Dependent and Non-Dependent Mobile Phone Users in Urban Malaysia: A Demographic And Psychographic Study

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to profile the urban Malaysian mobile phone users into dependent and non-dependent mobile phone user groups based on individuals' perceived importance of mobile phone in their daily personal and business related activities; to distinguish the identities of two groups of mobile phone users along with demographic and psychographic characteristics; and to explore the relationship between demographic variables and psychographic segments of mobile phone users.

The study was conducted via a three-pronged approach. Firstly, an analysis was conducted on the ranking of eight ICT (Information and Communications Technology) gadgets and equipments comprised traditional telephone, mobile phone, television set, video games, computer with Internet access, digital camera, CD player and DVD/VCD player, in terms of its importance to mobile phone users' daily activities. Next, an empirical study was carried out to identify the demographic and psychographic profiles of dependent and non-dependent users, coupled with an analysis on the relationship of demographic variables and psychographic segments.

The study utilized various statistical analysis of 426 responses from a survey conducted via a self-administered questionnaire using quota and convenient sampling method. Frequency and percentage counts, chi-square significance analysis, factor analysis, t-test and ANOVA were carried out to understand the general profile of respondents, to examine the demographic and psychographic profiles of the respondents, as well as to identify the relationship between demographic variables and psychographic segments.

It was observed that a majority of respondents ranked mobile phone as the most important ICT gadget in their daily activities, and hence this group of mobile phone users were categorized as dependent users; while respondents who ranked ICT gadget or equipment other than mobile phone as the most important gadget or equipment in their daily activities were categorized as non-dependent users. The two groups of mobile phone users are then compared using seven demographic and seven psychographic dimensions.

The results indicate that there were significant differences in terms of age, education background, occupation and gross monthly personal income between the two mobile phone user groups. In terms of psychographic dimensions. Dependent users were found more family oriented than non-dependent users. When the relationships between demographic and psychographic dimensions were examined, significant differences were also found. Generally, young individuals were found more variety seeking, brand conscious and impulsive than elder individuals. On the other hand, elder individuals who worked as managers, had higher monthly personal income and

better education background, exhibited higher degree of self-confidence and tend to be family oriented and home oriented.

With this information in hand, numerous marketing implications were emerged that the target market and potential segment for the future mobile services shall be the sales personnel and young urban individual respectively. Hence, relevant proposed future service offerings can be drawn up and appropriate market efforts shall be contributed in advertising and promotions activities in order to reach the target markets.

Armed with these valuable market information, the insights obtain from the findings of study would enhance the effectiveness of marketing strategies promising strategic competitiveness of mobile operators who are operating in extremely dynamic business environment while experiencing phenomenal growth as well as revolutionary changes which may not skewed in favour of any particular operator.

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