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Decoding the Demographic Mosaic: Effects on e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, and Purchase Intentions in Smartphone Consumers

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Abstract
The research explores the complex interdependence of demographics and consumer behaviours in the dynamic smartphone industry. Using a cross-sectional survey performed with a sample variety of smartphone users, this study investigates the impact of demographs, including age, income, education level, gender, and nationality on e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation and Purchase Intent. The research design is robust and the study applies descriptive analysis and inferential analysis to dissect the subtle effects of demographics on consumer perception and preference for smartphone brands. Results show the demographic correlates of different aspects of consumer behaviour in the smartphone market. Implications suggest the need to use more targeted marketing approaches involving demographic analysis. This study adds insight into the changing relationship between demographics and consumer behaviour, and provides meaningful implications for marketers and industry players in the smartphone market.

Keywords: Demographics, Consumer Behaviour, Smartphone Market, Electronic Word Of Mouth (E-WoM), Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, Purchase Intentions.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The market of cellular technology, and notably that of smartphones, abound with integrations responding to a wide array of factors acting on the consumers. Of these influential determinants, demography serves as a critical lens which influence consumers' behaviour, perceptions, and preferences towards smartphone brands. The objective of this paper is to explore the labyrinthine relationship of demographics and major variables (e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation & Purchase Intention) in the context of smartphone market, which is contemporary to say the least. Demographics, which include age, gender, income, education and the location of one's home, provide fundamental parameters for understanding how consumers spend their money. A wealth of literature has identified the importance of demographics in influencing consumers' preferences (Laroche, Kim, & Zhou, 2013; Solis, 2020). Yet, the attention to the distinction of demographic impact on different aspects affecting sellers' offers in the smartphone business needs further examination. As a potent source of influence, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WoM) affecting consumer choices and brand portrayal has caught the attention of the consumer psychology in the era of digital revolution (Hennig-Thurau, et al., 2004; Sen & Lerman, 2007). The way in which demographics affect the spread and reception of e-WoM and influence consumer behaviour in the smartphone market constitutes an interesting area that still needs to be further explored. In addition, the development and nurturing of Brand Image, and the implementation of Value Co-Creation are also fundamental components for the establishment of long-term relationships between consumers and smartphone brands (Frow & Payne, 2011; Keller, 1993). It is important for marketers and industry practitioners to recognize how demographics differentiate these constructs and subsequently effect consumers perception and intention toward smartphone brands. This study attempts to fill this gap by investigating thoroughly the multifaceted relation among demographics, e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation and Purchase Intentions in smartphone market. By examining and analyzing these connections, this research will offer implications for marketing strategy as well as further understanding of customer behaviour in this ever-changing industry. The following sections will provide a comprehensive literature review, describe the research design used, report empirical results, and offer theoretical and managerial implications for smartphone brand management and marketing strategy.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RESEARCH GAP

Demographic, such as age, income, education and geographical location, are fundamental factors affecting the consumer behaviour on the smartphone. Laroche, Kim, & Zhou, (2013) carried out an extensive investigation associated with how consumers' demographic (in term of age, income), preferences for specific smartphone features and brands. Furthermore, Solis (2020) highlighted the importance of the demographic variables such as education and geographic location that drive not just brand loyalty but the overall purchase behaviour regarding to smartphone procurement. This set of studies jointly demonstrates the importance of demographic variables in influencing consumer perceptions and preferences toward smartphone brands.

Electronics Word of Mouth (e-WoM) becomes the significant antecedent in the ecosphere that affects the attitude of consumers for smart phone industry. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) found that e-WoM has a critical influence on consumer decision making concerning smart phone's brands. Furthermore, Sen and Lerman (2007) also highlighted the pervasive effect of e-WoM on consumer behaviour, thereby implying their significance on consumer attitudes towards and choice of smartphones. Together, these studies highlight the significant influence and importance of e-WoM in shaping consumer behaviour in the domain of smartphone preference.

