A Study on Smart Phone Users and Usage Habits

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Abstract

The culture of constant connection takes a toll both professionally and personally Smart phones are an integral part of communication and entertainment for almost all age group of people. This study provides an insightful overview on smart phone trend and usage behaviours of users at Ambur in Vellore district of Tamilnadu. It was found out that the smart phone users learn and adapt to latest trends and technology and try to make the best use of their smart phones.

Keywords: Smart Phones, latest technology, communication

Introduction

Smart phones are becoming an essential part of everyone's daily life. They are not just simple and user-friendly communication devices but also means for connecting to the Internet and other devices. According to the Visual Networking Index, the Smart Phone market has grown 54% in India during 2014, reaching 140 million in number. The study reported that the number of smart phones would grow 4.7-fold between 2014 and 2019, reaching 651 million in number. Generally, a smart phone is based on a certain operating system like Apple's iOS, Google's Android, Microsoft's Windows etc. that allows phone users to install applications (apps) on it. Mobile users are able to download and install various software apps like time schedule, navigator, personal finance managers, games and many other exiting functions in their operating systems.

Review of Literature

Service quality is the gap between customer expectation and actual performance of service (Parasuraman et al,1985). Seth et al (2008) analyzed the importance of service quality features based on Parasuraman et.al (1985) model and found out that responsiveness is the important dimension followed by reliability, customer perceived network quality, assurance, convenience, empathy and tangibles .SunGiChun (2013) found out that consumers of younger age are frequent users, frequent downloader's, having more number of apps on their Smartphones, and choosing Android and iOS as their future Smartphone platforms. Doidge (2011) reported that mobile apps market would be very competitive, particularly for the integration of innovative apps and platform layer technology.

Need for the study

Intense competition and technological advancement has made the manufacturers to provide high quality and positive wireless experience .Smartphone devices are more expensive compared to conventional mobile phones. A potential buyer should balance the cost of purchasing the device with the level of offered features and utility. Hence, the user is always anxious to learn and use the phone features and applications. In order to understand the habits of today's mobile users, it is imperative to understand the awareness level of smart phone users and their usage. This study tries to estimate the gap awareness of latest applications of smart phones and usage of those applications by the smart phone users.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the behavior pattern of smart phone users in Ambur city
2. To investigate the gap between awareness and usage of smart phone applications among the smart phone users in Ambur

Research Methodology

Simple Random Sampling method is used to collect data. Sample size is 100. The study has been conducted during the period of April 2015- May 2015.Each individual is considered to be the sampling unit. The respondents of the study are part of population of city namely Ambur in Vellore district of Tamilnadu.

Measurement and Scaling

Five point Likert (interval) scaling has been used for conducting the survey to analyze the habits of smart phone users, which has been given as follows: 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

Tools Used:

Percentage analysis is used to analyze the demographic factors of mobile phone user. Chi -Square analysis is used to test the association between demographic factors and smart phone applications. Mean scores are determined and the gap between awareness and usage of smart phones is ascertained.

Hypothesis:

H1: There is no significant association between gender of the smart phone user and smart phone application usage

H2: There is no significant association between age of the smart phone user and smart phone application usage

H3: There is no significant association between income level of the smart phone user and smart phone application usage

H4: There is no significant association between occupation of the smart phone user and smart phone application usage

Results and Discussion:

Table 1

Demographic Profile

		Percentage
Gender	Male	53
	Female	47
	Total	**100**
Age	20 -30 years	71
	31-40 years	24
	40 and above	5
	Total	**100**
Occupation	Student	12
	Self- Employed	39
	Government Employee	8
	Private employee	30
	Home makers	11
	Total	**100**
Income per month	Below 15,000	26
	15,000-20,000	12
	20,000-30,000	41
	30,000 -50,000	12
	Above 50,000	9
	Total	**100**
Mobile operating system used	Android	86
	iphone	2
	Windows	12
	Total	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The sample data is collected from 53% of male and 47% of female smart phone users, where 71% of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-30 years, 24% are in the age group of 30-40 years and 5% were above 40 years of age and above. This result is consistent to previous studies, which found that majority of the smart phone users are teenagers, and younger adults 12% of smart phone users are students.

39% are self employed 8 % are government employees,30% are Private employees and 11% are home makers.41% of the respondents earn Rs.20,000 to Rs.30,000 per month,26% earn below Rs.15,000 per month. 86% of the smart phone users have android mobile operating system followed by windows and iphone platforms

Table 2

Association between Features and Demographic Profile

Feature	Gender		Age		Occupation		Income	
Features	Assymp Value	Significant/ Not Significant	Assymp Value	Significant /Not Significant	Assymp Value	Significant/ Not Significant	Assymp Value	Significant/ Not Significant
GPRS	0.011	Significant	0.581	Not Significant	0.000	Significant	0.001	significant
Mobile shopping	0.879	Not Significant	0.272	Not Significant	0.000	Significant	0.011	significant
Blue tooth	0.602	Not Significant	0.272	Not Significant	0.000	Significant	0.011	significant
MMS	0.038	Significant	0.003	Significant	0.000	Significant	0.081	Not significant
Video Call	0.389	Not Significant	0.133	Not Significant	0.000	Significant	0.187	Not significant
Wi-Fi	0.602	Not Significant	0.272	Not Significant	0.000	Significant	0.011	significant
3G / Wireless Internet	0.879	Not Significant	0.272	Not Significant	0.000	Significant	0.011	significant
Mobile banking	0.532	Not Significant	0.068	Not Significant	0.000	Significant	0.003	significant

Source: Primary Data

H1: There is no significant association between gender of the smart phone user and usage of smart phone applications such as Mobile shopping, Blue tooth, MMS, Videocall, Wi-fi facility, mobile banking and wireless internet. However, there was a significant association between gender and GPRS usage.

H2: There is no significant association between age of the smart phone user and smart phone application GPRS, Mobile shopping, Blue tooth, Videocall, Wi-fi facility, mobile banking and wireless internet. There was a significant association between age and MMS usage.

H3: There is a significant association between income level of the smart phone user and smart phone application usage.

H4: There is no significant association between occupation of the smart phone user and smart phone application usage like mms and video call. However, there is a significant association between occupation and various features like GPRS, Mobile Shopping, Blue tooth, Wi-Fi facility, mobile banking and wireless internet.

Table 3

Awareness – Usage GAP

Features	Awareness Mean Score)	Usage (Mean Score)	Gap (Awareness- Usage)
GPRS	1.97	1.62	0.35
Mobile shopping	1.97	1.94	0.03
Blue tooth	1.11	1.06	0.05
MMS	1.97	1.88	0.09
Video Call	1.12	1.09	0.03
Wi-Fi	1.97	1.94	0.03
3G/mobile Internet	1.06	1.06	0
Mobile banking	1.97	1.88	0.09

Source: Primary Data

It can be noted that the gap between the awareness and usage level is minimum. In fact, the awareness level and usage gap for mobile internet application is zero, which indicates that the users make a full attempt to utilize the services of smart phone applications

Conclusion

The chi-square test revealed that there is an association between age and MMS usage as the smart phone users are more in the age group of 20- 30 years. There is no association between Gender and smart phone usage features except for GPRS where males were the highest number of users. The income and occupation had an impact on smart phone usage. The study clearly demonstrates that awareness-usage gap is very low among smart phone user, which means the consumers prefer flexibility and versatility in mobile apps. They try to learn and try to update with the recent trends and conditions. The manufacturers should make an effort to meet the expectation of customers by making the features of the smart phone easy-to use and provide powerful operating system with the ability to customize application to suit the individual needs.

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