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A Study of Consumer individual Characteristics in Selecting Mobile Cell

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ABSTRACT

This research aims at determining the role of consumers' individual characteristics of women for choosing a cell phone. In this research, the relationship between dimensions of individual characteristics of woman consumers include, life cycle, profession, economic conditions, life style, and personality and women's personal imaginations with different brands of cell phone was determined. From the method point of view the present research is analytical survey, and from the type point of view it is descriptive-analytic. The aim of the study is applied (developmental). The statistical population of the study includes women in Shiraz (Iran). Multi stages cluster method was used for sampling. Appling Cochran formula the sample size of 384 persons was obtained. Variance Analysis and Chi-Square were used to test hypothesizes. Findings of research indicate that there is meaningful relation among choosing the type of cell phone with the life cycle and profession but there is no meaningful difference between choosing the type of cell phone with economic conditions and also there is meaningful difference among choosing the type of cell phone based on life style, personality and personal imaginations.

KEY WORDS: Individual Characteristics, Customer's Behaviour, Life Style, Life Cycle, Personality, Personal Imaginations, Cell Phone, Women

INTRODUCTION

The competition is inevitable in the trade arena. Business institutions use many instruments to be successful in this competition. All strategies and marketing methods are based on explicit and implicit beliefs of consumer's behavior. Consumers are the main factors and parts of products and services. So knowing their thoughts, beliefs, values, attitudes, cultures, costumes and needs is necessary. Accordingly, it is not possible to predict and react toward customers' needs and tendencies without having correct understanding of the knowledge of consumer's behavior. Producing good's, the rate of demand, and the features of consumer's products and at last, generating many demands for consumers will be possible by achieving this knowledge.

Corporations should continuously research about consumers' behavior and survey the reasons of their behavior. Consumers' behavior means; the study of how people do shopping, what thing or things they buy and why they buy? (khajeh Nasiri, 2008). The key point for being successful in marketing strategy is, understanding of consumers' behavior both from local and universal viewpoints (Hawkins, 1992). The understanding of consumers' behavior and his /her buying is very important from marketing viewpoints. Choosing a product is one part of the consumers' decision making process. Identifying factors that consumers take into consideration when they buy goods such as cell phones that are supplied to the market accompanied by features and different technological model and intensive competition with multi intentional uses is necessary for marketers and producers (Ranjbar, 2006). A corporation can design consumers' demographic profile after surveying different demographic features. By designing such a profile a corporation can specify the attractive situations and also the situations of reducing markets (samadi, 2007). An individual consumer's characteristic is one of the demographic factors including age, life cycle, profession, economic condition, life style, personality and personal imagination. These features influence a person's decision making (kotler, 2003). So, surveying these characteristics and their effects on consumers' behavior, help corporations to design the demographic profile.

Nowadays technology is continuously and rapidly changing. New technologies in two recent decades have had a lot of effects on people's lives and largely caused to change their life styles. When analog systems were changed to digital in industry of communications, an extensive evolution took place in the marketing of new digital goods. So, with regard to this point that different corporations put the expansive facilities in means of digital, an intensive competition has been existence among these products, such as cell phones. (Karin et al, 2005). It can be said that, the marketing of cell phone is one of the rough environments because of intensive competition and also expansive changes in it. In this marketing, products are manufactured based on knowing consumer's probable needs in the future (Gerstheimer & Lupp, 2004). Communications are not the only main needs for wanting a cell phone. The market of cell phone is rapidly going toward means which grants more needs of consumers than vocal simple means. In fact the producers of cell phones provide new fields for increment of demand and perpetuate the marketing growth by encouraging consumers to buy again during their life cycle. (Kerin et al, 2005). Both aspects of applied and hedonistic are considered in the cell phone. Buying the cell phone is affected by symbolic values related to the brand. (karjaluot, 2004).

This research aims at identifying the role of individual characteristics of female consumer in choosing the features of a cell phone.

