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Utilization Pattern of Mobile Phone among Registered Women Vendors in Imphal Ema Market of Manipur, India

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A B S T R A C T

Mobile phones provide real time services that reduce costs, increase income, increases reach ability and mobility. They also facilitate the extension of social and business networks that empower women with knowledge to gain emancipation. The present study was carried out in Ema market of Imphal West district to study the utilization pattern of mobile phone among registered women vendors. A sample of 120 registered women vendors were selected from Ema market by taking 56, 40 and 24 registered women vendors through proportionate random sampling from market segments namely Purana bazaar, New market and Laxmi bazaar respectively. Majority (93.33%) of the women own feature phone, majorly used service providers by the women were Service provider-2 (52.5%) and Service provider-1 (48.33%), all respondents agreed that cellular mobile service to them was useful, all the respondents use only pre-paid mode of payment, Service provider-2 is the most preferred choice of mobile service provider and difficulty in using various mobile apps in smart phone is found to be the major constraint.

Introduction

The mobile phone is emerging as a powerful tool and the usage of mobile phones have dramatically expanded since the 1990s (UCC, 2010). Mobile phones provide real time services that reduce costs, increase income, increases reach ability and mobility. They also facilitate the extension of social and business networks that empower women with knowledge to gain emancipation. In addition, mobile phones clearly substitute for journeys, brokers, trades and other business intermediaries (Donner and Escobari, 2010). Mobile phone ownership gives women the ability to open a mobile phone-based bank account, an important gateway to financial independence. A private account gives women in developing nations control over their money as well as the ability to put food on the family table. A mobile phone also gives women the ability to open a business in a remote village, without having to trek to a distant city to register that business. And, with a phone, women in developing countries can more easily schedule a clinic appointment or register their children for school. But these benefits are unavailable to the 1.7 billion women in developing countries who don't own a mobile phone. Around the world, women are

14 percent less likely than men to own a mobile phone, according to the GSMA, an association representing mobile operators worldwide. The situation is even worse in South Asia, where women on average are 38.00 percent less likely to own a mobile phone than men (Klapper, 2016)

Ema market is considered the largest women's market in Asia, in the heart of Imphal town, Manipur. It is also known as Ema keithel or Khwairamb and Bazar; a place where equality is preached and practiced. Ema means mother and keithel means market. So, it is known as mother's market. Any women regardless of her background, community or religion can set a store here by registering in Imphal Municipal Cooperation. Registered women vendors; women who registered their name in Imphal Municipal Cooperation and hold vendor card. Vendor card is a license to the shed and to open their vendor under roof of Ema Market.

This research is inspired by the rapid increase in adoption and usage of mobile phones in developing countries. However, despite widespread adoption and usage of innovative mobile phone services, it is still not well understood whether mobile phones are used for business particularly by women.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in Imphal (Imphal West) Ema Market of Manipur. Ema market consist of three market segments namely Purana bazaar, New market and Laxmi bazaar which have total registered women vendors of 1691, 1195 and 728 respectively. So, total of 3614 registered women vendors are in Ema market. A sample of 120 registered women vendors were selected from Ema market by taking 56, 40 and 24 registered women vendors through proportionate random sampling from market segments namely Purana bazaar, New market and Laxmi bazaar respectively. Data was collected with the help of pre tested schedule. The data collected from the respondents were scored, tabulated and analyzed using suitable statistical tools i.e., frequencies and percentages.

Results and Discussion

Type of mobile phone

Majority (93.33%) of the respondents own feature phones and only (6.67%) of the respondents use smart phones because feature phones are available in the most affordable prices compare to smart phones. More than half (58.33%) of the respondents had single SIM and 41.67 per cent of the respondent had dual SIM type. The companies of the phone were Samsung (40.83%), Nokia (37.5%) and others (21.67%). Majorly, they were using Samsung due to famous company name and users confidence (Komunte, 2015).

Service provider

Majorly used service providers by the women were Service provider-2 (52.5%) and Service provider-1 (48.33%) as they are more preferred by the respondents because they provide good quality service. More than half (55.83%) of the respondent was use only one service provider without changing. However, 44.17 per cent had change to other service providers with one (36.67%), two (8.33%) and more than two (1.66%) in the past. This trend may be due to loss of mobile phone or network connectivity problem. The service provider they used in the past were Service provider-4 (20.83%), Service provider-1 (11.66%), Service provider-2 (10%), Service provider-5 (8.33%) and Service provider-3 (5%). The factors considered while choosing the service provider were majorly the network coverage by the respondents followed by the quality service (55%) and fair pricing (43.33%).

