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A Study on Brand Awareness of Mobile Phones - with Reference to Specific Brands in Bangalore City, Karnataka, India

Sandhya. Ch. V. L.

Research Scholar, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

Dr. K. Rajesh Kumar

Professor & HOD, AMC Engineering College, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

Abstract:

In recent times consumers choose their favorable and familiar brands due to the rise in their consciousness. Consequently, the businesses in order to compete with others must create love for their brands in the minds of consumers. So, the purpose of this article is to identify the influence of Brand Awareness in Purchase intention with reference to mobile phones in Bangalore city, in this course a questionnaire was developed circulated among young adults, by hypothesizing that brand awareness has a high influence on purchase decisions. The testing of hypothesis was done using correlation and chi-square analysis. The study results say that brand awareness has definite positive influence on purchase decisions. even the results show that today's generation are ready to accept new brands if it satisfies their preferences.

Keywords: Brand Awareness, brands, customer Purchase Motives

1. Introduction

Business success is dependent of many factors; namely a realistic business idea, an outstanding business plan, a superior marketing strategy and great customer service. but all this depends on, to what extent the customer is aware of the product availability.

Thus, the first step apart to internal planning of the product for any business is to make its target customer group *to be aware of its product*, by the time customers reaches to search of alternatives in their purchase decision process.

The technical term for, level of understanding the availability of a particular product of a particular company by the customer, i.e., the state or condition of being aware; having knowledge; consciousness is called "*Awareness of a particular Brand*" Simplified as Brand Awareness.

Thus, Brand awareness is the likelihood that consumers recognize the existence and availability of a company's product or service. Brand awareness is the probability that consumers are familiar about the life and availability of the product. It is the degree to which consumers precisely associate the brand with the specific product.

2. Role of Brands

A customer reaching purchase decision and buying a product of his need without any awareness would end up in purchase in disguise, which may or may not give the desired or expected satisfaction. So, an expected behavior of customer could be an understanding of the options available in relation to their requirement.

Brands simplify consumers purchase decision. Over a period of time, consumers discover the brands which satisfy their need. If the consumers recognize a particular brand and have knowledge about it, they make quick purchase decision and save lot of time. Also, they save search costs for product. Consumers remain committed and loyal to a brand as long as they believe and have an implicit understanding that the brand will continue meeting their expectations and perform in the desired manner consistently. As long as the consumers get benefits and satisfaction from consumption of the product, they will more likely continue to buy that brand. Brands also play a crucial role in signifying certain product features to consumers.

3. Review of Literature

A literature review is a body of text that aims to review the critical points of current knowledge and or methodological approaches on a particular topic. Literature reviews are secondary sources and as such, do not report any new or original experimental work.

In the literature perspective, Assael (1994) explained that consumer behaviour as the process of perceiving and evaluating different components of a purchase. the individual consumer's needs, consciousness of brand characteristics and awareness to alternatives are of significance in the matter of decision-making

Kolter et al (2005) explained that the pre-purchase evaluation that consumers compare between different products and brands to make a purchasing decision.

Aaker (2000) revealed that brand awareness as a remarkably durable and sustainable asset. It provided a sense of familiarity for the product

Nandagopal and Chinnaiyan (2003) concluded that the level of awareness among the rural consumers about the brand of soft drinks was high which was indicated by the mode of purchase of the soft drinks by "Brand Name". The major source of brand awareness was word of mouth followed by advertisements, family members, relatives and friends.

Ramasamy et al (2005) indicated that, the buying behaviour is vastly influenced by brand awareness and attitude towards the product. Consumers do build opinion about a brand on the basis of which various product features play an important role in decision making process.

If an organization has a successful brand awareness it means that the products and services of the organization have a good reputation in the market and simply acceptable (Gustafson & Chabot, 2007). The awareness of the brand plays a significant role while purchasing a product or service and may have control on perceived risk evaluation of consumers and their level of assurance about the buying decision due to awareness with the brand and its uniqueness.

- Brand awareness is the probability that, consumers are familiar about the availability and accessibility of a company's product and service.

4. Statement of Problem

The world economy has undergone a radical transformation in the last two decades. The companies are emerging at the faster level. The technology and advances have permitted companies to widen substantially both the Markets and suppliers' sources. Now as companies are emerging with their new products, marketing has become exuberant activity in expanding the market globally. In today's competitive world there are many products coming up with similar features, which increases complexity in purchase decision of the customer. With increasing market tactics, it is becoming wide open to fraudulent practices and products too in the market. So, customer could be at higher risk for making perfect choice.

