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Consumer Usage Pattern of Internet in Mobile Phone Purchase – A Study of Consumers in Punjab

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Abstract

internet is a world of its own. It's a virtual word which is now getting more and more real. In this transition, it is also finding its way in a very tangible field of marketing channels. This particular paper tries to look at the consumer behaviour of consumers in select cities of Punjab towards the internet as a channel of purchase for mobile phones. The paper looks at the utility of internet for a consumer in Punjab who is planning to buy a mobile phone. The paper concludes that consumer in Punjab uses internet as a source of information but doesn't prefer it as a channel for purchase of mobile phone.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction and implementation of internet technologies has created new market for manufacturers and service providers and also has provided new arena for innovative marketing strategies by the professionals. There are various reasons of shifting the customers buying patterns towards online retail shops. The facility of comparing your product with competitive products on the basis of price, colour, size and quality is one of the biggest benefits of online shopping. The other popular names for online shopping are virtual store, e-shop, webshop, internet shop, web-store and online storefront etc. These days Mobile commerce or m-commerce is also one of the popular means of shopping. The facilities of various coupon and discount scheme are also fascinating the customers in online shopping. In our time, internet is acknowledged as noteworthy valuable communication channel taxing with the traditional ones, such as walkie-talkie, magazines, and small screen. It allows consumer to shop from any vendor he finds suitable so he gets the access to all brands which is at times hindered in offline mode. Secondly, the consumer has time advantage as he can do shopping according to time available to him and has not to be dependent on schedule of retailer. This is a great advantage for the working class, probably the reason for this channel to be favorite among newly employed age group of 23-24 years. This also gives a lot of options for the female section of society especially housewives and working women as they can be comfortable with their daily schedule and yet be able to do shopping as desired. Thirdly, it gives him place access i.e. consumer can do shopping from anywhere irrespective of his location. The last point is of great importance to remote area residents. Often one can come across stories on how a person from far flung areas in North East have been able to purchase products for which earlier one would have to come to nearby big towns. This is also resulting in dependence on big city markets for consumers as they can select from various vendors of their choice and so shopping which earlier was not possible. This mode results in saving time for consumer as consumer can do shopping sitting at his place of comfort and does not have to wait for an appropriate time to move out and do shopping for the products. The online channel today provides an option to consumer to check across various websites for best offers and can make an informed decision basis the product comparisons. Consumer also has the option of checking the review of earlier customers for the product and make a guided decision.

The increasing consumer base, principally of youths, is playing a significant role in the online shopping. KPMG came out with a report on "Retail in Emerging Market" which identified youth as the key element behind the sterling growth of e-commerce market in India. A major reason identified by this study for quick adoption of this channel by youth of the country is that the young earning youth is quite open to experimentation. Education has also come out to be an important factor in this report. The growing number of educated youth are also seen as a reason for the growth of e commerce market in India. Psychographic analysis on the surveyed youth in the report suggest that most of the Indian youth has a liberal mindset again re enforcing the point the youth is open to experimentation. This new generation of consumers is looking at options that provide them value for money, better service or at times a preference in service by virtue of brand association and customized products .As per the "Neilson Insights 2012" report 36% of total online consumer is within the age bracket of 15-24 years in India. This is way above the global average of 26%.Online consumers between age brackets of 15-34 years constitute the belly of the market with 75% share coming from this age group. This clearly shows the dominance of youth in the this space.

Another important take away from this report is that mobile is coming out to be the biggest platform for consumer doing online shopping. That is precisely the reason the e-commerce giants are now focusing more on mobile application-based purchase. Smart phones have huge contribution in increasing this percentage. The advent of smart phones has lead to birth of mobile phone applications which are in turn now revolutionizing the way purchase can be made. This chart, thus, brings a very important aspect that is contributing to the growth of online channel and its connection with mobility. Youth doesn't want to be constrained and online provides that boundaryless shopping experience which is personalized on his mobile phone.

The growth of mobiles is India has been phenomenal and generations born in 80s and 90s have witnessed the transition from a landline phone to smart phones as they call them today. To understand this entire story some background needs to be known.During the period between FY 2000 (ending 31 March 2000) and FY11, the wireless subscriber base grew at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 73.6% to reach 811.6 million by the end of FY 2011. The wireless segment has been registering monthly additions of approximately 3.8 million subscribers. The teledensity figures given in the chart below tell a story in itself. When Indian telecom subscriber moved from wiredline to wireless communication the teledensity just zoomed.

