

FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE INTENTION OF SMARTPHONE AMONG GENERATION Z

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ABSTRACT

The advanced computing capability and connectivity of smartphones made humans more depend on it extensively in their lives. Currently, the youth has a strong inclination towards the smartphone and the upcoming Generation Z accounts for the main population for users of the smartphone. The purpose of this paper is to assess whether factors such as product features, social influence, social need, brand and price of smartphones influencing purchasing intention of smartphones among generation z. A multistage random sampling method was utilized. In total, 600 completed and usable questionnaires were received from the respondents who comprised students of selected high schools and higher secondary schools in Muvattupuzha Educational District, Ernakulum. The research used multiple regression and Pearson correlation to achieve the objective. The study was limited to certain factors which are more characteristics towards generation z. The result shows that social factors, social needs, product features, price, and brand significantly influence students purchasing intention of smartphones. The social influence was found to have a dominant factor among generation z towards the purchase intention of the smartphone. This research provides customer insight to smartphone manufacturers to focus on the upcoming generation.

Keywords

Smartphones, Generation Z, product feature, social factors, social need, brand, product price

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-moving the digital world, Smartphone has gained its importance and place in our social life because of its tremendous increase in the features of the smartphone. According to the Oxford dictionary, a smartphone can be defined as "A mobile phone that performs many of the functions of a computer, typically having a touch screen interface, internet access, and an operating system capable of running downloaded applications. The increasing innovation has brought craze among the people on smartphones. A growing number of everyday or common applications are likely to be optimized for smartphones – from paying for parking to finding the fastest way to the best lunch restaurant, booking a haircut or purchasing flight tickets. Smartphone technology is a relatively new technology that is rapidly evolving and gradually impacting consumers' behavior, their daily activities, their social activities, the mobile industry, business activities, marketing, education, healthcare and more (Alwahaishi&Snášel, 2013; Carayannis& Clark, 2011; Rohm et.al, 2012).

Generation Z is the next new crop for consumers. They are born in the 1990s and raised in the 2000s and mostly in schools and colleges. They are also referred to as Generation I, Gen Tech, Digital natives, Gen Wii, etc. Generation z is considered as mega mobile generations. The generation z exists in a world with the web, internet, smartphones, laptops, freely available networks, and digital media are considered as the Generation Z (Bascha, 2011; Brue Tulgan& Rainmaker Inc., 2013). According to UN projection, 99.2 million generation z individuals are there in India and also the world's youngest country with a population in the age range of 10-24 with 64% of the total population.

Characteristics of Generation Z

· **Bonding**

According to the study of tech intimates. Comscope, Gen Zer's smartphone is not only something they feel close to, but it's also something they keep close to them. It is at the centre of their interactions and is seen as a friend and a fortress.

· **Techno savvy**

Generation Z is an annual initiative created to better understand the emerging technology, network and communication needs of today's savviest generation and Technological-performance expectations are high among this group reported by MNI Targeted Media Inc.

Holds brands to a high standard.

In October 2017, MNI Targeted Media Inc. commissioned a Media Usage & Attitudes study to learn more about the informational habits, interests, and activities of Generation Z. Research now reports, In general, the younger age group has a stronger affinity to most brands tested across technology, fast food, fashion, and luxury brands, with a few notable exceptions.

Don't Forget Price

According to the MNI study, 72% of Gen Z consumers say that cost is the most important factor when making a purchase. They know how to use the internet to price compare, and no amount of marketing can make them buy unless the price is right. The number of mobile internet users in India is estimated to touch 478 million by June 2018 according to an IAMA report. According to the Nielsen survey, Young students turned out to be the “most prolific users of most services and 50% of smartphone users in India are under the age of 25. The Indian smartphone user study shows India's youth are driven by the desire to stay connected, with almost 50% of the 40 million smartphones being used by people under the age of 25. Kerala has emerged as the state with the highest smartphone penetration in the country, according to data released by Cybermedia Research, a market intelligence firm tracking the technology sector. So, Kerala is a favourite place for smartphone manufacturers. We have reached the point where smartphones have become an integral part of people's lives. The emergence of new competitors is a threat for smartphone companies to gain market share. Hence it is necessary to understand deeply the consumer and modify marketing strategies.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The smartphone market is one of the most turbulent markets in existence today due to fierce competition and technological advancement. But there's a group coming through that is much less understood the upcoming generation z, much more than the rest of the population. According to Activities of Kids and Teens, Mintel Reports (2013), Retailers, and all businesses, hoping to connect to these savvy consumers and they are already \$44billion in purchasing power. As the major consumers of marketers are generation z understanding the digitally born consumer

is a major concern for the marketers. This is the key for the manufacturers to conquer the smartphone market.

3. MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this research is to determine the significant influence of product features, brand name, social need, social influence and price on the purchasing intention of smartphones among generation z.

4. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The null hypothesis is:

H01: There is no significant relationship with respect to product features towards generation Z to purchase the smartphone.

H02: There is no significant influence in respect to social influence towards generation Z to purchase the smartphone.

H03: There is no significant influence in respect of brand name towards generation Z to purchase the smartphone.

H04: There is no significant influence in respect of price towards generation Z to purchase the smartphone.

H05: There is no significant influence in respect to social needs towards generation Z to purchase the smartphone.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Product feature

Product features can be defined as the attributes of a product that can satisfy consumers' preferences by having the product, using and applying the product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2007).

According to Saif et al, (2012) consumer's value new technology features as the crucial factor that influences the consumer to go for a new smartphone purchase decision. Based on the findings of the research by Osman et al. (2012) in Malaysia concluded that hardware and software are important product features of a smartphone. Based on the research conducted by Lay-Yee et al (2013), studied the importance of hardware and software features in smartphones. The study disclosed that software features are most important than hardware features. Moreover,

the study conducted by MesaySata(2013) product features tends to have the second most influential factor affecting the choice of smartphones among youngsters. Based on the research conducted by (Mudondo, 2014). Proved that the younger generation has a better understanding of the technological advancement in mobile phones, influencing their purchasing decision. The product feature is the major influencing factor among adults to purchase smartphones. Azira Rahim et al, (2015). Recently Filieri& Lin (2017) found that smartphone design is a major consideration for youngsters as it's a symbol of their style to be distinguished from others. A study by Ashraf BanyMohammed (2018) titled Selling smartphones to generation Z: Understanding the factors influencing the purchase intentions, product design is a key influential factor that controls the buying decision of Gen Z.

Brand

Brands play an important role in customer purchase decision. Brand can be a name, term, symbol, design or all the above, and used frequently to distinguish a product or services from others. K. Khasawneh(2010) in their study revealed that brands have a positive impact on female customers' more than male customers. According to a study conducted by (Bhattacharya and Mitra, 2012) confirmed that the brand name significantly influences customers to purchase because of their perception of quality and service. Another study done by Norazah (2013), concluded that the brand name was found to have a significant effect on the demand for smartphones among Malaysian students. Amanjot A Kaur Gill (2016) studied the external and internal variables which influence the young generation to acquire the smartphone. The study revealed that brand name, previous user satisfaction, and after-sales service had a strong impact on the smartphone buying decision. S. Santhosh Kumar, &Rahul P. Menon (2017) in their study proved that. Brand loyalty, which is a crucial factor influencing the purchase decision of smartphoneusers, is assessed in this particular scenario. Rinky Trivedi & RahulRaval(2018) commented that Customers also prefer to buy a trustworthy andreputed brand that adds to their personality. ZyeinyelkhaanKhundyz(2018) inhis study found that people become more brand conscious related themselves withbrands to meet social needs which makes them feel deprive and pursue repetitivepurchases.

Social influence

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2007), consumers' action is being influenced by people surrounding them. Consumers would be dominantly influenced bymedia, parents, and peers to

purchase the smartphones (Nelson & McLeod, 2005). Commonly it is noted that friends and family members are the major influencers among consumer evaluations while selecting a product (Schieman, Kanuk, & Wisenbut, 2010; Auter, 2007). Social influence is a key factor that influences the purchase intention. So, it has a major role in consumer adoption of new technology (Kulviwat, Bruner II, & Al-Shuridah, 2009). Another research was done by Suki & Suki (2013), the young generation especially students depend mostly on friends and families to purchase smartphones. Based on the research conducted by Jack Loechner & Staff Writer (2017) friends and family are the most authentic influence among generation z. A study by Ashraf Bany Mohammed (2018) concluded that peer and social influence has a significant influence on generation of z to purchase smartphones.

Social need

Social needs are the social necessities of a person, and in the context of smartphones, they may represent the necessity for keeping in touch with friends, family, and associates (Tikkanen 2009). In the 21st century, having a smartphone is a social necessity for the younger generation, as it is argued that smartphones are an important facilitator of social ties (Wei and Lo, 2006). The younger's customers look for smartphones that are congruent with their lifestyles and their needs and want (Mudondo 2014; Bridges et al. 2010). Social need is considered as the main factor of consumers' dependence on smartphones because of its communication and maintaining relationships between and among individuals (Yuan, 2012; Pearson, Carmon, Tobola, & Fowler, 2010; Lippincott, 2010). The need for the smartphone became a must-buy device for consumers (Mohd Suki, 2013). Marian Mocan et al., (2017) evaluated whether social needs, convenience, and other factors influence the students in purchasing smartphones in Romania. The study concluded that social need influences the university students of Romania to purchase the smartphone.

