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An Empirical Analysis of Smartphone Brand Preferences and Customer Satisfaction in the Rayalaseema Region, Andhra Pradesh, India

[1]Kandukuru Nagathimmaiah [2]Dr. Devendra Kumar Ojha

1. Research Scholar School of Commerce & Management YBN University, Jharkhand
2. Assistant Professor in School of Commerce & Management YBN University, Jharkhand

ABSTRACT

This study examines smartphone brand preferences and customer satisfaction levels in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh, India. Through a comprehensive survey and data analysis, we identify the key factors influencing consumer choices and satisfaction. The research explores demographic variables, brand loyalty, price sensitivity, and feature preferences among smartphone users. Our findings provide valuable insights into regional market trends and consumer behavior, highlighting the dominant brands and the attributes most valued by customers. These insights can help smartphone manufacturers and marketers tailor their strategies to better meet the needs and expectations of consumers in this specific region.

The term “telecommunication” is derived from the Greek word “tele” (meaning distance) and the Latin word “communicare” (meaning sharing). Historically, communication methods included smoke signals, drums, flags, and carrier pigeons. Modern communication has significantly advanced to encompass wireless technology, undersea cables, and geostationary satellites. The advent of wireless transmission has greatly enhanced both speed and data capacity. For instance, researchers at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology in Germany have developed a technique capable of transmitting data at a rate of 26 terabytes per second (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, 2011).

Keywords: *Smartphone brands, customer satisfaction, consumer preferences, Rayalaseema, Andhra Pradesh, market trends.*

INTRODUCTION:

The mobile phones dominate most of modern human in every movement of life. Which Nowadays is becoming a part of basic needs of a person as means of communication across the world for more than two decades. Every individual use mobile for not only communication purpose, but also it became a personal assistance to make an everyday life easier. The development of mobile communication technology e. g. wireless internet, mobile phone, MP3 player, GPS navigation system has been a long journey of innovation, which is constantly evolving and updating as a result of consumers changing needs and preferences. There is a problem of hard competition among various brands of mobile phones in the market. Every day a new phone is launched with enhanced features and technology. Nevertheless of the fact that this competition has provided the consumer a wide variety of mobile phones to choose from at the same time there is also confusion prevailing in the minds of consumer about which of particular mobile phone suits their requirements the most. This problem of choice is known as brand preference. So the marketers have to study the various mobile phone attributes that influence the consumer brand preference towards mobile phones to face this competition. It is at this juncture a study on "Customer preferences and satisfaction levels towards Smart Phone brands – A study of Rayalaseema Region in Andhra Pradesh" has been taken up.

Review of Literature : After through literature review, it is found that, though some of them had a focus on mobile phones and in general, the absence of smart phone studies in this regard at regional level with particular reference to Rayalaseema Region has been felt very much. Moreover, it is an undisputable fact to mention that the socio economic characteristic features of smart phone users in terms of their motives, preferences and satisfaction levels definitely varies form region to region, necessitating to take up the study in this direction in the Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh.

In view of the above and to identify the possible areas for future research, the present study is a modest attempt to study the satisfaction levels of smart phone users in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh.

Need for the Study

The review of various studies and literature on mobile phones and smart phones revealed that there are very few studies covered the concept of customer preferences and satisfaction levels. The studies are micro level studies and are taken up with small sample. The studies in backward regions are very meager. Hence, it is felt that, there is an imperative need to study the preferences and satisfaction levels of customers towards Smart Phone brands in Rayalaseema Region in Andhra Pradesh.

Objectives of the Study

The basic objective of the present research work is to study the satisfaction levels of smart phone users. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study about the satisfaction levels of smart phone users towards various aspects of smart phones
2. To examine the overall satisfaction levels of smart phone users in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh and
3. To offer suitable suggestions for various stake holders.

Methodology & Sampling

The present study is mainly based on primary data and is behavioral in nature. However, the secondary data is also made use of at some places of the study wherever it became necessary. The primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire.

The relevant secondary data are gathered from the Books, Journals, Magazines, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Publications, Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) Publications, Published and Unpublished reports etc. The data and the information collected with the help of questionnaire are processed and analyzed using SPSS software.

