Does Brand Impact Various Attributes Of Smartphone?

Sudha.J1 & Dr. N. Jayaprada2
1Student, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning
2Assistant Professor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

Abstract: Smartphones have become a novel area of innovation for smartphone manufacturing companies, as people across the globe show high amount of preference towards using smartphones. This study analyzes the impact of brand on various attributes of smartphone. Primary data was gathered from 110 smartphone users living in Mumbai Metropolitan Region through a survey. The factors included in the questionnaire were taken from existing literature. The Kano Model was used to analyze and interpret primary data. The findings of the study can be used to understand customers’ perception towards and importance they attach to different features of smartphones, and the impact of brand on the same.

1. Introduction

Innovations in the communication technology have made people shift from using mobile phones with basic features to Smartphones. Smartphones have become an essential part of people’s communication process and have transcended to become a need from a want. Holding a smartphone has become a style statement and indeed a trend for the people as it helps them to build a link across the globe.

According to Times of India sources, Smartphones, especially Indian smartphones are estimated to become the biggest trend of India. As per a survey conducted on 2,600 smartphone users across India, there is an anticipation of 1% growth in the smartphone market in the years 2017 and 2018. They have marked the standards and expect 23% as the annual growth rate of Indian smartphones in 2018 and say that our country must achieve 30% growth globally in the smartphone market and become the second largest smartphone market. (CMR)

Brand name of a product helps to build a strong relationship with the consumer. As there is plethora of competition in the smartphone market it becomes very essential to focus on brand as well as various aspects of brand of smartphones.

The American Marketing Association defines a brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.” (Kotler, Keller, Koshi, & Jha, 2013)

This paper aims to analyze the impact of brand on attributes of Smartphone based on how they are perceived by consumers.

2. Literature Review

The Mobile market has become very competitive as many new players have entered into the market. In the process of huge competition and consumers purchase decision making, brand plays a very crucial role. Brands that meet the needs of the consumer create positive attitude toward the product and consumers prefer to repurchase the brand in future hence building a strong bond between the consumers and the company. While selecting a phones brand, consumers give importance to factors such as price, perceived quality, stylish appearances. (Ismail, Riyath, & Musthafa)

The main factor that affects the decision of purchasing a phone is durability backed by price, becoming the variable of importance that impacts consumers buying behavior against other brands. Companies should work on building the brand image of the product by focusing on price, after sales service and durability of the phone i.e. the product. (Khan, Abid, Muntaha, & Jamal, 2016)

(Karjaluoto, et al., 2005) wanted to identify the causes of consumers’ preference towards smartphone purchase and also the reasons which make them shift from one brand to another brand phone. Focus group interview and survey method were used to prove the objectives of the study. It was found that the most influencing factors that motivate the consumer to
make a selection between brands are interface, brand, price, and properties of the phone. Technical problem is the fundamental reason for students shifting mobile phones.

Purchase behavior varies according to the lifestyle of the customer. In order to look unique, some of the customers preferred fake products i.e. fake version of the original brands. (Husnain & Akhtar, 2015)

The younger generation is highly involved in technology and are very active consumers when it comes to using smartphones. They are the promoters of digital technology and usage of new applications. The brand image and quality that a product carries impacts them and they are also motivated to purchase a smartphone by their family and friends. (Khan & Rohi, 2013)

(Pandey, Mithilesh, Nakra, & Neelam, 2014) concentrated on consumer preference towards Smartphone brands in the study. Operating system of a Smartphone is the driving force for people favoring Smartphones. Android has taken over the mobile market from the time it has entered. The study aims to know the brand preference of the consumers when a Smartphone has Android as its operating system and the preference towards other operating system. This study identified that among the operating systems, Android and iOS are favored by consumers and Samsung is highly favored brand having Android operating system. The features that motivate the consumer to make a brand preference are price, screen size and RAM size.

3. Methodology

Primary secondary data was used to collect data for the study. Primary data was collected through a survey. Convenient sampling method was used to collect the responses. The study is limited to Mumbai Metropolitan Region only. The questionnaires were distributed to totally 150 smartphone users, among which only 113 responded and 110 responses were complete.

The questionnaire contains attributes that might influence the consumer’s preference towards purchasing a particular brand of Smartphone. The questionnaire was formed on the basis of empirical studies. The respondents were required to answer these questions on a 5-point likert scale.

Kano model was used to analyze data because it is a model which helps to classify product attributes based on consumers’ perception. The findings thus obtained will be helpful in identifying the gap between the various attributes that satisfy them and attributes which need to be improved. The findings can also be used to understand consumer’s level of satisfaction towards the product and changes can be made to satisfy their needs.

4. Findings

The findings and the analysis are mentioned below:

Brand is the identity of a product that introduces the company and its product to the consumer. Therefore, the smartphone users were asked to express their opinion about the importance they give to brand while they are selecting a smartphone. The pie chart given below provides a proof of the rate of importance the smartphone users attach to brand.

![Importance of brand](image)

**Figure 1: Importance of brand**

The Kano Model is used to derive conclusions out of consumer’s perception about a product and their satisfaction towards the product. In this study, accurate understanding of the attributes of the smartphone will help us to understand the influence of brand on the attributes of the smartphone.

