

REACH AND USAGE OF HOME MAINTENANCE MOBILE APPLICATIONS: A STUDY AMONG HOMEMAKERS IN CHENNAI

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Abstract:

Home maintenance is a major chore of every homemaker to make the home hygienic and flawless. They discover multiple new ideas and purchase different products to maintain their home. As a part of maintenance they have to clean the house and for other repair works they depend upon the specific work professionals to do the work. They have to find the right technician to do their repair job. Finding the right person becomes the major task for the Homemakers. Today in this technology evolved world there are companies which offer home maintenance services. To call the home maintenance service a mobile application is more than enough to book a right professional to execute the maintenance work. There are mobile applications like Urban clap, which offers home maintenance service in and around Chennai. Home makers can book the professional through the mobile application. In this research we are going to find the outreach and consumption of home maintenance mobile applications among homemakers. The research is conducted in Chennai. Quantitative research method is used and data collection method is used for collecting data from Homemakers. A set of hundred samples is chosen for data collection from Chennai and each homemaker will be asked to fill the questionnaire that consists of thirty five questions constructed with a five point scale questionnaire method. The collected data will be analysed and a report will be prepared to find the outreach and consumption of mobile applications among Homemakers of Chennai.

Key Point: Mobile Application, Homemaker, Urban Clap, Home Maintenances

Introduction

Home Maintenance is a recurring and common work which is carried out in all the homes. There is professional help available to carry out the maintenance work. Cleaning of houses is basically carried out by homemakers and in case of any repair or any specific work like electric, plumbing, and drainage cleaning, homemakers request help from professionals. When a homemaker is not able to accomplish specific work by oneself then one has to depend on the service agency which is available in their city. There are various service agencies which offer services for home maintenance. Finding a professional in the time of

emergency becomes a huge task for homemakers. Development of technology has led to the path to professional search especially in cities where the population is increasing and the need for professionals is also exceeding. Occasionally, it is not easy to find the right personnel which then leads to the dependence on online search engines. When one searches online, the browser redirects the consumer to mobile applications that are available for home maintenance. Individuals download the mobile application that they require according to their needs which will guide them to specific professionals who are experts in certain fields of work. Companies that offer house maintenance services have created their mobile applications through which consumers can reach them easily. The mobile application allows people to order specific services which they are searching for and they can understand the pricing for various services posted on the mobile application. Once the required service is opted, the consumer will receive SMS regarding the service and who will be arriving to execute the service along with the cost of the service that is selected. Home makers can use this facility in maintaining their home which makes their work easy without depending on the other members of the family.

Significance of the study:

Mobile applications have become a part of our daily life requirement. Though smartphone usage has intensified in recent years, the usage of mobile applications is lesser to a degree among women. Most of the mobile applications are used by the younger generation. There are certain mobile applications which are designed for specific works and also for specific users like homemakers. This study is conducted to find out the reach and usage of home maintenance mobile applications by homemakers. Most of the homemakers are still not knowledgeable of technology developed facilities which are available in the hand. The study also finds which service provider mobile applications are used and what type of service they opt for. They have less awareness and knowledge to use mobile application facilities. This study will help to know about the reach and usage of home maintenance mobile applications among homemakers.

Objective of study:

- The study is conducted to identify the reach and usage of home maintenance applications among homemakers.
- To distinguish the usage of various home maintenance applications such as urban company, Asian paints, House joy, Home Triangle
- To distinguish the knowledge of using home maintenance application to book maintenance service through smart phone

Literature Review:

According to Aniket Nikam (2017) research on Fully Automated System for Monitoring Water Usage using SMS and Android Application invented a device which has been fixed on the water tank which is controlled by a mobile application. This application helps to find the quantity of water in the tank. The user can check the water usage in the house and also they

can fasten the water valve in case they have to leave the house. These water management ideas will help to save the water and lessen the problems of scarcity. It will also help the house owners to save their time without manually opening the water supply and closing it while leaving one's home. Hence this fully automated water usage monitoring system will help in saving water.

