

Dose Every One Accept the Innovations; an Analysis of Demographic Factors on Purchasing Decisions in Mobile Phone Purchasing

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Abstract—Mobile phones, a rarity in many developing countries at the turn of the century, now seem to be everywhere. The mobile revolution is transforming livelihoods, helping to create new businesses, and changing the way we communicate. Sri Lanka's mobile phone industry is poised for rapid expansion in the next couple of years mainly due to remarkable growth in the mobile communications market. It is also identified that the Sri Lanka's mobile industry is one of the most competitive markets in the region. Therefore it is a key factor for the modern marketers in the mobile phone industry to develop break through innovation by closely analyzing the market insights and consumer behavior.

The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of demographic factors on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones in Sri Lanka. For this study data will be collected through a survey by collecting data through questionnaire from 100 respondents. . The data collection process will entirely be using a form of online data collection and also self-administered for those that do not have internet facility or technical knowledge. Respondents chosen from online will be from western province in Sri Lanka and main emphasis when selecting the respondents will be given for age, education and occupation levels. Collected data was entered to the SPSS 18.0 software in order to perform the data analysis. Accordingly the survey was conducted to test the hypothesis of the study constructs.

As per the study executed by the researcher it was proven that the gender does not have a significant relationship with the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones in Sri Lanka whereas age, income, education and occupation showed a significant relationship with the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones in Sri Lanka. It also proved that the Sri Lankan mobile phone users and purchasers consider about the utilitarian criteria (objective) at the purchase evaluation of a mobile phone more than the hedonic criteria. But is also contrasted that when you consider occupation and education the higher the levels are the more they look for hedonic criteria (subjective) when purchasing a mobile phone.

This study provides valuable insights to the marketers on the important market segmentations of demographic factors and also the understanding of how to alter their marketing mix for different demographic factors. Thereby this study implies that the marketers have to consider that the demographic factors have an influence on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones in the Sri Lankan market.

Index Terms—Purchase evaluation, hedonic benefits, utilitarian benefits, consumer decision making.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mobile phones, a rarity in many developing countries at the turn of the century, now seem to be everywhere. Between 2010 and 2018, the number of mobile phones in use world-wide grew from fewer than 1 billion to around 9 billion. The mobile revolution is transforming livelihoods, helping to create new businesses, and changing the way we communicate. The mobile phone network is already the biggest "machine" the world has ever seen, and now that machine is being used to deliver development opportunities on a scale never before imagined.

During this second decade of the new millennium, maximizing the potential of mobile phones is a challenge that will engage governments, the private sector, and the development community alike. Mobile phones manufacturers are constantly looking for new ways to differentiate themselves. The communization of this market causes a deeper view into what drives a consumer purchase of one brand over another.

Therefore the research focuses on analyzing the influence of demographic factors for the purchasing decision of mobile phone in Sri Lanka with the special reference to western province.

The Sri Lanka mobile phones market recorded sales of over 0.69 million units in 3rd quarter of 2018. In the overall Sri Lanka mobile handsets market, Nokia emerged as the leader with a 27.2% share, followed by Samsung at second position with 17.4% and Micromax at third position with 16.1%, in terms of sales during 2018. The bulk of phones that were marketed were Dual SIM phones mostly manufactured in China. This segment made up over 35% of total sales. The Sri Lanka mobile phones market is showing a marked preference for smart phones versus feature phones that is even higher. Accordingly, feature phone sales in Sri Lanka are showing a much faster decline.

According to a Cyber Media Research, the leading New Delhi based IT and Telecoms market research firm, findings on mobile phone sales in Sri Lanka, Smartphone sales touched 0.14 million units in Sri Lanka during 2018. Samsung emerged as the leader in the smart phones segment with a 39.0% share in 2013, followed by Huawei with 15.5%. Micromax occupied third place with 11.2% share of sales during the same period.

