asia Pacific Wireless Telecommunication Market is spurred by the growth in demand in countries like India and China. India's mobile phone subscriber base is growing at a rate of 82.2%. China is the biggest market in Asia Pacific with a subscriber base of 48% of the total subscribers in Asia Pacific. Compared to that India's share in Asia Pacific Mobile phone market is 6.4%. Considering the fact that India and China have almost comparable populations, India's low mobile penetration offers huge scope for growth.

Mobile Handset Market in India

The cell phones industry has shown a remarkable growth in the last decade. In 1989 the number of its subscribers was zero in India. India's love affair with cell phones started in the mid-1990s, as the mobile revolution took hold and India had just 10 million mobile and landline connections. Delhi was the first state to launch cell phones in India. Growth then soared in the last four years due to regulatory change and falling costs of calls and handsets. India's wireless market is a test bed for alternative infrastructure, handsets, billing systems, business models and marketing strategies that will likely prove applicable to other developing

countries. On a numerical basis, India is the biggest growth market adding about 6 million cell phones every month. CAGR for mobile phones is 86% in India. It is one of the fastest growing mobile markets in the world; in April 2006 mobile subscriber base crossed 100 million mark. This has been accomplished by rethinking handsets, network infrastructure, enhanced services and content. More than two-third of mobile subscriptions are with GSM operators and rest with CDMA. India has one of the lowest mobile phone tariffs in the world resulting in low Average Revenue per User (ARPU) of 9.04 USD per year (CDMA 5.74 USD and GSM 8.89 USD). Indian land area covered by mobile networks is approx 30%. CAGR of Mobile Market Value for 2004- 2009 is 36.9%. With 156.31 million cell phones; teledensity in the country is still low at 17.45%. Fewer than eight in every 100 Indians use mobiles, compared with China's 30 per cent. In India, about 13 percent of people have cell phone which have increased from 8% in 2005 and is expected to reach 40 percent within a few years. A lack of investment in the infrastructure needed to support landline services means there are only 50 million fixed-line users in the country, leaving the stage set for mobile operators. India is expected to have the third largest mobile user base, behind China and the US, by the year end and will become the second largest market of mobile handsets by 2010. Indian cellular market would account for 11% of the overall Asia Pacific and Japan market by 2009 and is expected to reach 500 million subscribers by end of 2010 with CAGR of 33.7% for 2004- 2010.

Consumer Preference

The underlying foundation of demand, therefore, is a model of how consumers behave. The individual consumer has a set of preferences and values whose determinations are outside the realm of economics. They are no doubt dependent upon culture, education, and individual tastes, among a plethora of other factors. The measure of these values in this model for a particular good is in terms of the real opportunity cost to the consumer who purchases and consumes the good. If an individual purchases a particular good, then the opportunity cost of that purchase is the forgone goods the consumer could have bought instead. We develop a model in which we map or graphically derive consumer preferences. These are measured in terms of the level of satisfaction the consumer obtains from consuming various combinations or bundles of goods. The consumer's objective is to choose the bundle of goods that provides the greatest level of satisfaction as they the consumer define it. But consumers are very much constrained in their choices. These constraints are defined by the consumer's income, and the prices the consumer pays for the goods. We will formally present the model of consumer

choice. As we go along, we will establish a vocabulary in order to explain the model. Development of the model will be in three stages. After a formal statement of the consumer's objectives, we will map the consumer's preferences. Secondly, we present the consumer's budget constraint; and lastly, combine the two in order to examine the consumer's choices of goods.

