A STUDY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR WITH REFERENCE TO MOBILE PHONES IN SAMINATTHAM PANCHAYAT , SIVAKASI BLOCK , TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

Consumer behavior is the act of individuals directly involved in obtaining and using economic goods and services, including the decision processes that precede and determine this act.

Cell phone was developed in 1979. In India it was introduced in 1994. But it becomes familiar only in the beginning of year 2000. Now cell phone users are scattered over the world. One fifth of Indians are using cell phone. It is a very fast point to point communication. It helps one to send and receive information anytime and anywhere. The effective and efficient usage of cell phone largely depends upon the attitude of cell phone users and growth of this communication sector depends on the cell phone service providers. Cell phone users meet many problems. Problems pertaining to buying a cell phone, choosing an activation card, tower problem, variety of schemes, recharge coupons, roaming and optimum use of cell phone facilities are some of the vital issues of the cell phone users. So the researcher made sincere attempt to analyse the consumer behavior of mobile phones in the study area.

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INTRODUCTION

Cell phone was developed in 1979. In India it was introduced in 1994. But it becomes familiar only in the beginning of year 2000. Now cell phone users are scattered over the world. One fifth of Indians are using cell phone. It is a very fast point to point communication. It helps one to send and receive information any time and any where. The effective and efficient usage of cell phone largely depends upon the attitude of cell phone users and growth of this communication sector depends on the cell phone service providers.

Cell phone users meet many problems. Problems pertaining to buying a cell phone, choosing an activation card, tower problem, variety of schemes, recharge coupons, roaming and optimum use of cell phone facilities are some of the vital issues of the cell phone users.

Cell phone plays a predominant role in the modern life because cell phones are used by all levels of people. A day may come; where in, number of cell phone users may be greater than number of telephone users.

SCOPE AND PERIOD OF THE STUDY

The present study confines to Saminattham Panchayat of Sivakasi block, Virudhunagar District of Tamilnadu. The study was carried out during the month of October 2011.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Identify the most popular brand of mobile phones in Saminattham Panchayat.
2. Provide a clear insight on the attitude of the cell phone users.
3. Bring out the main purposes of using mobile phones.

HYPOTHESES

Based on the objectives of the study the following hypotheses have been framed.

1. There exists relationship between sex of the respondents and the impact of advertisement on mobile phone brand selection.
2. There exists a relationship between the income of the respondents and the impact of advertisement of mobile phone brand selection.

SAMPLING DESIGN

The Saminattham Panchayat consists of four stratas of villages namely Saminattham, S.Pudupatti, Arunachalapuram and Mannukkumeendanpatti. From each village 10 respondents are interviewed for the study. Thus in total 40 respondents were selected for the study.

TOOL USED

Statistical tools used in the present paper are:

- ☑ Percentage Analysis
- ☑ Chi – Square test and
- ☑ Scaling Technique

Sex wise Classification

Among the total number of 40 respondents majority of them are (75 percent) males and the remaining (25 percent) females. The Table 1 furnishes the sex – wise classification of the respondents.

Table: 1

Sex – wise classification

S.No	Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Male	30	75
2.	Female	10	25
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Educational status

The survey gathers information regarding the educational status of the respondents of the sample force. Of them 5% is illiterate. Of the others 35% of the have studied up to secondary level; 17.5% - Higher secondary level; 25% Degree holder; 15% - Post Graduates and the remaining 2.5% of them are technically qualified. Refer Table 2

Table: 2

Educational Status

S.No	Status	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Illiterate	2	5
2.	Secondary	14	35
3.	Higher Secondary	7	17.5
4.	Graduate	10	25
5.	Post Graduate	6	15
6.	Technical	1	2.5
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Occupational details

The survey brings to light the details regarding the occupation of the respondents. Out of 40 respondents, 35% of users are Employees; 30% - students; 15% - Business man; 10% - Professionals and rest of them (10%) are Housewives. Table 3 indicates this state of affairs

Table: 3

Details of Occupation

S.No	Status	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Employees	14	35
2.	Students	12	30
3.	Business man	6	15
4.	Profession	4	10
5.	Housewives	4	10
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Income – wise classification

The survey throws light on the earnings of the family. Out of 40 respondents, 25% of the respondents had the family income of less than Rs.3000; 40% - Rs.3000 to Rs.6000; 20% - Rs.6001 to Rs.9000 and 15% of the respondents and the family income of more than Rs.9000. Table 4 is evidence to this phenomenon.