Theoretical Researches

Providing satisfaction and creating value for customer is in the center of thought and the action of modern marketing (kettles &Armstrong, 2005). The goal of marketing is attraction of customer's satisfaction in return for profit. The necessity for attracting customer's satisfaction is identifying their needs, wanting's, tastes, construing, tendencies, ability and limitations. Marketing can identify the effective factors on consumer's behavior by achievement of such information and realizing the rate of factors' effect. (kotler, 2008). The important factor in successful strategies of marketing and advertising is the correct understanding of consumer's behavior (Nesaii, 2009). So consumer's behavior is a main factor in stagnation or commencing all business activities in society with consumer orientation (Schiffman & kanuk, 2000). If a corporation is aware of how a consumer reacts toward different features of goods, price and promotion it possesses a special point facing its competitors (Smaiilpoor & GhafariAshtiyani, 2002). Consumer's behavior refers to the emotions and thoughts that people experience and actions that they do during their involvement in consumption process (Peer & Olson, 1999). Consumer's behavior deals with explanation of how a consumer decides to buy and the way of using goods or buying services (Mc Danial, 2003). Wanting and personal needs of all consumers of society and special groups of consumers in different times change because of a permanent evolution of emotion and looking. The consumer's dynamic quiddity indicates the needs of permanent research on changes of people's looking and emotions that affect the behavior of buying. Factors affecting consumer's behavior include cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. Even if a marketer can't influence on many factors, it is very important to know these factors for recognition of potential buyers and manufacturing of products that can provide these needs(Kotler, 2003). The individual characteristics of consumer's include (Kotler, 2008):

1. The phases of life cycle: People buy different products and services during their lives. Also the life cycle of a family, is formative of consumption. Marketers often choose groups of life cycle as purpose marketing. It should be reminded that the purpose household is not always the family. Marketers pay attention to the conditions of changing life such as divorce, widow, remarry and the effect of it on consumed behavior.2. Profession: Person's profession affects his/her consumption pattern, too. Marketers intend to recognize the group of professions having average and high interest toward products and services. Each corporation can be specialist for special groups of professions. 3. Economic conditions: Choosing a product is affected by economic conditions including possessed income, saved money and assets, debts, the power of borrowing and people's opinion about spending money in comparison with saving money. Marketers pay attention to the income and personal saving trend and interest rate. If economic indexes show recession states, marketers will show interest in redesigning, renewal of position and putting prices again on their goods, so that they can be profitable to their customers.4. Life style: Those people having the same culture, social class and job, may have different life styles. A person's life style is his/her life pattern in the world that appears in his/her activity interests, beliefs and opinions. Life style indicates person's contrast as a whole with his/her environment. Marketers are looking the relationship among their products and groups with different life styles. 5. Personality and personal imagination: Each person has a unique personality that affects his/her shopping behavior. Personality means obvious psychological characteristics that follow the permanent and durable reaction of a person toward his/her environment. Personality allows to predict person's behavior in a hypothetical situation and it is related to the person's all behavior whether clear or hidden (Berkman & Clison, 1981). What depends on personality is personal imagination. A person may know himself a very skilled man or women deserving the best. So he/she will like a cell phone that shows typically those dimensions of quality. If cell phones of a corporation have been priced and advertised for those who are looking for the best brand will be in agreement with personal imagination (Kotler, 2008).

Women have the main role in management and programming of consumed pattern in the family and it is richly colored in traditional societies. In the past, consumption was only meant an economic behavior so that rich people used more goods because of having high income. Nowadays consumption has become a means that people show their personality by using it. In fact consumption has changed to a social behavior. A woman can have a very important role with regard to the role she has in her family as a mother and also as a person who can transfer ethical values to the next generation. A woman can also have a direct effect on consumption pattern and economic system because of having special position from the emotional point of view. With regard to the expansive role of women in today's society, the number of employed women and consequently, the increment of

buying rate by them, it is necessary to investigate the factors affecting the decision making of buying. The cell phone is related to the fashion considering both as a physical product and decorative product. A cell phone is a beautiful thing like the other fashionable things that people accept and reform it according to the other emotions and they use it for raising the feeling of their identity in the public places (Katz & Sugiyama, 2005).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Karjaluto & et al (2004), have done a research titled "The effective factors on selecting cell phone". The results of research have shown that the demographic variables specially the social class and sex have a meaningful importance in choosing a cell phone. Women put too much importance on known marks and men put too much importance on new features, e-mail, internet, colorful page, the capacity of bigger memory.

Whipple et al (2004) have done a research titled "the role of brand on selecting a cell phone in North America, Asia and Europe". In this research they have investigated the importance of brand in consumer's decision making to the brand as a prominent factor in buying a cell phone. Consumers often consider decision making as an important factor as soon as their needs were complied with form and price of the cell phone.