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II. RESEARCH PROBLEM

A. Segments of Mobile phones market in Sri Lanka

What is market segmentation? According to the most of experts of marketing subject, market segmentation is; grouping people according to their similarity related to a particular product category. Market segmentation is the process of dividing a market into two or more segments with each having specific needs and characteristics and who will need specific products or marketing mix. For a market to be broken up into these different segments different segmentation variables must either be used individually or in combination (Kotler et al.2006)

Major bases of market segmentation are: (1) Geographic (2) Demographic (3) Psychographic (4) Behavioral (5) Benefits Sought As per the major bases of the above mentioned market segmentation it is visible that the demographic factors like Age, Generation, gender, Marital Status, Family life cycle, Family size, Occupation, Education, Ethnic background, Religion are play a vital role.

B. Research problem

The aim of the research is to analyze whether the personal factors of individuals affect the purchasing decision when a customer is going to purchase mobile phones. As such the problem statement can be built up as:

“A demographic factor analysis towards the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phone in Sri Lanka” with Special reference western province.

C. Objectives of the Study

- To identify the influence of customer age on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones
- To identify the influence of customer income on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones
- To identify the influence of customer education on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones
- To identify the influence of occupation on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones
- To identify the influence of gender on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones
- To identify the most important criterion of each customer demographic category of mobile phones?

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Consumers make many buying decisions every day. For most of the marketers all around the world need answers to question with regard to what customers buy, where they buy, how and how much they buy, when they buy and why they buy. The answers for these questions are often locked within the customer's head. All these questions relate to a central question, which is that how customers respond to various marketing efforts which are used by the companies. In order clarify this we could adopt the model of stimulus – response of buyer behavior which is expressed by Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong (2003).

The marketing stimuli consist of the four Ps: product, price, place, promotion. Other stimuli include major forces and events in the buyer's environment: economic, technological, political and cultural. All these inputs enter the buyer's black box where they are turned into a set of observable buyer

responses: product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchase timing and purchase amount.

The most important thing for a marketer is to understand the nature of process which happens within the buyer's black box. The process within the black box is mainly divided in to two categories. First, the buyer's characteristics influence how he or she perceives and reacts to the stimuli. Second, the buyer's decision process itself affects the buyer's behavior.

The research area of this particular research concentrates on this buyer's black box. The researcher in his research concentrates in identifying the level influence of demographic factors on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones in Sri Lanka. The demographic factors of customers come under the area of buyer characteristics. Whereas the evaluation criterion is a stage within the buyer's decision making process.

Kotler and Armstrong have expressed that customers before deciding to purchase a respective product he/she use to follow a sequence of decision making stages. This is in other words expressed as the buyer decision making process. This process consists of five stages. As (1) Need recognition (2) Information search (3) Evaluation of alternatives (4) Purchase decision (5) Post purchase behavior

Following the need recognition stage of the buyer decision process, customers often seek information to guide their purchase alternative selection process. In many situations, consumers simply follow their past practices for products of a particular type or in a given category (e.g. brand loyalty or habitual buying) in making purchase decisions. In other instances such as first time or infrequent purchases and high involvement purchases, consumers often follow a piecemeal process, involving the construction of criteria sets to be used in alternative evaluation (Blackwell 2001).

Furthermore Blackwell has explained that formally or informally the customers use to develop a set of evaluative criteria that are applied in processing information and judging purchase alternatives. They reflect underlying consumer values, lifestyle, attitudes, knowledge and experience. These criteria may be related to any of a variety of attributes or benefits associated with a purchase alternative (hedonic and utilitarian), and they logically provide a focus for a benefit which is provided/ offered by the marketer in terms of a specific brand, a product design, positioning and promotion efforts. The relative importance of these criteria does vary considerably across customers. It highly depends on the nature of the characteristics which is pertained within the customer itself. Further Blackwell has shown that this nature of the behavior of the customers is highly predictable for a certain customer and his purchase characteristics.