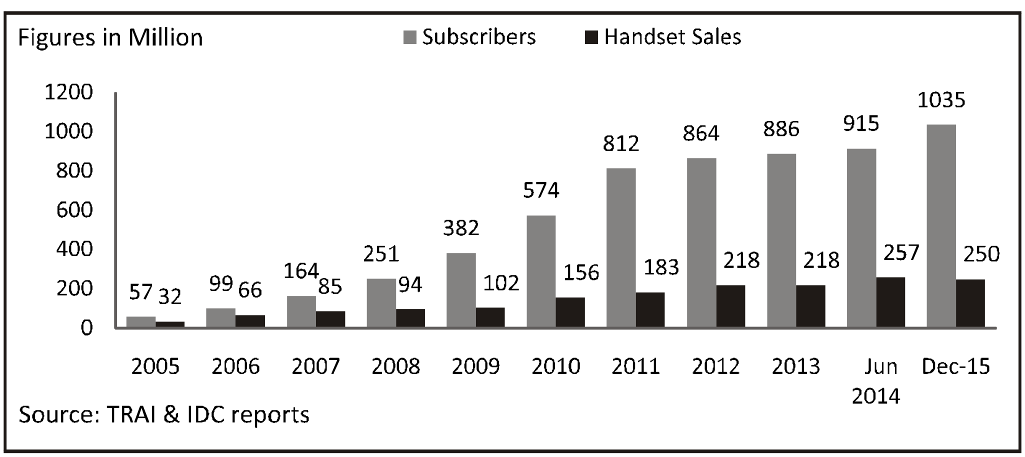
Such is the magnitude of change in teledensity that today in urban parts of India number of mobile connections are more than the population so much so that in Metro like New Delhi its more than double at 230%. This trend is not only with metros but is seen in some other states, too, though less in magnitude as compared to national capital. These are interesting figures considering the growth in numbers started just around 2004. The next wave of growth in the Indian telecom market is expected to be from the rural areas. The spread of telecom services has been aided by a significant decrease in international call charges, reduction in interconnect charges introduction of feature-rich low-cost handsets and the rollout of micro–prepaid and lifetime validity schemes. In March 2008, the TRAI abolished the access deficit charge (ADC), which provided a further boost to wireless services.

The constant fall in mobile tariffs has been one of the primary reasons behind the rapid growth of the wireless subscriber base. Currently, India boasts of one of the lowest mobile tariffs in the world. This has made mobile communication affordable to a wider section of the society. In 2006, a leading operator launched the "One India Plan." It was considered affordable, customer-friendly and innovative for both local and long distance calls. It also removed the distinction between fixed-line and cellular tariffs. The plan enabled customers to make calls anywhere within the country for INR1 (US$0.02) per minute any time during the day. This was followed up by an incumbent operator's introduction of cheaper tariffs, giving India one of the lowest tariffs in the world. Furthermore, the increase in subscriber base and teledensity has enabled telecom operators to achieve economies of scale and, at the same time, provide leading class services.

With the rapid increase in teledensity an appropriate ecosystem was getting developed for the growth of handset market in India. The call rates were reducing at a rapid rate, such was the decline in call rates, that the call rates in India became the lowest in the world. There is a little surprise then that researchers are increasingly looking at correlation between the growth in subscriber base and mobile handset sales. The below mentioned chart namely Figure 1 gives a pictorial description of this correlation.

India's handset market, one of the largest in the world, continues to grow strongly every year. Back in the early 2000s, mobile phones were typically only found in key urban centers and primary cities due to the low number of models in the market, high handset costs, expensive tariffs and limited network coverage.

The situation has changed over the past few years with the entry of more global brands and the emergence of homegrown manufacturers in the handset market. Wider availability of more affordable handsets, including smartphones, and significantly lower call rates has catalyzed growth in the market, most notably in rural areas. Competition within the crowded market is intense with more than 50 device manufacturers now selling their products.