Price

Price is the quantity of money that a consumer is willing to exchange for a service or product (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). The price of the device creates more impact than other factors (Hanif et al., 2010). Chew (2012) identified that price is a major factor among Malaysian younger generations to purchase a smartphone. According to the report by Thanh-Tuyen Tran (2018) price has the highest significance factor affecting Smartphone purchase intention of office staff in the North of Vietnam. A study by Ashraf Bany Mohammed (2018) titled Selling

smartphones to generation Z: Understanding the factors influencing the purchase intention, price is the main influential factor that controls the buying decision of Gen Z.

6.Theoretical Framework

After a comprehensive literature review analysis for the subject matter research associated with purchase intention, the following theoretical framework has been proposed for the study. There are five independent factors (Product Feature, Brand Name, Price, Social Influence and social need) which influence the dependent variable (Purchase Intension). To develop the model, the researcher has taken the base of Lay-Yee et al. (2013) and Wei and Lo (2006) factors affecting the smartphone purchase decision.

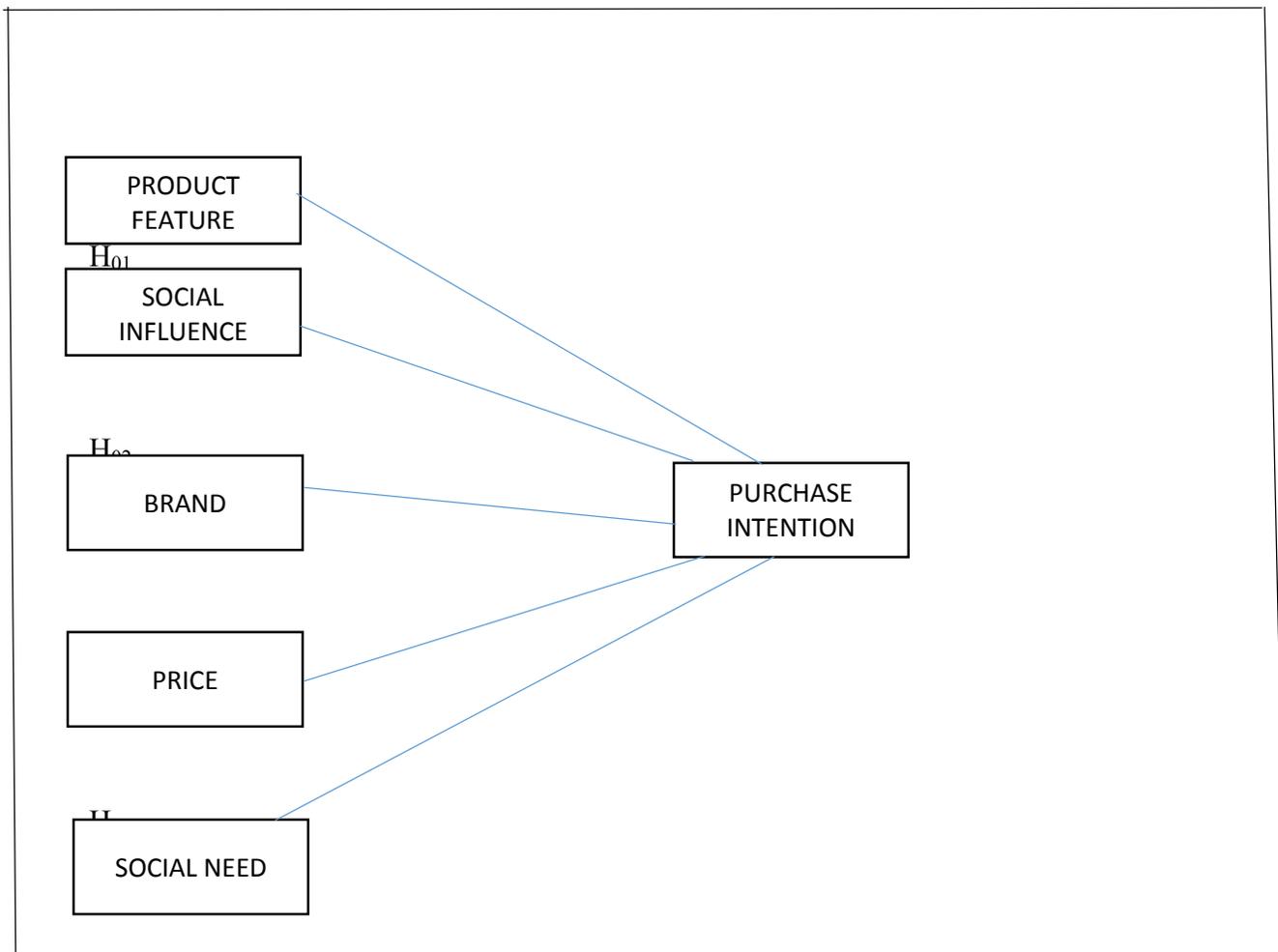


Figure 1. Proposed Theoretical Model on Factors affecting purchase intentions of Smart Phones (Source: Primary data and developed by the author)

