

STUDY OF SMART PHONE BRAND CHOICE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' IN PUNE CITY

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ABSTRACT

Telecommunication industry, including smart phone, is changing leaps and bound every now and then. Such changes are creating multiplier impact within and outside the industry. Research and development in the smartphones are providing new and new models very frequently. On the one hand the global players and luxury brands like iPhone, Samsung etc. believes in long term relationship with the customers, while the brands like Vivo and Oppo provide continuous up- gradation in it. Such competition is proving to be beneficial to customers and hence, by getting attracted to the attractive advertisements and utility of the phones, some customers are buying multiple/ latest handsets, even if they have the existing mobile in good condition. The College going students seems to be more cost and feature conscious and hence they prefer Vivo and Oppo for their use. Such preference of the overall customers is deciding the market leader. The present study aiming at understanding the smart phone choice of the College going students.

Keywords: Smart Phones, Phone Brands, Market Leader, Telecommunication Industry.

Introduction

Today, smart phone has occupied an important part of almost everybody's life. Considering such penetration, all the manufacturers are not only trying to come out with newer versions of phones, but are also trying to offer number of facilities and utilities to attract the customers. In response to that, customers are also becoming more selective and are trying to possess the latest version with low cost. In this process, the entire smart phone mobile market is passing through the dramatic journey, wherein, every brand is struggling to retain its market share and more than that, to become the market leader. Innovations in the smart phones are driving the markets and the company which is offering innovation with price reduction is winning in the market. Recently, Oppo and Vivo brands are catching the lion's share in the Indian smart phone market. In the present article the researcher is trying to trace the position of the smart phone leader in the Indian market on the one hand and on the other hand, he is also trying to understand the preference of the smart phone brand of the College students in the Pune city.

Objectives

The current study aims at:

- To take a review of the smart phone market share in Indian and Global market.
- To take input from College going students in Pune city, about their choice and preferences.
- To analyze and interpret the primary data and correlate it with the market data about the preference of smart phone brand.

Scope of the Study

The current study is mainly focusing on the undergraduate and Post Graduate students of Colleges located in Pune.

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Smart Phone Market Share in India

Xiaomi has been the number one player in the Indian mobile phone market from late 2017 to 2019 as per reports from Counterpoint Research as well as IDC. This has been possible due to budget and mid-range smartphone offerings. However, amongst the top 5 smartphone brands in India, it can be noticed that three out of the five brands are owned by the BBK group. This essentially means that the BBK group which owns OPPO, Vivo, OnePlus and Realme brands holds the largest market share in India and not Xiaomi. It's just the beginning of 2020 and from the way things are progressing, it seems both Xiaomi and BBK group are getting ready to go to open war with each other.

If we go over the Indian smartphone market landscape in the past five years, one can see that Xiaomi and BBK group has constantly been trying to cut each other down. January 2014 was when BBK entered India with its OPPO brand which focused mainly on the offline market and received a good response. Xiaomi arrived next in July 2014 but with an online-only model and instantly gained unprecedented sales with its first device itself. This made the BBK group sit up and pay attention to the evolving online market in India and as a result, we saw both OnePlus and Vivo arrive in India in December 2014. OnePlus catered to the niche power users while Vivo was for the masses at attractive pricing in the online and offline space. Over the next few years, Xiaomi topped the entry-level and medium price market with its Redmi series while its Mi series of premium phones didn't gain too much traction and was eventually abandoned for the Indian market. On the other hand, BBK group's three brands garnered great success – OPPO and Vivo did great in the entry and mid-level range while OnePlus made its mark in the premium segment.

Head-to-Head Competition

Trouble is that everyone wants a bigger slice of the pie and since the pie is the multi-billion dollar smartphone market of India, both Xiaomi and BBK group have been trying to take the other's market share. BBK group forayed into the online segment with Vivo and OPPO to take on Xiaomi and Xiaomi went into the offline market to win over market share from Vivo and OPPO. In 2017, Xiaomi experimented with a new sub-brand, POCO, which was a power user device to compete with OnePlus. While there was only one device launched in the sub-brand, it did impact OnePlus's positioning. BBK group didn't sit idle – they launched a sub-brand, Realme in 2018 under OPPO, which went into a head-to-head competition with Xiaomi by doing exactly what Xiaomi does ranging from aggressively priced smartphones, fan events, and even marketing strategy. Seeing the success it received, BBK group spun it off as an independent brand in 2018 itself.