Despite the increase in use and popularity of the internet over the last few years, the question of why consumers prefer to shop on the internet for certain products and not for others still remains poorly understood. Empirical research on consumers' preference for shopping on the internet has not been abundant. Until just a few years ago, the internet had been relatively new to consumers as a shopping medium, and is still in a growth phase. Lack of familiarity with its use and the risk perceived by consumers in revealing personal information as a part of online purchasing has created uncertainty and wariness about untried e-tailers. In addition, the appeal and adoption of online shopping have been hindered by inferior internet retail site design and functions. Consumers' preferences for shopping on the internet may depend on the product type, which will in turn influence the need to obtain product information easily and cost-effectively, or to test or try products before purchasing. In addition, consumers' willingness to purchase on the internet may vary depending on the attributes that internet retailers offer for online-shopping (i.e., information and order services, privacy, quality of products, site quality, etc.). In the brick-and-mortar retailing and catalog shopping literature, the published research indicates that the importance of store/mail-order attributes varies by product category (Eastlick & Feinberg, 1999). Lynch, Kent and Srinivasan (2001) found that with respect to e-commerce "the impact of site quality on loyalty and purchase intentions depends on the particular product category." Drawing upon the previous literature, the authors propose that product classifications have a significant impact on consumers' preference for shopping on the internet, and the importance they assign to internet retailers' attributes.

A technology with an easy access starts a revolutionary change. In case of internet its success as a delivery channel is largely attributed to the much improved access of internet. The cost of internet pack on mobiles has reduced, speeds have increased and so is the acceptance of technology. Another very important enabling factor has been the growth of smart phones. Smart phones have been discussed in earlier part, hence will not get into its details again as a product but in given context smart phones have ushered a revolution in delivery channels. The most advantage that internet provides is to the people living in rural and remote areas. Their dependence on coming to nearby big town has been reduced significantly. In metro and big towns, it saves the time for consumer to do mobile phone shopping. He can now just connect to internet and do easy product comparisons, price comparisons and if satisfied, can buy online as well. Cash on delivery model adopted by Indian E-tailers has changed the shopping pattern for Indian consumer. Indian consumer has a typical behaviour of buying after having touch and feel of the product and cash on delivery model gives him the assurance of doing the same before payment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Coelho & Easingwood, 2008 believed that distribution channels also undergo changes but as compared to other visible changes this change happens quietly and gradually. The changes may happen on account of changing consumer needs, changes in technology driving consumer and channel sophistication . Changes in distribution channels because of other factors of business environment like increase in competition or change in competitors' strategies or purely because of environmental reasons. The changes can also be initiated from the manufacturers side and can be even more far reaching. Mazursky and Jacob (1985) through their research concluded that the financial transactions have highly important role for the consumer. At a store, the financial clarity of each deal being provided, the refund or exchange policy are also critically important for the consumer.

Sheth (1998) observed that with certain industries facing slow growth rates and stiffer competition coupled with fast changes in technological domain forced has made companies look for means of reducing cost of their operations and improve the effectiveness of operations. Companies have started looking at redesigning their business processes, with increasing use of computer-based automation and reducing the employee force has companies reduce manpower related costs. Peterson *et al.* (1997) in their research on internet impact on consumer behaviour noted that despite the increase in use and popularity of the internet over the last few years, the question of why consumers prefer to shop on the internet for certain products and not for others still remains poorly understood. Empirical research on consumers' preference for shopping on the internet has not been abundant. Until just a few years ago, the internet had been relatively new to consumers as a shopping medium, and is still in a growth phase. Lack of familiarity with its use and the risk perceived by consumers in revealing personal information as a part of online purchasing has created uncertainty and wariness about untried e-tailers. In addition, the appeal and adoption of online shopping have been hindered by inferior internet retail site design and functions.

According to the Ernst and Young Global Online Retailing Report (MacIntosh, 2001), there is a discrepancy between e-tailers and customers regarding why customers visit a site. Retailers were reported to believe that factors such as convenience, reputation/trust, and customer service were most important, while customers were reported to list merchandise assortment and competitive prices as the factors that mattered most to them (McIntosh, 2001).

