



International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal Homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

A Study on the Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Smartphones in the Digital Era

Janani K¹, R. Gayathri²

¹MBA Student, Department of Management Studies, Jerusalem College of Engineering, Chennai – 600100, India

²Project Guide, Department of Management Studies, Jerusalem College of Engineering, Chennai – 600100, India

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.07.1026.3217>

ABSTRACT

Buying a smartphone in the current environment mostly requires extensive online surveys, comparisons in terms of price and reading of other consumers' reviews. This study aims to investigate the relationship between four factors, including price, brand image, product quality and social media reviews, and consumers' buying behaviour towards smartphones. The descriptive research design was utilised, and the primary data were gathered from 80 participants, who were selected employing a convenience sampling method. The data were collected using a Google Forms questionnaire and analysed using percentage analysis, Pearson correlation, one-way ANOVA and the weighted average method. The results revealed that there was a strong positive correlation between smartphone price and consumer buying behaviour ($r = 0.785$, $p = 0.000$), whereas the buying behavior differed significantly between the brand-image categories ($F = 34.17$, $p = 0.000$). Regarding the analysis of social media reviews, comparing smartphones on the basis of reviews appeared to be the most common activity (weighted average 3.36), followed by taking reviews into account when choosing a smartphone (3.30). Overall, the results suggest that the participants take all factors into account when buy smartphones. Smartphone companies can benefit from the results of the study when determining their product's price, branding, quality and social media marketing strategy.

Keywords: Consumer Buying Behaviour, Smartphones, Price, Brand Image, Product Quality, Social Media Reviews, Digital Era

1. INTRODUCTION

Most people nowadays use their smartphones for way more than making calls on them: they do research on it, they shop on it, they pay their utility bills on it, they socialize through it and even work on them. However, the way in which they choose their smartphone has changed. A buyer can easily research and compare prices, specifications and brands within minutes and even read other owners' reviews to know what to expect before shelling out some cash. With all the various brands out there, companies and marketers have to understand what influences a buyer into choosing one over the other.

Consumer buying behaviour is described as the process a consumer goes through from perceiving a need to searching for information, considering options and ultimately deciding to buy a product or service. In the case of smartphones, the criteria that are taken into consideration are price, brand image, product quality, features, durability, offers and online information. Their relative importance varies from buyer to buyer, based on preference, budget, lifestyle, and access to information.

It is often the price that catches the eye of the buyer first. Comparing the various prices and checking if their features are up to their needs and asking if a cheaper model will suffice before purchasing plays a role. In terms of brand image, a recognized brand usually means quality and reliability, and often has an impact on the customer's decisions when faced with similar products.

As for the product quality, its characteristics and features, durability, battery life, camera features and display all determine if the customer's needs and interests will be met after purchase. Lastly, the customer will check out social media reviews, which is the newest of the four factors. The user-generated content serves as his guide in comparing the different products.

Since companies are constantly coming out with new models, the competition in this industry is tough and customers are no longer dependent on the companies' information or that of traditional media. Thus, this study aims to establish the relationship between the price, brand image, product quality and social media reviews amongst consumer buying behaviours in relation to smartphones..

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Earlier research into factors influencing the purchase of smartphones has mainly focused on the role of price, brand and quality. Arjuna and Ilmi (2020) employed multiple regression and concluded that product quality, brand image and price each significantly influenced the decision to purchase. In

contrast, Listiana and Aida (2021) found mixed results when investigating Xiaomi phones: product quality and brand image each had a positive and significant effect, while price positively but insignificantly influenced the decision. Finally, Pratiwi et al. (2022) surveyed 128 iPhone users in Malang and, using multiple linear regression, concluded that brand image, product quality and price each positively and significantly influenced the purchase decision.

Studies concerning the factors influencing young consumers' purchase intentions are largely consistent with those regarding older consumers. Rakib et al. (2022) found that product features, brand image and price significantly influenced young customers' purchase intentions during the COVID-19 pandemic, although social influence did not. Alsmadi et al. (2024) investigated the purchase intentions of Jordanian university students and found that social influence, price, brand image, product features, perceived usefulness, ease of use and product support service each significantly influenced the intention to purchase smartphones to differing degrees.

A number of studies have investigated the impact of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Do Rosário and Loureiro (2021) compared the eWOM of digital influencers on the platforms of Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, finding that YouTube and Instagram were more effective than Facebook in terms of information quality, credibility, usefulness and buying intention. Yodthong and Yansomboon (2022) surveyed 200 consumers who had viewed online reviews of Samsung foldable phones and found that information quality, credibility, need for information, usefulness and acceptance of the information all significantly influenced purchase intention.

