

Smartphone Brand Preferences among Students in Nadia District: A Descriptive Study

Indranil Goswami¹, Riddhiman Pal², Debosmita Sarkar³, Ritam Majumder⁴, Rupa Paul⁵

^{1,2,3,4}BBA (Hospital Management) Student, Department of Business Administration, JIS College of Engineering, Kalyani

⁵ Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, JIS College of Engineering, Kalyani

Abstract

The smartphone industry is marked by rapid technological advancement, intense competition, and frequent changes in consumer preferences. Among different consumer groups, students represent a highly active and technology-oriented segment because smartphones are used not only for communication but also for education, entertainment, social media, gaming, and content creation. The present study examines smartphone brand preferences among students in Nadia District, West Bengal. The study is descriptive in nature and is based on primary data collected from 63 respondents through a structured questionnaire administered using Google Forms. Percentage analysis and graphical representation were used to interpret the data. The findings reveal that Samsung and Vivo are the most commonly used smartphone brands, while Samsung emerged as the most preferred brand among students. Camera quality, features and technology, battery backup, and price range were identified as major factors influencing smartphone brand preference. The study also found that most students prefer smartphones in the ₹10,000–₹20,000 price range and that advertisements have a considerable influence on purchase decisions. Overall, the findings suggest that students prefer smartphone brands that offer a balance of affordability, performance, reliability, and advanced features.

Keywords: *Smartphone brand preference, student consumers, consumer behavior, brand equity, purchase decision, Nadia District, smartphone usage*

1. Introduction

The global smartphone industry has become one of the most competitive and rapidly evolving sectors in the consumer electronics market. Continuous technological innovation, frequent product launches, aggressive pricing strategies, and changing consumer expectations have made smartphone purchase decisions increasingly complex. In this competitive environment, students form an important consumer segment because they are active users of digital technology and depend heavily on smartphones for academic, social, and personal purposes.

For students, smartphones are no longer limited to calling and messaging. They are widely used for online classes, social networking, mobile gaming, photography, video creation, entertainment, and accessing educational content. As a result, students evaluate smartphone brands on the basis of multiple factors such as price, camera quality, battery backup, performance, design, brand image, and after-sales service.

In emerging regional markets such as Nadia District in West Bengal, smartphone brand preference is shaped by both functional and aspirational factors. While affordability and performance remain major concerns, brand trust, social status, advertisement exposure, and peer influence also play an important role. Therefore, the present study attempts to examine

the smartphone brand preferences of students in Nadia District and identify the major factors influencing their purchase decisions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Technology Adoption and Youth Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior in technology markets is often explained through models such as the Technology Acceptance Model proposed by Davis et al. (1989) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology discussed by Venkatesh et al. (2003). These models suggest that consumers adopt technology based on their perception of usefulness, ease of use, performance expectation, and value.

In the context of smartphone usage, perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which a smartphone helps users perform daily activities efficiently. For students, this includes attending online classes, accessing study materials, communicating with peers, using social media, playing games, and creating digital content. Price value is also a major factor because students usually have limited disposable income. Therefore, they tend to compare specifications such as RAM, processor, battery capacity, camera quality, storage, and price before selecting a smartphone brand.

The present study supports this theoretical understanding, as a large proportion of respondents preferred utility-focused brands such as Vivo, Xiaomi/Redmi, Oppo, and Realme. These brands are popular among students because they offer feature-rich smartphones at affordable and mid-range prices.

2.2 Utilitarian and Hedonic Consumption

Consumer research often classifies buying motives into utilitarian and hedonic categories. Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) explained hedonic consumption as consumption driven by emotional, symbolic, and experiential factors. In contrast, utilitarian consumption is based on practical and functional needs.

For students, smartphones serve strong utilitarian purposes. They are used for online learning, communication, academic work, social media, entertainment, and gaming. Therefore, students prefer smartphones with good battery backup, strong performance, camera quality, and advanced features. Brands that highlight these functional benefits are able to attract price-sensitive student consumers.