Abraham-Murali and Littrell (1995) have shown that consumers judge products during information gathering, at the time of purchase, and during consumption based on objective or verifiable characteristics as well as on abstract features ascribed to the product by the user such as beauty, value, and usability.

According to the research done by Olson and Jacoby (1972), they segregate attributes broadly into two categories; (1) intrinsic cues (2) extrinsic cues

Intrinsic cues refer to product attributes that are inherent in the product (e.g. fiber content, style, color) and extrinsic cues are attributes that do not form part of the physical product but are added by retailers and manufacturers (e.g. brand name,

price, packaging). Eckman (1990) in his studies have elicited attributes related to consumers' decisions to buy clothing. Furthermore he has shown that the effects of extrinsic cues on overall judgment have been more frequent than the effects of intrinsic cues.

Fiore and Damhorst (1992) found complex and abstract evaluative criteria related to aesthetics were important estimators of the overall quality of women's pants. Abraham Murali and Littrell (1995) suggested grouping the assortment of attributes into four major themes, (1) Physical appearance (2) Physical performance (3) Expressive (4) Extrinsic

These are composed of uni-dimensional and multidimensional attributes, which are intrinsic and extrinsic in nature. They confirmed that both uni-dimensional and multidimensional attributes appeared to be important to consumers in decision making. Researchers also need insight on a broad range of consumer-perceived attributes to design studies that realistically reflect consumer decision making. The purpose of this study was to first, identify the dimensions of evaluative criteria used when purchasing mobile phones products, and then determine which evaluative criteria served as predictors of brand extension purchase behavior for mobile phones products.

The relative importance of the criteria selected depends of their degree of objectivity and significance. The criteria which is related to benefits could be categorized as (Blackwell 2001, Ahtola 1985) (1) utilitarian (concrete) (2) hedonic (abstract). Ahtola (1985) have shown in his studies that the utilitarian evaluative criteria relate to objective, economic, rational, concrete and functional purchase dimensions whereas hedonic evaluative criteria relate to benefits arising from experiential, abstract, subjective, emotional, symbolic, sensory, non-rational and aesthetic purchase attributes and benefits.

Terry. G. Williams (2004) in his research article have shown that the process of selection of the criteria the customers must attach a weight or relative importance to relevant criteria and somehow evaluate purchase alternatives considered in light of the value of each criterion in making the final purchase decision.

There have been many research conducted in order to show the relative importance of evaluative criteria which may vary according to,

- The purchase situation – Dickson 1982, Miller & Ginter 1979
- The nature of alternatives evaluated – Corfman 1991
- The involvement level – Gensch & Javalgi 1987
- The amount of purchase experience – Bettman & Sujan 1987

Terry. G. Williams (2004) have shown that by considering less generic product attributes and benefits it could easily investigate the perceived importance of criteria for a wide variety of products. Various numbers of evaluative criteria could be used to apply in different purchase situations, but there are only few factors which could be applied across a wide range of consumer products.

Blackwell 2001, Boner and Nelson 1985, Brucks and Zeithaml 1987, have shown that only the price and the brand name are the two attributes that could be attach to a wide variety of purchase situations. Additional general criteria are

suggested by dimensions of product quality, image, reliability, appearance, performance, durability, and prestige. Based on the research analysis above, Terry G. Williams (2004) have categorized criteria which is considered as being more or less utilitarian or objective (Price, Well-known brand name, Performance/attributes, Reliability, Durability, Warranty) and hedonistic or subjective (Prestigious brand, Style/Appearance, Value, Referent quality and Uniqueness). These criteria form the basis for the attributes investigated in this study.

Durability

Physical durability can be defined as how long the device can last under normal use, or whether the device can resist impact from abnormal use (Ling et al. 2007). As a mobile device, mobile phones must have a tough case and a hard material. In addition, mobile phones need to be handy to carry around. Small and lightweight make a phone more portable.

