FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE OF DIGITAL CAMERA IN DHARMAPURI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT A digital camera is an electronic photo camera. Once the photo is taken the camera will record, encode digitally and store it for later reproduction. In this way the picture can be uploaded on computer. The need of a digital camera in today's society is more demanding. With popularity of social networks and blogs several devices have a camera built in so consumers can take pictures. Digital camera has been used by different users for different purposes. It is used in educational institutions for academic purposes. The digital cameras are used in offices, institutions and other commercial establishments for surveillance purposes. In wedding and other functions, the digital cameras are used for coverage of the programmes. Some consumers use digital cameras for taking photos as their hobbies. The purchase of digital camera is dependent on several factors. This paper has aimed at analyzing the factors influencing purchase of digital camera in Dharmapuri District.

KEYWORDS : Factors, Purchase, Digital Camera, Consumers

INTRODUCTION
Digital camera is a camera which captures an image on a light sensitive digital sensor (also called a CCD or Charge Coupled Device) instead of a piece of film. It saves money from buying rolls of film. The pictures are not required to be developed at the store. The pictures taken can be viewed within a few seconds of taking them. Digital camera technology eliminates the probability of bad pictures and the users can readily delete photos within the camera that are taken improperly or by mistake. The photos taken can be uploaded to a computer immediately.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
The digital cameras are compact in such a way that they can be easily carried by the users anywhere. Photography has become a passion for many youngsters nowadays. They show keen interest in taking photographs – self photographs, photographs of functions, sceneries, birds, etc. Not only the photographers, but also those who consider the photography as hobby feel very happy with the digital cameras. As they can keep the digital cameras with them always and can take the photographs whenever they need to take photographs, they like the digital cameras very much. Many brands of digital cameras are available in the market for the selection of buyers. However, it is necessary to examine what are the factors influencing them to buy digital cameras.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The present study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To understand the demographic variables of the digital camera users
2. To examine the factors influencing the purchase of digital cameras and
3. To offer suitable suggestions for making better purchase decisions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The present study is an empirical study based on survey method. The main source of data required for the study has been found to be primary sources. The researchers have prepared a structured questionnaire and administered the same among the sample respondents for the collection of data required for the present study. In this regard, 150 digital camera users (75 male users and 75 female users) have been selected as the sample respondents on convenient sampling method.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED
For the purpose of analyzing the primary data obtained from the sample respondents, the statistical tools like percentage analysis and Henry Garrett Ranking method have been used.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
The present study is subject to the following limitations:
1. The size of sample is confined to 150 respondents only.
2. The study has been carried out in Dharmapuri District only and care should be taken while generalizing the findings of the study.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
The analysis of data has been made in two parts – the first part of the analysis deals with the demographic variables of the sample respondents while the second part of the analysis focuses on the factors influencing purchase decision of digital cameras. For the purpose of the present study, the demographic variables include age, gender, marital status, educational level, occupational status and monthly income of the family. The demographic variables have been analyzed with the percentage analysis. The following table shows the distribution of sample respondents according to the demographic variables:

TABLE 1 DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Demographic variables	Groups	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age	Below 20 years	27	18.0
	20 to 40 years	70	46.6
	40 to 60 years	40	26.7
	Above 60 years'	13	8.7
	Total	**150**	**100**
Gender	Male	75	50.0
	Female	75	50.0
	Total	**150**	**100**
Marital Status	Single	84	56.0
	Married	66	44.0
	Total	**150**	**100**
Educational Level	School Level	26	17.3
	UG Level	68	45.3
	PG Level	43	28.7
	Others	13	8.7
	Total	**150**	**100**
Occupational Status	Student	36	24.0
	Employee	47	31.3
	Businessman	30	20.0
	Professional	17	11.3
	Housewife	16	10.7
	Others	4	2.7
	Total	**150**	**100**
Monthly Income	Below Rs.10000	35	23.3
	Rs.10000 to Rs.20000	54	36.0
	Rs.20000 to Rs.30000	50	33.3
	Above Rs.30000	11	7.4
	Total	**150**	**100**

It could be evinced from the Table 1 that out of 150 sample respon-

dents, 18.0 per cent of them belonged to the age group of below 20 years while 46.,6 per cent of them represented the age group of 20 to 40 years and 26.7 per cent of them were pertaining to the age group of 40 to 60 years. The age group of above 60 years consisted of 8.7 per cent of the total respondents. The sample respondents comprised equal proportion of male and female users of digital cameras. It is understood that 56.0 per cent of the total respondents were single individuals and 44.0 per cent of them were married. The results showed that the education completed by 17.3 per cent of the total respondents was up to school level while the educational level of 45.3 per cent of the respondents was found to be UG level and that of 28.7 per cent of the respondents was observed to be PG level. The remaining 8.7 per cent of the respondents have pursued other levels of education. It is revealed that 24.0 per cent of the sample respondents were students, 31.3 per cent of them were employees and 20.0 per cent of them were businessmen. It is also noted that 11.3 per cent of the respondents have been professionals, 10.7 per cent of the respondents were housewives and 2.7 per cent of them have been others. The monthly income earned by the family of 23.3 per cent of the respondents was found to be below Rs.10000 whereas the families of 36.0 per cent of the respondents have earned a monthly income of Rs.10000 to Rs.20000 and 33.3 per cent of the respondents have a monthly income of Rs.20000 to Rs.30000. The monthly income earned by the families of 7.4 per cent of the respondents was found to be Above Rs.30000.

