A STUDY ON CUSTOMER PERCEIVED VALUE TOWARDS 3G AND 4G DONGLE MARKET SERVICE PROVIDERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BHARTI AIRTEL IN THANJAVUR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Internet is a bustling industry, spurred by various internet service providers in India. In a brief period, it has ended up hard to envision a world without constant access to the web. In the present scenario, people have become more sophisticated and they want internet facilities at all places. Thus, the demand for wireless internet has increased since it provides mobile internet connectivity. Many players have entered the dongle market and the level of competition is continuously increasing. The objective of this study is to examine the customer perceived value towards various 3G and 4G wireless internet service providers especially dongles. This study focuses on different attributes that contribute to the customer perceived value and to focus on building market share with special reference to Bharti Airtel Ltd. Simple random sampling was followed to collect data from various dongle users in Thanjavur market. Questionnaires were distributed to 150 respondents and the data were analysed using Descriptive analysis, ANOVA, Chi-Square and Correlation Analysis with the help of SPSS package. Most of the respondents prefer Airtel dongle for its speed, network connectivity and brand image. Customer perceived value towards dongles is found to be positive when they are satisfied with company products and services in terms of emotional and functional benefits.

Keywords: Wireless internet, customer perceived value, customer preference.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the four decades since its inception, the Internet has driven dramatic change. It has empowered streams of data, including stimulation, news, and money related and scholastic material. It has brought people closer together by enabling various forms of interpersonal communication, notably e-mail, instant messaging, video conferencing, and social networking. And it has allowed consumers to purchase virtually anything at any time, while providing

producers with direct access to a wide range of markets. Due to internet popularity, the companies are trying hard to satisfy the needs of the customer by providing internet services through different modes such as broadband services, wireless dongles, data card, hotspot, etc. Many players have entered the dongle market and the level of competition is continuously increasing. Hence, it is high time for the market players to understand the customer preferences and their level of perception towards various 3G and 4G dongles available in the market.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Internet popularity is found to have constant development in the past because of the developing innovation and level of rivalry; an organization needs to embrace numerous progressions to stay in the business and being productive. One of such measures is that conducting a survey to understand the consumer preference and their level of perception towards various dongles in the market. It helps the service provider to identify the prospects and shortcomings of the outlet from the customers' perspective. This study aims to reveal the customer perceived value towards various 3G and 4G dongle market service providers. This study also helps to figure out the various attributes that contribute to the customer perceived value and to provide suggestions to enhance the quality of service been rendered and to focus on building market share with special reference to Bharti Airtel Ltd.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the customers' preference towards wireless internet dongle services.
- To study the customer rating for various components of perceived value for the dongle services.
- To find out the prospects and problems relating to the services offered by competing brands in the 3G and 4G dongle market.
- To offer suggestions to improve the quality of service been rendered and to focus on building market share with special reference to Bharti Airtel Ltd.

4. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The study is based on 150 samples from various dongle users in Thanjavur district. The results may vary as per the opinions of various respondents.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is mainly out of the analysis made from the data collected. The data were primary in nature with sample of 150 collected from dongle users in Thanjavur district. Some of the tools used for the analysis are ANOVA, Friedman test, Chi-Square and Multiple regression.

6. LITERATURE REVIEW

Jyh-Shen Chiou (2004)[1] made an attempt to study "The antecedents of consumers' loyalty toward Internet Service Providers". This study found that perceived value is very important in generating overall customer satisfaction and loyalty intention toward an ISP, and that perceived trust of an ISP enhances perceived value, overall satisfaction, and loyalty intention. However, the study demonstrated that future ISP technology expectancy exerted a negative influence on a consumer's overall satisfaction and loyalty intention toward their ISP.

Dr S.M.Yamuna, U.Sanjana and J.Priyadharshini (2015)[2] have done a research on "Customer Awareness and Preference towards Prepaid Airtel Mobile Internet Service in Coimbatore City" is carried out with an objective to determine the customer awareness and preference. From the study, the awareness is created through friends and relatives, the benefits offered by the Airtel service providers should clearly be communicated to illiterates also through mass media in the form of slogans or informative and descriptive advertisement for improvement of sales.

Albert Wenben Lai (1995)[3], made an attempt to study on "Consumer Values, Product Benefits and Customer Value: a Consumption Behavior Approach". From the perspective of consumption behavior analysis, this paper constructs a framework of product valuation for consumers and its typology of product benefits. The customers' buying satisfaction depends on both their perceived value of the purchase and their knowledge of what a fair level of buying value should be. In short, customers will feel satisfied to the extent that the perceived value of their buying exceeds the standard they hold.