Zhou *et al.* (2007) prepared a synthesis of studies related to online shopping behaviour and developed a reference model called OSAM (Online Shopping

Acceptance Model) to explain consumer acceptance of online shopping. The literature survey revealed that a myriad of factors have been examined in the context of online shopping and mixed results on those factors have been reported. The proposed model helps reconcile conflicting findings, discover recent trends in this line of research, and shed light on future research directions. Girard Tulay *et al.* (2002) examined the influence of product classification (i.e., search, experience, and credence) on consumer preferences for shopping on the internet, and the importance of internet retailers' attributes. Based on the review of the product classification literature, products are classified into four categories: search products, two types of experience products, and credence products. Data were collected from adult internet users in two phases, through self-administered surveys. The findings of the study supported the hypothesis that product classes significantly influence consumers' online purchase preferences. internet retailer attributes were found to be important as well. In addition, the findings confirm that the importance consumers place upon internet retailer attributes significantly influences their online purchase preference for different product categories. Liao & Cheung (2001) analyse consumer attitude towards internet-based e-shopping. The study was conducted on B 2 C e-commerce in Singapore. Regression analysis shows that the life content of products, transactions security, price, vendor quality, IT education and internet usage significantly affect the initial willingness of Singaporeans to e-shop on the internet. Sultan and Henrichs (2000) concluded that the consumer's willingness to and preference for adopting the internet as his or her shopping medium was also positively related to income, household size, and innovativeness.

Sharma Ranuka; Mehta Kiran; and Sharma Shashank (2014) conducted a study to understand the online buying behaviour of the consumer in India. The study concluded that there is increasing significance of online stores in life of the Indian people and are very frequently visited by the Indians. The study found that travel still remains the largest source of business online . Bellman, Lohse and Johnson (1999) examine the relationship among demographics, personal characteristics, and attitudes towards online shopping. These authors find that people who have a more wired lifestyle. And who are more time constrained tends to buy online more frequently, i.e., those who use the internet as a routine tool and/or those who are more time starved prefer shopping on the internet. Swaminathan, Lepkowska-White, and Rao (1999) referred to vendor characteristics, security of transactions, content for privacy and customer characteristics as factors influencing electronic exchange. Donthu and Garcia (1999) proposed that risk aversion, innovativeness, brand consciousness, price consciousness, importance of convenience, variety-seeking propensity, impulsiveness, attitude toward adverting, attitude toward shopping, and attitude toward direct marketing would influence online shopping behaviour and found that among them, age, income, importance of convenience, innovativeness, risk aversion, impulsiveness, variety-seeking propensity, attitude toward direct marketing, and attitude toward advertising were factors influencing online shopping behaviour. Bhatnagar, Misra and Rao (2000) measure how demographics, vender/service/ product characteristics, and website quality influence the consumers, their attitude towards online shopping and consequently their online buying behaviour. They report that the convenience the internet affords and the risk perceived by the consumers are related to the two dependent variables (attitudes and behaviour) positively and negatively, respectively. Sultan and Henrichs (2000) concluded that the consumer's willingness to and preference for adopting the internet as his or her shopping medium was also positively related to income, household size, and innovativeness.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The primary objective of the study is to identify the pattern of usage of internet by the consumers for mobile phone purchase in the state of Punjab. The objective of the study is destined to provide vital information to the marketing professionals in Mobile Handset industry on ways of approaching internet as a marketing tools and as a form of delivery channel.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

Primary data has been collected through the questionnaire. Secondary data is being used to form basis of introduction and literature review.

Scope of Study and Sampling

The study was done at locations in the State of Punjab & Union Territory Chandigarh. The respondent sample size was 600. Stratified Random Sampling Technique was used for data collection. Mobile companies divide cities on the basis of their sale potential and census Tier Classification.In this Tier classification metro towns and cities like Pune, Banglore form part of Tier 1 cities. Non-metros with population more than 10 Lacs qualify as Tier 2 cities. In Punjab, Tier 2 cities are Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Chandigarh. These cities have the availability of all channel types Exclusive, Multi Brand, Internet Respondents. Rest of the towns qualify as Tier 3 & below and cover rural areas as well. Hence, Tier 2 and Tier 3 & below were the basic strata and sub-strata were male, female, rural and urban classification.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Description		Number of Respondents	Percentage in Total Sample
Gender	Male	265	44%
	Female	335	56%
Area of Residence	Rural	161	27%
	Urban	439	73%
Age (Years)	< = 25	279	47%
	26-35	184	31%
	36-45	104	17%
	46-55	27	5%
	>55	6	1%
Occupation	Business	39	7%
	Service	310	52%
	Agriculture	28	5%
	Housewife	14	2%
	Student	194	32%
	Others	15	3%
Education Level	Under-Graduate	159	27%
	Graduate	111	19%
	Post-Graduate	219	37%
	Professional	70	12%
	Others	41	7%