So, awareness of brand is an important concept for both customer as well as manufacturer. Though the ultimate selection choice is with customer, awareness of the product availability is with manufacturer. Brand knowledge is a key to evaluate in reaching the consumers.

Thus, this study helps to understand *how familiar are people with brands, how brands are facilitating customers what are the strong motives for going behind brands*

5. Objectives of the Study

When a brand presence is registered in the mind of consumers. The level of awareness can range from mere recognition to recall to top of mind to dominant. The companies are putting more effort to keep brand in consumer's memory. By making brand as strategy of their success.

Strong brands help build the corporate image and also by making it eager for the companies launch new brands. Today brands are treated, as major enduring assets of a company-more over brand equity are major contributor to customer equity. This all can happen only there is proper brand awareness.

Even Brand awareness also satisfies a need of the consumer. A consumer as aims, ambitions, motivation drives and desire. Consumer feels more powerful when he uses the brand. Satisfaction or preference for a brand shows how loyal the consumer is likely to be brand. Now a day's consumers are experience with brand awareness for different product, where the consumers' expectations levels are increased towards brand, product etc....

5.1. Objectives of the Study

I) To study brand awareness with respect to a mobile phone companies.

→ Sub-Objectives

- 1) To know the top brands preferred by customers among the various available.
- 2) To know the awareness level of various mobile phone brands
- 3) To know the effectiveness of the available media

II) To know the various criteria for choosing particular brand.

→ Sub-Objectives

- 1) To find the factors like Brand Name, Safety, Comfort, Price, Maintenance, quality, service etc., that influencing the buying behavior of customers while choosing a particular mobile phone brand

III) To analyze the expectations of the customers.

IV) To know the opinion about the mobile phone brands.

v) To know the impact of brand awareness in sales improvement of the mobile phones.

- Scope:



Figure 1

As the number of products are increasing parallel no. of brands do increase in every segment of product, so for better understanding the said topic Mobile sector is considered which is a booming sector in India.

After the government of India announced National Telecom Policy in 1994 to allow Private players, mobile industry held ground way back in 1995 with only few subscribers. It's the time where it is an item of luxury but not a necessity.

But over a period of time the no. of mobile users and no. of mobile providers have increased, apart from mobile phone manufactures, the industry has also seen the growth of mobile phone carriers, mobile phone application developers, mobile phone content providers and so on.

Thus, to understand the role of brands in detail the study would focus on leading mobile companies, with majority mobile age group of 20-40 years, in Bangalore limits.

5.2. Hypothesis

In support of the above objectives the following hypothesis are developed

- H1: Customers prefer the Mobiles out of top brands.
- H2: Significant proportions of the customers are aware the Mobile brands in detail
- H3: Promotional tools are effective in intensifying awareness of Mobile brands
- H4: Awareness of product attributes is giving scope for brand Proliferation
- H5: The attitude of customers for trying new brands is positive

6. Research Methodology

The methodology explains research approach and design considered for current study. As the methodology is subject to offer connection between research problem and the procedure by which this problem can be analyzed. This section has been categorized under two distinctive parts, implication of types of data and the method of the research.

Here the descriptive research design with survey research method is considered. As descriptive approach illustrates the ideologies of population and never stands as any literary approach, but offers concrete and concise illustration about originality. So, for the concerned study, descriptive approach was considered as justified research design. And the survey was done through structured Questionnaire for a sample of 90 young adults between age group of 20-40, students from two management colleges of Bangalore city.

7. Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of identifying trends, patterns and insights in the surveyed data in relation to proposed title. So, the data collected through questionnaire is segregated, tabulated, calculated and analyzed for testing the hypothesis developed. And the major tools used here are percentage analysis, correlation and chi-square.

- H1: Customers prefer the Mobiles out of top brands.

Mobile sector is booming with so many competitors entering into today's market with many options, variations and features. But if observe the analysis of sample though the no of brands is increasing the preference is always there with top brands. The level and intensity of awareness programs is more with top brands, and analyzed results also show that top brands are successful in reaching the customers.

Table showing holding brands of respondents and their preferred (Favorite) brands and listed top brands of respondents.

Bands	purchased brands	Preferred brands	Ranking of top brands			top brand wtd ranking	purchased brand ranking
Samsung	39	31	38	24	18	1	1
Apple	17	32	23	6		2	3
Sony	8	7	13	5	7	4	4
HTC	13	13	16	12	42	3	2
LG	3			8	4	6	7
Micro Max	2			16	14	7	5
Black berry	1					8	8
Others	7	7		19	5	5	6

Table 1

- The degree of correlation between purchased brands and top brands observed highly positive with 0.904 level of association.
- The degree of correlation between purchased brands and preferred brands observed moderately positive with 0.76 level of association.