Lu (2003), have studied factors that effect on choosing a brand in the cell phone industry in Asia and found that a cell phone is affected by both looking to the brand of the cell phone and looking to the network. Also choosing a brand of the cell phone is affected by new technological features.

Wilska (2005), have studied on 637 persons and come to this result that choosing is often affected by hedonistic feature's, especially among youngers. Hedonistic features result in giving value to the cell phone.

Riquelme (2001), have done a research for determining the rate of consumer's consciousness at the time of choosing a cell phone among different brands. The research has shown that consumers having previous experience with product to same extent they can predict their choices well

Katz & Sugiyama (2002) have investigated the relationship between the time of a cell phone's acceptance and the importance of beauty dimension of the cell phone. The results have shown that the most important factor for American young's to accept cell phones sooner than the other, is the form of the cell phone. Also Japanese and American users (Heavy users) who use cell phone more than the others, put more value for style in comparison with the other users (light users). Heavy users prefer style to the battery age.

Stammers (2005) have done a research on 1000 young in Sued and come to this result that young people make their decision based on price and the form of a cell phone. After that, camera is a factor affecting their choice. About 30% of responders notice to the price as a most important factor. Whereas 11% express that the design of a cell phone is the most prominent factor.

Nokia (2004), have done a research on 3409 persons in Pakistan and come to this conclusion that the brand of a cell phone 46% the quality / durable 38% the design 35% and the price 35% were important to choose a cell phone.

Anandan et al (2004a) have done a research titled "the effect of colors on brand preference by consumers". The results have shown that consumers prefer the color of gray in choosing a cell phone. Consumers with different levels of income and different ages are affected by the color of product and its package.

Kekkonen (2005), have evaluated the design of five cell phones. These cell phones had never been marketed and their brands had been eliminated. The results have shown that there is correlation between the different aspects of design evaluation and staring fixedly.

Anandan et al (2004_b) , have investigated a model for determining factors affecting the loyalty of brand including price, variety, price, variety, the external beauty, product performance of the services and Guaranty. It has been concluded that the loyalty to the brand of Nokia is more than the other brands among consumers. Then Samsung and LG are in the

Ranjbar, (2006), have done a research titled "surveying the importance rate of factors in choosing cell phone among consumers in Tehran". It has been concluded that the most important features of product for buyers in choosing, decision making of buying include: the external features (the colorful monitor), the technological features (the ability to transfer files) and entertainment and efficiency (camera and movie camera).

Theoretical Framework of Research

In this research, according to the figure1, the relationship of dimensions among individual characteristics of consumers including the stage of life cycle, the type of profession, economic conditions, life style, personality and personal imagination with the features of a cell phone including the features of applied, outward, entertainment, technological, brand, consumption feeling and after sale services has been determined.

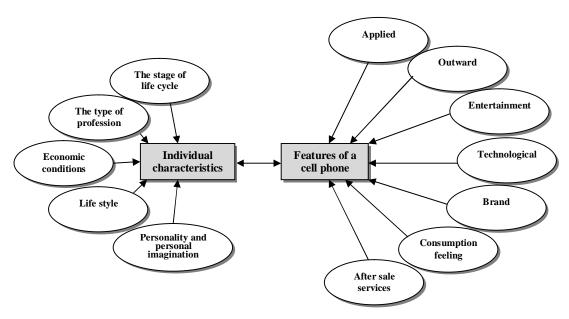


Diagram 1, Theoretical Framework of Research

Research Hypothesizes

The research hypothesizes include:

- 1. There is difference among the features of a cell phone based on the stage of life cycle, the type of profession and economic conditions of women.
- 2. There is a direct correlation among life style, personality and personal imagination with the cell phone's features

METHODOLOGY

From the method point of view, the present study is an analytical survey, and from the type point of view it is analytic. The aim of the study is applied (developmental) .The statistical population of the study includes all Women in Shiraz (Iran). Multi stages cluster method was used for sampling. Applying formula 1, (Cochran formula) the sample size of 384 persons out of 474,120 persons was obtained. Structured questionnaires comprised of two sections have been used to collect data. The questionnaire based on five-point Likert scale (from 1 - totally disagree, to 5 - totally agree) was adopted for the respondents to indicate their level of agreement. The validity of questionnaire has contently been confirmed. Cronbach's alpha was obtained forth questions above 0.7 with confirmed high reliability.