Price

According to the Wikipedia encyclopedia price is defined as the assigned numerical monetary value of a good, service or asset. In general terms price is a component of an exchange or transaction that takes place between two parties and refers to what must be given up by one party (i.e., buyer) in order to obtain something offered by another party (i.e., seller). Price of the mobile phone affects choice in countries where mobile phones are not linked to the operator contract (Karjaluo et al.; 2003a; 2003b)

Warranty

A promise about a product made by either a manufacturer or a seller. A statement or agreement by a seller of property which is a part of the contract of sale. The truth of the statement is necessary to the validity of the contract. His word has several significations, as it is applied to the conveyance and sale of lands, to the sale of goods, and to the contract of insurance. i.e., a product is defective or not as should be expected by a reasonable buyer. Performance in this particular study considers being the expected functionality based on purchase experience (Lectric Law Library)

Well-known brand name

Well-known brand names develop and convey the product's character in a unique manner different from its competitor's image. Well-known brand names consists of various associations in consumers' mind - attributes, benefits and attributes. Brand attributes are the functional and mental connections with the brand that the customers have (Rich & Jain, 1968).

Reliability

Reliability is defined as the probability that a given item will perform its intended function for a given period of time under a given set of conditions and the ability of an apparatus, machine, or system to consistently perform its intended or required function or mission, on demand and without degradation or failure (Peters, 1990)

Performance

Performance is defined as expected functionality based on purchase experience (Brucks and Zeithaml 1987)

Value

The Customer Perceived value of a product is the difference between the prospective customer's evaluation of all the benefits & all the cost of an offering & the perceived alternatives. Formally it may be conceptualized as the relationship between the consumer's perceived benefits in relation to the perceived costs of receiving these benefits.

According to Philip Kotler & Gary Armstrong, Principles of Marketing 10th edition, they have expressed that consumer purchase decision making are influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological characteristics. We could categorize demographic factors such as customer's age, gender, income level, occupation, education as factors as personal factors. Since the above said demographic factors are characteristics which are unique to the customers and also it expresses the demographic nature of the customer. These demographic factors could be used as parameters for the marketers to segment customers in the groups.

Customer demographic characteristics are sometimes used to identify customer niches that would be interested in the purchase of a specific product offering. By doing so, a retailer can determine what it would take to satisfy and retain a specific group of customers (Dholakia and Uusitalo, 2002). In this particular study the nature of the relationship of the demographic factors is best described with regard to internet retailing and internet usage of customers for purchasing. A successful e-retailer would consider this to be an ongoing process. An online research conducted by Chang and Samuel (2004) suggests that there is a statistically significant association between the demographic characteristics (gender, age, income and location) of internet users and frequency of consumer online purchases. Chen and Lee (2005) found that the difference between the importances of web site image was due to browsers' gender, age, educational history, career, residential area and income.

If we focus on research studies done in the area of retail choice the researchers have found out a close connection between the customer demographics and the retail choice of customers. The researcher in his research study have made use these particular findings in order to get a clear understanding of the nature of impact of customer demographics on the purchase evaluation criteria for mobile phones.

Crask and Reynolds (1978) compared the demographic characteristics of frequent and nonfrequent patrons of department stores and found that frequent patrons tended to be younger, more educated, and had higher incomes. Sampson and Tigert (1992) found that warehouse club members represent an upscale market compared to the general population. Findings from the study indicated that warehouse club members were more educated and had higher incomes. Later work by Arnold (1997) found significant differences between the demographic profiles (e.g. age, education, household size) of large-format department store shoppers as compared to non-shoppers.

Zeithaml (1985) conducted a field study to examine the effects of five demographic variables (gender, female working status, age, income, marital status) on supermarket shopping variables (e.g. shopping time, number of supermarkets visited weekly, amount of money spent). Stone (1995) compared the demographic profiles of supermarket shoppers and warehouse club shoppers, finding that

warehouse club members were younger, more educated, and had higher incomes.