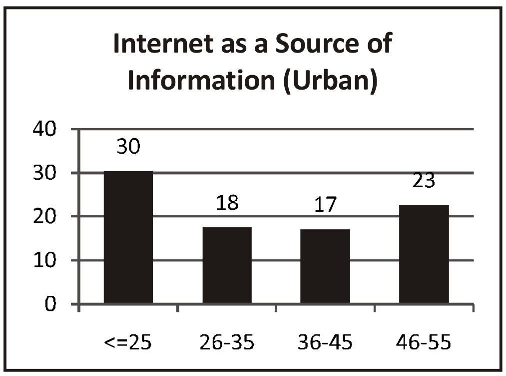
Usage Pattern of Internet

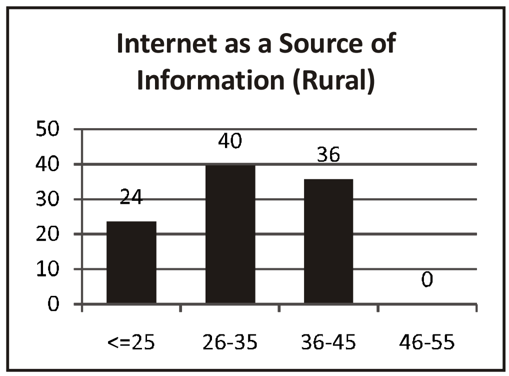
Consumers were asked to name their various sources of information when they plan to purchase a mobile phone. Following are the responses to the statement. It is to be noted that consumers were allowed to give multiple responses.

Sources of Information About Mobile Phone Range (Multiple Response)

Source of Information	No.	%age
Advertisements	118	20
Friends	176	29
Public Talk	79	13
Internet	175	29
Own Observation	129	22
Others	41	7

Internet came out to be the top source of information for the respondents. In the below charts, let's look at the demographic beakup of the pattern.





In urban areas, internet is a more prominent source of information among the less than 25 years age group whereas in rural areas it is the most prominent source of information among the 26-35 years age group.

Sources of Information About Mobile Phone Range (Multiple Response)

Source of Information	Male		Female		Z-value
	No.	%age	No.	%age	
Advertisements	43	16.23	75	22.39	1.89
Friends	84	31.70	92	27.46	1.13
Public Talk	22	8.30	57	17.01	3.13
Internet	82	30.94	93	27.76	0.85
Own Observation	48	18.11	81	24.18	1.80
Others	14	5.28	27	8.06	1.34

In the above chart, responses related to the respondents' source of information for mobile phone purchase are listed. The respondents were asked to identify the sources from where the respondents gathers information related to purchase of mobile phone. internet remained the top source of information for the female respondents across Punjab and second top most source of information for male members.

Sources of Information About Mobile Phone Range (Multiple Response)

Source of Information	Rural		Urban		Z-value
	No.	%age	No.	%age	
Advertisements	36	22.36	82	18.68	1.01
Friends	54	33.54	122	27.79	1.37
Public Talk	34	21.12	45	10.25	3.49
internet	52	32.30	123	28.02	1.02
Own Observation	42	26.09	87	19.82	1.66
Others	14	8.70	27	6.15	1.09

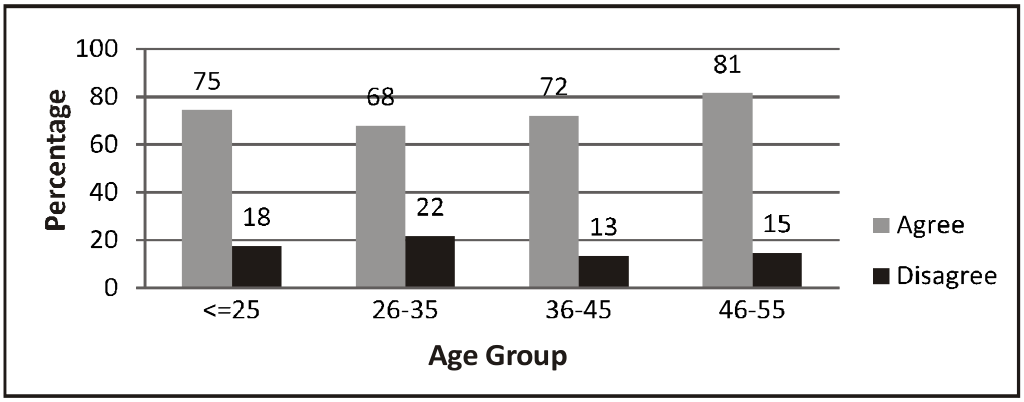
Among the rural area consumers, internet was the second most preferred source after friends. In case of urban area consumers, internet remained the top source of information.