At the same time, smartphones also carry aspirational value. Premium brands such as Apple and OnePlus are often associated with status, style, build quality, and long-term performance. In youth culture, premium smartphones may act as symbols of identity and social positioning. However, in emerging markets, students do not always purchase premium smartphones purely for status. Many also consider them long-term investments due to better software support, durability, resale value, and smooth performance over time.

The findings of the present study reflect this dual nature of smartphone preference. While affordable and mid-range brands dominate usage, premium brands such as Apple and OnePlus also have a noticeable presence among students.

2.3 Brand Equity, Trust, and Risk Reduction

Brand equity refers to the value associated with a brand name and the trust consumers place in it. According to Keller (1993), customer-based brand equity is created when consumers are

familiar with a brand and hold strong, favorable, and unique associations with it. Similarly, Faircloth et al. (2001) emphasized the role of brand attitude and brand image in shaping brand equity.

In smartphone purchase decisions, brand equity helps reduce perceived risk. Students and their families may prefer established brands because smartphones require a considerable financial investment. A trusted brand reduces concerns related to product failure, poor performance, weak service support, and low resale value.

This explains why Samsung has a strong position among the respondents. Samsung's wide product range, service network, durability, and brand reputation make it a preferred choice for many students. For budget-conscious consumers, brand trust works as a form of security because they cannot easily afford frequent replacement or repair costs.

2.4 Market Fragmentation in Regional Smartphone Markets

The smartphone market in India is highly fragmented because consumers have different needs, budgets, and brand expectations. In Tier-2 and Tier-3 regions, students may choose brands based on price, camera quality, gaming performance, battery life, service availability, and peer recommendations.

Different brands have developed distinct market identities. For example, Xiaomi/Redmi is often associated with value-for-money devices, Vivo and Oppo are known for camera-focused marketing, Realme attracts budget-conscious young users, Samsung emphasizes reliability and trust, while Apple and OnePlus appeal to premium and aspirational consumers.

The data collected from Nadia District shows that no single brand completely dominates the market. Instead, several brands have meaningful shares among student users. This indicates that the smartphone market among students in Nadia District is competitive, diverse, and segmented.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review

The existing literature suggests that smartphone brand preference is influenced by several factors, including perceived usefulness, price value, brand trust, technological features, hedonic appeal, and consumer risk perception. Students select smartphones through a balance of affordability, functionality, reliability, and aspiration. The present study builds on these theoretical ideas by examining how these factors are reflected in the smartphone brand preferences of students in Nadia District.

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To examine smartphone usage patterns among students in Nadia District.
2. To identify the most commonly used smartphone brands among students.
3. To determine the most preferred smartphone brands among the respondents.
4. To analyze the major factors influencing smartphone brand preference.
5. To understand the preferred price range of students while purchasing smartphones.
6. To examine the influence of advertisements on smartphone purchase decisions.

7. To analyze satisfaction levels and recommendation behavior among student smartphone users.
8. To identify the improvements students expect from smartphone brands.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The present study is descriptive in nature. Descriptive research is useful for collecting detailed information about the opinions, attitudes, preferences, and behavior of respondents. This study attempts to describe smartphone brand preferences among students in Nadia District and identify the major factors influencing their purchasing decisions.

4.2 Source of Data

The study is based primarily on primary data. The data were collected directly from student respondents through a structured questionnaire. Since the data were gathered specifically for this study, they provide relevant and current information about smartphone brand preferences, usage patterns, satisfaction levels, and purchase behavior.

4.3 Data Collection Tool

A structured questionnaire was developed and circulated through Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of 12 questions covering demographic details, smartphone ownership, brand preference, purchase behavior, price preference, satisfaction level, advertisement influence, and expected improvements in smartphone brands.

Google Forms was used because it allowed respondents to participate conveniently from different locations and helped in collecting responses quickly and efficiently.

4.4 Sampling Method

The study adopted the convenience sampling method. Under this method, respondents were selected based on their availability, accessibility, and willingness to participate in the survey. Convenience sampling was considered suitable due to limitations of time and resources.

Although convenience sampling does not provide equal chances of selection to all members of the population, it is commonly used in academic studies for collecting quick and practical responses from a targeted group.