According to the research studies of Palakurthi and Parks (2000), age distribution, income distribution, gender, occupation, education level etc. were used by them as the socio-demographical variables in order to measure the effect of lodging demand in the Sri Lanka.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

After identifying the variables and developing the conceptual framework, under research design the researcher has designed the study in a way that the requisite data can be gathered and analyzed to arrive at a solution. Accordingly, the researcher has addressed purpose of the study, extent of researcher interference with the study and study setting unit of analysis under this section of the study

The purpose of this study is descriptive research which is conclusive in nature. The main reason is that the researcher in this particular research seeks in order to understand the influence of demographic factors on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phone in Sri Lanka.

As this study is dependent on assessing the significance of the constructs, the study is conducted in a natural setting with minimum intervention by the researcher with a natural flow of procedures related to the researching background. Thereby the researcher will develop a questionnaire and distribute it among online respondents in order to identify the influence of the demographic factors towards the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones.

As this study is conducted to assess the significance between constructs this study is conducted in a natural setting with no intervention to the ordinary behavior of the respondents. The targeted population for this study can be defined as the mobile phone purchasers and mobile phone users above 19 years of age. Convenient sampling and judgmental sampling will be used to select respondents for the sample of this research. By this way it enables to identify the most suitable respondents for the research. The initial sample size was divided as 52% for the females and 48% for the males in order to go in line with the population distribution.

The chosen sample size for this study is a total of 100 respondents due to the requirement of gathering respondents that covers all variables of gender, age, income, education and occupation. This sample was also chosen as a result of similar research studies having a similar sample size.

The main data gathering technique will be questionnaires. Questions will be designed based on the conceptual framework and likert scales.

The purpose of this study is conclusive in nature. The main reason is that the researcher in this particular research seeks in order to understand the influence of demographic factors on the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phone in Sri Lanka. Data will be collected from 100 respondents using a well-constructed questionnaire. The data collection process will entirely be using a form of online data collection and also self-administered for those that do not have internet facility or technical knowledge.

Respondents chosen from online and main emphasis when selecting the respondents will be given for age, education and

occupation levels. In order to get the required representativeness of the above mentioned demographics the online questionnaire form was mailed to selected groups from schools, universities, companies and households.

The study was conducted through a questionnaire which has been developed using structured (fixed alternative questions) in order to gather data on how demographic factors influence the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones in Sri Lanka. Therefore the questionnaire has been separated into two parts as follows:

The part 1 of the questionnaire is developed using the construct „purchase evaluation criteria“ in order to gather data of the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phone purchase. Here we measure the indicators of the utilitarian and hedonic criteria as per the past studies done by Blackwell 2001, Boner and Nelson 1985, Brucks and Zeithaml 1987, Terry G. Williams (2004).

The part 2 of the questionnaire was constructed in order to collect data on the demographic factors of the respondents such as the Gender, Age, Income, Education and Occupation. Therefore by collecting the data on the respondent's demographic factors the researcher can assess the influence of the demographic factors to the purchase evaluation criteria of mobile phones.

In order to identify level of effectiveness of the questionnaire it was been distributed among few respondents and asked to identify any unclear or questionnaires which are hard to understand. Basis there response the questions were altered accordingly so that the questions were easy to understand.

V. KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

A. Reliability and Validity of Instruments

The reliability of the purchase evaluation criteria measure will be proven by testing for both consistency and stability. Consistency specifies how well the items quantifying the concept attach together as a set. Therefore when the Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for the purchase evaluation criteria's (utilitarian & hedonic) the value was 0.896 and thereby the internal reliability and consistency of the purchase evaluation criteria's (utilitarian & hedonic) can be accepted to be good. (The closer the Cronbach's Alpha is to 1, the higher internal consistency and reliability)

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is a statistic that indicates the proportion of variance in your variables that might be caused by underlying factors. High values (close to 1.0) generally indicate that a factor analysis may be useful with the data. If the value is less than 0.50, the results of the factor analysis probably won't be very useful. Therefore as per the above table values for the utilitarian criteria we can get a value of 0.729 which is close to 1 that interprets that the factor analysis has useful data.

