PERCEPTION TOWARDS SMART PHONE AMONG THE MOBILE USERS IN KERALA

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Abstract
There is no secret that smart phones are everywhere these days. It seems like nearly everyone has one, even if they're not sporting some fancy new model. Even though the price is so high, operation is very difficult, more and more people are turning in to smart phones by substituting their traditional mobile phones. Smart phones are become a fashion and a new life style among them. The "all in one device" concept is real attraction to smart phone. This study tries to find the reason behind the popularity of smart phone, level of satisfaction by using it, main purpose of using smart phones and thereby to understand the perception of people towards smart phone. Statistical tools like simple percentage and weighted mean is used to analyze and interpret the data.

Key Words: Smart Phone, Mobile Phone, Iphone, Customer Perception.

INTRODUCTION
Today the life style of people has been changed a lot. Electronic goods are becoming a basic need rather than a luxury. For the present generation of mobile users, the meaning of mobile phones also has changed. Smart phones are become a fashion and a new life style among them. The multiple uses of smart phones really attracted the mobile users towards it. Most smart phones can access the internet, have a touch screen user interface, can run third-party applications, audio and video players and are camera phones. Most Smartphone's produced from 2012 onwards also have high-speed mobile broadband internet, motion sensors and mobile payment mechanisms. There is a rapid growth witnessed by the companies producing smart phones since last decade. The manufactures have brought out numerous models of superior technology. Therefore consumers have a wide choice of smart phones available in the market. In 2014, sales of smart phones worldwide topped 1.2 billion, which was up 28% from 2013. [1]

Advantages of smart phones
- Smart phones have the ability to browse full websites with large amount of data and it will appear the same way as it is in the desktop browser.
- Also has QWERTY keyboard which is similar to the computer keyboard. The key board can be hardware (physical keys that you type) or it can be software (on a touch screen like you will find on an iPhones).
- Smart phones have applications that can help you create and edit Microsoft office documents.
- Smart phone also has a GPS which can be used to locate places that are new to you. When traveling to unknown places it is a good idea to have a GPS to help you find the place you're looking for. Smart phones will help makes your tour navigable [2].
- When it comes to messaging, a smart phone will send messages and also emails. A smart phone can synchronize your personal and most likely your professional email account. Some smart phone can support multiple accounts depending on the make and model.

Disadvantages of smart phones
- Smart phones are not durable especially when not taken good care of. For example it can malfunction easily when they come into contact with water.
- It is very expensive to buy compared to other phones.
- Many of the applications which need to be on the Smartphone need to be mastered to avoid confusion when operating it.
- It can only work efficiently where there is accessible internet connection when it comes to browsing. Smart phones cannot be used to store large amount of data due to their storage memory.[3]
- Using Smartphone late at night can disturb sleep, due to the brightly lit screen affecting melatonin levels and sleep cycles [4]
- Compared to earlier mobile phones, Smartphone battery life has generally been poor and a significant drain on customer satisfaction [5].

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Smart phones considered as an essential part of modern life. Now in the present century, all mobile companies are introducing new technologies and new brand of smart phones every day. The new arrival of smart phones has made the companies constantly engaged in gaining the attention of the customer's interest in technology, price, style etc. In Kerala, the Customers perception towards smart phones by substituting ordinary mobile phones has been made by the researcher for studying the necessity of customer needs and their satisfaction.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. This research paper deals with the study of performance evaluation of smart phone.
2. This paper aimed at knowing the customers level of satisfaction in terms of value for money from using smart phone.
3. To know the reason behind the creation of customers perception towards smart phone.
4. To give the suggestions in terms of improving the smart phone features and its popularity among all segment of the population.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is purely and simply a basic frame work or plan for a study that guides the collection of data and analysis of the data. In this study, we have adopted descriptive research design in collecting and analyzing the data.

Sources of Data

Primary Data: The validity of any research is based on the data collected for the study. Primary data includes questionnaire. Questionnaire was the main tool used for collecting the first hand information from the respondents. Hence, due attention was given in construction of the questionnaire.

Secondary Data: The study also consists of secondary data, which is collected from magazines, newspaper and journal and also websites.

Sample Selection

For the purpose of the research, convenient sampling method has been used in selecting the respondents. In Kerala the population here considered for the study include all clusters namely, students, service class, business class, professional and others. The total sample size decided for this study was 150 respondents. Researcher had made an attempt that the sample size was adequate, representative and estimator with sufficiently high precision.

The Questionnaire schedule has been prepared in such a way that the respondents were able to give their opinion truly and frankly.

Analytical Tool

The following are the analytical tools applied for the analysis of the data collected.
- Simple Percentage Analysis
- Weighted Average Mean

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

On the bases of data collected, the data has been analyzed with demographical characteristics of the respondents, performance, price and purpose of use of the smart phones.

Demographic characteristics of the Respondents

The data collected through the questionnaire has classified according to various demographic characteristics of the respondents like Gender, age, education, area and occupation. Simple percentage is used to analyze the data and presented in a table format.

Table 1- Demographic characteristics of Respondents			
Details		**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage (Rounded off)**
Gender	Male	101	67
	Female	49	33
Total		**150**	**100**
Age	16- 25	36	24

	26- 35	54	36
	36- 45	48	32
	Above 45	12	8
Total		**150**	**100**
Education	Below SSLC	24	16
	Below Degree	72	48
	Degree and above	54	36
Total		**150**	**100**
Area	Rural	34	23
	Semi Urban	47	31
	Urban	69	46
Total		**150**	**100**
Occupation	Employee	21	14
	Business	58	39
	NRI	39	26
	Others (Student, Agriculture, etc)	32	21
Total		**150**	**100**

From the above table it is clear that out of the total respondents 67 percentages are male and 33 percentages are females. When we look at to the age wise classification it is seen that 24 percentages are comes under the 16- 25 age category, 36 percentages in 26- 35, 32 percentages are in 36- 45 category and only 8 percentage are in above 45 age category. The education wise study of the respondents shows that, 16 percentages have below SSLC educational qualification, 48 percentages have up to Degree level education and 36 percentages have qualified with any degree or higher education.