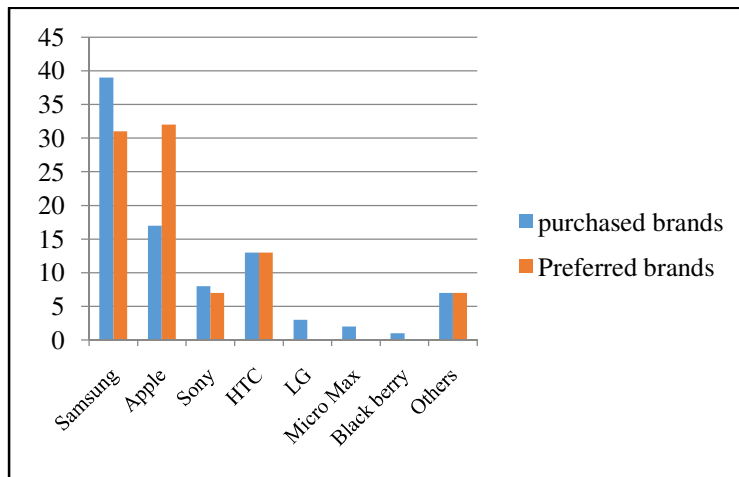


Figure 2

Application of spearman’s Rank correlation by using ordinal rank numbers with 1 for the individual observation ranked first; 2 for the observation ranked second and so on, and mathematical calculation resulted that the degree of correlation between purchased brands and top brands observed highly positive with 0.904 level of association. Which says that most of the mobiles purchased by the respondents is from top three brands listed by the respondents.

The degree of correlation between purchased brands and Preferred brands observed moderately positive with 0.76 level of association, which says that customers try to opt maximum for their favorite brands because of the level of awareness they had towards the brands attributes which observed through analyzed data stating that around 68% of customer get detailed information about the mobile and its brand, and their purchase is also based on awareness of these attributes.

➤ H2: Significant proportion of the customers are aware the brands in detail

Level of awareness	respondents	percentage
Spontaneous brand recall	36	40%
top of mind brand recall	27	30%
aided brand recall	18	20%
rare brand recall	9	10%

Table 2

The level of awareness among the customers could be identified based on the attributes they are clear, basing on which, their preference and purchase decisions are considered and the level of awareness is observed through their emotional link with the brand. This is observing through level of correlation of attributes between their preference and purchase, and emotional link with brands.

Attributes	Preferred	Purchase
Design	32	3
price	31	46
Quality	22	33
Support	5	8
others		

Table 3

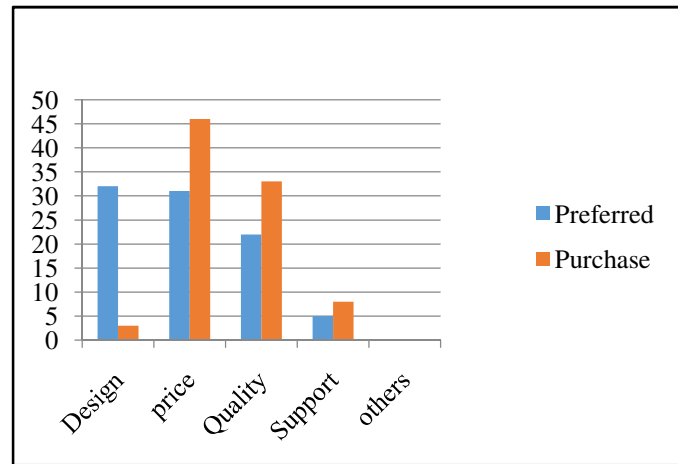


Figure 3

The calculated, level of correlation between preferred attributes to that of purchased attributes is positive but relatively the level of correlation is very low at 0.343079, which says their customers are clear with attributes of different brands and depending upon their suitability and requirements decisions would be considered, however the level of awareness is around 90% relatively in comparison of rare recall of 10%

➤ H3: Promotional tools are effective in intensifying awareness of Mobile brands

The success of a company depends on how effectively the company is able to place its product in its customers’ mind. That is., “Brand awareness is the probability that, consumers are familiar about the availability and accessibility of a company’s product and service.” So, it is obvious that every company has promotional tools, and in case of mobile brands it is well proved that 58% of respondents are aware of the product through promotional tools like advertising and website were others through experience of friends and relatives. And more than 68% of respondents are able to gather in detail information about the product of their preference and affordability. So, it is true that mobile brands are effective in intensifying awareness of Mobile brands.