As per IDC, Realme had 14.3 percent market share in Q3, 2019 and this is something that shook up Xiaomi. Xiaomi, which saw a continuous growth in the Indian market with its aggressive pricing, no longer had the exclusivity of offering a smartphone with the best specs and features in the entry-level and mid-range price segment. As it stands today, Realme has a competing device for each of Xiaomi's current smartphone portfolio under the Redmi brand and this is impacting Xiaomi's business in India as its market share has become stagnant. Xiaomi is not the one to back up from a fight and for 2020 it is laying down its plan to win more market share with the same multi-brand approach as the BBK group. Xiaomi made Redmi into a separate brand in 2019 for China that will focus on entry-level and mid-range devices while the MI brand will focus on premium range. In India, since the MI range was not available, there were no official changes made to the brand and it continues to sell under Xiaomi India. But for 2020, Xiaomi India is gearing up to take the fight to the BBK group.

A week ago, Raghu Reddy, Head of Categories and Online sales, Xiaomi India, showcased the company's 5G concept smartphone, Mi Mix Alpha, with the Indian media at a select roundtable meet. At the meet, Reddy also shared the news that Xiaomi India is working on bringing the Mi series smartphones back and that we should see the premium devices soon in India. Keep in mind that even though the Mi series phones never came to India, they always saw traction and demand from interested consumers in India – this demand is one of the reasons why a lot of Indian YouTubers imported the Mi series device from China for unboxing and reviews. So who does this impact the BBK group? Considering that OPPO has been gaining a foothold in the premium segment with their Reno series, the launch of Mi series can be counted as a head-on competitor to the brand by Xiaomi.

The next big-news followed mere days later as Manu Kumar Jain, Managing Director, Xiaomi India, announced on social media that POCO will now be an independent brand. If it will be structured under the Xiaomi umbrella or it's a standalone company is not clear at the moment. POCO as a brand gained its share of fans with just one device in its portfolio, the POCO F1 and consumers have been speculating for the launch of the second device under the POCO brand for the whole of 2019 with no

answer from any spokesperson. It has gained so much hype that the question "Where is Poco F2?" can be found on almost all social media posts by the company spokespersons. The announcement of POCO becoming an independent brand now is a clear indication that the goal here is to use the popularity of the POCO brand in India to disrupt the positioning of OnePlus and to eat into its market share.

Aggressive Moves

Obviously, BBK group is also not the one to back away from a challenge. As it stands, Vivo's premium sub-brand IQOO from China is rumoured to be launching in India in March as per 91Mobiles. The announcement came just two days after POCO was announced as a separate brand and is the BBK group's reply to Xiaomi India's announcements. IQOO smartphones are similar to POCO in terms of delivering top-end specifications at an aggressive price. So if Xiaomi uses POCO to undercut OnePlus in terms of pricing or features, BBK group can use IQOO to undercut POCO in a similar fashion.

At the moment, the brands under the BBK group makes up for more than 50 percent market share in India. Xiaomi India is needed to make big changes to stand up to the rising competition and they have started strong in 2020 with two big announcements back to back. Opting for a similar tactic as its biggest competitor is a smart move and if Realme can grow by being inspired by Xiaomi's strategy, then Xiaomi can also grow by using BBK group's multi-brand strategy. However, the BBK group is also ready to counter Xiaomi's aggressive moves and 2020 is setting up to be an interesting year for the smartphone market. The back-to-back announcements are Xiaomi India's bugle call as they go head-on with the BBK group and irrespective of whichever side comes out on the top, it's the Indian consumer that will get to reap the benefits with some great smartphones being available at attractive pricing.