Table: 4

Monthly income

S.No	Sex	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Less than Rs.300	10	25
2.	Rs.3000 to Rs.6000	16	40
3.	Rs.6001 – Rs.9000	8	20
4.	Above Rs.9000	6	15
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Sex – wise classification

Sex – wise classification of the respondents who were motivated by the advertisement is shown in table 5. It could be inferred that out of the 30 male respondents 20 respondents were motivated after seeing the advertisement to purchase a particular brand of mobile phone. Remaining interviewees were not so. Out of 10 female respondents, only 6 of them were motivated. Refer table 5

Table: 5

Sex of the respondents and the impact of advertisement on brand selection

S.No	Sex	Number of respondents		Total
		Motivated by advertisement	Not motivated by Advertisement	
1.	Male	20	10	30
2.	Female	6	4	10
	Total	26	14	40

Source: Primary data

Chi – Square test is applied to test the hypothesis :There exists a relationship between sex of the respondents and the impact of advertisement on mobile brand selection.

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$$

Table: 6

O	E	O – E	$(O - E)^2$	$(O - E)^2 / E$
20	19.5	0.5	0.25	0.013
10	10.5	-0.5	0.25	0.024
6	6.5	-0.5	0.25	0.038
4	3.5	0.5	0.25	0.071
			$\frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$	**0.146**

Calculated value at 1 degrees of freedom = 0.146. Table value for 1 degree of freedom at 5 percent level of significance is 3.841. Since, calculate value (0.146) is less than the table value. the hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it could be concluded that there exists a relationship between the sex of the respondents and the impact of advertisement on mobile phone brand selection.

Income wise classification

Table 7 shows the income – wise classification of the respondents and the impact of advertisement on brand preference of mobile phone. Out 40 respondents, 26 of them were motivated by seeing the advertisement to purchase particular brand of mobile phone and the remaining 14 interviews are not motivated. See details in Table No 7

Table 7

Income of the Respondents and the impact on brand selection on mobile phone

S.No	Sex	Number of respondents		Total
		Motivated by advertisement	Not motivated by Advertisement	
1.	Less than Rs.300	6	4	10
2.	Rs.3000 to Rs.6000	11	5	16
3.	Rs.6001 – Rs.9000	5	3	8
4.	Above Rs.9000	4	2	6
		26	14	40

Source: Primary data

In order to test the hypothesis, "there exist relationship between the income of the respondents and the impact of advertisement on mobile phone brand selection", Chi – Square value was computed.

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$$

Table 8

O	E	O – E	(O –E)^2	(O –E)^2 / E
6	6.5	-0.5	0.25	0.038
4	3.5	0.5	0.25	0.071
11	10.4	0.6	0.36	0.035
5	5.6	-0.6	0.36	0.064
5	5.2	-0.2	0.04	0.008
3	2.8	0.2	0.04	0.014
4	3.9	0.1	0.01	0.003
2	2.1	-0.1	0.01	0.05
$\frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$				0.238

Calculated value at 3 degrees of freedom is 0.238. Table value for 3 degrees of freedom at 5 percent level of significance 7.81. Since, calculated value (0.238) is less than the table value, the hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it could be concluded that there exists a relationship between the income of the respondents and the impact of advertisement on selection of mobile phones brands.