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The target population of this research is high school and higher secondary school students in Ernakulam District. Among the four educational districts in Ernakulam, Muvattupuzha educational district was selected for study. A total of 600 completed and usable questionnaires were received from the respondents who comprised high school and higher secondary students in Ernakulam District, Kerala. A multi stage random sampling method was utilized where every unit in the population had an equal chance to be selected. To be selected as a respondent in this study, the respondents were required to have a smart phone. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale with values ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). A descriptive research method was applied to determine whether the independent variables (i.e. product feature, Brand, Price, social influence and social need) significantly affect dependent the variable (purchase intention). Descriptive statistics such as percentage analysis was used to assess the demographic profile of the respondents to make the analysis more meaningful, clear and easily interpretable. Inferential statistical tools such as regression and correlation were applied for analysis by using SPSS 17.

8. DATA FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics and Inferential Statistics techniques were used for statistical analysis.

8.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

In descriptive statistics, percentage analysis covering demographic profile, money spent for purchasing smart phones, and brand preference have been analyzed. The results are tabulated below:

Table 1: Percentage Analysis on Demographic Profile of Respondents

Sl. No.	Groups	Class	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	Gender	Girls	300	50.0	50.0
		Boys	300	50.0	100
		Total	600	100.0	
2	Age	15 years	171	28.5	28.5
		16 years	183	30.5	59.0
		17 years	204	34.0	93.0
		18 years	42	7.0	100.0
		Total	600	100.0	
3	Occupation of Parent	Private Sector	186	31.0	31.0
		Public Sector	169	28.2	59.2
		Self-Employed	226	37.7	96.8
		Unemployed	19	3.2	100.0
		Total	600	100.0	
4.	Monthly Income of Parent	Above Rs10000-Rs.20000	240	40.0	40.0
		Above Rs.20000-Rs.30000	203	33.8	73.8
		Above Rs.30000	80	13.3	87.2
		Up to Rs.10000	77	12.8	100.0
		Total	600	100.0	

The gender of respondents is equally considered representing 50% each from boys and girls. Majority of them were in the age of 17(34 %), followed by age of 16 (30.5%). Accordingly, the majority of the respondent's parents are Self –employed (37.7%) followed by the private sector which was (31%). Moreover, there are few respondents' parents considered as unemployed (3.2%). If we look at the parent's income, 40% of the respondent's parents earn income above Rs.10, 000-Rs.20, 000 followed by 33.8% which represents the parent's income above 20,000-30,000.

Table 2: Money Spent for Purchasing Smartphone

Amount Spent in Rupees	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Above Rs.10000- Rs.20000	402	67.0	67.0
Above Rs.20000	42	7.0	74.0
Above Rs.5000- Rs.10000	153	25.5	99.5
Up to Rs.5000	3	0.5	100.0
Total	600	100.0	

The majority (67%) of students' parents spent above Rs.10000-Rs.20000 for purchasing the smartphone for their children. This indicates the average amount which the parents spent for purchasing the smartphone for their children would be between Rs.10000 and Rs.20000.

Table 3: Brand of smartphone owned by students

Brand	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Apple	4	0.7	1.0
Asus	7	1.2	2.2
Gionee	14	2.3	4.5
Honor	26	4.3	8.8
I bell snap	1	0.2	9.0
Lenovo	4	0.7	9.6
Micromax	7	1.2	10.8
Motorola	15	2.5	13.3
Nokia	10	1.7	15.0
Oppo	115	19.1	34.1
Xiamoi	130	21.6	55.6
Samsung	216	35.9	91.5
Vivo	51	8.5	100.0
Total	602	100.0	

