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A STUDY ON BRAND LOYALTY AND BRAND SWITCHING BEHAVIOR IN THE SMARTPHONE MARKET

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ABSTRACT
The smartphone market has grown rapidly and has become highly competitive with the presence of major brands such as Apple, Samsung, Xiaomi, OnePlus, and Vivo. Consumers today have many choices when purchasing smartphones, which makes brand loyalty and brand switching behaviour important areas of study. Brand loyalty refers to the tendency of customers to repeatedly purchase and prefer a particular brand due to satisfaction, trust, and positive experience. On the other hand, brand switching behaviour occurs when consumers change from one brand to another due to factors such as price differences, innovative features, promotional offers, peer influence, and dissatisfaction with the current brand. This study aims to examine the factors that influence brand loyalty and the reasons behind brand switching behaviour among smartphone users. The research focuses on various elements such as product quality, price, brand image, technological features, and after-sales service that affect consumer purchasing decisions. The study is based on primary data collected from respondents using a structured questionnaire, and the responses are analyzed using simple statistical tools to understand consumer preferences and behaviour in the smartphone market. The findings of the study help identify the major factors that influence customer loyalty as well as the reasons that encourage consumers to switch smartphone brands. The results of the study will be useful for smartphone companies and marketers in developing effective strategies to improve customer satisfaction, strengthen brand loyalty, and reduce brand switching in the competitive smartphone market.

KEY WORDS: *Brand Loyalty, Brand Switching Behaviour, Smartphone Market, Consumer Behaviour, Customer Satisfaction.*

INTRODUCTION

The smartphone market has become one of the fastest-growing and most competitive industries in the world. With rapid technological advancements, increasing internet penetration, and changing consumer lifestyles, smartphones have become an essential part of daily life. Consumers use smartphones not only for communication but also for education, entertainment, usiness, banking, and social networking.

Leading brands such as Apple, Samsung, Xiaomi, OnePlus, and Vivo compete intensely by offering innovative features, competitive pricing, strong branding, and after-sales services. Due to this high level of competition, consumers often face multiple choices while purchasing a smartphone, which directly influences their loyalty towards a brand or their decision to switch to another brand.

Brand loyalty refers to a customer's consistent preference and repeated purchase of a particular smartphone brand over time. Loyal customers tend to trust the brand, recommend it to others, and resist switching even when competitors offer attractive alternatives. On the other hand, brand switching behaviour occurs when customers change from one smartphone brand to another due to factors such as price differences, new features, poor service quality, peer influence, or promotional offers.

Understanding the factors that influence brand loyalty and brand switching behaviour is important for smartphone companies to retain customers and increase market share. This study aims to analyze the reasons behind customer loyalty, identify the key factors that cause brand switching, and examine the relationship between consumer satisfaction and repurchase intention in the smartphone market.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The smartphone market has become highly competitive with the presence of several strong brands such as Apple, Samsung, Xiaomi, and OnePlus. Each brand continuously introduces new models with advanced features, competitive pricing, and promotional offers to attract customers. As a result, consumers are exposed to numerous alternatives, making brand loyalty more challenging to maintain.

Despite customer satisfaction, many consumers frequently switch from one smartphone brand to another due to factors such as price variations, technological advancements, peer influence, brand image, service quality, and promotional strategies. This switching behaviour creates uncertainty for companies in retaining customers and maintaining long-term profitability.
Therefore, the main problem of this study is to identify and analyze the factors influencing brand loyalty and brand switching behaviour in the smartphone market, and to understand why consumers remain loyal to a particular brand or decide to switch to another brand.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Nandi & Pattanayak (2015) in their study on mobile phone usage among young Indian consumers found that brand loyalty is strongly influenced by brand reputation,

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perceived quality, and innovative features. The study also revealed that consumers tend to switch brands due to technological upgrades and better alternatives available in the market.

- Santhosh Kumar & Menon (2017) conducted research on smartphone brand loyalty in India and concluded that customer satisfaction, brand experience, and service quality play a significant role in developing brand loyalty. The study highlighted that dissatisfied customers are more likely to switch to competing brands.
- Agarwal, Sahoo & Agarwal (2019) examined factors affecting mobile phone buying behaviour in India and reported that price, brand image, peer influence, and product features significantly impact purchase decisions. The study found that competitive pricing and innovative features often lead to brand switching behaviour.
- Chatterjee & Giri (2021) analyzed consumer behaviour in the Indian smartphone market and observed that emotional attachment, promotional strategies, and digital marketing activities influence brand loyalty. The research also indicated that attractive advertisements and new product launches encourage consumers to try other brands.
- Kavitha & Muthulakshmi (2023) studied brand switching behaviour among mobile phone users in Tamil Nadu and found that technological advancements, camera quality, promotional offers, and after-sales service are major factors influencing switching decisions. The study emphasized that maintaining customer satisfaction is essential to reduce brand switching.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- To examine the impact of product features on brand loyalty in the smartphone market.
- To analyse how price perception influences consumers' loyalty toward smartphone brands.
- To study the relationship between brand image and brand loyalty among smartphone users.
- To evaluate the role of customer satisfaction in building long-term brand loyalty.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study titled **"A study on brand loyalty and brand switching behaviour in smartphone market"** Convenient sampling technique is used to collect the data. The sample size for the study is 120 respondents who are residing in Coimbatore City. The period of the study is from December 2025 – February 2026.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	GENDER	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Male	72	64.3
2.	Female	40	35.7
3.	Others	0	0.00
	Total	112	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The table shows the gender distribution of 112 respondents in the study. Out of the total respondents, 72 (64.3%) belong to Gender category 1, while 40 (35.7%) belong to Gender category 2. This indicates that the majority of participants are from Gender category 1. Therefore, Gender category 1 has a higher representation compared to Gender category 2 in the sample.