Table No. 1: Details of Sample Distribution

S. No	Name of the District	Area wise sample distribution			
		Urban	Sub Urban	Rural	Total
1	Ananthapur	40	40	40	120
2	Chithoor	40	40	40	120
3	Kurnool	40	40	40	120
4	YSR Kadapa	40	40	40	120
Total		160	160	160	480

Source: Field Survey

For the purpose of the study, smart phone users located in Rayalaseema Region are considered as population. As the universe of the study is entire Rayalaseema Region, an attempt is made to stratify the region into strata. Rayalaseema Region consists of four districts namely, Ananthapur, Chithoor, Kurnool and YSR Kadapa. The stratification is done on the basis of location such as Rural, Sub Urban and Urban.

A sample of 120 customers/respondents was selected from each district (40 from Urban areas, 40 from Sub-Urban areas and 40 from Rural areas). On this basis, the total respondents of the study is 480. But, some of the respondents have not responded to the items of the questionnaire. Hence, they were eliminated from the study and the final resultant sample size is 432.

Convenient Sampling method has been employed. While selecting the elements of the population, efforts were

made to approach the respondents by taking into consideration various factors such as social background, economic status, professional background and educational qualifications.

Data analysis and Interpretation

The primary and secondary data collected from different sources have been tabulated and interpreted meaningfully. Hypotheses were formulated and statistical analysis has been done to test the reliability of the data. The data have been analyzed thoroughly and various inferences and conclusions have been drawn from the data. The information has been represented in graphical method also.

HYPOTHESIS

Null hypothesis: Customer satisfaction levels towards smart phone brands do not differ with Socio-Economic factors

Alternative hypothesis: Customer satisfaction levels towards smart phone brands differ with Socio-Economic factors.

Scope of the study : Smart phone users located in Rayalaseema Region have been chosen for the study. The scope of the study confined only to the select smart phone users located in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh.

Table No. 2: Details of satisfaction level towards – Warranty

Satisfaction Level towards Warranty

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	78	18.7	18.7	18.7
	Satisfied	180	43.2	43.2	61.9
	Neutral	84	20.1	20.1	82.0
	Dissatisfied	45	10.8	10.8	92.8
	Highly Dissatisfied	30	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	417	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It can be interpreted from the table no. 2 that, with regard to details of satisfaction level towards warranty, 18.7% of the respondents rated it as highly satisfied, 43.2% of the respondents rated it as satisfied, 20.1% of the

respondents rated it as neutral, 10.8% of the respondents rated it as dissatisfied and 7.2% of the respondents rated it as highly dissatisfied,. It can be concluded from the above analysis that, major segment of the respondents are satisfied towards the warranty.

Table No. 3: Details of satisfaction level towards – Price

Satisfaction Level towards Price

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	129	30.9	30.9	30.9
	Satisfied	84	20.1	20.1	51.1
	Neutral	42	10.1	10.1	61.2
	Dissatisfied	141	33.8	33.8	95.0
	Highly Dissatisfied	21	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	417	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It can be illustrated from the table no. 3 that, with regard to details of satisfaction level towards price, 30.9% of the respondents rated it as highly satisfied, 20.1% of the respondents rated it as satisfied, 10.1% of the respondents rated it as neutral, 33.8% of the respondents rated it as dissatisfied and 5.0% of the respondents rated it as highly dissatisfied,. It can be concluded from the above analysis that, major segment of the respondents are dissatisfied towards the price. It indicates that the consumers are perceiving smart phones as high priced products.

Table No. 4: Details of satisfaction level towards – Durability / Features

Satisfaction Level towards Durability / Features

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	249	59.7	59.7	59.7
	Satisfied	93	22.3	22.3	82.0
	Neutral	33	7.9	7.9	89.9
	Dissatisfied	12	2.9	2.9	92.8
	Highly Dissatisfied	30	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	417	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It can be observed from the table no. 4 that, with regard to details of satisfaction level towards durability / features, 59.7% of the respondents rated it as highly satisfied, 22.3% of the respondents rated it as satisfied, 7.9% of the respondents rated it as neutral, 2.9% of the respondents rated it as dissatisfied and 7.2% of the respondents rated it as highly dissatisfied,. It can be concluded from the above analysis that, majority of the respondents are highly satisfied towards the durability / features.

