

Customer satisfaction in purchasing mobile phones: An explorative studyRohith Raja M¹, Ida David²Research Scholar, Department of Mathematics,
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Abstract

Customers hold the key role in determining the market of any material. The demand and requirements of the customers are taken into account while the manufacturers produce any product. Mobile phones, being an essential element in today's world, occupy a large market in today's business world. Customer satisfaction is the prime motive of the manufacturing companies. Based on a survey conducted, we study the current trend of phone purchase in India and thus analyze the customer's responses towards different brands and their products. The results depict which brands satisfy the customer requirements.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, mobile phone brands

1. Introduction

Mobile phones have become an important part of today's lives. The use of mobile phones have grown over the ages from mere communication to the fields of security and national defence and what not. It has become a part of the society. Most of today's professions, academics etc. are all based on the mobile phones. Thus, the style and quality of the mobile phones purchased by the community is gaining huge importance. Many people today are brand conscious or at least, conscious about the characteristics of the phones they purchase. This has led to a boom in the market for mobile phones.

A brand is a symbol, a mark or a logo that companies use to identify themselves among the customers and thus differentiate them from their rival companies. The companies try and create an impression among the society using the different methods such as advertisements, promotions and so on so that their brand gets registered in the minds of the customers. Apart from the efforts made by the companies, what matters today is the word of mouth appreciations which comes from the customers who have already purchased or used the products. With increasing importance for mobile phones in all fields, the different companies play on a cut throat competition for survival in the market.

The mobile phone market today is largely influenced by many factors, namely, the price, the financial background of the customer, the social status or profession, the recommendations from family and friends, various functional requirements such as storage space, camera and video quality, sound and music qualities and numerous other factors. People tend to purchase phones with all these factors in mind. Once bought, they focus on the qualities and the experience obtained from the product for further purchase or recommendation to friends or family. This is the point of customer satisfaction which in turn leads to customer loyalty. A satisfied customer tends to promote the particular brand to others or may even continue to purchase the same brand, thus turning into a loyal customer on whom the manufacturers can count upon.

Many authors have discussed the various aspects regarding the choice of mobile phone brands and the consequent customer satisfaction and loyalty thus obtained, previously. Luca Petruzzellis, in his paper titled “Mobile phone choice: technology versus marketing. The brand effect in Italian market”, discusses the role of brand preferences with respect to the influence in shifting customer preferences from technical outcomes through an interview conducted with a stratified population (Petruzzellis, 2010). E M Isaid et al., analyses the patterns of repurchase of mobile phones among the customers through a survey conducted among 470 participants. The results were studied using Multiple Regression models, ANOVA and chi-square tests (Emad Naji Isaid, 2015).

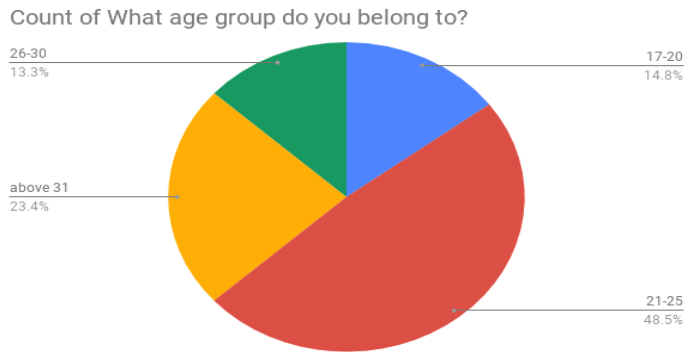
In our paper, we try to analyze the data collected and interpret it so as to determine the leading brand in the market as of now as well as to identify the brands that have inculcated a sense of customer satisfaction and in turn customer loyalty among the customers.

2. Methodology

This paper is based on an online survey conducted among 339 participants from Kerala, Bangalore and Delhi. The targeted population comprises of people from all ages from 17 onwards and has been classified into four categories namely, 17-20, 21-25, 26- 30 and above 31. The questionnaire was of moderate length and consisted of around 16 questions that have been used in this paper. The participants are from all rounds of the society. We have used Microsoft Excel to analyze the data and produce graphs.

3. Data analysis and results

According to the data collected in the survey, the population is classified into four categories as shown below.



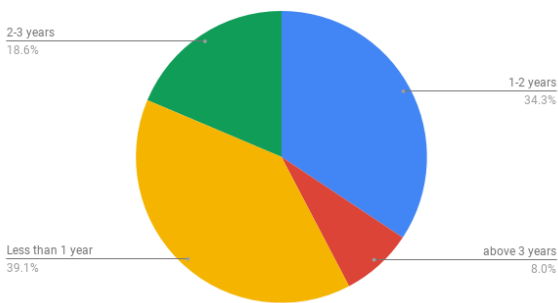
We asked the respondents to mention the brand of phone they currently use. Out of the 339 respondents, 77 of them use Redmi, 69 use Samsung, 37 use Apple, 35 use Moto, 32 use One plus and 21 people use Oppo. We have not taken into consideration, those brands that have been used by less than 5% of the sample population.