Statement	Agreement %age	Neutral %age	Disagreement %age
I don't believe in internet till I get a personal feedback	73	9	18%

When respondents were asked if they believe in the information provided by internet or they second it with personal feedback. 436 out of 600 respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and another 54 were neutral to the statement. Those who agreed with the statement, basically mean that while they may be using internet as a source of information they don't completely believe in the information provided online and try to look for confirmation from personal sources like friends, self-observation etc. This displays the lack of trust in the information provided by the internet. Out of the 214 respondents who said that they use internet as a source of information to get knowledge about the mobile phone range 153 agreed or strongly agreed to this statement which is roughly 72% of them. This effectively indicates that along with internet people also use other sources as well to gather information and the reliability on information provided online is pretty less.

Statement	Rural		Urban		t-value
	Mean	Overall	Mean	Overall	
I don't believe in internet till I get a personal feedback	3.61	A	3.82	A	2.13*

The difference in the rural and urban consumers on the extent of agreement with the statement is significant. Rural consumers seemed to believe more on the information provided by internet as compared to their urban counterparts.



The age group analysis reveals that though youngest set of consumers is using internet as their main source of information yet they are not relying on the information provided by it and check with their personal sources.

Statement	Male		Female		t-value
	Mean	Overall	Mean	Overall	
I don't believe in internet till I get a personal feedback	3.89	A	3.67	A	2.50

Male respondents have more tendency to check the information provided by the internet with their personal sources as compared to female respondents.

Statement	Agreement %age	Neutral %age	Disagreement %age
internet helps me do feature comparison	90	5	6

Respondents were asked if they use internet for feature comparison among various companies and models. An overwhelming majority 538 out of 600 respondents use internet for feature comparison which is the reason for overall clear agreement with the statement.

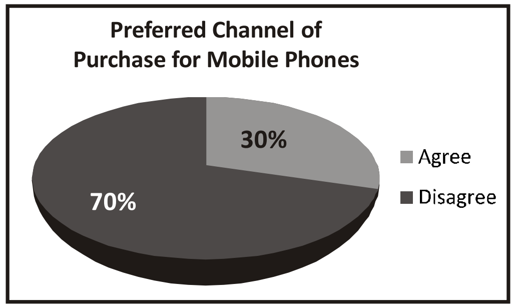
Statement	Agreement %age	Neutral %age	Disagreement %age
internet helps me do price comparison	90	7	3

Similar to the response to previous query, consumers were almost unanimously agreeing that they use internet for price comparison among various mobile phone products.

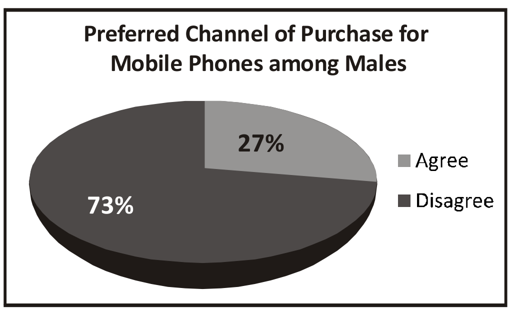
Statement	Agreement %age	Neutral %age	Disagreement %age
Online effort is only to get an idea about price and features	71	13	16

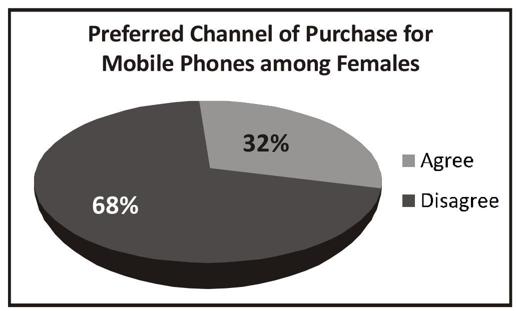
Respondents were asked if they use internet to only gather information related price and features and that too as an idea or benchmarking. 426 out of 600 respondents agreed to the statement that they use internet as a source of information to gather information related to price and features only in case of mobile phones. 316 of these respondents had responded positively to the statement 1 that checked their reliance on information provided by internet. This means 52% of the respondents use internet to gather information related to price and features, but don't rely on the information provided by the internet and crosscheck the same with personal sources. The above question also shows that most of the respondents do not make purchase of mobile phones online and just use internet for the purpose of price and feature comparison. The online effort is only to check features of the mobile phones and do price comparison. After taking an idea about the product features and price, people in Punjab tend to look for their own sources to consolidate the information received. The above statement in a way summarizes the behavior or attitude of the respondents towards the internet in terms of mobile phone purchase.