Table No. 5: Details of satisfaction level towards – Camera Quality

Satisfaction Level towards Camera Quality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	72	17.3	17.3	17.3
	Satisfied	105	25.2	25.2	42.4
	Neutral	102	24.5	24.5	66.9
	Dissatisfied	93	22.3	22.3	89.2
	Highly Dissatisfied	45	10.8	10.8	100.0
	Total	417	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It can be reviewed from the table no. 5 that, with regard to details of satisfaction level towards camera quality, 17.3% of the respondents rated it as highly satisfied, 25.2% of the respondents rated it as satisfied, 24.5% of the respondents rated it as neutral, 22.3% of the respondents rated it as dissatisfied and 10.8% of the respondents rated it as highly dissatisfied,. It can be concluded from the above analysis that, major segment of the respondents are satisfied towards the camera quality.

Table No.6: Details of satisfaction level towards – Service Centre / Facility

Satisfaction Level towards Service Centre / Facility

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	183	43.9	43.9	43.9
	Satisfied	75	18.0	18.0	61.9
	Neutral	81	19.4	19.4	81.3
	Dissatisfied	45	10.8	10.8	92.1
	Highly Dissatisfied	33	7.9	7.9	100.0
	Total	417	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It can be seen from the table no. 6 that, with regard to details of satisfaction level towards service centre / facility, 43.9% of the respondents rated it as highly satisfied, 18.0% of the respondents rated it as satisfied, 19.4% of the respondents rated it as neutral, 10.8% of the respondents rated it as dissatisfied and 7.9% of the respondents rated it as highly dissatisfied,.

It can be concluded from the above analysis that, major segment of the respondents are highly satisfied towards the service centre / facility.

Table No.7: Details of satisfaction level towards – Battery Life

Satisfaction Level towards Battery Life

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	129	30.9	30.9	30.9
	Satisfied	84	20.1	20.1	51.1
	Neutral	42	10.1	10.1	61.2
	Dissatisfied	141	33.8	33.8	95.0
	Highly Dissatisfied	21	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	417	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It can be understood from the table no. 7 that, with regard to details of satisfaction level towards battery life, 30.9% of the respondents rated it as highly satisfied, 20.1% of the respondents rated it as satisfied, 10.1% of the respondents rated it as neutral, 33.8% of the respondents rated it as dissatisfied and 5.0% of the respondents rated it as highly dissatisfied,. It can be concluded from the above analysis that, major segment of the respondents are dissatisfied towards the battery life.

Table No. 8: Details of satisfaction level towards – Memory / Storage

Satisfaction Level towards Memory / Storage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	183	43.9	43.9	43.9
	Satisfied	75	18.0	18.0	61.9
	Neutral	81	19.4	19.4	81.3
	Dissatisfied	45	10.8	10.8	92.1
	Highly Dissatisfied	33	7.9	7.9	100.0
	Total	417	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It can be visualized from the table no. 8 that, with regard to details of satisfaction level towards memory / storage, 43.9% of the respondents rated it as highly satisfied, 18.0% of the respondents rated it as satisfied, 19.4% of the respondents

rated it as neutral, 10.8% of the respondents rated it as dissatisfied and 7.9% of the respondents rated it as highly dissatisfied,. It can be concluded from the above analysis that, major segment of the respondents are highly satisfied towards memory / storage.

Table No. 9: Details of overall satisfaction level towards smart phone

Overall Satisfaction Level towards Smart Phone Brand

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	135	32.4	32.4	32.4
	Satisfied	195	46.8	46.8	79.1
	Neutral	66	15.8	15.8	95.0
	Dissatisfied	15	3.6	3.6	98.6
	Highly Dissatisfied	6	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	417	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

It can be analysed from the table no. 9 that, with regard to details of overall satisfaction level towards smart phone, 32.4% of the respondents rated it as highly satisfied, 46.8% of the respondents rated it as satisfied, 15.8% of the respondents rated it as neutral, 3.6% of the respondents rated it as dissatisfied and 1.4% of the respondents rated it as highly dissatisfied,. It can be concluded from the above analysis that, with regard to overall satisfaction level towards smart phone, major segment of the respondents rated it as satisfied.

Hypothesis

Null hypothesis: Customer satisfaction levels towards smart phone brands do not differ with Socio-Economic factors

Alternative hypothesis: Customer satisfaction levels towards smart phone brands differ with Socio-Economic factors.