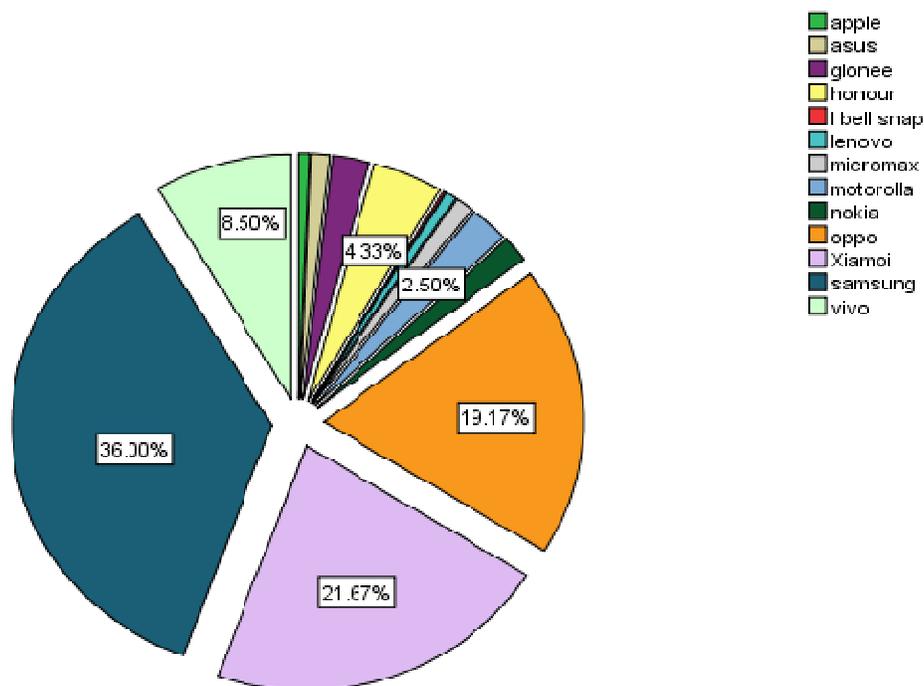


Figure 2. Brand of smartphone owned by students

Based on the report of counterpoint(Q2, 2018), the top five brands in our country according to the market share are Samsung, Xiaomi, Vivo, Oppo, and Huawei/ Honor. The above pie chart exhibits the brands of smartphone owned by students. Accordingly, 36 % of the respondents with overwhelming majority currently use Samsung smartphones followed by Xiamoi (21.67%), Oppo (19.17%), vivo (8.5%), Huawei, Honor (4.3%)and other brands. This result is also comparable to the market share of smartphone manufacturers in India.

Table 4: Regularly using electronic gadget by students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Desktop computer	30	5.0	5.0	5.0
laptop	53	8.8	8.8	13.8
smartphone	463	77.2	77.2	91.0
tablet	54	9.0	9.0	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

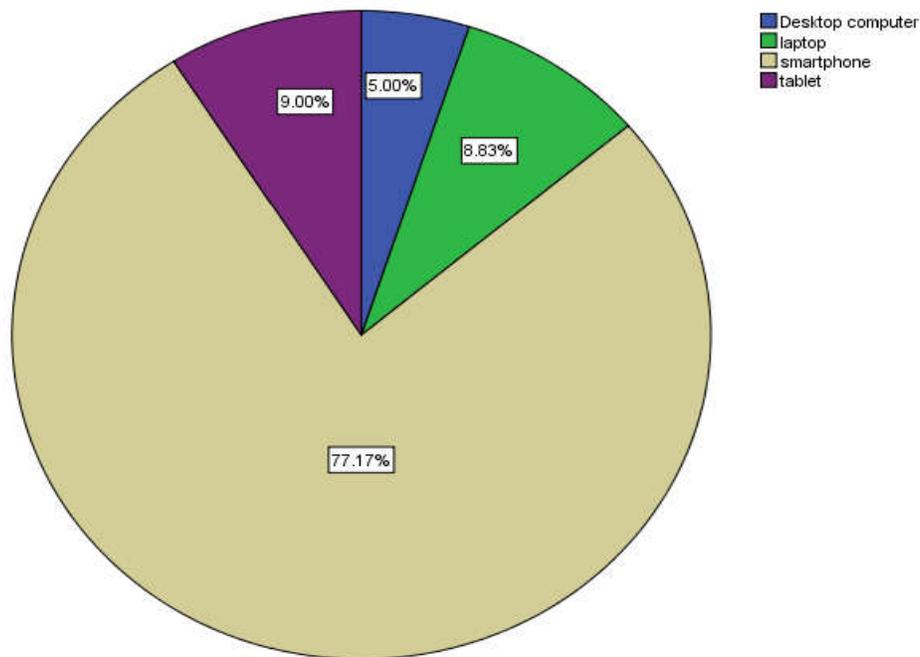
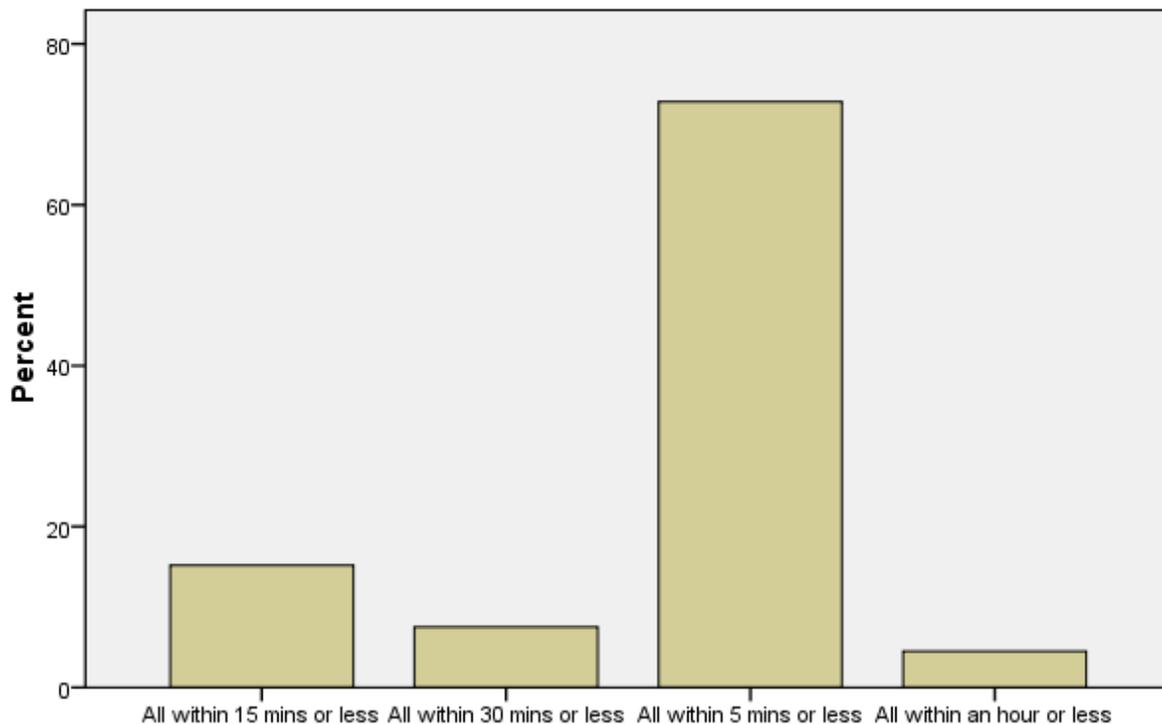