Research gap

These studies focus primarily on one factor, a combination of specific factors, or one brand or social media platform. Few investigate factors such as price, brand image, product quality, and social media reviews in combination with each other on consumer buying behaviour toward smartphones or online reviews, which contribute to influences that earlier studies did not address. This study aims to address this lack of research.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of this study is to identify the influential factors on the consumer buying behavior towards smartphones in the digital age. Thus, the following objectives are set and will be achieved by the statistical analysis:

1. Determine the influence of Price on the Consumer Buying Behaviour toward smartphones using Pearson correlation;
2. Test the direction and degree of the effect of Brand Image on the Consumer Buying Behaviour toward smartphones with the help of one-way ANOVA;
3. Demonstrate how the Social Media Reviews affect Consumer Buying Behaviour toward smartphones using a weighted average method.

The product quality is also subject to analysis as it is the characteristic that is under the highest percentage of respondent evaluation. Therefore, an analysis of the percentage distribution of the respondents' opinions will be conducted

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design . The paper employs a descriptive research design that best fits attempting to describe the viewpoint of respondents. The independent variables include price, brand image, product quality, and social media reviews whereas the dependent variable is the consumer buying behaviour towards smartphones.

Sampling . The population was consumers who use or have purchased smartphones. The convenience sampling technique, which is a non-probability sampling procedure wherein participants are selected on an ease-of-access basis, was selected. The convenience sampling technique was selected whereby 80 respondents were picked.

Data collection . The primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire. Using Google forms, the questionnaire initially sought the respondents' demography before requesting them to indicate their opinion on statements related to the price, brand image, product quality, social media reviews, and buying behaviour of smartphones on a scale of Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Conversely, secondary data were gathered from journals, published research, books, and websites.

Tools of analysis. The analysis procedure involved percentage analysis to describe the respondents' demography as well as indicate the distribution of their viewpoint. Similarly, Pearson correlation analysis was utilized to determine the relationship between the price and the consumer buying behaviour towards smartphones. However, a one-way ANOVA procedure was utilized to evaluate if the consumer buying behavior differed significantly among brand image groups. On the other hand, a weighted average approach where the Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree registered scores 1 to 5 respectively was employed to indicate opinion towards social media review. A 0.05% level of significance was set in the analysis.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Profile of respondents

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents (N = 80)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (years)	Below 20	9	11.3
Age (years)	20–25	57	71.3
Age (years)	26–30	3	3.8
Age (years)	31–35	6	7.5
Age (years)	Above 35	5	6.3
Gender	Male	37	46.3
Gender	Female	43	53.8
Occupation	Student	35	43.8
Occupation	Employee	29	36.3
Occupation	Professional	5	6.3
Occupation	Other	11	13.8
Total		80	100.0

Most respondents (71.3%) were between 20 and 25 years old, so the sample is a young one. Females made up 53.8% and males 46.3%. Students formed the largest occupational group (43.8%), followed by employees (36.3%).

5.2 Percentage analysis of respondents' opinions

Table 2: Responses to statements on the four factors (frequencies, N = 80)

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	A + SA (%)
Price						
Price is important when purchasing a smartphone	12	4	16	23	25	60.0
I consider the price in relation to the value provided	12	5	12	28	23	63.8
I compare smartphone prices before purchase	7	5	16	23	29	65.0
Discounts influence my purchase decision	14	7	17	17	25	52.5
I avoid smartphones with a high price	11	5	22	19	23	52.5
Brand Image						
I avoid smartphones from brands I do not prefer	12	8	22	20	18	47.5
I prefer trusted smartphone brands	7	9	9	22	33	68.8
I feel confident buying from a well-known brand	8	6	13	18	35	66.3

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	A + SA (%)
I consider the brand before purchase	8	4	17	24	27	63.8
I prefer popular smartphone brands	14	7	10	21	28	61.3
Product Quality						
Product quality is important when purchasing	9	4	13	18	36	67.5
I prefer durable smartphones	6	5	13	24	32	70.0
Smartphone performance influences my decision	9	7	8	22	34	70.0
I consider build quality before purchase	8	8	9	26	29	68.8
I am willing to pay more for better quality	12	10	14	23	21	55.0
Social Media Reviews						
I check social media reviews before purchase	14	7	20	22	17	48.8
I consider reviews when selecting a smartphone	12	11	16	23	18	51.3
Positive reviews influence my decision	13	10	21	24	12	45.0
Negative reviews influence my decision	13	7	22	24	14	47.5
I compare smartphones based on reviews	10	10	15	31	14	56.3

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Percentages are calculated as frequency ÷ 80.