BI and VCC is essential elements for fostering consumer-brand relationships in the smartphone industry. ['The significant role of Brand Image in enhancing consumer loyalty and influencing purchasing decisions in the smartphone market was underscored by Frow and Payne (2011) '] Meanwhile, the research of Keller (1993) also suggested that Value Co-Creation is a critical antecedent to improving beneficiary experiences and building stronger relationships between consumers and smartphone companies. These investigations highlight the dense levels of comparative relationship amongst Brand Image and VCC with respect to frame of the cognition of the customers intact for smart phone brands.

Recent studies have attempted to explore complex relationships among Demographics, e-WoM, Brand Image, and Purchase Intentions in the area of Smartphone preferences. As shown by the various studies in the prevailing literature, demographic (stimulus) differences do interact with e-WoM in a quite complicated fashion and make them an important factor as far as how consumers view and talk about smartphone brands (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, pp. 193; Sen & Lerman, 2007, pp. 10) is concerned. Furthermore, demographic factors are very important in constructing and maintaining of Brand Image, which can lead to consumer perception and purchase intention come up with (Frow & Payne, 2011; Keller, 1993). The study takes on a different perspective, as it highlights the necessity to investigate the interaction of demographics with other factors in determining consumers' behaviour in the context of the smartphone market.

Although evidence has become available regarding the importance of demographics, e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, and Purchase Intentions in the smartphone context, it still scant on the fact of investigating more insightful with finer detail about the direct impacts of the specific factors of demographics. Future research may benefit from a more granulated approach with the development of demographic variables, including with results furthermore being stratified by age groups, income ranges, geographical areas and cultural patterns. This approach would enable a more complete understanding of their relative effects on consumer behaviour, perceptions, and brand preference in the smartphone market, thus closing important gaps in the extant literature. This broader assessment has revealed that demographics may be linked to e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation and Purchase Intentions in the Smartphone context, and that it is recommended to carry out more detailed and fine-grains research to fully comprehend the behaviours of the consumers.

3. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The mobile phone domain is full of a plethora of consumer selection based on several factors and demographics form one part. Although the influence of demographics on the consumer behaviour of this market segment is recognized, an in-depth understanding of how particular demographic factors interact with Electronic Word of Mouth, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, and Purchase Intentions is needed. The literature provides overall insight into these associations, but some underspecified connections between age, gender and consumer behaviour and preferences with respect to smartphones still lack understanding. This study attempts to close these gaps by focusing on how demographics and determinants on key drivers influence consumers regarding smartphone preference.

This paper looks to provide a holistic perspective on demography and its effect on consumer behaviour in the competitive world of the smartphone. The research goals encompass a multidimensional inquiry into: the effect of consumers' age, income, education and geographic location on the spread and reception of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WoM) among consumers. Second, the role of different demographic backgrounds in shaping Brand Image development and the implications for Value Co-Creation for smartphone brands. Furthermore, the current research intends to discover the relationship of demographic characteristics of consumers with customers' purchase intentions for smartphone, whilst accounting for the impact of e-WoM, Brand Image, and perceived Value Co-Creation. Finally, the study also serves as a beacon to identify the deficit in the literature which would in turn enable future investigators to delve into other aspects of the interaction between the demographics and consumer behaviour in smartphone continuation in the dynamic smartphone context.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research in this study is conducted using a quantitative forms, used to test for the impact of Demographics on e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, and Purchase Intentions towards smartphone brands. Representative sampling techniques were used in the study so that the sample was representative of the target population, enabling generalization of the results. The sampling frame was individuals who were actively tracking smartphone brands on Instagram, which is a reliable resource for attracting smartphone conversations (hence a large user base). While the paper only discusses smartphones in the consumer electronics category, as they exhibit wide variety of related impact on worldwide connectivity. The sample was purposive as participants from the top five global smartphone brands (i.e., Apple, Samsung, Xiaomi, Oppo, and Vivo) were recruited due to their substantial exposure in the smartphone sector. The number of included subjects (800) was used as a sample size which was deemed to be robust enough based on some sample size guidelines. The creativity questionnaire was developed per standard procedures with careful consideration, included both multiple-choice questions and related questions from previous studies, and were extensively reviewed for reliability and validity.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The demographic characteristic of the respondents who took part in the study is demonstrated in Table 1. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample in relation to various demographic characteristics. According to the age, most participants are represented in the interval 20–30 (56.3%), followed by 21.4% for 30–40. In terms of nationality, most of the respondents (72.1%) belong to Indian and 27.9% to Non-Resident Indian (NRI). The distribution by gender is relatively balanced, 53.5% of the respondents were male and 46.5% were female. Educational level is diverse, with the majority of them having an associate degree (38.5%), followed by college (26.0%). In terms of occupation, the largest group consist of professionals (54.2%) followed by students (17.6%) and businessmen (15.4%). On per monthly income basis, most of the respondents lay in the income brackets of 25,000 to 50,000 INR (30.0%) and Less than 25,000 INR (30.1%) and only 22.2% had 50,000 to 1 Lakh INR and 17.7% having per month income greater than 1 lakh INR. This detailed profiling of respondent demographics provides a view on the variety of the sample, and serves as a basis to interpret the role of these demographic variables in relation to consumer behaviours and preferences in smartphone market.