		Overall Satisfaction Level towards Smart Phone Brand					Chi square	P value
		Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied		
Age group	Up to 30 Years	93	105	45	12	3	130.019*	0.0001
	31 to 45 Years	24	66	12	0	0		
	46 to 60 Years	18	24	6	3	0		
	Above 60 Years	0	0	3	0	3		

Gender	Male	114	135	42	6	6	23.61*	0.0001
	Female	21	60	24	9	0		
Educational Qualification	Up to SSC	3	6	3	0	0	19.691	0.234484
	+2	6	12	6	0	0		
	Graduation	66	84	39	12	3		
	Post Graduation	54	81	18	3	3		
	Any other, specify	6	12	0	0	0		
Occupation	Student	63	75	36	12	3	23.489	0.265418
	Employee	54	81	18	3	3		
	Business	3	6	3	0	0		
	Agriculture	6	12	6	0	0		
	Home Makers	6	12	0	0	0		
	Any other, specify	3	9	3	0	0		
Monthly Family Income	Up to Rs. 75,000/-	105	162	60	15	6	20.679	0.055286
	Rs. 75,001/- to Rs. 1,50,000/-	18	15	6	0	0		
	Rs. 1,50,001/- to Rs. 2,25,000/-	9	6	0	0	0		
	Above Rs. 2,25,000/-	3	12	0	0	0		
Number of Members in the Family	Up to 3 Members	57	54	21	3	3	29.238*	0.000288
	4 to 6 Members	69	123	42	6	3		
	7 Members and Above	9	18	3	6	0		
Total		135	195	66	15	6		

* Significant @ α = 0.05

Limitations of the study

In this study though meticulous care has been taken in each and every aspect of the study, certain limitations are likely to be there.

1. Some respondents were not aware of certain procedures and aspects of Smart phones.
2. Few respondents were hesitant to give correct details.

3. There might be a sense of bias crept in answers given by the respondents.

Suggestions:

- ✓ Mobile subscribers can play very crucial role in setting their own ethical standards regarding how to react during low service quality.
- ✓ Mobile service providers maintain and monitor several touch points and feedback system to check if subscribers are satisfied. Without switching mobile service provider a subscriber should take recourse of such ways to solve individual problems.
- ✓ The government also has several such mechanisms in place which can be utilised.
- ✓ Unlike tangible goods where every single piece can be identical, in case of service product such is not the case.
- ✓ At times subscribers need to be tolerant and review the physical environment, time or location of the mobile usage.
- ✓ As mobile telecommunication is a high technology industry, which is forever in the R&D mode, service blackouts or rather grey-outs can occur.
- ✓ Most of these events may not be intentional or attributed to the mobile service operators lack of nonperformance.
- ✓ As the demand for bandwidth continuously fluctuate throughout the day/night cycle, subscribers can shift some of their mobile activities specially related to data or internet to non peak hours like between 8 PM to 9AM.

Conclusions

The empirical analysis of smartphone brand preferences and customer satisfaction in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh, India, reveals several key insights:

Brand Preference and Loyalty: The study found that certain smartphone brands enjoy higher popularity and loyalty among consumers in the Rayalaseema region. Factors such as brand reputation, perceived quality, and past positive experiences significantly influence brand preference.

Price Sensitivity: Price remains a crucial factor in the decision-making process for many consumers. While premium brands are favored by a segment of the population, a significant portion of consumers prioritize affordability and value for money, leading to a strong market presence for mid-range and budget-friendly smartphones.

Feature Preferences: Consumers in Rayalaseema show a marked preference for smartphones with advanced features such as high-quality cameras, long battery life, and robust performance capabilities. The importance of these features varies across different demographic groups.

Customer Satisfaction: Overall customer satisfaction is closely linked to the perceived performance of the smartphone relative to its cost. Brands that deliver consistent quality and reliable after-sales service tend to achieve higher satisfaction levels.

Demographic Influences: Age, income, education, and occupation significantly influence smartphone preferences and satisfaction levels. Younger consumers and higher-income groups are more inclined towards premium features and brands, while older and lower-income groups tend to prioritize practicality and cost-effectiveness.

Market Trends: The study highlights a dynamic market with evolving consumer preferences. Technological advancements and the entry of new brands are continually reshaping consumer expectations and satisfaction metrics.

These overall conclusions underscore the importance for smartphone manufacturers and marketers to understand regional nuances and tailor their strategies accordingly. By focusing on the specific needs and preferences of consumers in the Rayalaseema region, brands can enhance customer satisfaction and build stronger market presence.

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