Table.1 Distribution of respondents based on utilization pattern of mobile phone among registered women vendors (n=120)

Sl. No.	Item	Classification	f	%
I	**Type of the mobile phone**			
1.	Type of phone	Smartphone	8	6.67
		Feature phone	112	93.33
2.	Number of SIM	Single SIM	70	58.33
		Dual SIM	50	41.67
3.	Company	Samsung	49	40.83
		Nokia	45	37.5
		Others	26	21.67
II	Service provider			
1.	Current cellular service provider	Service provider-1	58	48.33
		Service provider-2	63	52.5
		Service provider-3	16	13.33
		Service provider-4	0	0
		Service Provider-5	6	5
		Service provider-6	0	0
2.	First service provider	Yes	67	55.83
		No	53	44.17
3.	Service providers used in the past	One	44	36.67
		Two	10	8.33
		More than two	2	1.66
4.	Service provider availed in the past	Service provider-1	14	11.66
		Service provider-2	12	10
		Service provider-3	6	5
		Service provider-4	25	20.83
		Service Provider-5	0	0
		Service provider-6	10	8.33
5.	Factors consider while choosing cellular services	Network Coverage	120	100
		Fair Pricing	52	43.33
		Quality Service	66	55
		Attractive Packages	0	0
III	**Usage of the mobile phones**			
1.	Cellular mobile service to you	Useful	120	100
		Essential	67	55.83
		Personal	81	67.5
		Status Symbol	0	0
2.	Purpose of using mobile mostly	Home (personal)	120	100
		Business	91	75.83
3.	Basic use of mobiles	SMS	0	0

		Voice calls	120	100
4.	Types of mobile apps mostly used	Web browser	0	0
		Online apps	0	0
		Radio	11	9.16
		Camera	14	11.67
		Calculator	13	10.83
		Others	11	9.16
IV	**Payment details**			
1.	Mode of payment	Pre-paid	120	100
		Post-paid	0	0
2.	Average amount spent on mobile usage per month	Less than Rs.100	10	8.33
		Rs.100-200	53	44.17
		Rs. 200-300	48	40
		More than Rs. 300	9	7.5

Table.2 Distribution of respondents based on preferential choice of mobile service provider

Sl. No.	Service provider	f	%	Rank
1.	Service provider-1	52	43.33	II
2.	Service provider-2	56	46.67	I
3.	Service provider-3	10	8.33	III
4.	Service Provider-5	2	1.67	IV

It was found that Service provider-2 was the most preferred choice of mobile service provider followed by Service provider-1 , Service provider-3 and SERVICE PROVIDER-5.

Table.3 Constraints perceived by the women

Sl. No.	Particulars	f	%	Rank
1.	Fluctuation in mobile network service	43	35.8	IV
2.	Difficulty in using various mobile apps in smart phone	84	70	I
3.	High price in mobile SIM recharge	31	25.83	VI
4.	Low visibility because of small screen	28	23.33	VII
5.	Inadequate demonstration of new technologies	68	56.6	III
6.	Lack of finance to buy new phone	36	32	V
7.	Lack of awareness about beneficiary of mobile internet service	80	66.67	II

Usage of the mobile phone

All respondents agreed that cellular mobile service to them was useful while more than half (55.83%) of the respondent had found it to be essential and personal (67.5%). These indicated that mobile phone was truly integrated in the lives of the women of Ema market and use in all aspects of their lives. The mobile phones were used for various purposes like home by all the respondents and business (75.83%). Thus, the mobile phones are used for communicating with family, friends, relatives and for business purposes. All the respondents had found that the basic use of mobile phone as voice call only. It is found that 11.67 percent of the respondent used mobile camera app followed by (10.83%) calculator, (9.16%) radio, others (like games, music player) 9.16 per cent and no respondents were found to be using web browser and online apps in mobile phone. (Komunte *et al.*, 2012) and (Blumenstock and Eagle 2010)

Payment details

All the respondents use only pre-paid mode of payment as it is the most affordable way for them as they can monitor their usages per their budget.

On monthly basis, majority (44.17%) of the respondent were found to spent about an average amount of Rs. 100 to 200 followed by (40%) Rs.200 to 300, (8.33%) less than Rs. 100 and 7.5 per cent of the respondent spent more than Rs. 300 on mobile phone.

Difficulty in using various mobile apps in smart phone is found to be the major constraint followed by lack of awareness about beneficiary of mobile internet service, inadequate demonstration of new technologies, fluctuation in mobile network service, lack of finance to buy new phone, high price in mobile SIM recharge and low visibility because of small screen.

It can be concluded that majority (93.33%) of the women own feature phone, majorly used service providers by the women were Service provider-2 (52.5%) and Service provider-1 (48.33%), all respondents agreed that cellular mobile service to them was useful, all the respondents use only pre-paid mode of payment, Service provider-2 is the most preferred choice of mobile service provider and difficulty in using various mobile apps in smart phone is found to be the major constraint.

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