Before a new product can be made, or an existing one varied, someone must have the idea of doing so. Since market research as a business activity is conducted and paid for by firms, the investigation of consumer wants and preferences is fairly well defined by the spheres of interest that exist within the firm. There is little point in asking the public the open-end questions, "What do you need, or want? What shall we make?" The consensus appears to be that consumers themselves scarcely ever originate new product ideas, that development of a specific product represents the functioning of creativity in business, and that such creativity may be found among technical research, production engineering, market research, or sales staff, all of whom have been responsible for one idea or another. Considering the magnitude of choice that confronts the American public, it is easy to understand why this is true.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction, a business term is a measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet or surpass customer expectation. It is seen as a key performance indicator within business and is part of the four perspectives of a Balanced Scorecard. In a competitive marketplace where businesses compete for customers, customer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator and increasingly has become a key element of business strategy. Satisfaction is a person's feeling of pleasure and disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance in relation to his or her expectations. It is only the customer delight that marketer aims for. Increasing competition (whether for-profit or nonprofit) is forcing businesses to pay much more attention to satisfying customers. (It may help the reader to notice the role of customer satisfaction in the overall context of product or service development and management. See Product/Service Management Also notice the Related Info (including customer service) in the library.

Literature Review

In a study of restaurant patrons by **Newberry et al., (2003)**, it was found that the patrons who expressed strong purchase intent and made a subsequent purchase demonstrated distinct

attitudes differences when compared to those patrons who also expressed strong purchase intent but failed to make a subsequent purchase. The relational structure of a study by **Wu & Lo (2009)** shows that brand awareness has a significant influence on core-brand image (parent-brand image), thus indirectly affecting core-brand attitude and causing impacts on consumer purchase intention towards extended products. According to **Shukla (2009)** consumer culture in recent times has evolved into one of the most powerful ingredients shaping individuals and societies, findings suggest that contextual factors have the strongest influence on purchase decisions. Furthermore, contextual factors influence the brand loyalty and switching behaviour. Study by **Paul & Rana (2012)** indicate that health, availability and education from demographic factors positively influence the consumer's attitude towards buying organic food. **Butcher et al., (2002)** emphasized that social interaction between customers and individual employees can be critical for business success. Similarly, factors such as customer convenience and value for money are important to repeat purchase. Frontline employees often face the dilemma of how much social interaction is appropriate. On a study of counterfeits purchase by **Bian & Moutinho (2011)** establish that perceived brand personality plays a more dominant role in explaining consumers' purchase intention of CBP than other influential factors e.g. benefit and product attribute. Study by **Zielke & Dobbstein, (2007)** finds that customers' willingness to buy new store brands differs between different product groups. It is lowest for product groups associated with high social risk. Accordingly, premium store brands are preferred for these categories. The influence of price is small and nonlinear. Findings of a study by **Weng & Run (2013)** suggest that sales promotion technique preferences will have an impact on consumers' behavioral intention and purchase satisfaction for all the product types studied. **Simintiras et al., (1997)** Indicates that pre-purchase satisfaction can be distinguished from anticipated satisfaction and that it helps to predict first-time purchases. On the study of use of retail shopping aids **Chang & Kukar-Kinney (2011)** advocated that knowledgeable consumers and less time-pressed consumers should benefit from research-supporting shopping aids (i.e. expanded selection and additional product information), whereas novice consumers and time-pressed consumers should benefit from solution-oriented shopping aids (i.e. personalized product recommendation and product ratings). Findings of a research by **Shen et al., (2012)** suggested that consumer beliefs about ethical fashion, which are based on their perceptions of a company in terms of its reputation in the fashion industry, influence their support for what they perceive as socially and environmentally responsible businesses. Perception on a study by **Tingchi Liu et al., (2013)** derived three perceived benefits (price benefit, convenience

benefit, and recreational benefit) and three factors that together represent trust of the initiator (perceived reputation, structural assurance, and website trustworthiness) significantly positively influence consumers' attitudes toward online group buying. On the study of how private label affects customer purchases **Ellis & Uncles (1991)** suggested that consumers patronize stores with private labels in much the same way as stores without them. **Alvarez & Casielles, (2005)** said that Promotion is a tool that can help manufacturers and/or retailers in the achievement of their objectives try the brand, help to decide what brand to buy, etc.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the research is to know which factor influence more to consumer in purchasing the mobile handsets.

Sub Objective:

To know the impact of various external factors on Consumer preference:-

- Price, Brand name, Music player, Camera, Battery Backup
- To find out the market share of Mobile handset companies.
- Determine the influence of reference group in the purchase decision of college going students.
- To find the cause behind choice of particular brand of mobile handsets.
- To study effect of advertisement on the purchasing decision of the consumers.