4.5 Sample Size

A total of 63 valid responses were collected and included in the study. The respondents were students from different academic backgrounds and levels of study. The sample size was considered adequate for obtaining meaningful insights into smartphone brand preferences among students in Nadia District.

4.6 Area of Study

The geographical area of the study was Nadia District, located in the state of West Bengal, India. The district was selected because it represents a diverse student population with different academic backgrounds, income levels, and smartphone usage patterns.

4.7 Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were organized, classified, and tabulated for analysis. Percentage analysis was used as the primary statistical tool. Graphical representations such as pie charts and charts generated through Google Forms were used to present the data clearly.

The findings were interpreted in relation to the objectives of the study. The analysis helped identify major trends in smartphone usage, brand preference, purchase behavior, satisfaction level, and desired improvements among student consumers.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 Gender of Respondents

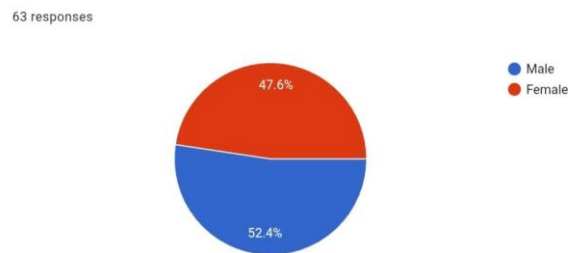


Figure 1: Gender of Respondents

The survey included respondents from different gender categories. This helped in ensuring diverse participation in the study.

The inclusion of students from different genders provides a broader understanding of smartphone brand preferences among the target population.

5.2 Age Group of Respondents

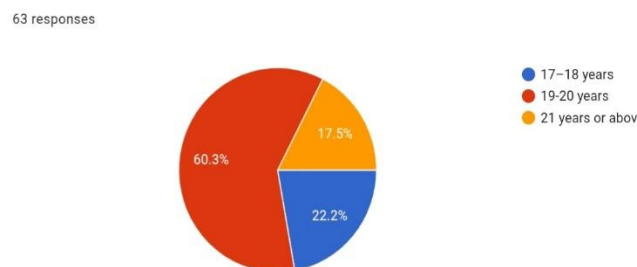


Figure 2: Age Group of Respondents

The respondents belonged to different age groups, with participation mainly from young students.

The age distribution reflects the target population of the study and provides useful insights into smartphone preferences among young consumers.

5.3 Course of Study

63 responses

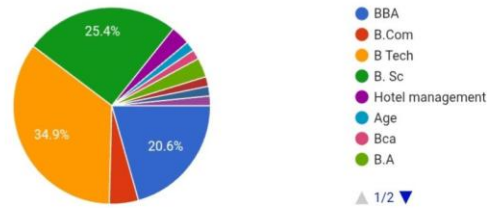


Figure 3: Course of Study

Students from different academic courses participated in the survey. The responses represent individuals from varied educational backgrounds.

The inclusion of respondents from multiple courses improves the diversity of the study and helps in understanding smartphone preferences across different academic groups.

5.4 Year of Study

63 responses

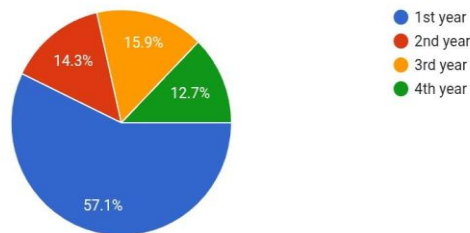


Figure 4: Year of Study

The survey received responses from students studying in different academic years. This ensured representation from various stages of higher education.

The participation of students from different academic years provides a wider understanding of smartphone preferences among students at different levels of academic experience.

5.5 Smartphone Usage among Respondents

63 responses

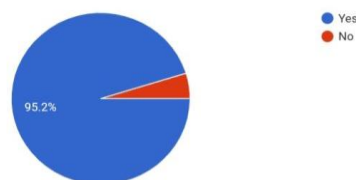


Figure 5: Do You Use a Smartphone?

The survey revealed that the vast majority of respondents use smartphones, while only a very small proportion reported not using them.