Figure 3. Regularly using electronic gadget by students

The above pie chart exhibits the regularly using gadgets by youngsters. Accordingly, 77 % of the respondents use smartphones as their main gadget. This result proves that generation z is the dominant group of smartphone users.

Table 5: Frequency of smartphone access by students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid All within 15 mins or less	91	15.2	15.2	15.2
All within 30 mins or less	45	7.5	7.5	22.7
All within 5 mins or less	437	72.8	72.8	95.5
All within an hour or less	27	4.5	4.5	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 4: Frequency of smartphone access by students**

The above study shows that all within 5 minutes or less the younger generation check their smartphone. The result revealed the fact that generation z consumers spend a significant amount of time in accessing smartphone.

Table 6: Main Activities of students in smartphones

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid apps Check	145	24.2	24.2	24.2
information about product/service	100	16.7	16.7	40.8
Make an online purchase of a product	48	8.0	8.0	48.8
Other activities	98	16.3	16.3	65.2
social networking	209	34.8	34.8	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

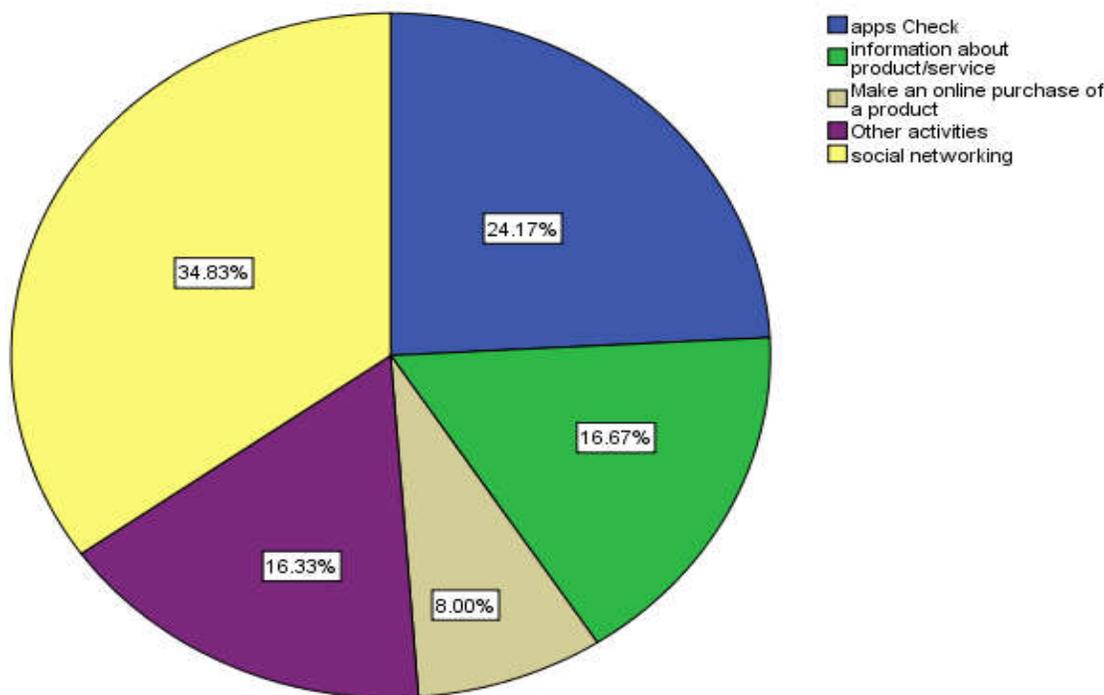
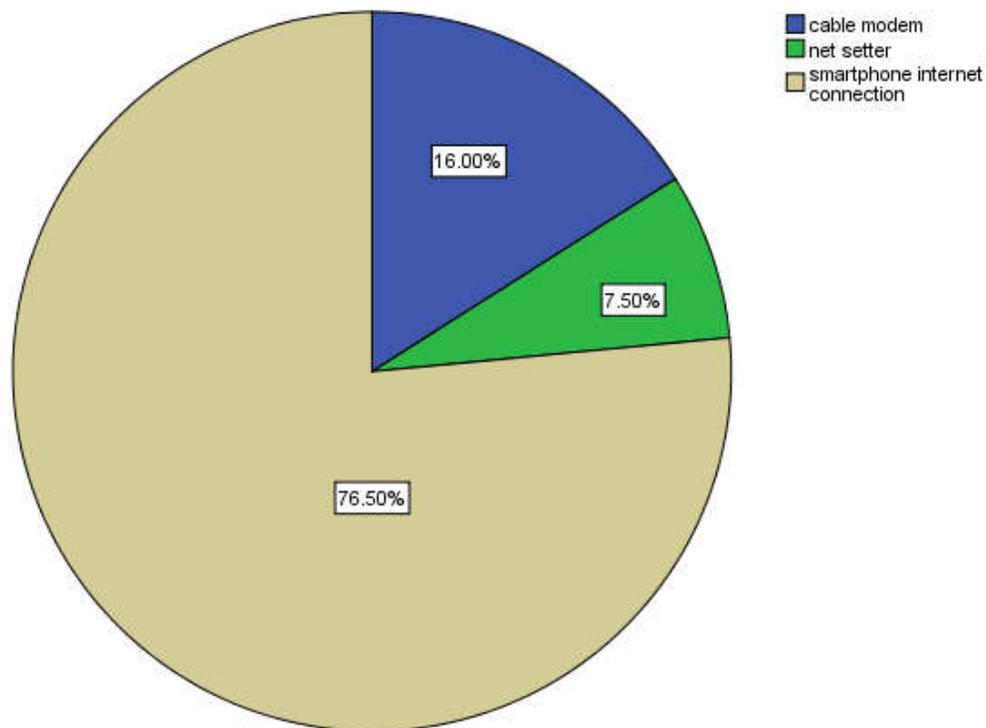


Figure 5: Main Activities of students in smartphones

As the study shows that characteristics of generation z are more social in nature, they mostly use their smartphone for social networking (34.83%).

Table 7: Device used by students to access internet

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid cable modem	96	16.0	16.0	16.0
net setter	45	7.5	7.5	23.5
smartphone internet connection	459	76.5	76.5	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 6: Device used by students to access internet**

As the generation z consumers are mega mobile generation, they prefer smartphone (76.50%) for accessing the internet.

Table: 8 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Analysis

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Brand	.863	6
Product Feature	.866	6
Price	.879	6
Social Factor	.843	6
Social Need	.860	6
Purchase Intension	.919	6