Hypothesis Testing (By Applying Chi-Square)

H₀: there is no significant relationship between the gender and time period of using the mobile phone.

H₁: there is significant relationship between the gender and time period of using the mobile phone.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Brand owned by respondents:

Response	Nokia	Samsung	Sony Ericsson	Any Other
Percentage	56	22	16	6

Table: (8.1) Brand owned by respondents

Interpretation:-

Many respondents in the sample have Mobiles, Nokia, Samsung or Sony Ericsson. 56% out of the total sample have Nokia Mobile. So Nokia is the most preferable brand of Consumers. 22% consumers prefers Samsung brand.

Frequency of changing mobile:

Response	Less then six months	Six months	One year	Two year	More then two year
Percentage	13	15	34	18	20

Table: (8.2) Frequency of changing mobile

Interpretation:-

36% of the respondents own their Mobile for a period of less then six months. Most of the respondents want to change their mobile in a short period of time. 28% own their Mobile for a period ranging between six months to one year. Small number of people own their Mobile for a time period of more the 2 years.

Spending money on mobile:

Response	Less than 2000	2000-5000	5000-8000	8000-12000	More than 12000
Percentage	16	18	25	23	18

Table: (8.3) Spending money on mobile

Interpretation:-

Only 16% of the people have spent less then Rs. 2000 on there Mobile. Most of the respondent have spent between 2000 to 5000. These are 18% of the total sample. Only 18% of

the respondents have spent more than Rs. 12000. So there is a huge potential customer for multimedia mobiles.

Sources of information:

Responses	Self	Family members	Friends/Relative	Promotional activity	Advertisement
Percentage	43	11	24	5	17

Table: (8.4) Sources of information

Interpretation:-

Involvement means how much the person takes interest in buying a particular thing. 24% respondents of the sample get information about the brand through friends. Advertisement plays a very important role in providing the information about brand. 17% respondents get information from advertisements. Some respondents also get information from their family members.

Influence of media:

Response	T.V	Newspaper	Wall painting	Hoarding	Magazine
Percentage	57	7	12	13	11

Table: (8.5) Influence of media

Interpretation:-

When it comes to the type of media which influences the purchase behaviour of the customer, then it is TV. 57% of the sample thinks that they are influenced by T.V when they are going to purchase. 7% consumers are influenced by Newspaper, 13% consumers are influenced by hoarding. Magazine and wall painting have very small influence on the purchase behavior i.e. 11% & 12%.

Role of advertisement:

Response	Provides important details	Creates awareness	Misleading
Percentage	60	24	16

Table: (8.6) Role of advertisement

Interpretation:-

Out of the total sample 60% of the respondents think that advertisements provides important details that proved to be very useful when they are going to purchase. 24% of them are saying that it provides awareness. 16% people are saying that advertisement leads to misguide them while they are going for purchase.

Factors of influence:

Responses	Price	Brand Name	Features	Battery Backup
Percentage	27	22	35	16

Table: (8.7) Factors of influence

Interpretation:-

When a person is going to purchase something then a no. of items that reflects a consumer. Here when a person is going to purchase a Mobile then price play a very vital role. 27% respondents of the sample think that they are mostly influenced by the Price. 35% respondents consider features as a big factor while purchasing a mobile. While 22% respondents think that they are influenced by brand name & 16% respondents influenced by battery back up.

Schemes preferred by respondents:

Responses	Price	Accessories	Free gift	Warranty	Discount offer
Percentage	27	17	18	33	5

Table: (8.8) Schemes preferred by respondents

Interpretation:-

When it comes to purchasing of Mobiles, the customers prefer various kinds of schemes like price, accessories, warranty etc. The sample that I have taken 27% of the respondents prefer price scheme while they are going for purchase. 33% of the respondents prefer Warranty while they are going for purchase. 5% of the respondents prefer discount offered by companies while they are going for purchase.

