



Mapping of Consumers' Perception for Laptop

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ABSTRACT

Wireless connectivity is not considered a luxury now-a-days. It has become a necessity for today's generation for meeting their computing needs from every place at any time. Following the success of desktop computers, laptop computers have become highly popular as versions of desktops with the full functionality of desktop computing and the portability which allows users to carry them anywhere. Hence, the sale of laptop has been increased in India and Indian market is referred as third fastest growing laptop market in the Asian region. Laptop companies are introducing new features in their laptop brands. Hence, it became difficult and confusing for an ordinary consumer to decide which laptop to purchase and how to purchase. The present study aims at deciding the laptop consumers' preference over the various factors of laptop brands they use. The study also includes the consumers' perceptions with respect to laptops.

Methodology: The data were collected through structured questionnaire. A total of 600 respondents were considered for the study. Chi-square test, weighted average, Kendall's coefficient of concordance test and cross tabulation were used for analysis of the data.

Findings: Majority of the consumers preferred to purchase a brand of their own choice from local dealer or retailer and showrooms after going through information available from reference groups like friends, relatives, technical experts, blogs, etc. features of laptop were considered the most important factor while purchasing laptop. Overall, laptop features ranked 1 followed price as far as the satisfaction is concerned to the laptop purchase. A large number of consumers were in favor of moving to new brand for their future purchase of laptop.

KEYWORDS

Consumer perception, Laptop, Product features, Brand.

Introduction

India is acknowledged as one of the most promising and fastest growing economy of the world. Today India is a young nation compared to other foreign countries like USA, Japan, UK. More than 50% of the Indian population is in the 5-25 years of age group, who contribute to the major changes in the Economy of India. People in this age group, unlike their parents are found more techno savvy like working with mobile and laptops and wireless technology. India's personal computer market is undergoing a major transition. However, laptop computers cannot completely wipe out desktop computers, because both are designed to meet different needs or different consumer segments. Laptop is a personal computer with mobility feature. Following the success of desktop computers, laptop computers have become highly popular as portable versions of desktops with the full functionality of desktop computing and the portability that allows users to carry them anywhere. Today, laptop industry is booming in India and this has attracted major players. Laptop sales in India have risen drastically due to a bunch of laptop brands available in the market with different attractive features, lower price, better quality, enhanced performance and improved after sale services options to the consumers.

Need of the Study

Laptop is a high involvement product which involves the target consumers' interpretations for product features, promotional offers, price, after sales services, guarantee or warranty conditions, etc. about the product. Therefore, it becomes important for the manufacturer to understand the exact customer requirements, and thereby, adapt accordingly. Introducing an increased offers and lucrative schemes does not always ensure a larger customer base or a larger market share. The manufacturer should also understand customers' perceptions about the company, i.e. company's image in customers' mind, and then there should be an effort to match the requirements with the image. Therefore it requires an ongoing in depth study of consumer behavior which influences the buying deci-

sion process of laptop. This study will provide the laptop companies a launching idea and will act as a guide to finalize the strategies to increase the market share and consumer awareness in the market for the product.

Research Objectives:

The primary objective of the study is to find out the consumer perceptions towards the various laptop brands. Secondary objectives are:

- To map the profile of the laptop consumers.
- To find the laptop brands used by the consumers
- To identify the sources influencing the consumers behind the laptop brand choice.
- To find out from where the consumers prefer to buy a laptop.

Limitations

Every research work has some limitations.

- Here the study is limited to attitudes and perceptions of selected sample of respondents and may not be universally applicable.
- The possibility of respondents' bias in reporting the self perceptions.
- The sample was of 600 so is not necessarily truly represent the population universe.

Literature Review

According to **Belch and Belch (2001)**, Consumer behavior is the process and the activities people engage in when searching for, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services so as to satisfy their needs and desires. They also noted that, for many products and services, purchase decision is the result of a long, detailed process that may include an extensive information search, brand comparison and evaluation.