A consumer might have multiple reasons for choosing a particular brand of smartphone but there are many other elements also that motivate them to prefer one brand to another. The aspects that stimulate a consumer may be expressed or hidden or may be discovered by the consumer when he actually uses the product.
The attributes that the Kano model holds are as follows:

**Threshold attributes:**
Threshold attributes are the attributes that are expected by the consumer. The presence of these attributes might not differentiate the product but the absence of these attributes may lead to dissatisfaction.

**Performance attributes:**
Performance attributes are attributes that must be definitely present in a product as these are directly related to the customer satisfaction. The customers speak up about these attributes. The presence of these attributes satisfies the customers but the absence will lead to dissatisfaction.

**Excitement attributes:**
Expected attributes are attributes that are unexpected and unspoken by the customer. The presence of these attributes delights the customer and the absence of these attributes may not lead to dissatisfaction.

Kano model will sort out the attributes and help to build appropriate strategies. Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) software was used to analyze 110 responses.

The following mean and standard deviation were generated using Descriptive Statistics Tool.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>.851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>.958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>1.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating System</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>1.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>.914</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next step that was followed was of calculating the Stated and Derived importance from the responses.

Stated importance is denoted by the value of individual mean as a percentage of the total mean.

**Table 2. Stated Importance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Stated Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>13.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>12.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>11.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating System</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>12.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>11.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>12.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>13.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>11.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Derived Importance values were generated using the SPSS software and the table is given below.

**Table 3. Derived Importance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Derived Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>0.528</td>
<td>0.279</td>
<td>16.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>0.461</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>12.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>7.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating System</td>
<td>0.486</td>
<td>0.237</td>
<td>13.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>0.424</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>10.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>12.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The fusion of both stated and derived importance is tabulated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Derived Importance</th>
<th>Stated Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>16.12</td>
<td>13.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>12.29</td>
<td>12.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>7.88</td>
<td>11.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating System</td>
<td>13.66</td>
<td>12.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>11.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>12.24</td>
<td>12.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>14.69</td>
<td>13.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>12.72</td>
<td>11.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diagram was created in SPSS with the help of stated importance and derived importance and the four quadrants derived using Kano model are given below:

The descriptions of the four quadrants are as follows:

1. **Quadrant I: Elementary Drivers:**
   
   This quadrant characterizes the basic attributes that a smartphone should possess. Consumers expect these attributes to be present in the phone. The existence of these attributes might not distinguish the product but the absence of these attributes might dissatisfy the consumer. The Smartphone companies need not invest specifically in these attributes as it may not influence them to purchase the product.
   
   The attributes that were identified as elementary or basic drivers are:
   - Appearance
   - Price
   - Service
   - Reputation
   - Design

2. **Quadrant II: Evident Drivers:**
   
   This quadrant characterizes the performance attributes that are stated by the consumer and also expect to be present in the product. The presence of these attributes is recognized and the absence is noticeable. The presence of these attributes satisfies the consumers and the absence dissatisfies them.
   
   The Smartphone companies may invest in these attributes as it might have an effect on the consumer. Consumers did not express any evident drivers in this study.
3. **Quadrant III: Exciting Drivers:**

This quadrant characterizes the attributes, of which, the consumer is unaware while purchasing. These attributes act as delight factors as the consumer is amazed and finds them exciting.

The attributes that were identified as exciting drivers are:
- Quality
- Performance

The existence of these attributes pleases the consumer while its absence does not dissatisfy them.

4. **Quadrant IV: Hidden Drivers:**

Hidden drivers are those drivers that have high derived importance and low stated importance. Consumers may not state these attributes but his activities recommend. The presence of these attributes may satisfy them but the absence reasons to dissatisfaction.

The attributes that were identified as hidden drivers is:
- Operating system

5. **Analysis of the Results using Kano Model:**

The four quadrants derived using Kano model give a clear hint about consumer’s attitude towards the attributes of the smartphone.

Brand was taken as the central factor as it was considered as an important factor by most of the smartphone users and its impact on various attributes of smartphone was studied.

The first quadrant i.e. the elementary drivers include Appearance, Price, Service, Reputation, Design. The customer expects the basic attributes to be present in a smartphone, regardless of the brand. It can be concluded that brand does not really have any impact on the consumers’ perception towards these features.

The customers did not express any opinion about the evident drivers. The absence of these drivers may imply that consumers are contented with the brand of the smartphone they are using.

The drivers that appeared as exciting drivers were quality and performance. The customers have a belief (in the brand) that they might discover a sense of excitement after buying the smartphone. The customers are actually elated when they experience good quality and performance in the smartphone. The companies may concentrate on investing on these factors (quality and performance of the smartphone) because once the consumer believes that a particular brand offers reliable quality and performance, he/she will relate the brand with those attributes hence creating a positive impression about the brand and the company’s product.

The hidden driver that was recognized was the operating system. This quadrant explains that the consumers expect reliable operating system in a smartphone. They don’t specifically state it but the absence dissatisfies them. Therefore the companies may invest a fruitful amount on the operating system of the smartphone.

6. **Conclusion:**

Brand aids to build a strong relationship with the customers and differentiates the product with other brands. Brand carries the company’s reputation with it and many a times just the brand name of the product is sufficient to influence the customer to purchase a smartphone (the product).

The findings of the study are symbolic of the fact that brand has an influence on the various attributes of smartphone. Companies can utilize the findings of the study to build a strong relationship with the customers.

**References**