Current brand of phones	Number of users
Redmi	77
Samsung	69
Apple	37
Moto	35
One-plus	32
Oppo	21

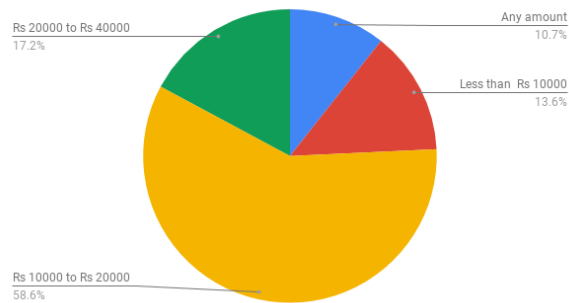
According to the data collected, certain people use more than one phone at a time. We analyze the data using the assumption that a brand chosen, as the currently used brand is the one about which they have answered the remaining questions.

The questionnaire consisted of questions like “How long have you been using your current phone?” and “What amount of money are you willing to pay for your phone?”. For the first question, the options given were “less than one year, 1-2 years, 2-3 years and above 3 years” and for the second question, the options were “less than Rs 10000, Rs 10000 to Rs 20000, Rs 20000 to Rs 40000, any amount”. The results obtained are depicted in the pi-charts below.

Count of How long have you been using your current phone?



Count of What would you be willing to pay for a mobile phone?



From the pi-charts, it is clear that almost 70% of the sample population has purchased the current phone in less than 2 years of which almost half of them purchased it in less than one year. The number of people who have purchased the six major brands mentioned above in less than one year have been represented in the table below.

Name of the brand	Number of customers in the last one year
Redmi	41
Samsung	22
One plus	18
Moto	16
Apple	10
Oppo	8

From the above table it is clear that, Redmi has emerged as the current trending brand according to the survey conducted. Also, it is to be noted that 53.2% of the people who currently use Redmi have purchased it in the last one year. Another thing to be noted is that One plus having only 32 current users has acquired 56.25% of their customers in the last one year which also shows an increasing trend towards the brand.

Since Redmi has emerged as the trending phone brand, we take into consideration the factors that have affected the trend for Redmi phones. The question asked was “What among the phones do you like the most?” and the answers are represented in the table below. The total number of people using Redmi phones currently is found to be 77 from the above table.

Features	Number of Redmi customers who liked the features
Camera and video quality	54
Storage capacity	53
Brand image	29
Looks and feel	33
Music and sound quality	35
Price	62

Now, taking into consideration, the number of buyers for each brand who have been using the phone for more than 2 years (adding up the last two options namely 2-3 years and above 3 years), we get the data as follows:

Name of the brand	Number of customers who have been using the brand for more than 2 years
Samsung	24
Apple	15
Redmi	10
Oppo	7
Moto	5
One plus	4

From the above table, the number of customers using Samsung for more than 2 years is 34.7% of the total Samsung customers and that of Apple customers is 40.5%. Now, the astonishing fact is that 7 of the Apple customers, 5 of the Samsung customers and a single Redmi customer who have been using their phones for more than 2 years are willing to pay any amount to buy a new phone. The fact that they haven't changed the phone yet even though they are willing to pay any amount, in some sense can depict customer satisfaction.

4. Interpretation of the results

The above-obtained results reveal many facts regarding the trends in purchasing mobile phones. The current trending brand can be evaluated based on the number of customers for each brand in the past one year. There may be many factors that have affected the trend. But among them, the major ones are price, camera and video quality and the storage capacity of the Redmi phones. These are also the major factors that affect the purchase of any phone in the market. Also it is noteworthy that, One plus has been able to increase their sales in the past 1 year which also could be interpreted as a trend. These factors may be kept in mind by all manufacturing units so as to increase their customer base and sales. It is highly important to analyze the demand of the customers and provide the products accordingly.

It is also interesting to note that certain brands are able to retain their customers for more than 2 years. A person who is willing to pay any amount for a mobile phone may purchase a phone at any time. But if he continues to use it for a longer period of time, it may show that the customer is satisfied with the product, its features and performances. This in turn depicts customer satisfaction. We may also infer that he/she would be a loyal customer if she recommends the brand to others. Thus from the above results, we came to a conclusion that Samsung and Apple have been able to retain some of their customers who are willing to pay any amount for a longer period of time. Thus, these two brands have been successful in inculcating a sense of customer satisfaction.

5. Limitations of the study

The study does not take into account other demographic factors such as gender, location or profession of the individuals. These factors may be taken into account while taking the study further ahead. The population under consideration has not been completely evenly distributed among the different ages where almost 48.5% of the sample under consideration consists of people aged between 21 and 25. The analysis is based on the data available as such.

6. Conclusion

Thus, in this paper, we have analyzed the trends in mobile phone market in various parts of India. There have been some limitations in the setting of the survey. This study may be useful for people who are planning to buy new phones and also may be referred by the manufacturing companies to analyze the trends of the customers and thus design their products in such a way that the customers are satisfied and they in turn be able to increase their sales.

7. Reference

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