Ownership of number of mobile phones

The study has also brought out the details about the number of mobile phones owned by the respondents. Out of 40 respondents, 85% of them have one mobile phone and 15% of the users have two mobile phones. Table 9 displays the number of mobile phones at the disposal of the respondents.

Table: 9

Number of Mobile phone

S.No	Number of mobile phones	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	One	34	85
2.	Two	6	15
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Purchase of mobile phones

The survey also identified the sources of purchase of cell phones. It reveals that 80% of the respondents have purchased cell phones from the town shops, where as the remaining 20% of them purchased from the city shop. No one has purchased from the local village shop. Of course there is no such village shop available for the rural consumers. Refer Table 10.

Table: 10

Sources of Purchase

S.No	Source	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Village shop	-	-
2.	Town shop	32	80
3.	City shop	8	20
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Brand of Mobile phone

The researcher further brought out the cell phone brands preferred by the rural consumers. Vodafone constitutes 40% of the respondents; Airtel – 30%; BSNL – 15%; Aircel – 7.5%; Reliance – 10% and Tata – indicom accounting for the remaining one respondent. These details are presented in Table 11.

Table: 11

Brand preference

S.No	Brand name	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Vodafone	16	40
2.	Airtel	12	30
3.	BSNL	6	15
4.	Aircel	3	7.5
5.	Reliance	2	5
6.	Tata – indicom	1	2.5
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Reasons for preference of brad

The researcher further probed the actual reasons, those have motivated the rural consumers in choosing a particular brand of mobile phone. It brings to sharp focus that, coverage aspects constitute 35% of the respondents, low cost – 20%; convenience in handling – 15%; small recharge vouchers – 15% E-recharge facility – 10% and after sales service covering 5%. The resultant particulars are presented in Table 12.

Table: 12

Reasons for Brand Selection

S.No	Reasons	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Coverage	14	35
2.	Low cost	8	20
3.	Convenience in handling	6	15
4.	Small Recharge vouchers	6	15
5.	E- recharge facility	4	10
6.	After sales service	2	5

	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Source of awareness

The study also carries out an indepth enquiry about the sources, those have created awareness of brand identity. This survey makes it clear that 26% of the interviews are influenced by advertisement; 12.5% - Friends; 10% - Relatives; 7.5% - Shopkeepers and neighbors associated with 5% of the sample element. The relevant particulars are presented in Table 1.13. Moreover T advertisement plays a dominant role among other medias. Table 13 reveals those details.

Table: 13

Source of Awareness

S.No	Motivation factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Advertisement	26	65
2.	Friends	5	12.5
3.	Relatives	4	10
4.	Shopkeepers	3	7.5
5.	Neighbours	2	5
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Preference of black and white / colour sets

The survey also identified the preference of black and white mobile (or) colour mobile. Out of 40 respondents, 80% of them preferred colour mobiles and 20% of the users prefer black and white mobile. Table 14 indicates this state of affairs.

Table: 14

Preference of Sets

S.No	Source	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Colour mobile	32	80
2.	Black and White	8	20
Total		40	100

Source: Primary data

Intention to go for advanced version

Of the total 40 respondents 70% of them are interested to go for improved models. Others are not interested. Of the interested respondents, 50% of them are motivated by Entertainment value; 22% - No heavy price; 14% - Interest facility and the remaining 14% of the respondents motivated by status symbol. These data are presented in Table 15.

Table :15

Intention to go for Advance version

S.No	Advanced version	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Entertainment value	14	50
2.	No heavy price	6	22
3.	Internet facility	4	14
4.	Status symbol	4	14
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Purchase decision

The survey gathered information from the respondents regarding the purchase decision. Of the sample force in 55% of the cases, decisions are taken by themselves; 25% - Friends; 15% - Elders and the remaining 5% constitute collective decision. Refer Table 16.

