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CUSTOMER BRAND PREFERENCE OF MOBILE PHONES AT HOSUR

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INTRODUCTION

The mobile industry has experienced significant growth during the past two decades. Mobile phones bring mobility, flexibility, connectivity and efficiency in communication to both consumers and business users alike.

The usage of mobile services in India has entered in all economic and social sectors. India is one of the major contributors of mobile phone market. India is now the world's second largest mobile phones market. The mobile phones selected for research study are

- Samsung
- Nokia
- Sony Ericsson
- Karbonn
- LG

The factors influencing Buying Decision of mobile phones are

1. Brand image
2. Physical appearance
3. Price
4. Value added features
5. Quality of product and performance
6. After sale service
7. Goodwill and popularity
8. Resale value

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find the prominent factors which influence the customer brand preference of mobile phones.
- To sort out the major problems faced by consumers in mobile phones.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study has been undertaken in order to identify the customers brand preference, attitude towards purchase of mobiles and level of awareness of varieties in mobiles. There is a wide scope for sale of mostly preferred mobile. If the study finds out the factors influencing brand preference mobiles that will help the marketer to chalk out a profitable strategy to increase brands market share.

The data was collected from the 100 users of mobile phones in Hosur.

PROFILE OF THE MOBILE COMPANIES SELECTED FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Samsung mobile

Samsung mobile in India is managed by Samsung Telecommunication India (STI) who is the design and technology leader in the market of mobiles. The head quarters of Samsung are in South Korea and at present it operates in more

than 100 countries. Samsung was founded by Lee Byung-chull in 1938 as a trading company. Some of the popular mobile models of Samsung are

- Samsung corby
- Samsung Guru 100

FEATURES

- Strong Infrastructure
- High brand value
- High investment for Research and development
- Wide range of products
- Product and performance quality

SONY ERICSSON

Ericsson is one of Sweden's largest company and provider of telecommunication equipments. It is head quartered in Kista Stockholm Municipality, Sweden. This world's largest ever manual telephone exchange is serving 60,000 lines. It was installed by Ericsson in Moscow in 1916. Over 1000 networks in more than 180 countries use Sony Ericsson network equipment and more than 40 percent of the world's mobile traffic passes through Ericsson networks.

FEATURES

- Quality operating system
- Social networking facilities
- Music
- Communication
- Quality battery
- Camera

NOKIA

Nokia started in 1865 when mining engineer Fredrik Ides tam established a ground wood pulp mill on the bank of the Tammerkoski. In 1970's Nokia became more involved in the telecommunications industry by developing the Nokia DX200. Nokia is really good at connecting people.

FEATURES

- Staying in touch
- Instantly online
- Discover your creative side
- Ready to entertain

KARBONN

Karbonn world in the telecom arena telecom technology and innovations have created a multitude of opportunities. The UTL group is a multi division telecom group with an annual turnover of Rs 1600 cores and over 2000 employees. Headquarter in Bangalore. Karbonn mobiles, India's leading mobile phone brand which has redefined telecom mobility across the world with its range of affordable and technologically rich mobile products.

FEATURES

- Karbonn mobile are committed in bringing pioneering technologies to the mobile users.
- Karbonn phones offers certain features suitable to absolute tastes trends in mobile telephony at incredible price.

LG

The abbreviation of LG brand denotes Lucky Gold star. It is a group of enterprise originated from South Korea. The history of LG started in 1947. LG become popular because of their superior and fine sound quality.

FEATURES

- Sleek and simple to use features phone give to customer everything needed to stay in touch with colleagues, friends and family.
- Whether customer want to talk, text or mail or even check face book and twitter with LG basic mobile it's easier than ever to stay connected.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As Hosur is a industrial hub and commercially vibrant need for effective communication is high. Especially mobile market is highly competitive. Specially all mobile dealers like to open their showrooms in Hosur. Understanding the customer preference of the mobile brand will help mobile companies to frame suitable market strategy to increase market share and sales. Hence it is imperative to conduct a research study to find out the factors influencing the customers mobile brand preference.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

Research Design is both descriptive and analytical in nature. The data was collected from the primary source. Data was analysed to find out which mobile is leading in the market in Hosur. The purposive random sample method was adopted in selecting 100 mobile users. The tools applied are

1. Chi square test
2. Weighted average ranking technique
3. Percentage analysis.

INTERPRETATION

Table 1 shows the number of respondents using the different types of phones. The highest number of respondents uses Nokia (44%) and lowest number of respondents uses Sony Ericsson (6%).

INTERPRETATION

Table 2 shows that socio economic profile of mobile user. Majority are men (74%), hail from 18-30 (62%) age group. Mostly students (34%) others (32%) are in the sample. Most of the users belong to 5001-10000 (40%) income group.

INTERPRETATION

Table 3 shows the factors influencing buying decisions of mobile phones. The major factor to prefer mobile is Brand image (30%) next goodwill and popularity (15%). The quality of product (13%), physical appearance (12%) and price (10%).