➤ H4: Awareness of product attributes is giving scope for brand Proliferation

When the word proliferation starts, the basic intention of brand would survive as it is the main purpose of branding i.e., to protect their life cycle by shifting the focus of the customer from one product to other in same product line. However, the respondents partially support this by saying the level of their awareness and interest in getting the new gadget of the same brand is above 60%. and analysis is done by considering total mobile brands that are held by respondents and their level of relation with attributes of brand.

brands	presently holding brands	ranking
Samsung	96	1
Apple	68	2
Sony	21	6
HTC	42	3
LG	35	4
Micro Max	20	7
Black berry	29	5
others	17	

Table 4

Relative Ranking	Price	Quality	Design	Service	Brand
Samsung	4	2	2	2	1
Apple	5	1	1	3	2
Sony	7	3	6	6	5
HTC	1.5	4	4.5	4	4
LG	3	5	3	7	3
Micro Max	1.5	6	4.5	1	6
Black berry	6	7	7	5	7

Table 5

Here we are correlating presently respondents holding brands with various attribute of mobiles to identify the relationship with purchase decision and each of the attribute.

Criteria	Level of Correlation
Purchase and Price	0.0360375
Purchase and Quality	0.67857143
Purchase and Design	0.72074997
Purchase and Service	0.14285714
Purchase and Brand	0.85714286

Table 6

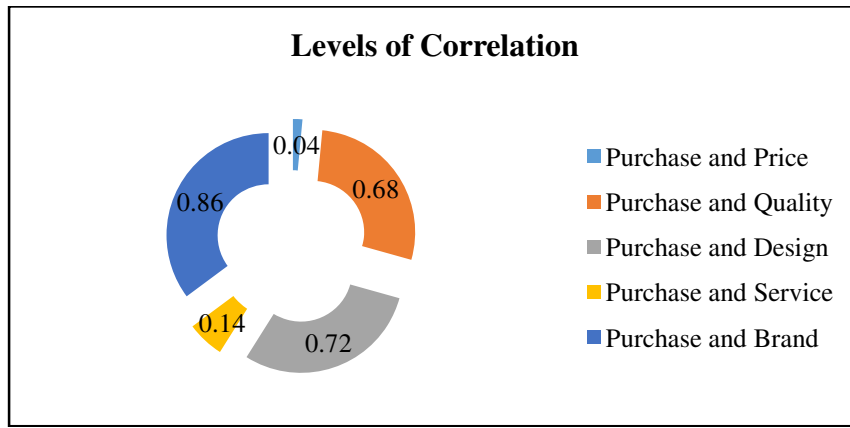


Figure 4

The above analysis clearly states the relation between purchase and various attributes and it could be clearly identified that the level of relation between purchase and brand image is relatively high at 0.86, followed by next purchase and design at 0.72, next quality, service and last price.

So, attributes ranking in relation to respondent's requirement is first with brands, then design, quality, service and price.

s.no	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
1	67	77	-10	100	1.306053
2	63	77	-14	196	2.559864
3	56	59	-3	9	0.153651
4	74	68	6	36	0.532777
5	68	63	5	25	0.395742
6	74	63	11	121	1.921474
7	56	53	3	9	0.171177
8	79	77	2	4	0.05179
9	87	77	10	100	1.294745
10	65	59	6	36	0.609282
11	65	68	-3	9	0.132041
12	62	64	-2	4	0.062771
13	54	64	-10	100	1.574246
14	50	53	-3	9	0.169695
15	86	76	10	100	1.314664
16	88	76	12	144	1.893117
17	56	58	-2	4	0.068739
18	58	67	-9	81	1.206652
19	59	63	-4	16	0.254945
20	58	63	-5	25	0.399616
21	50	52	-2	4	0.07658
22	75	80	-5	25	0.314166
23	74	80	-6	36	0.452399
24	58	61	-3	9	0.14784
25	74	70	4	16	0.227836
26	56	66	-10	100	1.523109
27	76	65	11	121	1.848813
28	63	51	12	144	2.850881
29	76	74	2	4	0.054379
30	71	74	-3	9	0.122353
31	58	56	2	4	0.071083
32	67	65	2	4	0.061619
33	71	61	10	100	1.647727
34	53	60	-7	49	0.809949
35	44	51	-7	49	0.970092
					27.25187