Rajkumar Paulrajan and Harish Rajkumar (2011)[4] A research study was conducted with an objective to understand the consumers' perception choice in selecting cellular mobile telecommunication service providers. Consumers' perception is widely varied in accordance with the Communication quality, call service, facilities, price, customer care and service provider's

attributes. The study shows communication and price were most influential factors in selecting telecommunication service provider. However, product quality and availability has a significant impact on consumer perception choice in selecting cellular mobile service provider.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

Table No: 7.1

Demographic profile of the respondents

S. No.	Demographic factors				
1	Age	18-25	26-35	36-45	above 40
	Frequency	129	19	2	0
	Per cent	86	12.7	1.3	0
2	Gender	Male	Female		
	Frequency	57	93		
	Per cent	38	62		
3	Monthly Income	Up to 20000	20001-40000	40001-60000	Above 60000
	Frequency	44	60	32	14
	Per cent	29.3	40	21.3	9.3
4	Usage of dongle	3 months	3-6 months	1 year	More than 1 year
	Frequency	33	34	37	46
	Per cent	22	22.7	24.7	30.7

Source: Primary Data

The above table depicts that 86 % of respondents were in the age group of 18-25 years. The table also shows that 93 % of respondents were female and the rest of respondents were male. 60 % of respondents are drawing a monthly income group of Rs.20,001 to Rs. 40,000. It also depicts that 46% of the respondents are using dongle for more than a year, 37 % of the respondents are using dongle for a year.

Table No: 7.2

Friedman Test- Brand Preference for Dongle Purchase

Service Operators	Mean Rank	Final Rank
Airtel	1.92	I
Vodafone	3.36	II
Reliance	4.73	IV
Aircel	4.8	V
Idea	5.75	VII
Tata DoCoMo	5.9	VIII
BSNL	4.63	III
MTS	4.91	VI

Source: Primary data

'Airtel' is first preferred by most of the respondents for dongle purchase which is confirmed with the lowest mean rank of 1.92 followed by 'Vodafone' (mean rank 3.36) and 'BSNL' (mean rank 4.63). 'Reliance' (mean rank 4.73) and 'Aircel' (mean rank 4.80) have been ranked as four and five respectively. And finally MTS in sixth place (4.91), Idea in seventh place (5.75) and last preference is given to Tata DoCoMo (5.90) for purchasing a dongle by the respondents.

Table No: 7.3

Chi-Square Test between Level of satisfaction towards various variables and Network operators of dongle

S. No	Factors	Chi-Square Value	Sig.	Decision
1.	Speed	68.490	0.000	Reject
2.	Network connectivity	65.782	0.000	Reject
3.	Tariff plan	35.140	0.166[*]	Accept
4.	Brand image	51.518	0.004	Reject
5.	Customer care services	52.187	0.004	Reject

Source: Primary data

([*]= H_o accepted at 5% significance level)

Hypothesis (H₀): There is no association between Level of satisfaction towards various variables and network operators of dongle.

From the above table it was found that null hypothesis is rejected ($p<0.05$) and it was concluded that there is association between the level of satisfaction towards various variables viz., speed, network connectivity, brand image, customer plan services and network operators of dongle. The researcher also concluded that there is no association between tariff plan and network operator of the dongle, since the null hypothesis is accepted ($p>0.05$).

Table No: 7.4

Independent Factors and the Age of the respondents – One way ANOVA

Independent Factors	F	Significance Value	Result
Speed	0.308	0.735[*]	Accepted
Network connectivity	4.848	0.009	Rejected
Customer care services	1.277	0.282[*]	Accepted
Carry forward data scheme	3.105	0.048	Rejected
Brand image	0.177.	0.838[*]	Accepted
Advertisement and offers	1.687	0.189[*]	Accepted

(Source: Primary data)

(*=H₀ accepted at 5% significance level)

Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant difference between age and independent factors of perceived value towards dongle.

From the table, the researcher found that there is no significant difference between age of the respondents and independent factors of perceived value towards dongle such as speed, customer care services, brand image, advertisement and promotional offers at 5% significance level ($p>0.05$). Researcher has also found that there is significant difference between age of the respondents and some independent factors like network connectivity and carry forward data scheme.

