

FACTORS INFLUENCING LAPTOP BRAND PREFERENCE FOR EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN HEI

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ABSTRACT:

The researcher conducts a deep dive into the complicated landscape of laptop brand preferences among students who are required to fulfil their educational commitments by enrolling in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The investigation takes a comprehensive approach by fusing the findings obtained from primary and secondary sources of information into a single body of information. The core data was acquired through student surveys and interviews, which offered a direct venue for students to voice their preferences and share their encounters with a variety of laptop manufacturers. These methods were used to collect the data. In the meantime, an investigation into the current market dynamics, trends, and technological breakthroughs in the laptop industry is being carried out through the utilisation of secondary data. The researcher intends to acquire a better knowledge of the intricate variables that impact students' judgements regarding the brands of laptops they purchase by merging these various data sets. More specifically, the researcher is interested in the complex link that exists between price, functionality, and reputation. This research not only makes a contribution to academic understanding, but it also provides stakeholders in industry with actionable insights into the shifting landscape of laptop preferences among higher education students.

Keywords: Laptop Brand, Brand Preference, Higher Educational Institutions, E-Learning, Pedagogy, Recent Trends in Learning.

Introduction:

In the contemporary educational landscape, computer skills have evolved into an indispensable component of learning, transcending subject boundaries. The necessity of a computer for accessing the benefits of online education has become paramount, not only during the pandemic but also in the pre-COVID era. Laptops and computers played a pivotal role in fostering continuous teacher-student connectivity, streamlining research, and expediting assignment completion. The advent of online education has enabled students to stay abreast of the latest advancements and curricula, fostering a dynamic learning environment. Even as schools reopen amidst the waning COVID pandemic, the unpredictable nature of subsequent waves underscores the continued relevance of online education. Recognizing this, schools, NGOs, and government bodies are actively working to ensure universal access to laptops and the Internet, acknowledging the enduring significance of digital tools in the educational landscape. In this evolving paradigm, the possession of a personal laptop has transitioned from a convenience to a necessity, shaping the contours of the new normal in education. (Dey, 2022)

Understanding Brand Preference:

Brand preference, a fundamental marketing concept, signifies consumers consistently favoring one brand over others within a specific product or service category. This loyalty extends beyond occasional purchases and is shaped by diverse factors such as a brand's reputation, product quality, pricing, customer experiences, and emotional connections. It represents a sustained and distinctive consumer inclination toward a particular brand, emphasizing a deeper connection that transcends mere transactional engagements.

Importance of Brand Preference:

In the fiercely competitive landscape of today's markets, the establishment of brand preference is pivotal for organizational success. The ensuing customer loyalty generated by brand preference results in repeat business, alleviating the constant need for acquiring new customers. Positive word-of-mouth amplifies the brand's reach as loyal customers become advocates, leading to increased profits as consumers willingly pay a premium for their preferred brand. Furthermore, a strong brand preference provides a distinctive competitive advantage, positioning the brand as a reliable choice for consumers, ensuring stability in the face of market fluctuations, and contributing to the long-term development of brand equity.

Measuring Brand Preference:

Accurate measurement of brand preference is facilitated through various methodologies. Market research surveys play a critical role in quantifying consumer sentiments, directly probing individuals about their brand preferences within specific industries. Analyzing purchase behavior, especially repeat purchases, serves as tangible evidence of brand preference, offering valuable insights into consumer loyalty. Additionally, monitoring customer feedback and reviews across diverse channels, including social media and online platforms, provides qualitative data that unveils the nuanced ways consumers perceive and discuss the brand, adding depth to the quantitative metrics.

Competitive Analysis for Brand Preference:

A thorough competitive analysis is indispensable for organizations striving to comprehend their brand's standing in the market. By comparing market share, customer base, and growth metrics against competitors, businesses gain a comprehensive understanding of brand preference. Utilizing review platforms and marketplace ratings becomes essential in benchmarking a brand's performance, offering a tangible reflection of consumer sentiment. This comparative analysis emphasizes the crucial role of a strong brand preference in maintaining market leadership, demonstrating that consumers are not just choosing a product but are consciously opting for a brand that holds a distinct and favorable place in their preferences. (QuestionPro Collaborators, 2023)

Objectives of the Study:

1. To investigate the key factors influencing the Laptop brand preference in higher educational institutions.
2. To assess the trends and adoption of laptop technology in educational institutions.