Table 7

Chi-Square is considered for understanding the level of impact on brand proliferation due to attributes of a particular product shown through brand. Even the above correlation shows levels of relationship of selected five attribute on overall purchase of mobiles by respondents. So, the calculated value of Chi-square is compared with tabulated value at (7-1) (5-1) degrees of freedom which is

Tabulated value of chi-square at 24 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of Confidence is 36.415
 Calculated value of Chi Square is 27.251

$36.415 > 27.251$
 Tabulated value > calculated
 Hypothesis accepted

➤ H5: The attitude of customers for trying new brands is positive

As stated in the hypothesis attitude of customers for trying new brands is positive, were 56% of the respondents were ready to change or try with the new brand if it possesses the required features and within the budget, and this is justified by calculating the degree of relation between the brands they already purchased and the brands they want to purchase in next buy. the relative correlation is moderately positive with 0.0665 which says that present brand preference would be there at the same time respondents are even ready to accept new brands too. This hypothesis was further justified when respondents were asked brand preference for Tab purchase were 38% went around new brand.

Brands	Present Purchase	Future Purchase
Samsung	39	24
Apple	17	7
Sony	8	12
HTC	13	26
LG	3	4
Micro Max	2	6
Black berry	1	-
others	7	11

Table 8

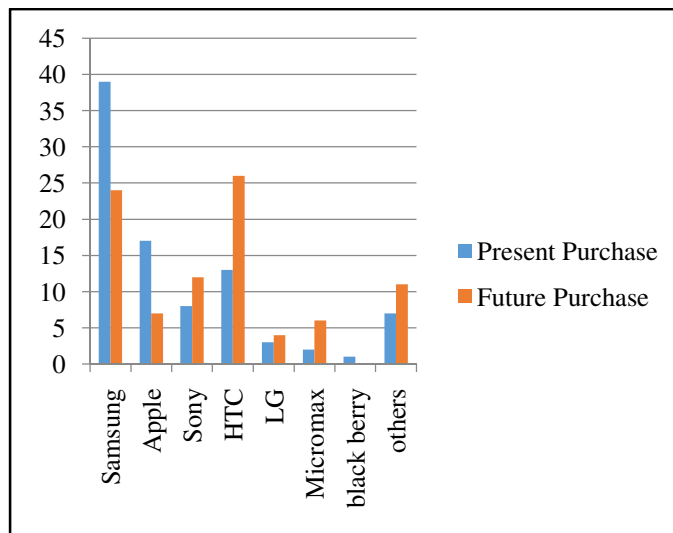


Figure 5

The above analysis says that, customers would always open to new products but at the same time they do have preference of well-established branded products.

8. Findings and Conclusions

The marketing scenario in India is undergoing a sea change in tune with the new trends and developments in the field of global business and economic situations. Globalization has brought about a situation where competition is very intense with the entry of multinational companies, global convergence of consumer's brand preference, global branding and advertising and increased practice of cross boarder buying and selling. Indian market started flooding with numerous brands of different kinds of products. Customers became more quality conscious and price sensitive as they are now exposed to international marketing conditions and opportunities.

They started expecting additional benefits and values from the products they are willing to buy. When it comes in specific findings, those are:

- Majority (above 68%) of customers are aware of the products in detail, even we could identify their preferred feature of a particular product, they do have clear information about other brand products too.
- Changing trend of customers is to demand for more value benefits to what they pay, because of which around 54% of the respondents were ready to go with new brands with their preferred features.
- Earlier Price was one of the important determinant of sale but when analyzed the level of relation between attribute, it direct that customer do give much priority to the brand design and service.
- Customers now try to correlate between the price, quality, design and service because of which some brands take their position in top three irrespective to high price.
- Brand awareness through various promotional tools is observed to quite effective. in reaching target groups.

Branding has become so strong that today hardly anything goes unbranded irrespective to the product (whether it is big or small) and even branding helps buyers in many ways. Brand name helps the consumer to identify products that might benefit them, and for familiarizing brand name advertisements play key role. Brands also tell the buyer something about the product quality. Buyers who always buy the same brand know that they will get same features, benefits, and quality each time they buy. In this way, it is found that a powerful brand has high brand equity, higher brand loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, strong brand associations and other assets such as patents, trademarks and channel relationship.

- “When one holds any branded mobile then they automatically feel a sense of satisfaction, a sense of pride in them.” –feeling they had strong brand association.

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