Table 16

Purchase decision

S.No	Purchase decision	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Own accord	22	55
2.	Friends	10	25
3.	Elders	6	15
4.	Collective Decision	2	5
	Total	40	100

Source: Primary data

Reasons for prepaid usage

Of the total respondents 80% of them have prepaid mobile phone users. Others are post paid mobile phone users. Of the prepaid mobile phone users 56.25% of them use prepaid to control the amount; 31.25% lengthy incoming and the remaining 12.5% of the respondents used due to restriction in talking. Table 17 is an evident to this phenomenon.

Table: 17

Reason for prepaid usage

S.No	Reasons	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
1.	Control of Amount	18	56.25
2.	Lengthy incoming	10	31.25
3.	Restriction in talking	4	12.5
	Total	40	100

Findings

The following are the major finds of the study:

- Among the total number of 40 respondents majority of them are (75 percent) males and the remaining (25 percent) females.
- The survey gathers information regarding the educational status of the respondents of the sample force. Of them 5% is illiterate. Of the others 35% of the have studied up to secondary level; 17.5% - Higher secondary level; 25% Degree holder; 15% - Post Graduates and the remaining 2.5% of them are technically qualified.
- The survey brings to light the details regarding the occupation of the respondents. Out of 40 respondents, 35% of users are Employees; 30% - students; 15% - Business man; 10% - Professionals and rest of them (10%) are Housewives.
- The survey throws light on the earnings of the family. Out of 40 respondents, 25% of the respondents had the family income of less than Rs.3000; 40% - Rs.3000 to Rs.6000; 20% - Rs.6001 to Rs.9000 and 15% of the respondents and the family income of more than Rs.9000.
- Sex – wise classification of the respondents who were motivated by the advertisement is shown in table 5. It could be inferred that out of the 30 male respondents 20 respondents were motivated after seeing the advertisement to purchase a particular brand of mobile phone. Remaining interviewees were not so. Out of 10 female respondents, only 6 of them were motivated.
- Out 40 respondents, 26 of them were motivated by seeing the advertisement to purchase particular brand of mobile phone and the remaining 14 interviews are not motivated.

- The study has also brought out the details about the number of mobile phones owned by the respondents. Out of 40 respondents, 85% of them have one mobile phone and 15% of the users have two mobile phones.
- The survey also identified the sources of purchase of cell phones. It reveals that 80% of the respondents have purchased cell phones from the town shops, where as the remaining 20% of them purchased from the city shop. No one has purchased from the local village shop. Of course there is no such village shop available for the rural consumers.
- The researcher further brought out the cell phone brands preferred by the rural consumers. Vodafone constitutes 40% of the respondents; Airtel – 30%; BSNL – 15%; Aircel – 7.5%; Reliance – 10% and Tata – indicom accounting for the remaining one respondent.
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- The study also carries out an in depth enquiry about the sources, those have created awareness of brand identity. This survey makes it clear that 26% of the interviews are influenced by advertisement; 12.5% - Friends; 10% - Relatives; 7.5% - Shopkeepers and neighbours associated with 5% of the sample element.
- The survey also identified the preference of black and white mobile (or) colour mobile. Out of 40 respondents, 80% of them preferred colour mobiles and 20% of the users prefer black and white mobile.
- Of the total 40 respondents 70% of them are interested to go for improved models. Others are not interested. Of the interested respondents, 50% of them are motivated by Entertainment value; 22% - No heavy price; 14% - Interest facility and the remaining 14% of the respondents motivated by status symbol.
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- Of the total respondents 80% of them have prepaid mobile phone users. Others are post paid mobile phone users. Of the prepaid mobile phone users 56.25% of them use prepaid to control the amount; 31.25% lengthy incoming and the remaining 12.5% of the respondents used due to restriction in talking.

CONCLUSION

Mobile phone becomes an integral part of an individual life. Product modification is taking place constantly. To create delighted consumers the manufacturers and dealers of different companies must attach much importance to coverage and good service .this alone can ensure an ever growing demand for mobile phones in the study area.

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