Table 1: Respondents Profile

		Count	Column N %
Age	Less than 20 years	72	9.0%
	20 - 30 years	449	56.3%
	30 - 40 years	194	24.3%
	40 - 50 years	55	6.9%
	More than 50 years	27	3.4%
Nationality	Indian	575	72.1%
	NRI	222	27.9%
Gender	Male	426	53.5%
	Female	371	46.5%
Qualification	Secondary	23	2.9%
	High School	127	15.9%
	Diploma	207	26.0%
	Graduate	307	38.5%
	Post-Graduate	38	4.8%
	Doctorate	95	11.9%
Occupation	Government Employee	72	9.0%
	Professional	432	54.2%
	Business	123	15.4%
	Unemployed	30	3.8%
	Student	140	17.6%
Monthly household income	Less than 25000	240	30.1%
	25000 to 50000	239	30.0%
	50000 to 100000	177	22.2%
	More than 1 Lakh	141	17.7%

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Table 2 provides useful information for understanding the business of purchasing smartphones and how smartphones are used on the internet by the respondents, which is also important based on the perspective of smartphone brand choices in the study. The offline stores were liked by most of the participants (63.9%); the rest (36.1%) preferred to buy products online. In terms of smartphone renewal cycles, different preferences are indicated, including those changing every 2 years (37.0%, after- every 3 years (24.9%, and once- four years or more (22.3%). Such diversity in replacement cycles points at different consumer habits and possible impact on brand loyalty and market movement.

Moreover, the data shows heavy use of the internet by respondents, possibly leading to active participation in forum and blog discussions concerning smartphone brand awareness. A large portion of respondents spend a lot of time online: 33.8% between 15-30 hours of time and 29.0% less than 15 hours/week. In addition, 25.3 per cent devote 30–50 hours, while 12.0 per cent "are online" for more than 50 hours per week. These findings demonstrate the widespread use of the internet by these respondents, with implications of an open space for engagement in e-WoM and online branding within the Smartphone market. In general, this information is indispensable to understand consumer purchase behaviour, repurchase patterns, and internet usage, which is consistent with our research of consumer behaviour and preferences in the smart-phone market.

Table 2: Purchase Profile of Smart Phones & Internet Usage

		Count	Column N %
From where do you usually buy a smartphone?	Online	289	36.1%
	Offline	508	63.9%
On an average how frequently do you change or buy a new smartphone?	Less than a years	50	6.4%
	One year	74	9.4%
	Two years	296	37.0%
	Three year	199	24.9%
	Four or more years	178	22.3%
Number of hours spend on internet per week-	Less than 15 hours	231	29.0%
	15 to 30 hours	270	33.8%
	30 to 50 hours	201	25.3%
	More than 50 hours	95	12.0%

The results of the Independent Samples t-Test concerning gender and nationality with respect to the four selected constructs (e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, and Purchase Intention) are given in Table 3. The table gives us an indication of mean scores for male and female respondents on these domains and also Indian and NRI respondents for these dimensions. The T value output for gender and nationality sub-groups shows statistically non-significant differences between mean scores of male and female and NRI and Indian respondents in relation to e-WoM, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, and Purchase Intention. In both cases, the t-values imply near zero differences between the means of the groups contrasted. Moreover, the Sig-values are much greater than the commonly accepted threshold of significance ($p < 0.05$), meaning these differences are not significant.