While **Schiffman and Kanuk (2010)** defined consumer behavior as the behavior displayed by consumers is the search for purchasing, evaluating and disposing of products, and services. They further stated that the study of consumer behavior is concerned not only with what consumers buy, but how they buy, and how often they buy it. They also informed in their study that consumer research takes place at each and every phase of consumption process which includes, before the purchase research, during the purchase research and after the purchase research.

The three most influential purchase perception factors cited in the literature are the perceptions of price, product quality, and product variety (**Arnold, Handelman, & Tiger, 1996; Baker, Levy & Grewal, 1992; Cronin, 1996**). Price is defined as the total monetary cost to the consumer for the purchase. Product quality is defined as those distinguishing characteristics or traits inherent in the product or service that differentiate it from competitive product or service offerings (**Cronin, 1996**).

The numerous studies had been conducted to identify influence of marketing mix variables, brand reputation, technology, country of origin, peer groups and society on consumer behavior (**Livesey, 1971; Hooley et al., 1988; Stoltman et al., 1991; Ansari et al., 1995; Schaefer, 1997; Anderson and He, 1999; Ahmed et al., 2004; Neuhaus and Taylor, 2009**).

Ansari et al. (1995) extensively discussed the different studies conducted on identifying the impact of marketing mix variables viz. price, Promotion, brand etc. on influencing consumer buying behavior.

According to **Hong and Lerch (2002)**, people evaluate various objective features when buying an IT product, and because of imperfect information and simplifications according to the decision rules people often abstract these various features into few perceptual dimensions such as 'usefulness' and 'price'.

Yateesh Hoblidar, Purav Singh & Tushar Alva (2009) in their study entitled "Studying the consumer buying behavior while buying a laptop" found that there is no significant relationship between laptop choice and the gender of the buyer. Educational qualification and annual family income have a significant impact on the choice of laptop brand.

According to **Kanwar (2012)** there are seven factors influencing consumers' laptop purchase decisions: core technical features, post purchase services, price and payment conditions, peripheral specifications, physical appearance, value added features and connectivity and mobility.

Vijay R. Kulkarni (2013) in his study, "A factorial study of consumer buying behavior of laptops of postgraduate students in Pune" stated that if you want to survive and grow in this challenging and highly competitive environment, companies need to have a highly innovative approach, keep a keen eye on the changing needs and expectations of the consumers. In the event of breakdown quick availability of spares and availability of service center is called for without which the customer cannot use the product and would definitely result in post purchase dissonance. It therefore calls on the part of the organizations to make available service facilities so that customers are put at ease, are satisfied and continue to use the products through their life time.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Research approach:** For collecting primary data, a survey approach was used.
- **Research instrument:** A research questionnaire consisting of a set of questions was presented to the respondents to know the pre and post purchase behavior regarding laptop.
- **Questionnaire design:** For consumer survey, the questionnaire was prepared with a Likert scale and check list method.

- **Sample unit:** Consumers of laptops
- **Sample size:** The study involved an in-depth investigation of 600 sample respondents.
- **Sample procedure:** The sampling technique used was judgmental sampling.
- **Time period of the study:** January 2014 to March 2015.
- **Method of data collection:** Collection of data is the next logical step after the sample had been chosen. Since the collection of data depends on the data collection method. Both primary and secondary data have been used in the present study. Primary data have been obtained through a well-designed questionnaire. Secondary data has been collected through several sources such as journals, related dissertation, rules and bylaws, internet, related books and newspapers.
- **Data Collection Tools:** For the purpose collecting the data, two separate questionnaires were designed: One for the initial survey (pilot survey) and the other for the final survey.
- **Analysis of data:** The primary and secondary data were analyzed through the statistical methods. SPSS was used for analyzing the data collected. Some analytical techniques like percentage, weighted average score Kendall's coefficient of concordance test and Chi-square were used to analyze the collected data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