This finding highlights the widespread adoption of smartphones among students and their importance in daily academic, social, and personal activities.

5.6 Currently Used Smartphone Brand

63 responses

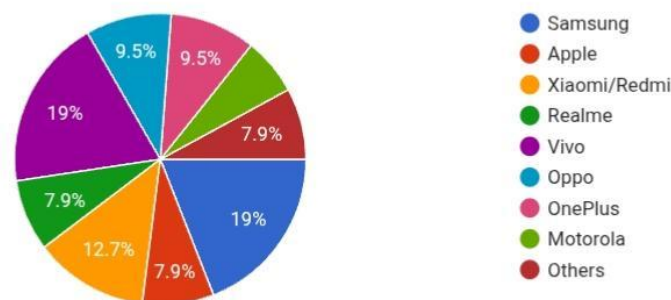


Figure 6: Which Smartphone Brand Are You Currently Using?

The findings show that Samsung and Vivo are the most widely used smartphone brands among the respondents, each accounting for 19% of the total responses. Xiaomi/Redmi occupies the third position with 12.7% of the responses, indicating its strong presence among student users. Oppo and OnePlus each account for 9.5%, while Apple and Realme represent 7.9% each. Motorola and other smartphone brands received the lowest proportion of responses, with 4.8% each.

The distribution clearly indicates that students use a variety of smartphone brands. This reflects the competitive and fragmented nature of the smartphone market among students in Nadia District.

Samsung and Vivo appear to enjoy greater popularity due to product reliability, availability across different price segments, user-friendly features, and strong brand reputation. Xiaomi/Redmi also maintains a significant user base because of its affordable pricing and feature-rich devices. The comparatively lower usage of Apple may be due to its premium pricing, which may not be affordable for many students.

Overall, the results suggest that students prefer smartphone brands that offer a balance between performance, quality, affordability, and modern technological features.

5.7 Main Reason for Preferring a Smartphone Brand

63 responses

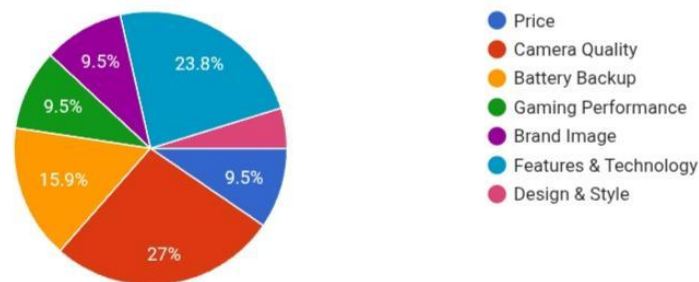


Figure 7: What Is the Main Reason for Preferring a Smartphone Brand?

The results show that respondents consider several factors while choosing a smartphone brand. Camera quality emerged as the most important factor, accounting for 27% of the responses. This was followed by features and technology, which received 23.8% of the responses. Battery backup was the third most preferred factor with 15.9%.

Price, gaming performance, and brand image each accounted for 9.5% of the responses. Design and style received the lowest percentage, indicating that it is comparatively less important in influencing smartphone brand preference among students.

The findings indicate that students give more importance to practical and performance-related aspects than purely aesthetic features. The high preference for camera quality suggests that students frequently use smartphones for photography, social media, and content creation. The importance given to features and technology reflects the growing demand for advanced smartphone capabilities. Battery backup is also a major consideration because students rely heavily on smartphones throughout the day for communication, education, entertainment, and online activities.

5.8 Preferred Price Range

63 responses

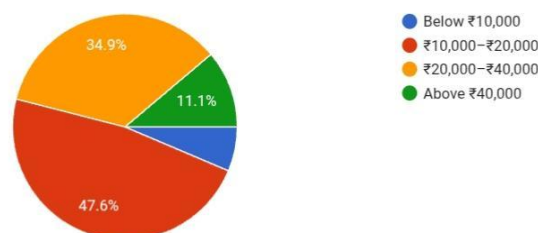


Figure 8: What Is Your Preferred Price Range While Purchasing a Smartphone?