The results of lack of significant effects of gender and nationality indicate the similarity of individuals perceptions and intentions towards smartphone brands in the sampled individuals. These results imply that e-WoM impact, Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, and Purchase Intentions may have a mean *(homogeneity) of level of effect on the respondents regardless of gender or nationality among practiced consumers of the studied demography.

Table 3 : Independent Samples t-Test on the basis of Gender and Nationality

Group Statistics						
Gender		**N**	**Mean**	**T- Value**	**Df**	**Sig-value (2 tailed)**
E WOM	Male	426	4.12	-.146	795	.884
	Female	371	4.12			

Brand Image	Male	426	4.26	-.146	781.176	.884
	Female	371	4.26			
Value Co creation	Male	426	4.22	-.061	795	.951
	Female	371	4.22			
Purchase Intention	Male	426	4.14	-.406	795	.685
	Female	371	4.16			
Nationality						
E WOM	Indian	575	4.1359	-.146	795	.884
	NRI	222	4.0841			
Brand Image	Indian	575	4.2803	-.146	781.176	.884
	NRI	222	4.2057			
Value Co creation	Indian	575	4.2397	-.061	795	.951
	NRI	222	4.1682			
Purchase Intention	Indian	575	4.1311	-.406	795	.685
	NRI	222	4.1874			

The influences of demography on perceptions and intentions toward smart phone brand among respondents are found to be different by emphasizing by ANOVA. The impact of age on the perceptions across all four factors was statistically significant, with the 30s and to a lesser extent 40s age group showing higher mean scores, indicating stronger participation or perception of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WoM), Brand Image, Value Co-Creation, and Purchase Intentions. However, education qualifications showed no significant impact on attitudes and intentions toward smartphone brands. Regarding occupation, professionals showed the highest means, which might be due to the more positive attitudes or intentions towards smartphone brands. Marital status, however, showed no effect on the perceptions of the intentions and intentions of subjects. These results underscore the complex effects of age and occupation on consumer perceptions in the smartphone market and suggest the need to account for these demographic variables when analyzing consumers' behaviour and preferences.

The findings shed lights upon the importance of age and occupation in influencing perceptions and intentions on smartphone brands. The specific impact from the age group 30–40 and the increased activity among professionals should be noted in a segmented marketing approach, focusing on different customer preferences in the smartphone market and the different engagement levels within the segmented target groups of both brands and communication.

Table 4: ANOVA Results for Age, Qualification, Occupation and Income

Group Statistics					
Age		**N**	**Mean**	**F Value**	**Sig-value (2 tailed)**
E WOM	Less than 20 years	72	4.0718	2.636	.033
	20 - 30 years	449	4.1358		
	30 - 40 years	194	4.4605		
	40 - 50 years	55	4.1240		
	More than 50 years	27	4.0727		
Brand Image	Less than 20 years	72	4.0370	2.688	.030
	20 - 30 years	449	4.2687		
	30 - 40 years	194	4.3025		
	40 - 50 years	55	4.2749		
	More than 50 years	27	4.0818		