Price. The most common response was to compare prices before purchasing, which received the agreement of 65.0%, followed by comparing the cost and benefits, which was supported by 63.8%, and general importance of the resource, which was shared by 60.0%. The impact of discounts was approved by half of the respondents (52.5%), while avoiding expensive products was explained by the same amount (52.5%). Therefore, for the majority of respondents, the price is an important criterion.

Brand image. Trustworthy brands were preferred by 68.8%, and trust in popular organizations proved to be common among 66.3%, which makes them take the lead. Considering brands before buying products received the agreement of 63.8%, and choosing popular organizations was shared by 61.3%. On the opposite, avoiding dispreferred brands was explained by only 47.5%, and 27.5% remained neutral about it. Therefore, the brand image plays a significant role in customer choices.

Product quality. Respondents' answers were positive to all criteria. Products appealing by their quality and being durable received the agreement of 70.0%, and the same amount of people paid attention to performance. 68.8% were guided by product quality when making their choices, while 67.5% admitted its general importance. Nevertheless, willingness to pay more for better quality remained unfilled, only 55.0% agreed to it.

Social media reviews. This criterion was less common, with the agreement score ranging from 45.0% to 56.3%. Comparing phones based on reviews was the most common action, which was supported by 56.3%, followed by choosing products based on reviews, which was explained by 51.3%, and actually reading them before buying, which received the agreement of 48.8%. Negative reviews were estimated by 47.5%, and positive ones, by 45.0%. Therefore, it can be said that people often use social media to read reviews and get informed about products.

5.3 Pearson correlation: price and consumer buying behaviour

H₀: There is no significant relationship between price and consumer buying behaviour towards smartphones.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between price and consumer buying behaviour towards smartphones.

Table 3: Correlation between price and consumer buying behaviour

Variables	Price	Consumer Buying Behaviour	Sig. (2-tailed)
Price	1.000	0.785	0.000
Consumer Buying Behaviour	0.785	1.000	0.000
N	80	80	

The correlation coefficient is 0.785 and the significance value is 0.000, well below 0.05. Price and consumer buying behaviour are therefore strongly and positively related, and the relationship is statistically significant, so the null hypothesis is rejected.

5.4 One-way ANOVA: brand image and consumer buying behaviour

H₀: There is no significant difference in consumer buying behaviour across the different levels of brand image.

H₁: There is a significant difference in consumer buying behaviour across the different levels of brand image.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA between brand image and consumer buying behaviour

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	68.45	4	17.11	34.17	0.000
Within Groups	37.56	75	0.50		
Total	106.01	79			

The F-value of 34.17 has a significance value of 0.000, which is below 0.05, so the null hypothesis is rejected. Consumer buying behaviour differs significantly across the brand-image groups.

5.5 Weighted average analysis: social media reviews

Table 5: Weighted average analysis of social media review statements

Statement	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Weighted Total	Weighted Average (Rank)
Checking reviews before purchase	14	7	20	22	17	261	3.26 (3)
Considering reviews when selecting	12	11	16	23	18	264	3.30 (2)
Positive reviews influence decision	13	10	21	24	12	252	3.15 (5)
Negative reviews influence decision	13	7	22	24	14	259	3.24 (4)
Comparing smartphones using reviews	10	10	15	31	14	269	3.36 (1)

Weighted total = $\Sigma(\text{frequency} \times \text{weight})$, with weights 1–5 for SD–SA. Weighted average = weighted total $\div$ 80.

Comparing smartphones using social media reviews had the highest weighted average (3.36), followed by considering reviews when selecting a phone (3.30), checking reviews before purchasing (3.26) and the influence of negative reviews (3.24). The influence of positive reviews was lowest (3.15). All five averages are slightly above the scale midpoint of 3, suggesting a moderate level of influence (strongest when respondents compare smartphones).

6. FINDINGS

- The study's sample was composed of 80 participants. The largest group represents respondents aged 20–25 (71.3%); 53.8% were female and 46.3% were male, and 43.8% were students and 36.3% were employees.