This is a logical conclusion statement of the consumer in context of purchase of Mobile Phones. Respondents were asked to name their preferred channel of purchase in case of mobile phone. 422 out of 600 respondents felt that

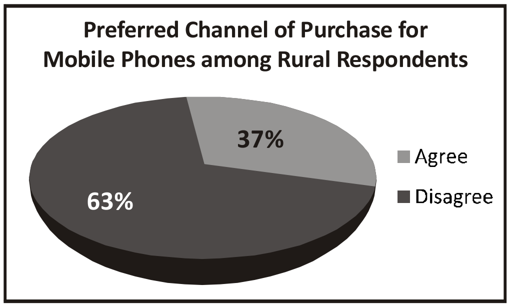


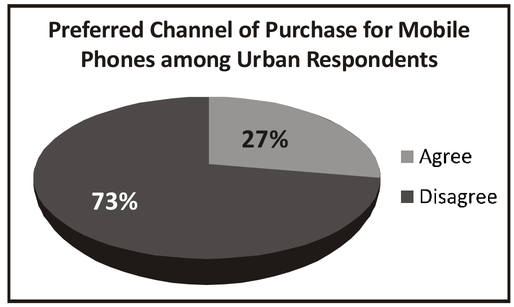
their preferred channel of purchase is shop and 178 out of 600 agreed that their preferred mode of purchase of mobile phone is online. This statement and the analysis from the previous statement brings to a very important conclusion that though internet is an important source of information (a) it is not taken to be a reliable source of information and most of the users tend to check from their personal sources (b) most of the respondents use internet only for feature and price comparison and don't prefer it for the final purchase.



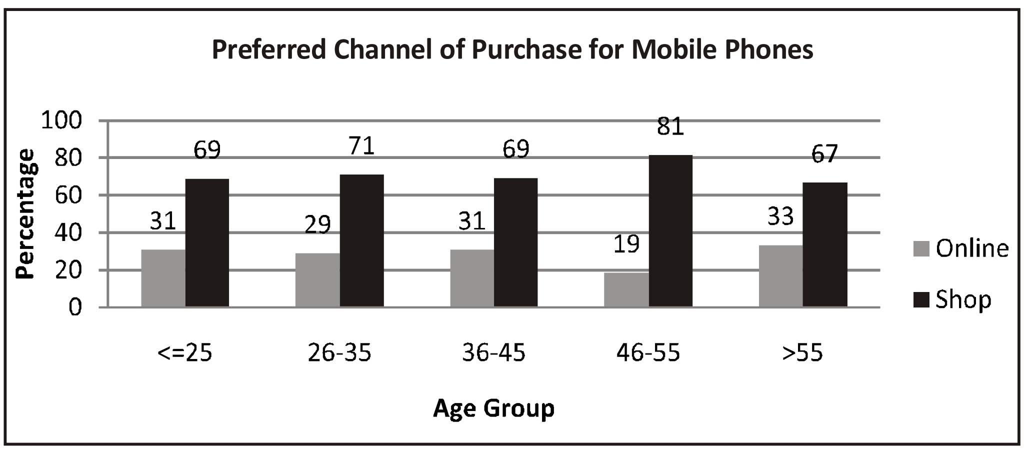


Brick and Mortar stores turned out to be the top choice of these respondents. Summarizing the behavior of male and female respondents based on their responses to statement 1, 2, 3 & 4 and to the above question, it can be safely concluded that male respondents use internet as an important source of information gathering while looking for information related to mobile phones. The reliability of information provided by internet is pretty low among male members and is only used for gathering information related to feature and price and its comparison with other models. The purchasing of mobile phone is not mostly done by internet.