Literature Review:

1. Wei Ying Chong (2012) looked at how Malaysian business owners thought about what made small and medium firms successful. The researcher polled one hundred and eight Klang Valley business owners. The perceived success variables were assessed using 18 Likert-style questions. Results showed that a reputation for honesty, good customer service, and strenuous effort were the recognised success criteria across ethnic groups and gender. Last but not least, they revealed that despite variations between ethnic groups and gender, entrepreneurs perceive many success characteristics in common.
2. According to Shomnath Dutta (2015), the Indian ice cream business is one of the country's fastest-growing industries and is also a major driver of the expansion and advancement of the dairy sector. The goal of this study was to assess consumer awareness of and perceptions of Amul Ice Creams in the Siliguri region of North Bengal in terms of their accessibility, acceptability, and affordability in relation to the product's performance quality, alternatives on the market, cost analysis, and other factors.
3. It is crucial for academics and managers to understand brand equity, according to Bruno Schivinski (2010). The purpose of this article is to show managers how to use the CBBE scale as a brand audit and monitoring tool. To determine ratings for brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty, a sample of 311 respondents were examined. The findings showed that Tyskie scored better for brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty whereas Zywiec scored higher for brand awareness.
4. Amruth G. Kumar and Ali Ussain (2017) For secondary school students using mobile phones as a learning aid, the entertainment and other appealing characteristics outweigh the informational parts. These learners' passivity and spontaneity in behaviour slow down their capacity for critical thought, which significantly impacts performance potential. The usage of technology has changed how people communicate with one another overall. Learners experience a certain estrangement as a result of the low degree of meaningful involvement. As a result, their intellectual output declines, potentially harming their ability to execute. It is imperative that educators and academics pay attention to the performance risk posed by this new generation of technology.
5. Banashri Mandal (2017) Mobile devices are becoming indispensable tools in a student's daily life, making smartphone learning an essential new learning strategy. This study aims to examine the advantages of mobile learning for education. The study's results show the system's advantages as well as its potential for improvement and application in education. This study set out to look into how smartphone learning can be used in the classroom. It has been claimed that mobile learning has impacted educational practices. Mobile learning is simply the primary use of mobile devices in education.
6. A. K. Mishra and Shyam Shah (2020) The study's primary objective is to analyse customer brand preferences for laptops. The goal of the study is to pinpoint the elements that influence people's decisions to buy a certain brand of laptop. It may depend on a variety of things, including brand reputation, cost, features, configuration, service ease, audio and video quality, brand name, and so on. The study's findings will enable us to comprehend the laptop market's

brand choice practises better. It will also assist us in understanding how much the customers are active in brand research, attribute analysis, brand selection, etc. Additionally, creating a customised customer profile for a certain brand would be beneficial.

Data analysis and Interpretation:

Table showing one-way ANOVA between Annual Family Income and other factors

| Factors | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Squares | F | Sig. |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----|--------------|-------|-------|
| Price | Between Groups | 10.698 | 3 | 3.566 | 3.024 | 0.032 |
| | Within Groups | 162.746 | 138 | 1.179 | | |
| | Total | 173.444 | 141 | | | |
| Multi-Tasking | Between Groups | 11.283 | 3 | 3.761 | 2.150 | 0.097 |
| | Within Groups | 241.365 | 138 | 1.749 | | |
| | Total | 252.648 | 141 | | | |
| Speed | Between Groups | 18.859 | 3 | 6.286 | 5.028 | 0.002 |
| | Within Groups | 172.528 | 138 | 1.250 | | |
| | Total | 191.387 | 141 | | | |

The one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the relationship between annual family income and three laptop-related factors: Price, Multi-Tasking, and Speed. For the Price factor, the analysis revealed a statistically significant difference among income groups ($F(3, 138) = 3.024, p = 0.032$). This suggests that there are variations in preferences for laptop prices based on different annual family income levels. Similarly, for Multi-Tasking, a significant difference among income groups was observed ($F(3, 138) = 2.150, p = 0.097$). While the p-value is slightly above the conventional threshold of 0.05, it indicates a potential trend worthy of consideration. Notably, for the Speed factor, a highly significant difference was found among income groups ($F(3, 138) = 5.028, p = 0.002$), suggesting that annual family income significantly influences preferences for laptops with varying speed capabilities. These findings underscore the importance of income considerations in understanding consumer preferences for specific laptop features, particularly in the domains of price and speed.

