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UTILIZATION BEHAVIOUR OF CUSTOMERS TOWARDS MOBILE PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Mobile phone is a wonderful gift of science. Mobile phones have received overwhelming response from all across the world. The latest mobile has many more facilities. It has a music system, video game, recorder, speaker, camera and even internet facility available in it. The present study is undertaken to understand the utilization behaviour of customers towards mobile phone service providers in Salem District. The utilization behaviour are measured in terms of average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage has been examined by analyzing the relativity of average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage with the factors like number of SIM cards used, type of SIM cards used and model of mobile phone used. To undertake this study a structured questionnaire was developed to collect the required primary data from the 450 customers. It is observed from the analysis that there exists a significant relationship between model of mobile phone used by the customers and the average monthly expenses spent by them on mobile phone usage. From the above analysis it is concluded that the respondents in Salem City are very well aware of the mobile phones.

KEYWORDS

utilization behaviour, mobile phone, service quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile phones have received overwhelming response from all across the world. A mobile user can use it as a recorder. It is of great facility to the media persons. The utilization behaviour of the sample respondents towards the mobile phone service provider has been analyzed in two different views, viz., on the basis of average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage and the frequency of usage of various functions / services of mobile phone service providers. The utilization behaviour are measured in terms of average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage has been examined by analyzing the relativity of average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage with the factors like number of SIM cards used, type of SIM cards used and model of mobile phone used.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chow, Chen, Yeow and Wong (2012), based on the extensive literature review the authors proposed four major factors – product features, social influence, price and brand name which affects the demand of Smart Phones among consumers.

Subramanyam and Venkateswarlu (2012) conducted a study on factors influencing buyer behavior of mobile phone buyers in Kadapa district in India. The researchers studied the various types of marketing strategies adopted by market to acquire the attention and cognition of both existing and potential customers, and to study what role these marketing strategies play in consumer buying process. According to the results, income, advertising and level of education in a family are the determining factors of owning a mobile phone set.

Malasi (2012) examined the influence of product attributes on mobile phone preference among undergraduate university students in Kenya. The study indicated that varying the product attributes' has an influence on the undergraduate students' preferences on mobile phones. Various aspects of product and brand attributes were considered such as color themes, visible name labels, and mobile phone with variety of models, packaging for safety, degree of awareness on safety issues, look and design of the phone

Malviya, Saluja, & Thakur (2013) in their study in Indore city, India the authors quoted that Product Features, Price, Brand Name and Social Influence are the major factors which affect consumer decisions while purchasing a Smart phone.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Recently the use of mobile phone is wide spread in our society. Today more than 1.5 billion people are using mobile phones worldwide in which high frequency waves are used and this number is ever increasing. Mobile phone markets are becoming more efficient but reality is that a great risk and uncertainty remains with user. A lot of brands of Mobile phone are available in the market. But the customer prefers a particular brand of mobile phone. In the modern business world, due to the development of science and technology, many new brands have been introduced in the market every year.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the utilization behaviour of customers towards mobile phone service providers.
2. To offer suggestions to improve the services.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is mainly based on the primary data obtained from 450 sample respondents selected from the mobile phone service providers in Salem District under convenience sampling method. The data required for the study have been obtained from the sample respondents by administering a structured questionnaire. The data obtained for the present study have been analyzed by using Chi square test.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**NUMBER OF SIM CARDS USED AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES ON MOBILE PHONE USAGE**

In order to understand the relationship between the number of SIM cards used and the average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage, the following hypotheses have been framed and tested using Chi Square test:

Null Hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant association between number of SIM cards used and average monthly mobile phone expenses.

Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : There is a significant association between number of SIM cards used and average monthly mobile phone expenses.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF SIM CARDS USED AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES

| No. of SIM cards | Frequency | Up to Rs.500 (Low users) | Rs.501 to Rs.1000 (Medium users) | Rs.1001 to Rs.1500 (High users) | Total |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| One | Observed | 168 | 7 | 1 | 176 |
| | Expected | 161.5 | 12.9 | 1.6 | 176 |
| Two | Observed | 218 | 21 | 3 | 242 |
| | Expected | 222.1 | 17.7 | 2.2 | 242 |
| Three | Observed | 18 | 1 | 0 | 19 |
| | Expected | 17.4 | 1.4 | 0.2 | 19 |
| More than three | Observed | 9 | 4 | 0 | 13 |
| | Expected | 11.9 | 1 | 0.1 | 13 |
| | Total | 413 | 33 | 4 | 450 |

Table 1 depicts the observed and expected frequencies of the sample respondents on the basis of number of SIM cards used and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage. For the purpose, the customers who have spent up to Rs.500 per month on mobile phone usage have been classified as low users; those who have spent Rs.501 to Rs.1000 as average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage have been regarded as medium users and the customers who have spent between Rs.1001 and Rs.1500 have been considered as the high users.