The majority of respondents, 47.6%, prefer smartphones in the price range of ₹10,000–₹20,000. This is followed by 34.9% of respondents who prefer smartphones in the ₹20,000–₹40,000 range. A smaller proportion of respondents prefer smartphones below ₹10,000 or above ₹40,000.

The findings indicate that most students prefer affordable and mid-range smartphones that provide good features at reasonable prices. This reflects the importance of price-value balance in smartphone purchase decisions among students.

5.9 Most Preferred Smartphone Brand

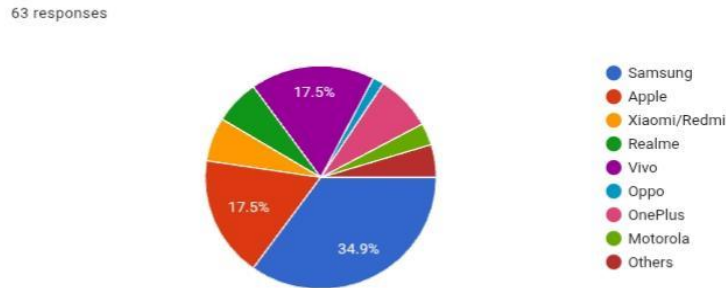


Figure 9: Which Smartphone Brand Do You Prefer the Most?

Samsung emerged as the most preferred smartphone brand, with 34.9% of the responses. Apple and Vivo followed with 17.5% each.

The results indicate that Samsung is the most popular brand among students in terms of preference. Apple and Vivo also enjoy significant preference, suggesting that both premium appeal and value-oriented features influence student choices.

5.10 Duration of Using Current Smartphone

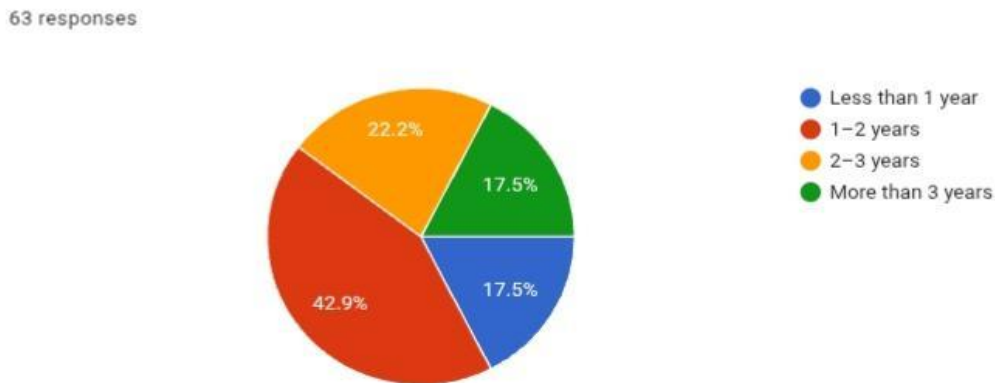


Figure 10: How Long Have You Been Using Your Current Smartphone?

Most respondents, 42.9%, have been using their current smartphone for 1–2 years, while 22.2% have used it for 2–3 years.

This indicates that students generally replace or upgrade their smartphones every few years. The finding also suggests that students expect their smartphones to remain functional and relevant for at least two to three years.

5.11 Place of Smartphone Purchase

63 responses

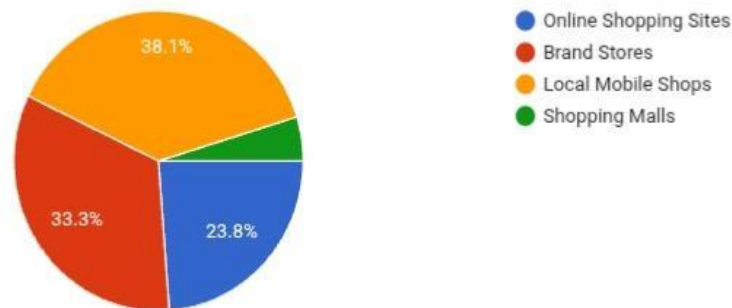


Figure 11: Where Do You Usually Purchase Smartphones From?