(N=474,120, t=1/96, p=q=0/5, d=0/05, n=384) **Formula 1.**
$$n = \frac{Nt^2pq}{Nd^2 + t^2pq} \cong 384$$

DATA ANALYSIS

The descriptive and the inferential statistics were used to analysis data. The tests have been used in this research include Variance Analysis, Chi-Square and Pierson's test by using SPSS software package.

Descriptive Statistics

According to the data of Table 1, it was noted that 5% of the studied females were illiterate and 95% were educated. Also83.9% of cell phones were new and 16.1% were pre-owned. According to the data of Table 2, it was noted that 88.4% of the studied females owned their cell phones,4.4% husbands,1.3% children, 4.2% other family members and 1.3% the others. Also 43.4% of the studied females have never married, 49.2% married, 2.9% widow and 4.5% divorce. According to the data of Table 3, it was noted that5.1% of the studied females were employer, 23.6% self-employed, 33.8% private salaried, 33.3% public salaried and 4.2% family employee without salary. According to the data of Table 4, it was noted that the 20.4% the studied females had incomes less than 400\$, 49.6% between 400\$ to 700\$, 23% more than 700\$ to 1000\$,4.2% more than 1000\$ to 1500\$, 2.3% more than 1500\$ to 2500\$ and 5% more than 2500\$ in a month. According to the data of Table 5, it was noted that 1.6% the studied females had primary education, 9.1% guidance,30.4% diploma, 21% junior college, 31.7% bachelor's degree and 3.2% master's degree,1.6% doctoral degree and 1.3% other level of education.

Also 22.7% of the studied females had the cell phone of Sam song, 49.5% Nokia, 20.6% Sony Ericsson ,0.5% Hyundai, 0.8% Motorola, 3.1% LG, 0.5% HTC , 0.8% Iphone, 0.5% GLX and 1% other brands. The most frequency was related to the Nokia.

Table 1, Frequency Distribution of Literacy status and type of women's cell phone

-	-				
Literacy status	illiterate	educated	total		
Valid percent	5	95.0	100.0		
type of cell phone	new	pre-owned	total		
Valid percent	83.9	16.1	100.0		

Table 2, Frequency Distribution of a cell phone ownership and women's marital status

cell phone ownership	owned	husbands	children	other family members	others	total
Valid percent	88.8	4.4	1.3	4.2	1.3	100.0
marital status	never married	married	widow	divorce	Missing	total
Valid percent	43.4	49.2	2.9	4.5	-	100.0

Table 3, Frequency Distribution of type of women's profession

type of profession	employer	self- employed	private salaried	public salaried	family employee	total
Valid percent	5.1	23.6	33.8	33.3	4.2	100.0

Table 4, Frequency Distribution of the average income and women's monthly cost

average income	less than 400\$	between 400\$ to 700\$	more than 700\$ to 1000\$	more than 1000\$ to 1500\$	more than 1500\$ to 2500\$	more than 2500\$	total
Valid percent	23.5	44.9	21.1	5.2	4.4	0.8	100.0
average cost	less than 400\$	between 400\$ to 700\$	more than 700\$ to 1000\$	more than 1000\$ to 1500\$	more than 1500\$ to 2500\$	more than 2500\$	total
Valid percent	20.4	49.6	23.0	4.2	2.3	0.5	100.0

Table 5, Frequency Distribution of level of education and the brand of a cell phone

level of education	primary	guidance	diploma	junior college	bachelor's degree	master's degree	doctoral degree	other level	total	Missing	total
Valid percent	1.6	9.1	30.4	21.0	31.7	3.2	1.6	1.3	100.0	-	-
brand of a cell phone	Samsung	Nokia	Sony Ericsson	Hyundai	Motorola	LG	HTC	IPhone	GLX	other	total
Valid percent	22.7	49.5	20.6	0.5	0.8	3.1	0.5	0.8	0.5	1.0	100.0

Frequency Distribution is based on the data of Table 6.It was noted that the mean of life style for women was 70.20, personality and personal imagination was 75.00, applied feature was 80.34, outward feature was 79.77, entertainment was 71.28, technological feature was 74.51, brand was 66.11, sense of consumption was 57.72, after sale services was 77.44 and total feature of a cell phone was 73.54.