Following table shows the quarter on quarter basis position of few smart phone's market share:

Sr. No.	Name/ Brand of the Smart Phone	2018 Q3	2018 Q4	2019 Q1	2019 Q2	2019 Q3
01	Xiaomi	27%	27%	29%	28%	26%
02	Samsung	23%	20%	24%	25%	20%
03	Vivo	10%	10%	12%	12%	17%
04	Realme	3%	8%	7%	9%	16%
05	Oppo	8%	7%	7%	8%	8%
06	Others	29%	28%	21%	18%	13%

Source: <https://www.counterpointresearch.com/india-smartphone-share>

From the above table it can be seen that, in stand- alone brand, still Xiaomi is an undoubted leader, though it is losing the minor ground. The sudden rise in the market share of Realme can be seen, especially, in the Q3 of 2019. One more point which can be seen that, the rise of the market share by the Realme is from the other brands and from Samsung. The Vivo brand has also seen a sharp rise of 5% in the period. Thus, we can see that the Chinese brands are eating out the lion's share of the Smart Phone market in India. Ultimately, the BBK group has been emerged as the Market Leader in the Indian market.

Research Methodology

The data for the current study has been collected from primary as well as secondary data. As a part of secondary data, the researcher has referred various websites related to mobile manufacturers, governmental websites, newspaper sites etc. As far as primary data is concerned, a questionnaire with four point linkard scale has been prepared.

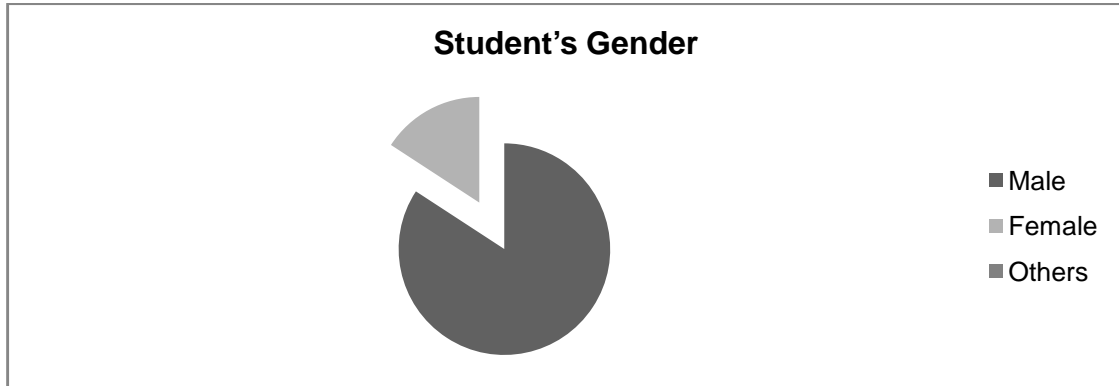
The questionnaire distribution was done in the flowing way:

Table 1

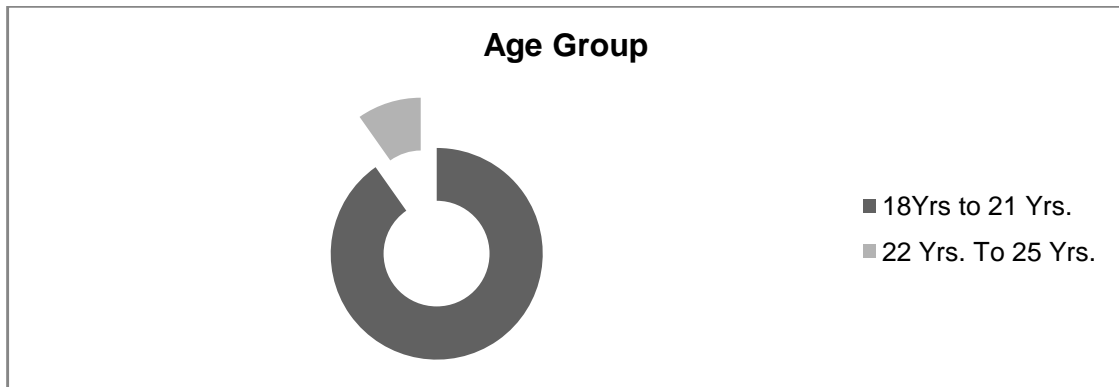
Sr. No.	Particulars	Total Number
01	Questionnaire Circulated	1200
02	Responses Received From	611
03	Correct Responses	583
04	Incorrect Responses	28

As mentioned in the above table, the researcher distributed a questionnaire in the form of Google Doc, to 1200 students of five colleges in Pune. 611 students from the faculty of Commerce, Arts and Science, both from under graduate and post graduate, responded to the questionnaire. From these 611, 28 responses were incomplete and incorrect and 583 responses were as per the requirement. Hence, the current research is based on the responses of 583 students of College Students.