Table showing one-way ANOVA between Age and other factors

| Factors | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Squares | F | Sig. |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|--------------|-------|-------|
| Customer Support | Between Groups | 9.672 | 4 | 2.418 | 2.023 | 0.095 |
| | Within Groups | 163.772 | 137 | 1.195 | | |
| | Total | 173.444 | 141 | | | |
| Celebrity Endorsement | Between Groups | 11.492 | 4 | 2.873 | 1.632 | 0.170 |
| | Within Groups | 241.156 | 137 | 1.760 | | |
| | Total | 252.648 | 141 | | | |
| Build Quality | Between Groups | 33.147 | 4 | 8.287 | 7.175 | 0.000 |
| | Within Groups | 158.240 | 137 | 1.155 | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------|---------|-----|--|--|--|
| | Total | 191.387 | 141 | | | |
|--|-------|---------|-----|--|--|--|

The one-way ANOVA was conducted to assess the relationship between age and three factors: Customer Support, Celebrity Endorsement, and Build Quality. For Customer Support, no statistically significant difference was observed among age groups ($F(4, 137) = 2.023, p = 0.095$). Similarly, for Celebrity Endorsement, there was no significant difference among age groups ($F(4, 137) = 1.632, p = 0.170$). However, for Build Quality, a highly significant difference was found among age groups ($F(4, 137) = 7.175, p < 0.001$). This indicates that age significantly influences preferences for laptops based on build quality, with distinct age groups exhibiting varying preferences. While age may not be a significant determinant for preferences regarding customer support and celebrity endorsements, it emerges as a crucial factor influencing perceptions of laptop build quality. These insights underscore the importance of considering age demographics in understanding consumer preferences for specific laptop attributes.

Table showing one-way ANOVA between Qualification & Factors

| Factors | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Squares | F | Sig. |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|--------------|-------|-------|
| After Sales Service | Between Groups | 2.875 | 4 | 0.719 | 1.947 | 0.106 |
| | Within Groups | 50.569 | 137 | 0.369 | | |
| | Total | 53.444 | 141 | | | |
| Performance | Between Groups | 2.964 | 4 | 0.741 | 3.485 | 0.010 |
| | Within Groups | 29.128 | 137 | 0.213 | | |
| | Total | 32.092 | 141 | | | |

The one-way ANOVA was conducted to explore the potential influence of varying qualification levels on perceptions of two critical laptop-related factors: After Sales Service and Performance. For After Sales Service, the analysis revealed no statistically significant difference among qualification groups ($F(4, 137) = 1.947, p = 0.106$), indicating that individuals with different educational backgrounds hold similar views on the quality of after-sales services provided by laptop brands. Conversely, in the case of Performance, a notable and statistically significant difference emerged among qualification groups ($F(4, 137) = 3.485, p = 0.010$). This suggests that individuals with different levels of qualification harbor distinct preferences and expectations concerning the performance capabilities of laptops. While qualification may not significantly impact perceptions of after-sales service, it appears to play a discernible role in shaping preferences for laptop performance, highlighting the nuanced ways in which educational backgrounds may influence consumer perspectives on specific technological attributes. These insights contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how demographic factors, such as educational qualifications, can impact consumer preferences in the laptop market.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this research delves into the intricate landscape of laptop brand preferences among students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), recognizing the evolving role of technology in education. Through a comprehensive approach, blending primary data from student surveys and interviews with insights derived from secondary sources, the study sheds light on the

multifaceted factors influencing brand preferences. The conducted one-way ANOVA analyses reveal nuanced associations between demographic variables (annual family income, age, and qualification levels) and specific laptop attributes (price, multi-tasking, speed, customer support, celebrity endorsement, and build quality). Notably, income levels significantly impact preferences for laptop price and speed, while age emerges as a crucial factor in shaping preferences for build quality. On the other hand, qualification levels showcase their influence on perceptions of laptop performance. These findings contribute valuable insights for both academia and industry stakeholders, guiding them in understanding the dynamic landscape of laptop preferences among higher education students, and how demographic factors play a pivotal role in shaping these preferences. In essence, this research illuminates the intricate dynamics of laptop brand preferences among higher education students, uncovering the nuanced interplay between demographic variables and specific laptop attributes. The analyses underscore the significant impact of annual family income on preferences for price and speed, while age emerges as a critical factor shaping preferences for build quality. Additionally, qualification levels wield influence over perceptions of laptop performance. The key takeaway is a holistic understanding of the multifaceted factors steering students' choices in the laptop market. These insights not only contribute to academic knowledge but also offer actionable guidance for industry stakeholders, providing a roadmap to navigate the evolving landscape of laptop preferences among higher education students in an era where technology intertwines seamlessly with educational pursuits.

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