Extent price influence the respondents:

Responses	High	High Average	Average	Low Average	Low
Percentage	17	13	45	9	5

Table: (8.9) Extent price influence the respondents

Interpretation:-

Mostly Respondents are influenced by the price when they are going to purchase the Mobile. 17% respondents think that they are highly influenced by the price when they are going to purchase Mobile. 13% respondents of the sample think that they are influenced at high average and at the average level 45% respondent are influenced. 5% respondents of the sample do not have any influence of price at their purchasing.

Satisfaction level of respondents:

Response	Fully satisfied	Satisfied	Average	Less satisfied	Dissatisfied
Percentage	26	35	13	20	6

Table: (8.10) Satisfaction level of respondents

Interpretation:-

Satisfaction plays a very important role to the consumers as well as to the sellers. The sample that I have taken shows that they most of them are satisfied with their mobile that they have purchased. 26% respondents of the sample are fully satisfied, 35% of the respondents are satisfied with their mobile. 13% of the respondents are average satisfied with their mobile. 20% respondents of the sample are less satisfied & 6% are dissatisfied.

Benefits provided by companies:

Response	Nokia	Samsung	Sony ericsson	Any other
Percentage	68	15	5	12

Tables: (8.11) Benefits provided by companies

Interpretation:-

Now when it's come to giving benefits to customers Nokia here also occupying the first place, 685 people agree with this. Only 15% people think that Samsung provides benefits to customers & 5% respondents think that Sony Ericsson provides benefit to customer. Only 12% people think that other companies like Samsung, LG etc, are also providing better benefits to customers.

Degree of change due to attractive scheme:

Responses	Sure	Often	Neutral	Not Sure	Never
Percentage	41	22	4	20	13

Table: (8.12) Degree of change due to attractive scheme

Interpretation:-

Now a day it is the time of competition. So every company whether it is domestic or foreign they want to join this competition. So each and every company is coming with a no. of promotion schemes. If the other companies come up with more attractive schemes then their present then 41% respondents think that they will shift to other company while 4% remain neutral at this, 22% remain often at this. 13% respondents think that they will purchase the Mobile from the same company. These are hard core loyal to the company.

Factors of switch over to some other brand:

Responses	Price	After sale services	Company Name	Promotional Scheme	Reference Group
Percentage	32	25	24	14	5

Table: (8.13) Factors of switch over to some other brand

Interpretation:-

When it comes to switch over from one brand to the other brand then the respondents mostly consider price and the after sale services. Price is most important in case of the Mobiles because sometimes the people buy Mobiles only on the basis of Price. 32 people change their brand only because of Price. 25% respondents of the sample change their mobile due to the after sale services. Company name also plays an important role 24% respondents of the sample will switch over with a brand name. Reference group also plays an important role. 5% respondents think that they will switch over to other brand with their reference & 14% due to promotional scheme.

Post purchase experience:

Response	Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Poor
Percentage	25	15	35	17	8

Table: (8.14) Post purchase experience

Interpretation:-

Post purchase behaviour means how the consumer reacts after the purchasing of Mobile. This is the behaviour on the basis of which the consumer repurchases. 15% respondents of the sample thinks that their post purchase behaviour is very good & 25% think that their post purchase behavior is excellent, means the product that they wanted from the seller meets their needs. 35% respondents of the sample that their post purchase behaviour is good or average & 17% think that their behavior is average. 8% respondents of the sample think that their post purchase behaviour is poor.

Satisfaction level with after sale service:

Response	Fully satisfied	Satisfied	Average	Less satisfied	Dissatisfied
Percentage	31	35	23	7	4

Table: (8.15) Satisfaction level with after sale service

Interpretation:-

Satisfaction plays a very important role to the consumers as well as to the sellers. The sample that I have taken shows that they most of them are satisfied with after sale service of their mobile company that they have purchased. 30% respondents of the sample are Fully satisfied & 35% respondents of the sample are satisfied. Only 10% respondents of the sample somehow are not satisfied with after sale service of their mobile company. 14% respondents of the sample are average & 16% respondents of the sample are less satisfied.