Bartlett's test of sphericity is used to test the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. We can look for SIGNIFICANCE (less than 0.05) as the variables need to be correlated also can be noted as that all items are perfectly correlated with themselves and have some level of correlation with the other items. Therefore when we consider the Bartlett's test of sphericity for the utilitarian criteria as shown in the above table we can see that the significance is 0.00 which is less than 0.05 connoting that the all items are

perfectly correlated with themselves and have some level of correlation with the other items.

In the above table the researcher has calculated the "Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings" which represents the "work" done by the factor analysis. As we can see, the first eigenvalue is equal to 3.134, and corresponds to 52.232% of the variance the original data. As per the above table we can clearly see that the variance of the extraction sums of squared loadings for the all the utilitarian criteria are more than 0.5 and the Eigen value more than 1, which connotes that the correlations between the variable and the factor are high.

B. Hypothesis testing

Gender and Evaluation Criteria

According to the study the researcher has identified that males and females in Sri Lanka consider utilitarian criteria as more important than the hedonic criteria when purchasing a mobile phone. Therefore when we consider the utilitarian criteria females are more price conscious than the males whereas the males consider warranty, performance, durability, well-known brand name & reliability as important factors when deciding to purchase the mobile phones. Under the hedonic criteria males seek more on the uniqueness, prestige & appearance than the females whereas females are more concern on the appearance and the value of the mobile phone.

Age and Evaluation Criteria

Based on the findings of the hypothesis testing we could see a close significant relationship between the age and the evaluative criteria. For all the age categories the utilitarian criteria have reported a mean value more than 4. Under this n all the age groups consider the durability factor as more important compared to the other utilitarian criteria from the utilitarian criteria the age group 20-30 looks for well-known brand name whereas from 31- 40 & 41-50 consider the price more important. The mobile phone users over the age of 51 consider the durability of the phone more important to them than the other factors.

Under the hedonic criteria the age group of 20 – 30 considers the appearance of the mobile phone more important whereas the rest of the age groups consider the value of the mobile phone to be important.

Income and Evaluation Criteria

The hypothesis testing proves that there is a close significant relationship between the income categories and the evaluative criteria. Out of the utilitarian and the hedonic criteria the utilitarian is considered as the most important with regard to income groups. Even though the overall mean value for the hedonic criteria (HC) is less than 4, for the people who belong to the house hold income category of more than Rs. 61,000 have reported mean values more than 4 for the hedonic criteria. Therefore it shows that the high income earners consider hedonic criteria as an important criterion when purchasing a mobile phone.

The people who belong to the monthly income category of more than Rs. 71,000 think the prestige criteria as the most important factor when purchasing a mobile phone compared to others. The lowest income group of less than Rs.10,000 consider price as more important whereas the middle house hold income category consider durability to be far more important compared to the rest.

Education and Evaluation Criteria

Based on the hypothesis it could be seen that there is a close significant relationship between the levels of education of people in Sri Lanka and the evaluative criteria. All level of education groups considers the utilitarian criteria as important. The post graduate qualified mobile phone purchasers look for a phone that has a well-known brand name of utilitarian as well as a prestigious brand of hedonic criteria. The lowest educational category were the people who have attend school, but did not complete GCE O/ L and those that do not have a formal education consider price of utilitarian and value of hedonic criteria to be more important than the rest of the people in Sri Lanka. The people who have obtained the University degree/equivalent professional qualification have considered warranty, appearance and uniqueness as the most important factor in deciding to purchase a mobile phone.

Occupation and Evaluation Criteria

Based on the research hypothesis findings we could see a close significant relationship between the level of occupation of people in Sri Lanka and the evaluative criteria of mobile phones. The people seek for more utilitarian criteria and less hedonic criteria with relation to occupation. The professionals in Sri Lanka, ranks the utilitarian criteria as highly important compared to the people who belong to other occupations. The price factor is a more concerning factor for Machine Operator & related workers, whereas Technicians / Associate Professional workers consider warranty as an important factor compared to the rest in the utilitarian criteria. Performance and a well-known brand name is a more concerning factor for the Professionals where as the most important hedonic criterion is the value. Senior Management level have a high importance towards the hedonic criteria where prestige and uniqueness factors is considered when purchasing a mobile phone.