Analysis, Interpretation and Findings of the Data



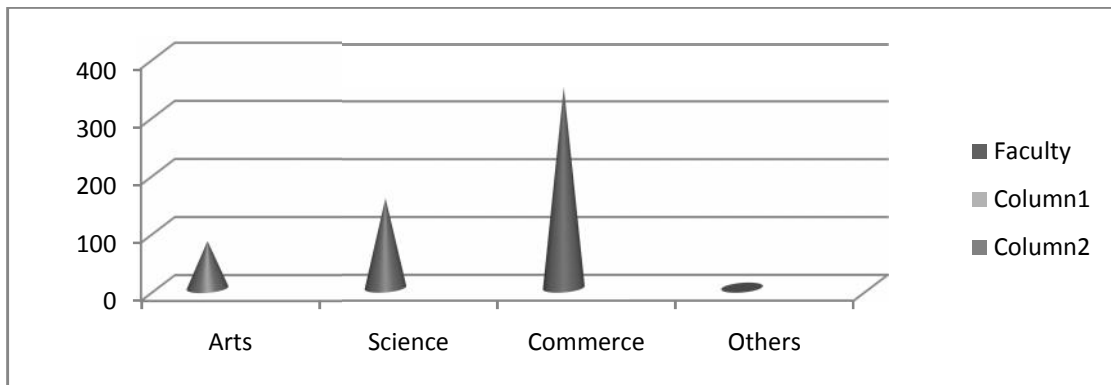
Graph No 1



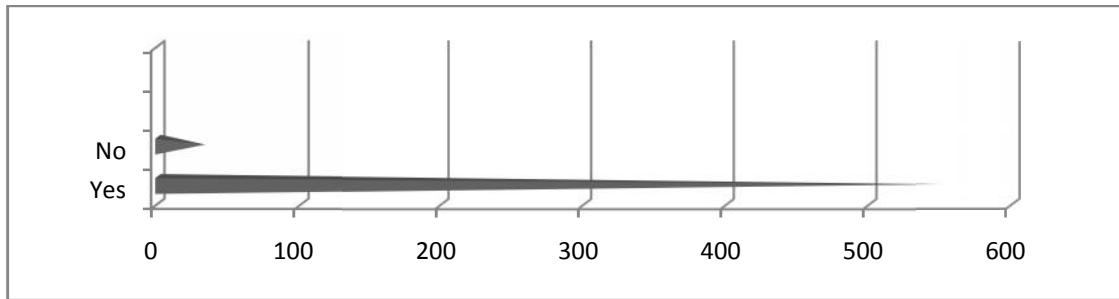
Graph No 2

Graph number one shows that out of 583 respondents 491 with 84.22% are male and 92 with 15.78% are female. It means that the findings of the research would mainly be dominated by the male respondents.

Graph number 2 represents the age of respondents. Since the responses were expected from the undergraduate and post graduate students, the researcher has categorised the age of the respondents in two groups that is 18 to 21 years as under graduate and 22 to 25 for the post graduates. From the graph, it can be seen that 90.22% of the respondents are in the first age bracket, whereas 9.78% belongs to the second that is the Post Graduate bracket. Thus, the inferences would significantly be influenced by the first, which is under graduate category.