Table 6, Frequency Distribution for quantity variables of research

	Life	personality		·	•	feature of a co	ell phone			
	style	and personal imagination	applied	outward	entertainment	technological	brand	sense of consumption	after sale services	total feature
Mean	70.2071	75.0059	80.3445	79.7786	71.2891	74.5182	66.1133	57.7214	77.4414	73.5476
Standard Deviation	9.53929	11.44170	14.17537	17.06662	17.34965	18.99470	19.12636	21.41418	17.77951	12.54638
Skewness	-0.472	-0.175	-0.829	-0.703	-0.445	-0.693	-0.274	-0.209	-0.578	-0.449
Std. Error of Skewness	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125
Minimum	28.57	38.64	18.18	20.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.05
Maximum	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Inferential statistics

The comparison of cell phone's feature based on the stage of life cycle, type of profession and women's economic condition

Variance Analysis was used because of testing cell phone's feature quantitatively and testing the stage of life cycle, type of profession and women's economic condition in a qualitative multi cases way. According to the information obtained from Table 7, it was noted that the importance of cell phone's feature mean for young people was 75.44, middle-aged was 71.84 and adults was 60.93. So as a result the importance rate of cell

phone's feature is more than the others. It was also noted that the importance of cell phone's feature mean for employers were 69.96, self-employed was 75.37, private salaried was 75.58, public salaried was 75.97 and family employee without salary was 59.98.So as a result the importance rate of cell phone's feature for women of public salaried was more than the others. It was noted that, the importance of cell phone's feature mean for women having incomes less than 400\$ was 70.91, between 400\$ to 700\$ was 73.30, more than 700\$ to 1000\$ was 75.94, more than 1000\$ to 1500\$ was 76.84, more than 1500\$ to 2500\$ was 73.49 and more than 2500\$ was 75.59. According to the information obtained from Table 7, it was noted that there is meaningful difference in the importance of cell phone's features based on the stage of life cycle and type of profession because of the significance level of < 0.05 but there is no meaningful difference in the importance of cell phone's features based on the women's economic condition because of the significance level of > 0.05.

Table 7, Descriptive Statistics for the comparison of cell phone's feature based on the stage of life cycle, the type of women's profession and women's economic condition

	type of womens pro-		_	_	_	_	_
Independent variable		N	Mean	انحراف معيار	انحراف استاندار د	Minimum	Maximum
the stage of	young	273	75.4404	11.69148	0.70760	19.05	100.00
life cycle	middle-aged	81	71.8401	12.54126	1.39347	33.93	100.00
	adults	72	60.9325	12.50878	2.28378	40.48	87.50
	total	384	73.5476	12.54638	.0.64025	19.05	100.00
The type of	employers	11	69.9675	10.34880	3.12028	51.19	80.95
profession	self-employed	51	75.3735	10.11762	1.41675	40.48	94.64
_	private salaried	73	75.5871	12.44377	1.45643	48.21	100.00
	public salaried	72	75.9755	11.52882	1.35868	47.62	98.81
	family employee without	9	59.9868	16.09010	5.36337	19.05	72.02
	salary	216	74.7299	12.05385	0.82016	19.05	100.00
	total						
economic	less than 400\$	90	70.9193	14.85660	1.56602	19.05	97.02
condition	between 400\$ to 700\$	172	73.3008	11.90593	0.90782	40.48	98.21
	more than 700\$ to 1000\$	81	75.9480	12.42422	1.38047	45.24	100.00
	more than 1000\$ to 1500\$	20	76.8452	7.41669	1.65842	58.93	89.29
	more than 1500\$ to 2500\$	17	73.4944	9.35281	2.26839	48.81	89.88
	more than 2500\$	3	75.5952	7.21688	4.16667	71.43	83.93
	total	383	73.5127	12.54414	0.64098	19.05	100.00

Table 8, Variance Analysis for the comparison of cell phone's feature based on the stage of life cycle, the type of women's profession and women's economic condition

Independe nt variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
The stage of life cycle	Between Groups Within Groups total	5988.463 54300.165 60288.628	2 381 383	2994.231 142.520	21.009	0.000
The type of profession	Between Groups Within Groups total	2392.196 28846.302 31238.498	4 211 215	598.049 136.712	4.375	0.002
economic condition	Between Groups Within Groups total	1328.540 58781.207 60109.747	5 377 382	265.708 155.918	1.704	0.133