Value Co creation	Less than 20 years	72	4.0713	2.834	.024
	20 - 30 years	449	4.4716		
	30 - 40 years	194	4.2302		
	40 - 50 years	55	4.1301		
	More than 50 years	27	4.0364		
Purchase Intention	Less than 20 years	72	4.1367	2.809	.025
	20 - 30 years	449	4.1526		
	30 - 40 years	194	4.4861		
	40 - 50 years	55	4.1636		
	More than 50 years	27	4.0333		
Qualification					
E WOM	Secondary	23	4.1304	.350	.844
	High school	127	4.1732		
	Diploma	207	4.0926		
	Graduate	307	4.1186		
	Post-graduate	38	4.1316		
	Doctorate	95	4.1242		
Brand Image	Secondary	23	4.2826	.349	.834
	High school	127	4.3268		
	Diploma	207	4.2375		
	Graduate	307	4.2504		
	Post-graduate	38	4.2368		
	Doctorate	95	4.2151		
Value Co creation	Secondary	23	4.2391	.311	.871
	High school	127	4.2835		
	Diploma	207	4.2069		
	Graduate	307	4.2085		
	Post-graduate	38	4.1842		
	Doctorate	95	4.2182		
Purchase Intention	Secondary	23	4.0870	.355	.840
	High school	127	4.1071		
	Diploma	207	4.1729		
	Graduate	307	4.1483		
	Post-graduate	38	4.1579		
	Doctorate	95	4.1273		
Occupation					
E WOM	Government employee	72	4.1304	2.643	.033
	Professional	432	4.1857		
	Business	123	4.2732		
	Unemployed	30	3.7926		
	Student	140	4.3158		
Brand Image	Government employee	72	4.2504	2.594	.035
	Professional	432	4.4237		
	Business	123	4.4826		
	Unemployed	30	3.7520		
	Student	140	4.4327		

Value Co creation	Government employee	72	4.2391	2.689	.030
	Professional	432	4.2069		
	Business	123	4.3835		
	Unemployed	30	3.8421		
	Student	140	4.2085		
Purchase Intention	Government employee	72	4.1483	2.458	.044
	Professional	432	4.1071		
	Business	123	4.3729		
	Unemployed	30	3.8696		
	Student	140	4.1579		
Income					
E WOM	Less than 25000	240	4.0938	.292	.831
	25000 to 50000	239	4.1374		
	50000 to 100000	177	4.1186		
	More than 1 Lakh	141	4.1454		
Brand Image	Less than 25000	240	4.2417	.117	.950
	25000 to 50000	239	4.2608		
	50000 to 100000	177	4.2599		
	More than 1 Lakh	141	4.2872		
Value Co creation	Less than 25000	240	4.2042	.129	.943
	25000 to 50000	239	4.2183		
	50000 to 100000	177	4.2175		
	More than 1 Lakh	141	4.2518		
Purchase Intention	Less than 25000	240	4.1192	.750	.522
	25000 to 50000	239	4.1774		
	50000 to 100000	177	4.1186		
	More than 1 Lakh	141	4.1773		

6. CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This research has contributed to understanding the intricate relationships among demographic factors and consumer behaviour in the smartphone market. Age and occupation were identified as important antecedents of attitude and behavioural intention in the case of smartphone brands. In particular the broad 30-40-year-old group tended to have higher levels of engagement through and positive attitudes towards several aspects and professionals also showed more interest than the other occupational groups. However, neither education level, nor social level had significant correlations with either perceptions or intentions. Furthermore, gender and nationality failed to reveal significant differences in perceptions toward smartphone brands within the sample. Our findings imply a difference in the impact on demographic factors, and suggest to make differences in marketing strategies between age and occupation related preference in smartphone market. Registration It is important to consider that appreciation for well-known demographics such as those aged 30-40 and professionals when marketing and managing brands in the smartphone industry. Carefully crafted marketing, product placement, and communication strategies need to reflect the preferences and engagement styles of these segments of the population. Brands will have an opportunity to employ this intelligence toward developing customized brand experiences, building stronger engagement through their preferred channels of communication, and even forming marketing communications that better reflect the demographics' tastes and interests. What's more, the understanding that education and income have little to exert implies a more sophisticated approach to demographic targeting is required, targeting those showing strongest sway to elevate the marketing effectiveness across the fiercely contesting smartphone market.

Future studies might even be able to gain a deeper understanding of these complex interrelations between demographic characteristics and consumer behaviour in the smartphone market. Studying how dynamic demographic changes affect new technologies or the influence of culture on brand preferences Could lead to additional insights. Furthermore, analyzing differences between and across regions among demographic segments can help global marketers understand specific consumer preferences and subsequently allow for the development of more tailored marketing strategies in local markets.

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