A very safe conclusion that can be drawn from above figures is that urban and rural population both use internet only as a reference point and doesn't actually believe in buying mobile phones from internet. This comes out to be a very significant outcome of the study and will help companies focus their resources judiciously on other channels of promotion. Online platforms should also focus on rural markets as they seem to be keener on information given by internet in case of mobile phones.



The preferred mode of purchase among various age groups is displayed by the above chart. A general trend of traditional stores being more popular among the respondents holds here as well. The younger age group supposed to be more tech savvy doesn't seem to prefer online as their preferred channel of purchase. There are no significant deviations from the overall average across any age group. Hence the age group analysis also shows that people in Punjab across age groups prefer to do shopping through offline mode and use internet only for price and feature comparison.

This is a very important analysis, the respondents were asked to select their preferred channel for mobile phone shopping and the responses have been segregated on the basis of occupation. Online channel gets the maximum support from the business category, but in that category as well, majority of respondents preferred offline or traditional brick and mortar store. Housewives had the least preference towards internet as a mode of purchase. Students also majorly don't prefer internet as a channel for purchase of mobile phone. These revelations speak a lot about the consumer behaviour of people in Punjab across occupation pattern towards online shopping of mobile phone.

CONCLUSION

From the data interpretation above, the following facts emerge :-

- internet has emerged as a very important source of information. The responses clearly indicate that internet has turned out to be a critical source of information. Rural consumers tend to rely more on it as compared to urban consumers .
- People largely don't believe in the information provided by the internet and tend to second the information provided online from their personal sources.
- Consumers in Punjab use internet mostly for price and feature comparison.
- The traditional brick and mortar store remains the preferred choice of the consumers of Punjab when it comes to purchasing a mobile phone.

The objective of the study was to understand the usage pattern of the internet by the consumers in Punjab. Based on the study it can be concluded that consumers extensively use internet to collect information related to mobile phones but do not believe in the information provided by it. Also, internet is limited to being a source of information and is not a preferred channel of purchase and people ultimately tend to rely on brick and mortar store for the purchase of mobile phone.

The study reveals that consumer in Punjab is using internet extensively for information search while purchase of mobile handset. The important thing to understand is that he/she is using it mainly for two purposes. One is the feature comparison; on this, companies should ensure that the relevant information for feature comparison is provided. There are specific websites that are popular among consumers for such comparisons. Company should ensure that its product gets compared and while comparison is displayed its key features are highlighted. Companies should also look at the kind of reviews being written about its products online. Blogger scam was a much talked about thing when Samsung and Nokia were locked in a battle of supremacy over Indian mobile phone market. Market was abuzz with stories that one company has hired bloggers to write negative reviews about the others newly launched smart phone range. Companies should encourage consumers to write reviews online and should also ensure the screening of these reviews. On the price comparison front, since the purchase is not happening much through online channel, hence companies should avoid giving aggressive pricing to online channel. Some consumers go online when they have to purchase a mobile phone. There is another set of consumers who keep on checking the internet to look at new offerings. These are the set of consumers who can be important in forming the opinion of peer and family members in buying a mobile phone. Companies should keep looking for such opinion makers and develop a program to reach them separately and should make sincere efforts to engage with them. The bottom line is the presence of the brand online is necessary for success in Punjab market.

Another point of attention is the fact that most of the consumers go online but only for feature and price comparison. Final purchasing happens from traditional brick and mortar store. The companies that are using online only as a channel will have to look at this study. Consumers don't prefer buying from online channel, hence the presence of product on the shelf of a shop is important for consumers in Punjab. This has a very interesting implication for the mobile handset marketing professional. internet can be used a source of providing information to the consumers in Punjab extensively. The conversion of sales online will be difficult and reliance on internet for sales should not be there in case of Punjab market. The above study also reveals that as the consumer is coming pre-informed about the product features, the company needs to train the manpower standing on the shop floors in a much better way . The salesman needs to understand this fact and accordingly pitch the sales story. The online story and the story at the retails shop should be in sync for consumer to get confidence about the dealings. Also, since the consumer has fair bit of idea on price the quoting of price the first time should be such that further discussion can happen.

The traditional way of sales is as relevant as it was five years ago. internet is now a reality and its influence on the way marketing and sale done in Punjab is profound. Companies will have to balance out their marketing and sales strategy based on the inputs provided by the research.

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