Graph No 3



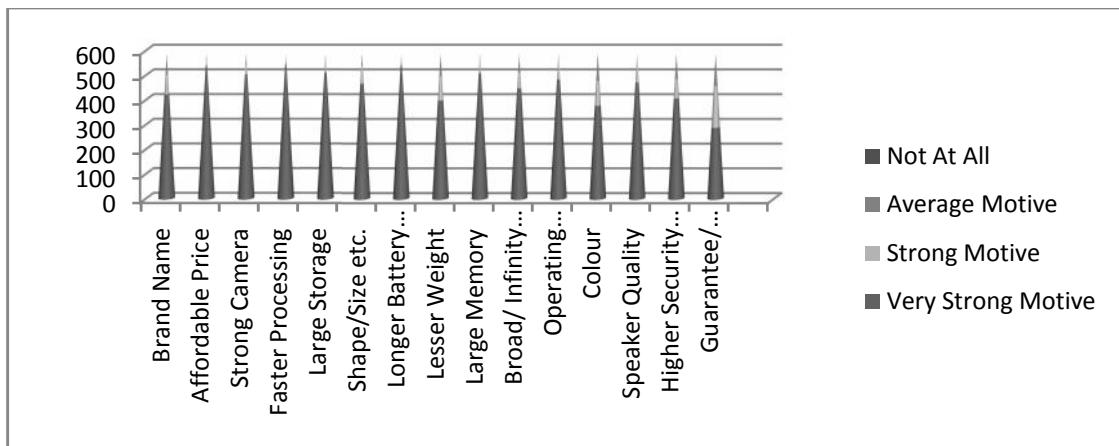
Graph No 4

Graph number 3 represents the faculty or stream of the respondents. Mainly, respondents are from three traditional faculties, namely, Arts, Science and Commerce. From the above graph it appears that, 81 respondents with 13.89% are from Arts Faculty, 155 respondents with 26.59% belongs to Science Faculty and 347 students with 59.52% are from the Commerce Faculty. Hence, it can be interpreted that the outcome of the research would have an impact of Commerce Faculty student's opinion.

Graph number 4 represents the input about the students having Smart Phones. To this question, 550 students with 94.33% have replied positively whereas, 33 respondents with 5.67% have replied negatively. It means that the significant number of students do have the Smart Phone with them.

Table No 2

Sr. No.	Reason/ Factor/ Point to Buy A Particular Smart Phone	Buying Motive				Total
		Very Strong	Strong	Average	Not at All	
01	Brand Name	421/72.21	78/13.32	70/12.00	14/2.4	583
02	Affordable Price	537/92.11	21/3.60	22/3.60	03/0.51	583
03	Strong Camera	502/86.11	39/6.69	33/5.67	09/1.54	583
04	Faster Processing	543/93.14	37/6.34	02/0.34	01/0.17	583
05	Large Storage : RAM/ ROM.	509/87.30	48/8.23	26/4.45	00/0.00	583
06	Shape, Size	464/79.59	73/12.52	27/4.63	19/3.25	583
07	Longer Battery life	539/92.45	34/5.83	08/1.37	02/0.34	583
08	Lesser Weight	397/68.09	96/16.46	83/14.23	07/1.20	583
09	Large Memory	506/86.79	58/9.94	10/1.71	09/1.54	583
10	Display: Broad, Infinity – U, etc.	446/76.50	61/10.46	68/11.67	08/1.37	583
11	Operating System	481/82.50	84/14.40	16/2.74	02/0.34	583
12	Colour	376/64.49	99/16.98	79/13.55	29/4.97	583
13	Speaker Quality	469/80.44	103/17.66	11/1.88	00/0.00	583
14	Higher Security Features	405/69.46	78/13.37	82/14.06	18/3.08	583
15	Guarantee/ Warrantee, etc.	288/49.39	167/28.64	119/20.41	09/1.54	583



Graph No 5

The researcher tried to identify the reason of buying the smart phones by the students. In response to his questions, following are the responses of the students:

While asking about the motive to buy the smart phone the researcher asked questions with respect to following points:

- **Brand Name:** As regards to response, 421 respondents with 72.21% responded as very strong, 78 with 13.32% have replied as strong, the average respondents are 70 with 12% and 14 respondents have responded as not at all. Thus, it can be interpreted that majority of the buyers smartphone do buy the smartphone looking at the brand name. It means that brand name is the strongest motivator to buy the smartphone for them.
- **Affordable Price:** the second point which was appointed to was the affordable pricing. To this question, 537 respondents with 92.11% have responded as strongly agree, 21 respondents with 3.60% have responded strong, 22 students 3.60% have responded average and in the end not at all responses are from only three respondents with 0.51%.

Hence, it can clearly understood that significant number of respondents 2 by smartphone affordability of the price. Thus prices is the strongest motivator to buy the smartphone.

- **Strong Camera:** as far as features of smartphone are concerned, the research asked about the strong camera as motivator to buy the smart phone. In response to this point, 502 students with 86.11% have responded at a strong motivator, whereas 39 respondents with 6.69% have responded as strong, 33 with 5.67% have responded as average motivator Where are used nine students have responded as not at all.

On the basis of the responses we can interpret that strong camera is definitely strong motivator to the respondents to buy the Smartphone.