AGE FOR THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	AGE GROUP	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Below 20	43	38.4
2.	21-25	58	51.8
3.	26-30	6	5.4
4.	Above 30	5	4.5
	Total	112	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The table shows the age group distribution of 112 respondents in the study. Among them, 58 respondents (51.8%) belong to age group 2, which is the highest percentage. Age group 1 includes 43 respondents (38.4%), while age groups 3 and 4 have 6 (5.4%) and 5 (4.5%) respondents respectively. This indicates that the majority of participants belong to age group 2, followed by age group 1, with very few respondents in the higher age groups.

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EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	EDUCATIONAL OUALIFCATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Undergraduate	94	83.9
2.	Postgraduate	8	7.1
3.	Others	10	8.9
		112	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The table presents the educational qualification of 112 respondents in the study. A majority of respondents, 94 (83.9%), belong to category 1, showing the highest representation. Category 3 includes 10 respondents (8.9%), while category 2 has 8 respondents (7.1%). This indicates that most of the participants fall under educational qualification category 1, with very few respondents in the other categories.

SMARTPHONE BRAND OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	SMARTPHONE BRANDS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Apple	28	25.0
2.	Samsung	42	37.5
3.	Vivo	20	17.9
4.	Oppo	7	6.3
5.	Others	15	13.4
	Total	112	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The table shows the distribution of smartphone brands currently used by 112 respondents. Brand category 2 has the highest number of users with 42 respondents (37.5%), followed by category 1 with 28 respondents (25%). Category 3 includes 20 respondents (17.9%), while category 5 has 15 respondents (13.4%), and category 4 has the least with 7 respondents (6.3%). This indicates that brand category 2 is the most preferred among the respondents, while category 4 is the least used brand in the study sample.

USING CURRENT BRAND OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	USING CURRENT BRAND	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Less than 1 Year	14	12.5
2.	1–2 Years	44	39.3
3.	2–4 Years	37	33.0
4.	More than 4 years	17	15.2
	Total	112	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The table shows how long respondents have been using their current brand. Out of 112 respondents, the highest percentage (39.3%) falls under category 2, followed by 33.0% in category 3. Only 12.5% of respondents belong to category 1, while 15.2% are in category 4. The cumulative percentage indicates that 84.8% of respondents fall within the first three categories. This suggests that most respondents have been using their current brand for a moderate period rather than a very short or very long duration.

NUMBER OF SMARTPHONES OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	NUMBER OF SMARTPHONES USED	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1.	One	10	8.9
2.	Two	54	48.2
3.	Three	26	23.2
4.	More than three	22	19.6
	Total	112	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

Most respondents (48.2%) have used two smartphone brands, showing moderate brand exposure. About 23.2% have used three brands and 19.6% have used four brands. Only 8.9% have used just one brand. This indicates that the majority of consumers have experience with multiple brands.

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SWTICHED SMARTPHONE BRANDS OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	SWITCHED SMARTPHONE BRANDS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Yes	105	93.8
2.	No	7	6.3
	Total	112	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

A large majority of respondents (93.8%) reported that they have switched smartphone brands. Only 6.3% stated that they have never switched brands. This suggests that brand switching is very common among consumers. Overall, brand loyalty appears to be relatively low.

MY SMARTPHONE BRAND OFFERS FEATURES THAT MEET MY DAILY NEEDS OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	SMARTPHONE BRAND OFFERS FEATURES	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Strongly agree	87	77.7
2.	Agree	15	13.4
3.	Neutral	8	7.1
4.	Disagree	1	.9
5.	Strongly disagree	1	.9
	Total		100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

Most respondents (77.7%) strongly agreed that their smartphone brand offers features that meet their daily needs. Additionally, 13.4% agreed with the statement. Very few respondents expressed neutral or negative opinions. This indicates a high level of satisfaction with current smartphone features.

FINDINGS

SIMPLE PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

- Majority(64.3) of the respondents are male.
- Majority(51.8) of the respondents are between the age 21-25.
- Majority(83.9) of the respondents are the educational qualification.
- Majority of respondents use Samsung, with 42 respondents (37.5%), making it the most preferred brand.
- Majority of respondents (44 respondents, 39.3%) have been using their current smartphone brand for 1–2 years.
- Majority of respondents (93.8%) have switched smartphone brands. Only 6.3% have not switched brands.
- Majority of respondents (77.7%) strongly agree that their smartphone brand offers features that meet their daily needs**.**

SUGGESTION

- Smartphone companies should focus on improving product quality, performance, and durability to increase customer satisfaction and strengthen brand loyalty.
- Brands such as Apple and Samsung should continue introducing innovative features and advanced technology to retain existing customers and attract new users.
- Smartphone companies should provide better after-sales service and customer support, as good service helps build trust and long-term relationships with customers.
- Brands like Xiaomi and OnePlus should focus on effective marketing and brand image building to strengthen customer loyalty.
- Companies should actively collect customer feedback and reviews to understand consumer needs and improve their products and services accordingly.

CONCLUSION

The study on brand loyalty and brand switching behaviour in the smartphone market shows that product quality, innovative features, brand image, pricing, and customer satisfaction strongly influence consumer decisions. Many customers remain loyal to brands like Apple and Samsung because of their reliability and strong reputation. At the same time, competitive pricing and attractive features from brands such as Xiaomi and OnePlus encourage customers to switch. Customer satisfaction and good after-sales service play a key role in maintaining long-term relationships. Continuous innovation also helps companies retain their customers. However, technological changes, promotional offers, and peer influence can increase brand switching behaviour. Therefore, smartphone companies must focus on quality, innovation, and strong customer relationships to improve brand loyalty.

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