2. 60.0% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that price is an important factor, 63.8% evaluated the importance of price vs. value, and 65.0% compared the prices offered by different sellers; 52.5% were influenced by discounts and 52.5% avoided the high-end models.
3. 68.8% preferred to buy a trusted brand, 66.3% were confident about the quality of what they bought from known manufacturers, 63.8% carefully considered the brand when making their choice and 61.3% preferred popular brands, while only 47.5% avoided purchasing their disliked brands.
4. 67.5% evaluated the importance of quality, 70.0% preferred durable models, 70.0% admitted that performance influenced their decision, and 68.8% compared the build quality; 55.0% were willing to pay extra for the high quality.
5. For each of the five statements regarding the use of social media for reviews, the level of agreement ranged from 45.0 to 56.3%, and 56.3% compared different smartphones using the online reviews.
6. There was a strong positive correlation between the respondents' assessment of the importance of price and their buying behaviour ($r = 0.785$, $p = 0.000$).
7. Consumer buying behaviour differed significantly across the brand-image groups ($F = 34.17$, $p = 0.000$).
8. The weighted average across the five statements for each participant ranged from 3.15 to 3.36, with the highest mean score obtained for the use of reviews when comparing the options and the lowest influence detected for the statement about positive reviews.
9. Overall, all the four aspects were considered by respondents to varying degrees, but there were more agreements in regard to statements about quality and brands than about reviews.

7. SUGGESTIONS

1. Many respondents compare prices and weigh them against value, so companies should price competitively and make sure the features justify the price.
2. Opinions on discounts were mixed, so offers are better paired with real improvements in features, performance and value than used on their own.
3. Since trusted and well-known brands were clearly preferred, companies should protect their brand through steady quality, dependable service and honest communication.
4. Lesser-known brands can build confidence by giving clear product information, warranty support and genuine customer feedback.
5. Durability, performance and build quality drew high agreement, so companies should keep improving them.
6. Willingness to pay more for quality was comparatively low. Higher-priced models should therefore explain clearly what the extra cost buys.
7. Companies should share accurate information on social media, encourage genuine reviews and respond properly to negative ones.

8. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to determine the role of price, brand image, product quality and social media reviews on buyers' behaviour towards smartphones. The data were collected from 80 consumers, and the results reveal that the former is strongly and positively correlated with the latter, which differs significantly across the brand-image groups. The respondents also expressed considerable importance of quality, including its such aspects as durability, performance and design, while using social media as a tool of comparing smartphones, having moderate weighted averages of 3.15 to 3.36.

To put it shortly, the buyers do not rely solely on one criterion when making purchasing decisions. Thus, the companies that provide excellent products at affordable prices, create brand images that people trust and do not fail to respond to customers in social media can meet the customers' expectations.

9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Convenience sampling was used for this purpose, which involved choosing respondents on the basis of their accessibility and interest in the study.
- The study was limited by the respondents selected and area for two main reasons. The first was that the results could not be generalized extensively because of the selected procedure. Secondly, the results represented the views expressed by individuals surveyed based on their opinions, whereas their purchasing preferences might vary.
- The study considered the effect of price, brand image, the quality of the product, and social media reviews, while other factors affecting the purchase decisions of smartphones were not considered.

- The changing consumer preferences were related to developing new models, technologies, and trends, which are not taken into consideration in the study.

REFERENCES

1. Alsmadi, S., Hailat, K. Q., Bazi, S., & Al-Haddad, H. B. (2024). The influence of consumer awareness in the digital era on the selection of smartphones: A study among Jordanian university students. *Heliyon*, 10 (4), e25635. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e25635>
2. Arjuna, H., & Ilmi, S. (2020). Effect of brand image, price, and quality of product on the smartphone purchase decision. *EkBis: Jurnal Ekonomi dan Bisnis*, 3 (2), 294-305. <https://doi.org/10.14421/EkBis.2019.3.2.1190>
3. Do Rosário, J. F., & Loureiro, S. M. C. (2021). The effectiveness of e-word-of-mouth communication about smartphones purchase intention: Digital influencer. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*, 15 (4), 429-449. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIMA.2021.117567>
4. Listiana, & Aida, N. (2021). Analisis harga, kualitas produk, citra merek dan keputusan pembelian produk smartphone Xiaomi. *Pamator: Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Trunojoyo*, 14 (1). <https://doi.org/10.21107/pamator.v14i1.10121>
5. Pratiwi, et al. (2022). The influence of brand image, product quality, and price on purchase decisions: Study on iPhone smartphone users in Malang city. *Jamanika*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.22219/jamanika.v2i02.21963>
6. Rakib, et al. (2022). Factors affecting young customers' smartphone purchase intention during Covid-19 pandemic. *PubMed Central*, PMC9476370.
7. Yodthong, R., & Yansomboon, S. (2022). Electronic word of mouth and customers' purchase intention of Samsung foldable smartphone. *The Journal of Integrated Business Innovation and Sustainability (JIBIS)*, 12 (2), 63-73.