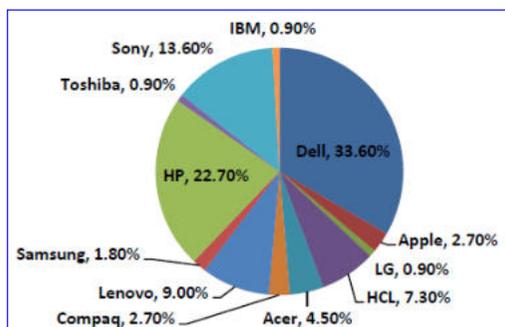
Table1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

1	Gender	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
	Male	450	75
	Female	150	25
	Total	600	100
2	Age		
	Below 20	143	24
	20-25	151	25
	26-30	105	17
	31-35	57	10
	36-40	68	11
	41-45	34	6
	46-50	26	4
	51-55	6	1
	56-60	7	1
	Above 60	3	1
	Total	600	100
3	Respondent category		
	Students	300	50
	Salaried	180	30
	Businessmen	120	20
	Total	600	100
4	Completed Level of Education		
	Up to HSC	148	25
	Above HSC-Graduation	170	28
	Above Graduation – Post graduation	205	34
	Above Post Graduation	77	13
	Total	600	100

5	Respondent possess Computer Degree		
	Yes	283	47
	No	317	53
	Total	100	100
6	Income of the Respondents		
	Less than 30,000 INR	172	29
	30,001 – 49,999 INR	181	30
	50,000 - 74,999 INR	114	19
	Above 75,000 INR	133	22
	Total	600	100
7	Geographical area of the Respondents		
	Urban	172	49
	Sub Urban	112	32
	Rural	68	19
	Total	600	100
8	Marital status of Respondents		
	Married	324	54
	Unmarried	274	46
	Married but single	2	0
	Total	600	100
9	Family Type of the Respondents		
	Join Family	333	55
	Nuclear Family	267	45
	Total	600	100

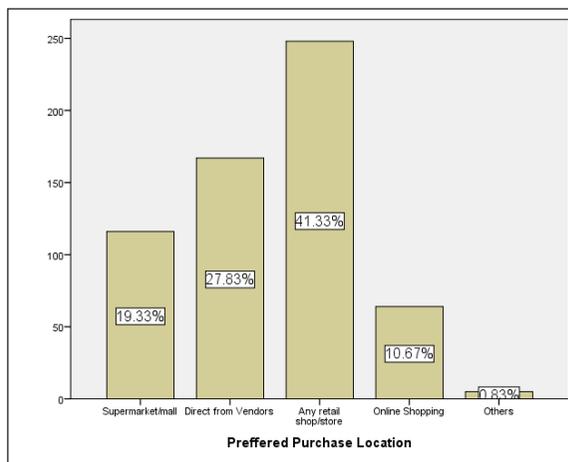
Source: Primary Data

In order to purchase consumers' perceptions regarding laptops, the responses of 600 consumers of laptops from Gujarat were collected and tabulated with the help of SPSS software. Socioeconomic profile of the sample respondents is shown in Table-1, where it is found that the gender compositions of respondents 75% males and 25% females. The majority (49%) of the respondents fall below age 25 years. 34% of the respondents having post graduation education. 47% of the respondents possess computer degree in the education. Majority of the respondents (59%) having family monthly income less than 50,000. 49% of the respondents belong to urban area and 54% of the respondents were married, while 55% of the respondents live in Join family.



Influence of sources
Source: Primary Data

Majority of the respondents influenced through the recommendation of IT Expert followed by their family members, friends and retail store visits.



Majority of the respondents preferred to purchase the laptop from any retail store or shop option followed by directly purchasing the laptop from vendors.