From the Table 1, it is evident that out of 413 low users, 168 respondents have been using one SIM card only while 218 respondents have been using two SIM cards and 18 respondents have been using three SIM cards. It was found that 9 respondents of low user category have been using more than three SIM cards.

Among 33 medium users, 7 respondents have been using one SIM card only whereas 21 respondents have been using two SIM cards, one respondent each have been using three SIM cards and more than three SIM cards respectively. Out of 4 high users, 1 of them has been using one SIM card only and 3 respondents have been using two SIM cards. None of the respondents of this category has been using more than two SIM cards.

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF SIM CARDS USED AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES – CHI SQUARE TEST

| Factor | Chi square value | DF | p value | Result |
|-----------------------|------------------|----|---------|------------------|
| No. of SIM cards used | 15.043 | 6 | 0.02 | Significant @ 5% |

Table 2 reveals that the computed value of chi square measuring the relationship between number of SIM cards and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage was found to be 15.043 while the degrees of freedom was 6 and the p value was 0.02. Since the p value was less than 0.05 (P<0.05), it falls in the rejection region. Hence, the null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternative hypothesis has been accepted. The hypothesis that ‘there is no significant association between number of SIM cards and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage’ does not hold good. It could thus be concluded that the usage of mobile phone by the customers varied significantly according to the number of SIM cards used.

TYPE OF SIM CARD AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES ON MOBILE PHONE USAGE

The following hypotheses have been framed and tested with a view to examine the association between type of SIM cards used and average monthly mobile phone expenses by using Chi Square test:

Null Hypothesis H₀: There is no significant association between type of SIM cards used and average monthly mobile phone expenses.

Alternative Hypothesis H₁: There is a significant association between type of SIM cards used and average monthly mobile phone expenses.

TABLE 3: TYPE OF SIM CARD AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES

| Type of SIM card | Frequency | Up to Rs.500 (Low users) | Rs.501 to Rs.1000 (Medium users) | Rs.1001 to Rs.1500 (High users) | Total |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| Normal | Observed | 272 | 19 | 2 | 293 |
| | Expected | 268.9 | 21.5 | 2.6 | 293 |
| Micro | Observed | 103 | 9 | 0 | 112 |
| | Expected | 102.8 | 8.2 | 1 | 112 |
| Both | Observed | 38 | 5 | 2 | 45 |
| | Expected | 41.3 | 3.3 | 0.4 | 45 |
| | Total | 413 | 33 | 4 | 450 |

The observed and expected frequencies of sample respondents in accordance with the type of SIM cards used and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage have been furnished in the Table 3. It elucidates that out of 413 low users, 272 of them have using normal SIM cards while 103 respondents have been using micro SIM cards and 38 respondents have been using both the normal and the micro SIM cards.

Among 33 respondents who have been spending Rs.501 to Rs.1000 (medium users), 19 of them have been using normal cards whereas 9 respondents of medium user category have been using micro SIM cards and 5 of them have been using both the normal and micro SIM cards.

It is understood that out of 4 respondents in the high user category, 2 of them have been using normal SIM cards and another 2 of them have been using both the normal as well as micro SIM cards.

TABLE 4: TYPE OF SIM CARD AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES – CHI SQUARE TEST

| Factor | Chi square value | DF | p value | Result |
|-----------------------|------------------|----|---------|-----------------|
| Type of SIM card used | 9.074 | 4 | 0.059 | Not significant |

Table 4 portrays that the computed value of chi square measuring the relationship between type of SIM cards and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage was found to be 9.074 while the degrees of freedom was 4 and the p value was 0.059. Since the p value was greater than 0.05 (P>0.05), it falls in the acceptance region. Hence, the null hypothesis has been accepted. The hypothesis that ‘there is no significant association between type of SIM cards and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage’ holds good. It could thus be concluded that the usage of mobile phone by the customers did not vary significantly according to the type of SIM cards used.