- **Faster Processing:** the next point which is asked to the respondents is processing. The research wanted to know how far the processing works as a motivating factor.

In response to the question 543 responded that processing is a strong motivator. Whereas 37 students have said as strong to respondent have replied as average where as one respondent have said not at all. Thus, on the basis of the responses so far it can be understood that fast processing one of the strong motivator to buy a smartphone

- **Large Storage:** Storage is one of the common problem of many smartphone users. Due to large data and photographs, WhatsApp images, number of videos etc., often it is observed that the data gets full into the storage of smartphone. As a result of it, the phone gets hanged for it becomes slower. Therefore, many users feel that their storage mobile should be as large as possible.

Researcher asked the students this question, in response, 509 respondents have responded as very strong responded as strong 26 as average and whereas there respondents saying not at all. Thus, based on the responses seal number of responses the first category of very strong, large space acts as one of the biggest motivator to buy smartphone by the students.

- **Shape and Size:** Since the respondents are from the students category, believe that they might get fascinated by the shape, size etc. From this perspective researcher feels that this could also be one of the motivating factor to respondents. On this point, 464 respondents responded as very strong 83 responded as strong 27 responded as average and 19 students have responded as not at all. Strong category constitutes to almost 80%, which is significant one, it can be said that, size and shape is definitely a motivating factor to them.
- **Long Battery Life:** one of the biggest problem of Smartphones that it gets discharged very frequently. Therefore tries to have longer battery for his mobile phone. The researcher tried to find out student this was the motivating factor or not. In response to this question, 539 responded as very strong, 34 as strong, 8 as average, and 2 as not at all. Considering the first response constitutes 292.45%, it can be said that Long battery life is definitely motivating factor to buy a smartphone to the students.
- **Lesser Weight:** since mobile is being carried throughout the day very important to ensure that the mobile phone is of lightweight. If it's heavy in weight it's going to be difficult and uncomfortable to carry. Therefore the researcher inquired from students' weather be like weight mobiles or should it be heavier one. In response to this 397 students 68.09% responded as very strong motivator, 96 students said as and 83 students replied as average motivator 7 respondents at its not at all a motivator to them.

Since 68.09% students have replied as very strong, it can be said that choosing the smartphone the lesser weight is going to be the motivator to them.

- **Large Memory:** the next parameter which is chosen by the researcher is memory of the phone. Larger the memory of the phone, it's going to be for the functioning and operations not going to be hanged all the time.

Looking at the responses of the students it can be seen that 506 respondents has replied as very strong 8 as strong 10 as average and nine respondents has responded as not at all as a motivator. Since significant number of responses are in favour of the statement it can be said that large memory definitely strong motivator to buy smartphone.

- **Display Board:** Having a wide and broad display helps in visibility and better look to the content of this Smartphone. Therefore recently almost all the phones are coming in broad and wide display. Therefore the researcher wanted to know whether this also acts as a biggest motivated or not.

In reply to the question, 446 correspondents with 76.50% responded as very strong, 61 students have responded as a strong and 68 respondents have responded as average and only 8 students have given their feedback as not at all hence it can be decisively said that display of the mobile phone is definitely motivator to buy smartphone.

- **Operating System:** operating system helps in faster processing of all the data in the mobile phone. Therefore future of smartphone who tries to use many apps or browse through number of data, would definitely be requiring faster processing or operating system in their smartphone.

In this connection also 481 correspondence responded as very strong motivator 84 students have responded as strong 16 students have applied as average and two respondents acid not at all considering significant response in favour of the statement decide that the operating system is one of the important motivator for the buyer of smartphone.

- **Colour:** the colour of a body of smartphone definitely attracts a number of viewers. Therefore the person who carries a colourful phone becomes noticeable in his group. More than that he also feels very comfortable while carrying attractive colour phone.

The researcher made an attempt understand responses of the college going students. In response to his question, 376 students light as very strong, 99 as strong 79 as average 9 has not at all a motivating factor. Thus, we can conclude that a colour of a smartphone is one of the strong motivating factor to buy it.