Comparison between companies advertisement:

Responses	Nokia	Samsung	Sony Ericsson	Any Other
Percentage	45	24	13	18

Table: (8.16) Comparison between companies advertisement

Interpretation:-

As we all know that advertisement plays a very important role. So now a day all the companies whether they are Indian or foreign they are going for this. 45 people of the sample like the advertisement of Nokia. Sony Ericsson's Ad is not so much familiar among the respondents only 13 people like that advertisement.

Awareness about different promotion activity:

Responses	Yes	No
Percentage	64	36

Table: (8.17) Awareness about different promotion activity

Interpretation:-

Promotion activities are those, which are being done by the companies for increasing their sales, increasing market share, for creating awareness. 64% of the respondents are aware about the different promotion activities done by the various Mobile companies. On the other hand 36% of the samples are not aware about these activities.

Effect of Chinese mobile on other mobile handsets:

Responses	Yes	No
Percentage	69	31

Table: (8.18) Effect of Chinese mobile on other mobile handsets

Interpretation:-

In this 69% respondents of the sample are think that Chinese mobile have impact on the other mobiles handset but 31% respondents of the sample think that there is no impact of the Chinese mobile on the other mobile handsets.

**CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
GENDER AND FREQUENCY OF CHANGING THE MOBILE PHONES**

GENDER	Less than six month	%	Six month	%	One year	%	Two year	%	More than two years	%	TOTAL	% TOTAL
Male	7	11.67	10	16.67	25	41.67	13	21.66	5	8.33	60	100
Female	6	15	5	12.5	9	22.5	5	12.5	15	37.5	40	100
TOTAL	13		15		34		18		20		100	

Table: (4.19) Relationship between gender changing the mobile Handset

FREQUENCY	Less than six month	%	Six month	%	One year	%	Two year	%	More than two years	%	TOTAL	% TOTAL
Male	7.8	13	9	15	20.4	34	10.8	18	12	20	60	100
Female	5.2	13	6	15	13.6	34	7.2	18	8	20	40	100
TOTAL	13		15		34		18		20		100	

Table: (4.20) Relationship between frequency of changing the mobile Handset

$$\chi^2 = 14.36$$

Number of degree of freedom:

$$Ndf = (\text{row}-1) (\text{column} -1)$$

$$= (2-1) (5-1)$$

$$= 4$$

Table value at 5% level of significance = 9.48

Interpretation: Since C.V of χ^2 at 5% level of significance is greater than the T.V of χ^2 . Hence we reject H_0 in favor of alternate hypothesis & conclude that there is a significance relationship between the gender & time period of using the mobile phones.

Findings of the Study

Nokia is the most popular and widely used brand by the people. Market share of Nokia is approximately 68% which is higher in mobile handset companies. Many of customers consider features as major factor before purchasing the mobile handset. More customers is satisfied from services provided by Nokia company to customer. Now a day's youth is going for design and music edition in mobile rather than battery back-up. Friends/Relative also plays an important role in influencing the buying decision. More customers are influenced by T.V. media rather than the news paper. Average price of mobile is more influenced the people when they purchase the mobile. More customers satisfied with their mobile they own. Customers said that they have good experience with their mobile after purchasing. Many of people said that they like the Nokia advertisement. 68% respondent of the sample is aware about different promotion activity done by mobile companies. 69% respondents of the sample think that Chinese mobile handsets have effect on other mobile handset.

Conclusion

The Mobile phone represents the convergence instrument of the future. It has become a necessity for many people throughout the world. The ability to keep in touch with family, business associates, and storing data are only a few of the reasons for the increasing importance of mobile phones. The above findings and results reflected the preferences, expectations and satisfaction level of mobile phones users in. The study would help the companies in understanding the factors that influence the purchase decision of the consumers

and their expectations from the mobile handsets. The results of the study indicate that mobile phones are no longer the status symbol for the people of. Brand and features in a handset are preferred over their prices. People here are techno savvy and require new innovative features in mobile phones every new day. Since the study was restricted to the limited area so there is need to study more in other cities to get the clear view of the findings.

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