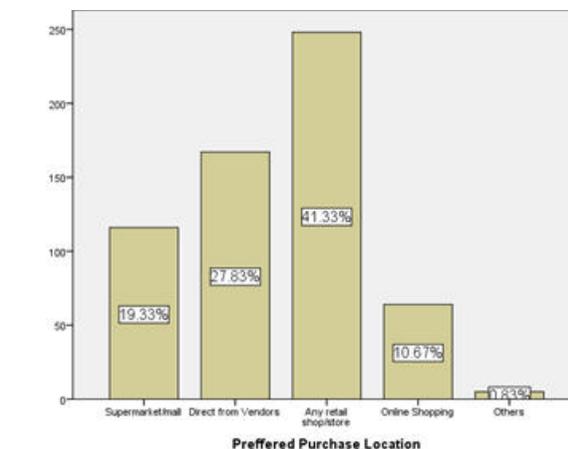


Table 2: Satisfaction level average score regarding different factors of laptops

Factors	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Laptop features	3.86	1
Price of laptop	3.70	2
After sale services	3.56	3
Promotional offers	3.24	5
Warranty and guarantee conditions	3.42	4

Source: Primary data collection

As far as the satisfaction concerned respondents highly satisfy with laptop features, which was followed by price of the laptop, After sale services warranty and guarantee conditions and promotional offers.

Table 3: Importance level average score regarding different factors of laptops

Factors	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Laptop features	3.80	1
Price of laptop	3.22	5
After sale services	3.45	3
Promotional offers	3.30	4
Warranty and guarantee conditions	3.65	2

Source: Primary data collection

From the above table it is concluded that respondents gave highest importance of laptop features followed by warranty and guarantee conditions, after sale services, promotional offers and price of the laptop.

Now, To find out if there is any association between the importance level and satisfaction level of the respondents regarding

different factors of laptop, Kendall's coefficient of concordance test was applied. As shown in the table below, calculated values shows that there is significant association between the importance level of respondents regarding different factors of laptops except between satisfaction level regarding price they paid and importance level regarding promotional offers only.

Table 4: Association between importance level and satisfaction level regarding various factors of laptop.

Satisfaction level		Laptop features	Price of laptop	After sale services	Promotional offers	Warranty and guarantee conditions
Importance Level						
Laptop features	Correlation Sig.	.445 .000	.345 .000	.475 .000	.311 .000	.462 .000
Price of laptop	Correlation Sig.	.345 .000	.540 .000	.367 .000	.261 .002	.351 .000
After sale services	Correlation Sig.	.384 .000	.436 .000	.425 .000	.345 .000	.464 .000
Promotional offers	Correlation Sig.	.137 .000	.102 .154	.309 .000	.552 .000	.245 .000
Warranty and guarantee conditions	Correlation Sig.	.435 .000	.415 .000	.458 .000	.358 .000	.448 .000

Source: Primary Data

For studying brand loyalty among the contacted respondents regarding the laptop they use, and whether they were ready to switch to another brand in future or not. And an analysis of the gathered data indicated that majority of the respondents (38%) shown interest in shifting to another brand of laptop in future while 33% of the respondents were uncertain about the brand of new laptop they would buy in future, while 29% of the respondents found brand loyal as they would like to stick to the same brand in future purchase

Table 4: Frequency distribution of respondents regarding brand loyalty

Sr. No.	Response category	Percentages
1	Shift to different Brand	38
2	Uncertain	33
3	Same Brand	29
	Total	100%

Findings:

1. Majority of the respondents (49%) possessing laptops were less than 26 years.
2. A very large number of respondents who were possessing laptops were post graduates.
3. The majority of the respondents preferred to purchase a brand of the laptop of referred by an IT expert followed by family members and friends and relatives.

4. Local retail shops and direct vendors were preferred for purchasing the laptop of their choice.
5. The laptop features, price of the laptop, after sale services, promotional offers and warranty and guarantee conditions were considered important while purchasing laptops but comparatively features of laptops were considered the most important followed warranty and guarantee conditions.
6. A majority of the respondents were in favor switching to a different brand of laptop in the future purchase of laptop.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Now-a-days, the number of people who are using and owning personal computers (PC) substantial increases in all over the world. In this research, it has been found that the features of laptop, price, after sale services, guarantee and warranty conditions and promotional offers, all these factors influence consumers' laptop purchase decisions. In order to improve the market share, companies should provide better featured laptops and should work on pricing strategy, easily availability of laptops. In order to improve the market share, the marketers should find the drawbacks of the strategy and should work on enhancing the quality and services aspect on the branding.

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