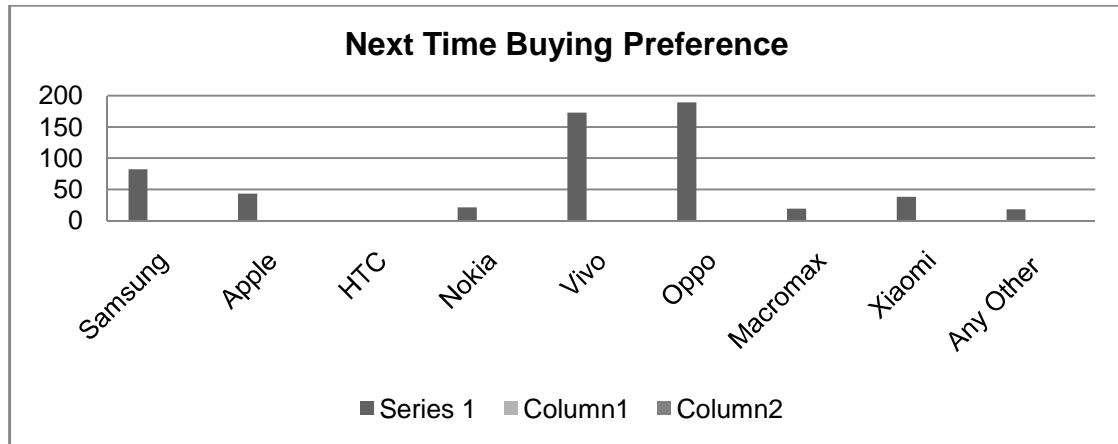
- **Speaker Quality:** smartphone is expected to perform number of multi functions. Playing audio is one of such important function. In order to play audio or video, quality of the speaker plays a vital role. And hence, the speaker quality of a smartphone should be really good one. 469 students have responded as very strong 103 as strong 11:00 as average and there are no respondents to say not at all. Considering the highest responses to very strong category it can be considered that is really good motivator.

- **Higher Security Features:** recently, across the globe there are rising number of cyber-crimes. In the smartphone number of facilities are offered hence along with its benefit can also be negative aspect for the user. There are very high chances that the hackers can get connected to your mobile phone and can hack your data can do any unlawful transactions to your mobile phone. Understanding this threat, number of mobile manufacturers coming up with the highest level of security measures. Though the college going boys and girls may not be so concerned about the security features, the researcher wanted to know the reality.

In this connection 405 college students have replied as very strong 78 as strong 82 as average there are 18 students who have said it's not at all and important motivator factor to them. But more importantly, around 70% of the respondents do say that it is one of the important motivator while buying smartphone.

- **Guarantee or Warranty:** Though, there are number of options available in the market when it comes to smartphones, still the cost remains at higher side. Therefore many user are cost-conscious they really value for money and therefore check guarantee on the smartphone. When asked questions on this, 288 respondents have said as very strong 167 have stayed as strong 119 as average and 9 students have said it's not at all a motivator.

Thus, on the basis of the responses received from the students it can be perceived that students conscious about number of features that are available with a smartphone. They try to ensure about features with their smartphone then and then only are ready to buy. Alternatively it also means that these are acting as the motivating factors to buy the Smartphone.



Graph No 6

The researcher has made an attempt to study the preference of respondents while buying the Smart next time. In response to that, 82 respondents have replied as Samsung, 43 as Apple, there are no respondents to go for HTC, 21 respondents have preferred as Nokia, 173 have made a choice of Vivo, 189 have gone for Oppo, 19 for Micromax, 38 for Xiaomi and there 18 respondents who have gone for any other brand, which is not listed in the chart above.

On the basis of the responses, we can say that respondents have preferred the smart phone which price sensitive and which gives frequent up gradations by launching new phones. It might also be presumed that, since smart phones like Apple are costly, they are not preferred by them, inspite of the fact that they do have better brand and long term relations with the customers.

Conclusion

Smart phone industry has been emerged as one of the vibrant, ever changing and big industry. With huge penetration in the Indian market, the industry is growing by leaps and bounds due to many reasons. As mentioned in the above tables, graphs and analysis, the motives of the customer to buy a smart phone are many. As far as college students are concerned, they prefer price and continuous change in the offerings and features of the smart phone. Since these motive criteria are fulfilled by the BBK group, majority of the youngsters are buying these phone. Therefore, the secondary data as well as primary data, both are showing that BBK group smart phones are the market leaders in the beginning of the year 2020. The time will tell who actually would be emerging as the market leader in due course of time.

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