The majority of respondents, 38.1%, purchase smartphones from local mobile shops. This is followed by brand stores, which account for 33.3%, and online shopping sites, which account for 23.8%.

The findings show that offline purchasing channels remain more popular among students than online platforms. This may be due to factors such as trust, physical inspection of the product, availability of local guidance, immediate purchase, and after-sales support.

5.12 Influence of Advertisements on Purchase Decisions

63 responses

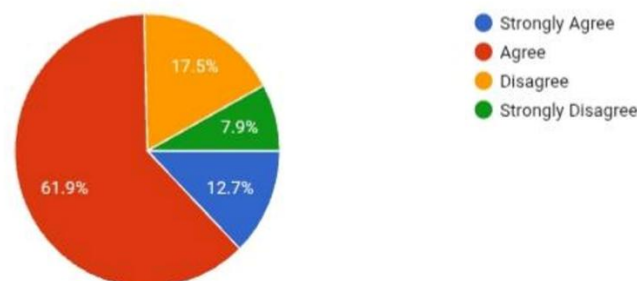


Figure 12: Do Advertisements Influence Your Smartphone Purchase Decision?

The survey findings reveal that advertisements have a considerable impact on smartphone purchase decisions. A majority of respondents, 61.9%, agreed that advertisements influence their buying decisions, while 12.7% strongly agreed. On the other hand, 17.5% disagreed and 7.9% strongly disagreed.

These results indicate that a large proportion of students pay attention to advertisements while gathering information about smartphone brands and products.

Advertisements play an important role in creating awareness about new smartphone models, features, promotional offers, and brand image. Although some respondents may rely more on personal experience, peer advice, or reviews, the majority acknowledge that advertisements influence their perceptions and purchase decisions.

5.13 Most Used Smartphone Feature

63 responses

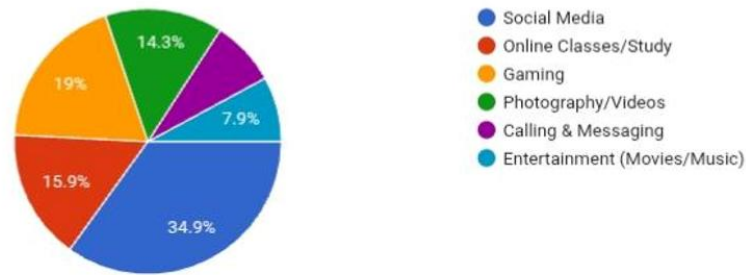


Figure 13: Which Feature Do You Use the Most on Your Smartphone?

The findings reveal that respondents use their smartphones for a wide range of activities. Social media emerged as the most frequently used feature, accounting for 34.9% of responses. Gaming was the second most used feature, with 19% of responses. Online classes and study-related activities accounted for 15.9%, while photography and videos accounted for 14.3%.

Comparatively lower percentages were recorded for calling and messaging and entertainment such as movies and music, although these continue to remain important smartphone functions.

The findings show that smartphones have become much more than communication devices for students. The dominance of social media usage suggests that students rely heavily on smartphones for interaction, networking, and information access. The popularity of gaming indicates the importance of mobile entertainment among young users. The use of smartphones for online classes and study-related activities highlights their role as educational tools. Similarly, photography and video usage reflect students' interest in content creation and digital sharing.

5.14 Satisfaction with Current Smartphone Brand

63 responses

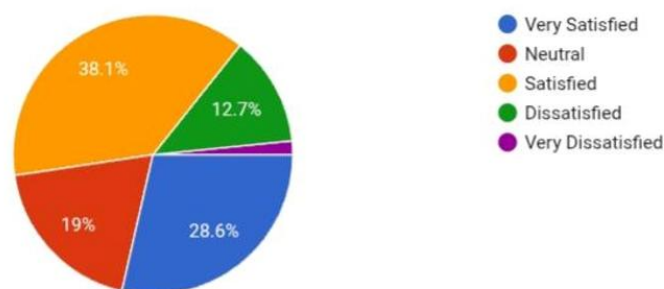


Figure 14: How Satisfied Are You with Your Current Smartphone Brand?