Cronbach's alpha value was measured as part of reliability check and for internal consistency of the constructs. The same has been mentioned in table 8 above. Whereby a higher value of above 0.70 indicated that the variables were reliable while the values above 0.9 are regarded as the most reliable but anything below 0.70 was regarded inconsistent with the reliability scales (Nunnally, and George & Mallery, 2003) who suggested that in order for a scale to be reliable, the Cronbach's alpha value should be above 0.70. Thus, the construct measures are deemed reliable.

8.2 INFERENCE STATISTICS

As part of inferential statistics, Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analysis have been conducted and the results are tabulated below:

Table:9 Correlations Analysis between Variables

		Productfeature	price	Social influence	Social need	purchase	Brand
Productfeature	Pearson Correlation	1	.577**	.530**	.509**	.581**	.358**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	600	600	600	600	600	600
price	Pearson Correlation	.577**	1	.843**	.906**	.881**	.748**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	600	600	600	600	600	600
Socialinfluence	Pearson Correlation	.530**	.843**	1	.831**	.914**	.742**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	600	600	600	600	600	600
Socialneed	Pearson Correlation	.509**	.906**	.831**	1	.822**	.737**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	600	600	600	600	600	600
purchase	Pearson Correlation	.581**	.881**	.914**	.822**	1	.695**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	600	600	600	600	600	600
Brand	Pearson Correlation	.358**	.748**	.742**	.737**	.695**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	600	600	600	600	600	600

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 shows the correlation between five variables such as product feature, price, social influences, social needs and price. All the five factors have the positive influence and the significant impact on the consumers purchase influence. However, the correlation degree among the three factors with each other depends on the highest correlation value of social influence (0.914), followed by price (0.881), social needs (0.822), Brand (.65) & product feature (.581). From the

results seen above, it is evident that social influence is the most significant factor while purchasing smartphones among students.