The area wise study of the respondents reveals that 23 percentages are resides in rural area of Kerala, 31 percentages are in semi urban areas and 46 percentages are in the urban cities of the state. Finally the occupation wise classification shows that 14 percentage of the respondents are employee class, 39 percentage are business people, 26 percentage are NRI's and 21 percentage comes under the category of others which includes students, farmers, professionals etc.

Level of satisfaction of the Respondents based on the Performance of the Smart phones
The respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction when they changed over to smart phones from their ordinary mobile phones. The responds were rated with four scales, highly satisfied, satisfied, moderate and dissatisfied.

Table 2- Level of satisfaction of the respondents

Level of Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	27	18
Satisfied	69	46
Moderate	39	26
Dissatisfied	15	10
Total	**150**	**100**

Table 2 shows that out of the total 150 respondents 18 percentage are highly satisfied with the level of performance of the smart phones, 46 percentages are satisfied, 26 percentages are on the opinion that the performance is moderate and only 10 percentages are not satisfied with the performance of the smart phones.

Level of satisfaction based on the Value for money (Price) of the Smart phones
The respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction based on the value for money when they changed over to smart phones from their ordinary mobile phones. The responds were rated with four scales, highly satisfied, satisfied, moderate and dissatisfied.

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Table 3- Value for money (Price)

Level of Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	21	14
Satisfied	54	36
Moderate	45	30
Dissatisfied	30	20
Total	**150**	**100**

Table 3 shows that out of the total 150 respondents 14 percentage are highly satisfied with the smart phones on the basis of value for money, 36 percentages are satisfied, 30 percentages are on the opinion that the performance is moderate and 20 percentages are not satisfied with the smart phones in comparison with the price they spend to purchase it.

Purpose of Smartphone use
In the questionnaire the respondents are asked to Rank each variable in the order of preference from 1to 5 (R_1 to R_5) against the purpose of use of smart phone in their daily life. For this purpose five variable were selected, ie; Job, Education, Entertainment Social media, and status symbol.

Table 4- The result of data collected through questionnaire about the Purpose of smart phone use

Sl No.	Purpose of Use	R_1	R_2	R_3	R_4	R_5	Total
1	Job	12	32	51	32	23	**150**
2	Education	32	29	42	29	18	**150**
3	Entertainment	46	39	26	25	14	**150**
4	Social Media	51	37	17	29	16	**150**
5	Status symbol	9	13	14	35	79	**150**
	Total	**150**	**150**	**150**	**150**	**150**	

Table 5 shows the result of statistical analysis of the survey data. Rank is computed on the basis of weighted mean score of the variables.

Table 5- Weighted mean score and Rank

Sl No.	Variables	Weighted Mean	Rank
1	Job	28.53	4
2	Education	31.07	**3**
3	Entertainment	35.00	**2**
4	Social Media	36.00	**1**
5	Status symbol	19.4	5

The statistical analysis of the survey data by using the weighted mean score and there by the rank shows that out of the five variable used to check the purpose of use of smart phone, for to participate in the social media is the most powerful motive behind converting in to smart phones from their traditional mobile phones. The variable Entertainment which got second rank stands so close to social media. Education stands third and job stands fourth. Even though the variable Status symbol stands fifth, the study shows that few people given preference to smart phone because it consider as a status symbol for them.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS
1. The study shows that the male population is more attracted to the smart phones and they have a positive perception towards it.
2. The younger generation's perception towards smart phone is positive.
3. The education of the population has an influence in the creation of perception towards using the smart phones. Highly educated people are more attracted to smart phones.

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4. The residential area of the population also has an influence towards the creation of perception towards smart phones. The urban and semi urban people are more attracted to smart phones.
5. When we look at to the occupation of the respondents, the business and NRI class are more attracted towards smart phones.
6. The satisfactory performance and quality of the smart phones have influenced in the creation of positive perception towards smart phones.
7. Majority of the respondents feels that the smart phone gives either moderate or satisfactory value for money which helps in creating a positive perception towards it.
8. The multi utility of the smart phones attracts the people towards it which also create a positive perception.

SUGGESTIONS
1. As far as performance and quality may concern the respondents were satisfied. But the companies should reduce the maintenance cost and increase the service standard.
2. The battery backup of the smart phones is not up to the expectation. So it should be increased.
3. The operation should be simplified in order to use for the uneducated, rural population.
4. The apps in the play store should be regulated in order to control violent and sexual apps.
5. More in built daily using offline apps should be added with the product.
6. The price of the product should be modified competitively. So this factor has to be improved with a view to retain and attract more buyers.

CONCLUSION
Smart phones, irrespective of the generational gap, gender difference, occupation, area of residence, educational qualification, become a new trend and life style. It is not about just making a call. It is all about part of life. The study shows that even though its operation is complicated and price is high compared to the traditional mobile phones, peoples are shifting to smart phones. The multi utility is the driving factor towards owning the smart phones. The most powerful factors in building positive perception towards smart phone is its ability to provide entertainment to the users and the influence of social Medias like face book and whatsApp. The customer satisfactions towards the smart phones are satisfactory on the bases of performance as well as the price.

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