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

Impact of the factors Age, Gender, Income, Occupation on the brand preference of mobile phones.

1. **Null hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between the age of consumer and preference of the mobile phones.
2. **Null hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between the gender of consumer and preference of the mobile phones.

3. **Null hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between the occupation of consumer and preference of the mobile phones.
4. **Null hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between the income of consumer and preference of the mobile phones.

INTERPRETATION

Age is an important factor in decision making. For the purpose of this study age of the respondent has been classified into four categories, viz below 18, 18-30, 30-50, 50 & above. The majority of sample 62% from the age group of 18-30 years prefers mostly purchase of mobile phones. Youth and middle age persons prefer mobiles to landlines. In order to find the relationship between age, gender, income and occupation of the consumer and the preference of mobile phone, a chi square test is applied and the result of the test is shown in Table no.4

It is understood from the Table no.4 that the calculated chi square value is more than the table value and the result is significant at 5 per cent-level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis "age, gender and income of the consumer and the preference of mobile phones" doesn't hold well. Null hypotheses were rejected. From the analysis, it is concluded that there is close relationship between age, income, gender of the consumer and preference of mobile phones. But there is no close relationship between occupation of the consumer and preference of mobile phones. Whatever be the occupation, people are purchasing their preferred mobile phones.

FINDINGS

From the data analysed, interpretations are made and results were derived. Based on the results findings were summarized.

- Mobile phones bring mobility, flexibility, connectivity and efficiency to both consumers and the business users alike. Mobile communication has made such impact on the ways people interact and conduct business.
- Now a mobile phone is already considered as a daily necessity in most of the developed countries of the world.
- The rapid growth and development in information technology and mobile devices has made the Indian mobile phone service marketing more and more competitive.
- Mobile users today want their handsets to be loaded with multiple functions and application.
- Entertainment is the most important among them.
- They want their mobile to be fully loaded with top end features at affordable cost.
- The major factors influencing the buying behaviour in mobile phones are presented as per their ranking order. They are Brand image, Physical appearance, price, value added features, Quality and performance, After sale service, Goodwill and popularity, Resale value.
- Age, Occupation, Income and Gender has significant impact on the brand preference of mobile phone in Hosur.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions are made to improve the marketing of mobile phones.

- All the customers who buy the mobile must see the features, models, applications, software and cost of the mobile.
- In order to increase the end use of the products, the mobile dealers can conduct frequent exhibitions, advertising campaigns in various organisation, institutions etc, regarding their new features importance and its models.
- Mobile services providers have to provide more attractive and innovative offers for family and friends also.
- Existing offers still hold to satisfy current consumers.
- Because of stiff competition and intense price war every operator offers a virtually similar plan to their customer.
- So operators should adopt service centric approach to increase the Brand loyalty and customer base.

Table 1. Type of Mobile Phones

Sl.No.	Mobiles	No.of Mobile Users	Percentage %
1	Nokia	44	44
2	Samsung	32	32
3	Sony Ericsson	6	6
4	LG	10	10
5	Karbons	8	8
	Total	100	100

Table 2. Socio economies Profile of Mobile Users

Sl.No.	Criteria	No.of Persons	Percentage
	GENDER		
1	Men	74	74
2	Women	26	26
	AGE		
3	Below 18	4	4
4	18-30	62	62
5	30-50	24	24
6	50& above	10	10
	OCCUPATION		
7	Business	14	14
8	Government Employee	12	12
9	Professional	8	8
10	Student	34	34
11	Others	32	32
	MONTHLY INCOME		
12	Below 5000	34	34
13	5001-10000	40	40
14	10001-15000	14	14
15	Above 15000	12	12

CONCLUSION

The research helps the people to understand today's mobile phone market scenario and generally analyze the mobile consumer buying behaviour at Hosur. The findings also suggest that managers of these mobile companies should shift their focus on building corporate image and analyze more carefully the reasons for purchase in order to increase brand loyalty among the consumers. Among mobile companies consumer are loyal to brands such as Samsung then to Nokia and then to Motorola, LG and Sony Ericsson.

This research study will help the mobile service providers at Hosur to understand the consumer and draw a suitable marketing strategy to increase sales. The study helps to improve the economic development of Hosur.

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Table 3. The Factors influencing Buying Decision of Mobile Phones

Sl.No.	Factors	No.of Mobile Users	Percentage
1	Brand image	30	30
2	Physical appearance	12	12
3	Price	10	10
4	Value added features	4	4
5	Quality of product and performance	13	13
6	After sale services	6	6
7	Goodwill and popularity	15	15
8	Resale value	10	10

Table 4. Age, Gender, Income, Occupation and the brand preference of mobile phones (chi-square test)

Factors	Calculated X ² Value	Table Value	Degree Of Freedom	Level of Significance	Remarks
AGE	28.087	21.0	12	5 per cent	Significant
GENDER	15.3907	9.49	4	5 per cent	Significant
OCCUPATION	46.7234	21.0	12	5 per cent	Significant
INCOME	16.4627	26.3	16	5 per cent	Not Significant

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