8.2.2 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

With reference to Weiers (2008), a multiple regression analysis is an analysis which involves one dependent variable and two or more independent variables. In other words, it is an analysis of association in which the effects of two or more independent variables on a single, interval-scaled dependent variable are investigated simultaneously (Sigmund et al., 2010).

In our study, totally there are five independent variables namely product feature, price, social influence, social needs and price influencing consumers to purchase the smartphone. Multiple regression is used in order to test the influence of these variables on the purchase.

Table: 10 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.940 ^a	.884	.883	1.85516	1.288

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand, productfeature, socialneed, socialfactor, price

b. Dependent Variable: purchase

From table 10 above, the value of R Square is found as .884, which indicates that 88 % variance in buying decision of consumers can be predicted using the above mentioned five variables in this study. Accordingly, there are other variables that influence buying decision of consumers by remaining 12 %. Durbin Watson statistic is a number that tests for autocorrelation in the residuals from the statistical regression analysis. It shows that the value is within the acceptable limit(1-3), Durbin & Watson (1951).

Table: 11 Anova Test Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15548.646	5	3109.729	903.570	.000 ^a
	Residual	2044.312	594	3.442		
	Total	17592.958	599			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand, product feature, socialneed, socialfactor, price

b. Dependent Variable: purchase

The abovetable 11 shows that the given model is significant ($p < 0.05$) i.e. The regression model which trying to fit on the given set to establish the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable is statistically significant.

Table: 12 Regression Analysis Results**Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.735	.448		-1.643	.101		
	Productfeature	.064	.019	.060	3.413	.001	.638	1.567
	price	.449	.039	.433	11.456	.000	.137	7.296
	Socialfactor	.676	.031	.624	21.821	.000	.239	4.183
	Socialneed	-.084	.037	-.079	-2.263	.024	.161	6.224
	Brand	-.058	.024	-.055	-2.415	.016	.380	2.634

a. Dependent Variable: purchase

The coefficients shown in table 12 above, the standardized (Beta) and unstandardized (B) for each independent variable along with the t-test values with corresponding p-values. IF values for all independent variables are below the threshold values 10 as suggested by Bowerman &

O'Connell (1990) & Myers (1990), therefore the data are free from the problem of multicollinearity.

The significance value for five independent variables include product feature (.001), price (.000), socialinfluence (.000), socialneed (.024) and brand (.016) are less than 0.05. Hence all the null hypotheses (H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} , H_{04} & H_{05}) are rejected. The test confirms that all five independent variables are significant factors which influence the consumer to purchase smartphones. The social influence is the most influencing factors among students to purchase smartphones.

9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The present study was confined to school students only and also the research was conducted in one geographical location -Muvattupuzha Educational District, Ernakulum. Further, the data collected from the samples may not be completely appropriate. This research uses only five independent variables to understand the smartphone purchase decision.

10. Conclusion

The study reviewed the various literature and has investigated the different variables that influence the purchase of the smartphone. Younger consumers were researched believing that they are potential consumers of the smartphone and are of vital importance for marketers in short-term as well as long-term. The result after analyzing the findings based on the survey shows that the majority of the parents spent above Rs.10, 000-Rs.20, 000 for purchasing the smartphone for their children. This finding helps the marketers to concentrate on the price range where parents of generation Z preferred while purchasing the smartphone for their children. A clear majority of the students own Samsung followed by Xiamoi. The smartphone is the electronic gadget usually preferred by students and also, they spend more time on accessing smartphone. The main purpose of generation z consumers of using the smartphone is for social networking and always prefer to access the internet from smartphones compared to other devices.

The current study aims to ascertain the factors which influence Purchase Intentions towards Smartphone. It revealed seven five components. The findings of the study revealed that product

feature, social influence, brand, price, and social need have a significant influence on purchased decision for generation z consumers. The key findings of the study revealed that social influence is the main factor influence students to purchase smartphones. The result of this study is important for smartphone manufacturers in India to synchronize the marketing strategies according to the characteristics of generation z.

11. SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEACRH

It would be very interesting to conduct another study within the same area of research with the incorporation of all the age group among generation z and include all the factors influencing them to purchase a smartphone which will give the more integrated result to the topic.

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