The factors influencing purchase of digital cameras have been identified and included for the analysis in this study are: Low price; Fully Automatic; Promotional Offers; Popular Brand, After sale service; Clarity of picture; video coverage speed and large memory. The respondents were asked to rank these factors according to their priority – the most influencing factor as the first, the next most influencing factor as the second and so on. The least influencing factor has to be ranked as the eighth factor influencing purchase of digital cameras. The ranks assigned individually by the sample respondents have to be consolidated and the overall ranks are to be arrived for each of the factors selected. For this purpose, Henry Garrett Ranking Method has been used. Accordingly, the percentage position of each rank has been obtained by using the following formula:

Percent position = $100 (R_{ij} – 0.5)/N_j$

Where R_{ij} is the ith rank for j^{tj} factor and N_j is the number of factors/ranks

After having obtained the percent position, Garrett score of each percent position has been obtained from the Garrett Ranking Table. The number of respondents in each category has been multiplied and total scores for each of the factors have been obtained. The mean scores have been obtained by dividing the total scores by the total number of respondents. The overall scores of each of these factors have been assigned according to the total scores and mean scores.

The following table depicts the total scores, mean scores and overall ranks of each of the selected factors influencing purchase of digital cameras:

TABLE 2 FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE OF DIGITAL CAMERAS

Factors	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
Score	79	67	59	53	46	40	32	20			
Low Price	37	52	22	9	8	7	12	3			
	2923	3484	1298	477	368	280	384	60	9274	61.83	I
Fully Automatic	12	17	17	32	21	14	16	21			
	948	1139	1003	1696	966	560	512	420	7244	48.29	V
Promotional Offers	11	12	13	24	23	29	17	21			
	869	804	767	1272	1058	1160	544	420	6894	45.96	VII
Popular Brand	27	9	21	12	17	16	24	24			
	2133	603	1239	636	782	640	768	480	7281	48.54	III
After sale Service	22	11	19	13	18	29	14	24			
	1738	737	1121	689	828	1160	448	480	7201	48.01	VI
Clarity of Picture	12	16	24	26	28	12	23	9			
	948	1072	1416	1378	1288	480	736	180	7498	49.99	II
Video Coverage	12	19	16	17	19	14	16	37			
	948	1273	944	901	874	560	512	740	6752	45.01	VIII
Large Memory	17	14	18	17	16	29	28	11			
	1343	938	1062	901	736	1160	896	220	7256	48.37	IV

According to the Table 2, low price has been the first factor as indicated by the total score and mean score of 9274 and 61.83 respectively. The second ranked factor was found to be clarity of picture with the total score of 7498 and mean score of 49.99 whereas the factor rated as the third rank by the sample respondents was popular brand whose total score was 7281 and mean score was 48.54. Large memory has been ranked as the fourth factor with the total score of 7256 and average score of 48.37 and the fifth factor according to the sample respondents was found to be fully automatic feature with the total score of 7244 and mean score of 48.29. After sale service has been considered as the fifth ranked factor as indicated by the total score and mean score of 7201 and 48.01 respectively. With the total score of 6894 and mean score of 45.96 promotional offers could be identified as the seventh factor while video coverage speed has been ranked as the eighth factor with the total score of 6752 and mean score of 45.01.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY
1. It is found that the digital cameras are used mainly by the users pertaining to the age group of 20 to 40 years.
2. The most of the digital camera users have been found to be married.
3. It could be proclaimed that the consumers having UG level education have been using digital cameras more than any other users.
4. The medium level income earners are the major users of digital cameras than the low level income earners and high level income earners.
5. According to the digital camera users, the price has been the most influencing factor for the purchase of digital camera.
6. The digital camera users consider the clarity of picture as one of the influencing factors after the lower price while purchasing a digital camera.
7. Popular brand and large memory have also been considered during the purchase of digital cameras.
8. Promotional offers have not influenced the purchase of digital camera by the users unlike the other factors considered for the study.
9. It is found that the video coverage speed feature of digital camera has been the least influencing factor for the purchase of digital camera.

SUGGESTIONS
1. On the basis of research findings, it is suggested that digital cameras shall be designed in such a way that the old aged consumers and educationally poor can also use the same easily.
2. It is recommended that the digital camera manufacturers should reduce the price such that it would be affordable to low income group.
3. Since the lower price has been the most influencing factor for the purchase of digital cameras, the pricing strategies should be redesigned in accordance with the taste and preference of the consumers.
4. According to the majority of the consumers, the clarity of picture plays a vital role in determining the purchase of digital cameras. Hence, the mega pixels shall be increased to provide more clarity and quality pictures to satisfy the users.

CONCLUSION

The digital cameras have been widely used by all kinds of consumers. It is not only used by the professional photographers, the other consumers are also fond of taking photographs using digital cameras. Even though the mobile phones have in-built cameras, the digital cameras provide quality pictures with utmost clarity when compared with the pictures taken using the mobile phone cameras. The use of digital camera by the old aged consumers is found to be less than that of middle aged consumers. Among the various factors influencing purchase of digital cameras, lower price and clarity of picture have been the most influencing factor for the purchase of digital cameras.

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