Table No: 7.5

Unstandardized Coefficients of Regression Model – Independent factors and

Overall perceived value towards dongle

S. No	Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	**Std. Error**	
	(Constant)	.136	.197	.490*
1	Speed	0.120	.095	.209*
2	Network connectivity	-.006	.078	.936*
3	Knowledge level of salespeople	-.032	.055	.556*
4	Brand image	.097	.056	.085*
5	Preference over low priced dongles	.165	.054	.003
6	Carry forward data scheme	.217	.071	.003
7	Packaging and warranty	.115	.062	.064*
R=0.792	**R Square= 0.627**			

Source: Primary data

(*=H₀ accepted at 5% significance level)

Hypothesis (H$_0$): There is no significant effect of perceived benefits on overall perceived value towards dongle.

The above result of regression shows that the independent factors viz., preference over low priced dongles and data carry forward scheme (p<0.05) are statistically significant towards overall perceived value towards dongle. The regression results also show that the variables such as speed, network connectivity, knowledge level of salespeople, brand image and packaging and warranty are not statistically significant (p>0.05), since the p value is greater than 0.05. From the above co-efficient table, it has been concluded that the factors of perceived benefit attribute namely data carry forward scheme, preference towards low priced dongles, speed, premium branded dongles, packaging and warranty and customer care services were the dominant variables that estimate overall customer perceived value towards dongle.

8. FINDINGS

Researchers found that 86 % of respondents were in the age group of 18-25 years. The table also shows that 93 % of respondents were female and the rest of respondents were male. 60 % of respondents are drawing a monthly income group of Rs.20,001 to Rs. 40,000. It also depicts that 46% of the respondents are using dongle for more than a year, 37 % of the respondents are using dongle for a year.

Analysis also depicts that 'Airtel' is first preferred by most of the respondents for dongle purchase which is confirmed with the lowest mean rank of 1.92 followed by 'Vodafone' (mean rank 3.36) and 'BSNL' (mean rank 4.63). 'Reliance' (mean rank 4.73) and 'Aircel' (mean rank 4.80) have been ranked as four and five respectively. And finally MTS in sixth place (4.91), Idea in seventh place (5.75) and last preference is given to Tata DoCoMo (5.90) for purchasing a dongle by the respondents.

From the analysis of the researchers, null hypothesis is rejected (p<0.05) and it was concluded that there is association between the level of satisfaction towards various variables viz., speed, network connectivity, brand image, customer plan services and network operators of dongle. The researcher also concluded that there is no association between tariff plan and network operator of the dongle, since the null hypothesis is accepted (p>0.05).

The researcher found that there is no significant difference between age of the respondents and independent factors of perceived value towards dongle such as speed, customer care services, brand image, advertisement and promotional offers at 5% significance level (p>0.05). Researcher

has also found that there is significant difference between age of the respondents and some independent factors like network connectivity and carry forward data scheme.

Analysis by the researcher revealed that preference over low priced dongles and data carry forward scheme ($p<0.05$) are statistically significant towards overall perceived value towards dongle. The regression results also show that the variables such as speed, network connectivity, knowledge level of salespeople, brand image and packaging and warranty are not statistically significant ($p>0.05$), since the p value is greater than 0.05. It has been concluded that the factors of perceived benefit attribute namely data carry forward scheme, preference towards low priced dongles, speed, premium branded dongles, packaging and warranty and customer care services were the dominant variables that estimate overall customer perceived value towards dongle.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Hence the researcher reveals that the Airtel dongles are moving in a good speed in the market because of its speed, technology, network connectivity, brand image and many other reasons as well. Still, few people are hesitant to buy Airtel dongles due to following reasons i.e. premium pricing, absence of data carry forward option when they purchase a dongle, lack of special offers. Thus, the company has to introduce data carry forward scheme from the initial period of using the dongle and try to reduce price and provide seasonal offers to improve the sales of Airtel dongles in the market.

10. CONCLUSION

In this competitive world, every company has to make valuable decision for profit maximization through sales maximization. Every organization should strive to make consumer satisfaction in its work culture. In the dongle market, service differentiation only highlights the company from the competitors. The company has to differentiate its product from its competitors through service quality, product features, etc. The demand for dongles will be burgeoning in a greater speed in the near future due to launch of 4G technology in and around the country. The company has to come up with attractive tariff plans, special combo offers; provide freebies to retailers which induce them to drive the sales to the ultimate customers. It is concluded that the customers give equal importance for all the four perceived benefits i.e. functional, monetary, emotional and social benefits of dongle before they make a final purchase. Thus, the market players

have to concentrate and work on these parameters to improve the future dongle sales in Thanjavur market.

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