Table 9, Post Hoc Test: LSD for the comparison of cell phone's feature based on the stage of life cycle

the stage of life	the stage of life	تفاوت	انحراف	Sig.	95% Confide	ence interval
cycle(I)	cycle(J)	میانگین	استاندارد		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
young	middle-aged adults	3.6003 14.5079	1.51048 2.29624	0.018 0.000	0.6304 9.9930	6.5703 19.0228
middle-aged	Young adults	3.6003 10.9076	1.51048 2.55151	0.018 0.000	-6.5703 5.8908	-0.6304 15.9243
adults	young middle-aged	-14.5079 -10.9076	2.29624 2.55151	$0.000 \\ 0.000$	-19.0228 -15.9243	-9.9930 -5.8908

Table 10, Post Hoc Test: LSD for the comparison of cell phone's feature based on the type of women's profession

The type of	The type of profession(J)	تفاوت	انحراف	Sig.	95% Confid	ence interval
profession(I)	sion(I) استاندارد میانگین			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
		(I-J)				
employers	self-employed	-5.4060	3.88703	0.166	-13.0683	2.2564
	private salaried	-5.6196	3.78169	0.139	-13.0743	1.8352
	public salaried	-6.0080	3.78513	0.114	-13.4695	1.4535
	family employee without salary	9.9808	5.25535	0.059	-0.3789	20.3405
self-employed	employers	5.4060	3.88703	0.166	-2.2564	13.0683

	private salaried	-0.2136	2.13387	0.920	-4.4200	3.9928
	public salaried	-0.6020	2.13996	0.779	-4.8205	3.6164
	family employee without salary	15.3867	4.22740	0.000	7.0534	23.7201
private salaried	employers self-employed public salaried family employee without salary	5.6196 0.2136 -0.3884 15.6003	3.78169 2.13387 1.94205 4.13074	0.139 0.920 0.842 0.000	-1.8352 -3.9928 -4.2167 7.4575	13.0743 4.4200 3.4399 23.7431
public salaried	employers	6.0080	3.78513	0.114	-1.4535	13.4695
	self-employed	0.6020	2.13996	0.779	-3.6164	4.8205
	private salaried	0.3884	1.94205	0.842	-3.4399	4.2167
	family employee without salary	15.9888	4.13389	0.000	7.8397	24.1378
family employee without salary	employers self-employed private salaried public salaried	-9.9808 -15.3867 -15.6003 -15.9888	5.25535 4.22740 4.130744. 13389	0.059 0.000 0.000 0.000	-20.3405 -23.7201 -23.7431 -24.1378	0.3789 -7.0534 -7.4575 -7.8397

The correlation among life style, personality and personal imagination with the cell phone's feature

The coefficient of Pearson correlation was used because of testing life style, personality and personal imagination and the cell phone's features in an interval scale. According to the information obtained from Table 11 and figure 2. & 3, it was noted that there is no meaningful direct correlation among life style, personality and personal imagination with the cell phone's feature because of the significance level of < 0.05. More improving in life style, personality and personal imagination will be resulted in giving more importance to the cell phone's features.

Table 11, Correlation among life style, personality and personal imagination of women with the cell phone's feature

Independent variable	N	r	P	Dependent variable
life style	384	0.326	0.000	cell phone's feature
personality and personal imagination	384	0.423	0.000	cell phone's feature

Diagram 2, Correlation between life style of women with the cell phone's feature

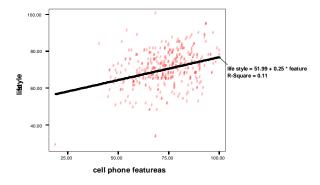
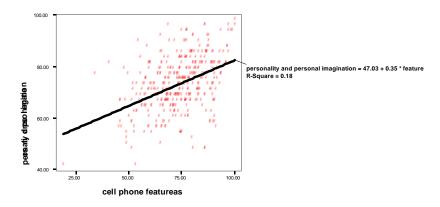


Diagram 3, Correlation between personality and personal imagination of women with the cell phone's feature



Conclusion

The results of this study are as following:

- 1. There is meaningful difference among the stage of life cycle and the type of women's profession with the cell phone's feature but there is no meaningful difference among women's economic condition with the cell phone's feature.
- 2. There is meaningful direct correlation among life style, personality and personal imagination with the cell phone's feature

Suggestion

Since there is meaningful difference among the stage of life cycle and the type of women's profession with the cell phone's feature, and also there is meaningful direct correlation among life style, personality and personal imagination with the cell phone's feature, it has been suggested that corporations producing cell phones design and produce different types of cell phones for each different groups of life cycle, women's profession, life style, personality and personal imagination.

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