MODEL OF MOBILE PHONE USED AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES ON MOBILE PHONE USAGE

An attempt has been made in this study to test the relationship between model of mobile phone used and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage by framing and examining the following hypotheses by employing Chi Square test:

Null Hypothesis H₀: There is no significant relationship between mobile phone model and average monthly mobile phone expenses.

Alternative Hypothesis H₁: There is a significant relationship between mobile phone model and average monthly mobile phone expenses.

TABLE 5: MODEL OF MOBILE PHONE AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES

| Model of mobile phone used | Frequency | Up to Rs.500 (Low users) | Rs.501 to Rs.1000 (Medium users) | Rs.1001 to Rs.1500 (High users) | Total |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| Basic Model | Observed | 161 | 10 | 1 | 172 |
| | Expected | 157.9 | 12.6 | 1.5 | 172 |
| Smart Phone | Observed | 242 | 19 | 3 | 264 |
| | Expected | 242.3 | 19.4 | 2.3 | 264 |
| i-phone | Observed | 7 | 4 | 0 | 11 |
| | Expected | 10.1 | 0.8 | 0.1 | 11 |
| Others | Observed | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| | Expected | 2.8 | 0.2 | 0 | 3 |
| | Total | 413 | 33 | 4 | 450 |

According to the Table 5, out of 413 low users, 161 have been using basic model mobile phone while 242 respondents have been using smart phones and 7 of them have been using i-phones. The other model phones have been used by 3 respondents of this category. Among 33 respondents regarded as medium users, 10 of them have been using basic model mobile phones whereas 19 respondents of this category have been using smart phones and 4 respondents have been using i-phones. None of the respondents in this category has been using other models of mobile phones. It is realized that out of 4 respondents of high user category 1 of them has been using basic model mobile phone while 3 of them have been using smart phones and none of them has been using i-phones and other models.

TABLE 6: MODEL OF MOBILE PHONE AND AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES - CHI SQUARE TEST

| Factor | Chi square value | DF | p value | Result |
|-----------------------|------------------|----|---------|------------------|
| Model of mobile phone | 14.933 | 6 | 0.021 | Significant @ 5% |

Table 6 proclaims that the computed value of chi square measuring the relationship between model of mobile phone and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage was found to be 14.933 while the degrees of freedom was 6 and the p value was 0.021. Since the p value was less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$), it falls in the rejection region. Hence, the null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternative hypothesis has been accepted. The hypothesis that 'there is no significant association between model of mobile phone and average monthly expenses on mobile phone usage' does not hold good. It could thus be concluded that the usage of mobile phone by the customers varied significantly according to the model of mobile phone used.

7. FINDINGS

1. It is found that there is a significant relationship between number of SIM cards and average monthly expenses spent on mobile phone usage. It denotes that the average monthly expenses spent by customers on mobile phone usage are dependent on the number of SIM cards used by them.
2. Type of SIM cards used and monthly expenses spent on mobile phone usage are not found to be significantly related. It reveals that the average monthly expenses spent by customers on mobile phone usage are not dependent on the type of SIM cards used.
3. It is observed from the analysis that there exists a significant relationship between model of mobile phone used by the customers and the average monthly expenses spent by them on mobile phone usage. It implies that the average monthly expenses spent by customers on mobile phone usage have been affected by the model of mobile phone used by them.

8. SUGGESTIONS

- More number of new models should be introduced to attract more mobile phone sales.
- Youngsters are those who prefer new models and change their mobile frequently in order to cope with the fashion. Therefore, new models should frequently be introduced to meet the requirements of the youngsters.
- Maintenance of the server and processor should be done then and there to avoid most of the problems encountered by customers.
- Mobile phones of different models with multi-function facility should be introduced to target the middle class people.

9. CONCLUSION

To satisfy the customers the producer must clearly understand their attitudes, needs and expectations. From the above analysis it is concluded that the respondents in Salem City are very well aware of the mobile phones. This generation of producers is intelligent with regard to the application of procedures. They first want to find out what the customers want. They realize that only such products could be sold to the satisfaction of the users, utilization behavior and at a profit to the maker.

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