The occupation groups that are unemployed/students and those who are retired consider the price in the utilitarian criteria to be the important factors but in the hedonic criteria the unemployed/students consider the appearance and the retired consider the value of the mobile phone as the important criteria when they decide to purchase one.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the report mainly focuses in order to discuss the application of the research findings to the practical context. In here the researcher has used the relative importance of the evaluative criteria in order to come up with the recommendations. The recommendations under this section discusses about the STP and 4Ps strategies.

- The most use full demographical variables to segment the markets are income, education and occupation, since the significant relationship between these demographical variables and the evaluation criteria of mobile phones with these variables are high.
- The managers need to emphasize more on the utilitarian attributes such as the price of the product, warranty, performance, reliability, well-known brand name and the durability when they make decisions with regard to the marketing strategies.
- Irrespective of the gender males and females both consider utilitarian criteria as important. There should not be any differentiation made on the strategies based on the gender

categorization. The earlier research findings have shown that the females consider evaluative criteria as important oppose to the men. But this is not true in of Sri Lanka.

- Under the income, education and occupation categorization, if we move from the lower level to the higher level categories managers need to focus more on emphasizing the hedonic criteria, since the relative importance of the hedonic criteria increases gradually with the increase in category.
- Durability and price is considered to be the most important factors when deciding purchasing mobile phones. Irrespective of the demographic profile all the people consider durability and price as important. Therefore in the mobile phones market there is a huge competition based on price. Premium pricing will only be feasible strategy for people who belong to the monthly income category of more than Rs. 71,000. The premium should reflect the prestige and uniqueness of the mobile phone given that the product has a good appearance and is durable.
- Amongst the hedonic criteria the most important factor is the value. Therefore managers need to identify and create value for the customers with regard to the mobile phones. It is critical for the managers to understand the value attributes of mobile phones. Furthermore for the process to be far more feasible and effective it is recommended to communicate the value created to the customers in a suitable manner.
- Since the promotional and product development decisions should be grounded in the attributes and benefits that consumers seek in buying various products, it is important to understand the evaluative criteria which correspond to these attributes and benefits and underline product and brand selection. The decisions with regard to the above should mainly focus in addressing the utilitarian criteria. Advertising messages directed at a mass scale should mainly focus in addressing attributes such as durability of the product, price, performance, reliability and the warranty.
- It is also essential for the marketing managers to build the brand equity of the mobile phone brand as the a well-known brand name brand name is looked forward to when purchasing a mobile phone due to the trust and the reliability of brand itself.
- Personnel selling would be feasible focusing an elite group of customers who may represent in the high income, educational and the occupational category. The sales men should address the hedonic factors such as the uniqueness, prestige and appearance of the product in order to be successful.
- Considering the distribution strategy the managers need to address the reliability of the distributors and the service providers if they are focusing to reach the elite groups at the regional level.
- Celebrity appeals and viral marketing will be effective if the managers are focusing to sell mobile phones to the lower demographic category of the population. The markers can also provide payment schemes where the lower income categories can pay on installment basis as they are more price conscious when purchasing mobile phones.

VII. FURTHER RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

The researcher has done this study to identify the influence of the demographic factors towards the purchase evaluation criteria when purchasing mobile phone in the Sri Lankan market. However, the researcher has identified the following areas to be studied in the future researches.

- The impact of demographic factors on the usage of mobile phone features within the context of Sri Lanka
- Identifying the impact of brand loyalty and purchase intention of mobile phones in the Sri Lankan market
- The influence of stereotype and the purchase intention when purchasing a mobile phone with regard to the Sri Lankan context.

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