The chart shows that the largest proportion of respondents, 38.1%, reported being satisfied with their current smartphone brand. Another 28.6% reported being very satisfied. Together, these two categories account for more than two-thirds of the respondents, indicating a generally positive attitude toward their smartphone brands.

Around 19% of respondents remained neutral, while 12.7% expressed dissatisfaction. Only a very small percentage reported being very dissatisfied.

The findings suggest that the majority of students are satisfied with the smartphone brands they currently use. High satisfaction levels indicate that smartphone manufacturers are meeting user expectations in areas such as performance, battery life, design, features, and usability. The presence of neutral responses indicates that some users may feel their smartphones are adequate but still have scope for improvement. The low level of dissatisfaction suggests that most brands are delivering reasonable value to student consumers.

5.15 Recommendation of Smartphone Brand

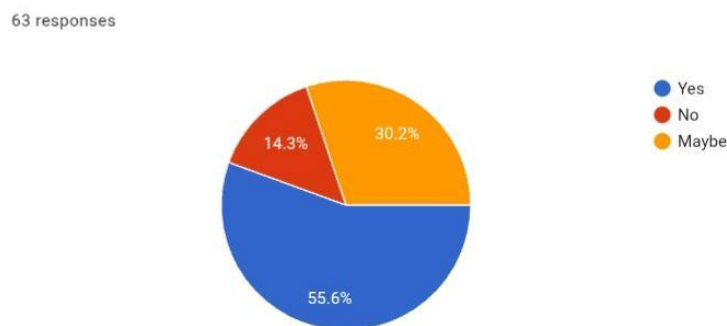


Figure 15: Would You Recommend Your Smartphone Brand to Others?

The findings show that the majority of respondents, 55.6%, would recommend their current smartphone brand to others. A substantial proportion, 30.2%, selected “Maybe,” while only 14.3% responded “No.”

The results indicate that most respondents have positive experiences with their smartphone brands and are willing to recommend them to friends, family members, or other potential buyers. Recommendation behavior is an important indicator of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. The relatively high percentage of “Maybe” responses suggests that some students are moderately satisfied but may expect improvements before fully endorsing their brand. The low percentage of negative responses indicates that smartphone brands generally enjoy a favorable image among students.

5.16 Desired Improvements in Smartphone Brands

63 responses

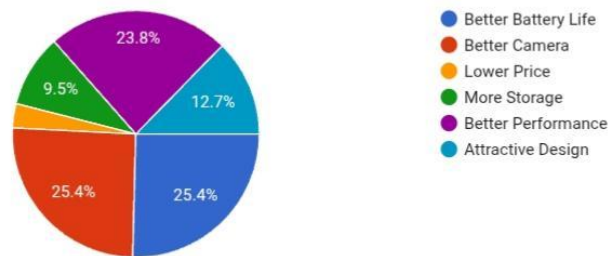


Figure 16: What Improvement Would You Like to See in Smartphone Brands?

The results show that better battery life and better camera quality are the most desired improvements, with each category receiving 25.4% of responses. Better performance follows closely with 23.8% of responses. Attractive design accounts for 12.7%, while more storage receives 9.5%. Lower price received the smallest percentage of responses.

The findings suggest that students place greater importance on quality and functionality than on price reduction alone. The strong demand for better battery life reflects the increasing dependence on smartphones for communication, entertainment, online learning, and social media. Similarly, the preference for better camera quality highlights the importance of photography, video recording, and content sharing among young users.

The demand for better performance indicates that students expect smartphones to handle multitasking, gaming, study applications, and advanced features efficiently. Interestingly, the relatively low preference for lower price suggests that many students may be willing to invest in smartphones if they provide better features, durability, and performance.

6. Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. The majority of respondents use smartphones in their daily lives.
2. Samsung emerged as the most preferred smartphone brand among students.
3. Samsung and Vivo were the most commonly used smartphone brands among the respondents.
4. Camera quality and advanced features were identified as the major factors influencing smartphone brand preference.
5. Most students preferred smartphones within the price range of ₹10,000–₹20,000.
6. Local mobile shops were found to be the most preferred place for purchasing smartphones.
7. Advertisements have a significant influence on smartphone purchase decisions.
8. Social media was the most frequently used smartphone feature among respondents.
9. Most respondents were satisfied with their current smartphone brands.
10. A majority of students were willing to recommend their smartphone brands to others.

11. Better battery life, camera quality, and performance were the most desired improvements in smartphone brands.

7. Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that smartphone brand preference among students in Nadia District is influenced by a combination of functional, economic, and psychological factors. Students prefer smartphones that provide strong performance, good camera quality, reliable battery backup, and advanced features at an affordable price.

The dominance of Samsung and Vivo shows that both brand trust and feature-based appeal are important in the student market. Samsung's popularity may be linked to its reliability, service network, and strong brand image, while Vivo's popularity may be connected to its camera-focused positioning and availability in affordable price segments.

The preference for the ₹10,000–₹20,000 price range confirms that affordability remains a major factor among student consumers. However, the presence of Apple and OnePlus in the preference list indicates that aspirational and premium brand value also influences a section of students.

The influence of advertisements shows that promotional activities, brand communication, and product visibility play an important role in shaping student purchase decisions. Similarly, the high use of social media suggests that smartphone brands should focus more on digital marketing, influencer promotion, and youth-oriented campaigns.

Overall, the study reveals that students are practical but aspirational consumers. They seek value for money, but they also pay attention to brand image, technology, and product experience.

8. Conclusion

The present study examined smartphone brand preferences among students in Nadia District. The findings reveal that smartphones have become an essential part of student life, serving multiple purposes such as communication, education, entertainment, social media usage, gaming, and content creation.

Samsung emerged as the most preferred brand, while Samsung and Vivo were the most commonly used brands among the respondents. Camera quality, features and technology, battery backup, and price were found to be the most important factors influencing smartphone brand preference. Most students preferred smartphones in the ₹10,000–₹20,000 price range, indicating a strong demand for affordable and feature-rich devices.

The study also found that advertisements influence purchase decisions and that most respondents are satisfied with their current smartphone brands. A majority of students are also willing to recommend their brands to others, indicating positive brand perception and satisfaction.

In conclusion, student smartphone preference is not shaped by a single factor. It is the result of a balance between affordability, performance, brand trust, social influence, and aspirational value. Smartphone brands targeting student consumers should focus on providing better battery life, improved camera quality, smooth performance, and strong after-sales support while maintaining competitive pricing.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be made:

1. Smartphone brands should focus on improving camera quality, battery life, and overall performance, as these are the most desired features among students.
2. Brands should introduce more value-for-money smartphones in the ₹10,000–₹20,000 price range.
3. Companies should strengthen their offline retail presence because many students still prefer purchasing smartphones from local mobile shops and brand stores.
4. Smartphone brands should use advertisements and social media campaigns effectively to influence young consumers.
5. Better after-sales service and warranty support should be provided to increase customer trust and satisfaction.
6. Brands should design student-friendly promotional offers, exchange schemes, and installment options to attract price-sensitive consumers.
7. Since social media is the most used smartphone feature, brands should promote devices with better front cameras, display quality, storage, and app performance.

10. Limitations of the Study

The study has certain limitations. First, the sample size was limited to 63 respondents, which may not fully represent the entire student population of Nadia District. Second, the study used convenience sampling, which may involve selection bias. Third, the study was geographically limited to Nadia District only. Therefore, the findings may not be directly generalized to other districts or regions. Finally, the study used percentage analysis only, and more advanced statistical techniques could be applied in future research for deeper analysis.

11. Scope for Future Research

Future studies may be conducted with a larger sample size covering students from multiple districts of West Bengal. Comparative studies may also be conducted between rural and urban students, male and female respondents, or different income groups. Future research may apply statistical tools such as chi-square tests, correlation analysis, regression analysis, or factor analysis to examine the relationship between demographic variables and smartphone brand preference. A comparative study between online and offline purchase behavior may also provide useful insights.

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