According to Akshit Gupta (2020) research on urban housekeeping services, they made a website application to find out housekeeping service personnel. This application was useful for working women who found difficulty in acquiring a housekeeping worker. This application made in different provisions of works will be useful for working women. This website provides details of different home maintenance services for the users to opt for and hire.

According to Divatia A (2017) research on Selected Social Media Applications Usage Practices of Homemakers says that homemakers have an average practice of using the social media applications. There is a relation between the usage of social media and household works among the home makers. There is no relationship between the age and family size of home makers in using social media. After the introduction of social media in 2005 it has taken nearly 10 years for home makers to start using social media.

According to Jayaseelan R (2015), the usage level of smartphones among women before and after pregnancy is similar and on observation, women take a major role in using technology than men. About 56% of women use smartphones when compared to 51% of men. The usage of mobile applications related to health was around 69% before and during pregnancy. Mobile applications on pregnancy are used by 65% of women. Mobile applications are more used by women with a family income of 1 lakh – 2 lakhs. Around 94% of women have reported that smartphone usage has made a change in their life.

According to Dr. Krishna Kant Agrawal (2020) research on AtDoorStep: An Innovative Online Application for Household Services designed a mobile application to find service providers for house maintenance works. The application provides service at the doorstep of the users to do their work such as electrical, carpentry, plumbing etc. The framework of the application is simple in such a way that both the customer and worker can understand its process. The application was easily understandable to uneducated workers as well.

According to Kamal Dharani (2018) research on Renovate, it is a geographical based mobile application designed for consumers to identify working professionals for various works in home maintenance. The application is designed with developed technology to enhance the safety of the users and it also provides an easy search option to find the professional in their locality. The application has safety features which protects their users from fake account creation and the application also provides more payment options which will help the users to pay their service amount.

According to S Monika (2019) research on Design and Implementation of Smart Floor Cleaning Robot using Android App proposes that floors can be cleaned easily with the help of a robot which was designed specifically for floor. This robot was designed by finding the

errors of earlier inventions like automatic vacuum cleaners and other floor cleaning robots. Robots which were created earlier faced difficulty to identify the objects that came in front and it is also difficult to move them in small places for floor cleaning. This research model has overcome the drawbacks of earlier cleaning robots.

According to Dr. Mitali Gupta (2019) research on Impact of Online Food delivery app on Restaurant Business with special references to Zomato and Swiggy, says that food ordering has been a useful technological development through mobile applications which has helped the urban people to get their food on time at their doorstep. The working community in the urban region has deficient time to purchase food at the hotels and restaurants. In that case, these working professionals are more attracted to technology usage. They use the food ordering mobile applications to order the food to their home and working places. The application is developed in an advanced manner to show different food varieties and available restaurants which helps the users to opt according to their choice.

According to Sheetal Bandekar (2016) research on Domestic Android Application for Home services, An application was created for the user's requirement of home maintenance services which provides services like electrical, plumbing and carpentry. The application provides the users to select the required service they need and call the service person for work. The main feature of this application is the GPS location tracking which will help the service person to identify the location of the customer. The application also helps to create an account for the user in the application so that they can manage the services that they have ordered through the application.

According to Vijayeta Priyadarshini (2018) research, a comparative study on home management practices among working and non-working women states that a homemaker is involved in managing the home maintenance works and she also motivates the other family members to carry out the work along with her. It is necessary for the homemaker to have knowledge on various works of home maintenance. The family members should understand the work of the home makers and how maintenance work is carried out.

Methodology:

The research is studied on usage of home maintenance applications and it is conducted using survey methodology. Samples for the research are selected from Chennai and a set of hundred samples were selected for data collection. Questionnaire was framed with a five point scaling method to collect the data. Questions related to awareness of home maintenance applications and its usage were asked. Questions related to pre-existing applications for home maintenance service and about its usage were asked in the questionnaire. Questions were also based on user satisfaction on getting specific service. The collected data was analysed and charts were produced.

Findings:

The research conducted among homemakers on awareness of home maintenance services indicates that 61% of the homemakers from the total sample are aware of the home maintenance services available in Chennai. 39% of home makers weren't aware about the home maintenance services that are available in Chennai.

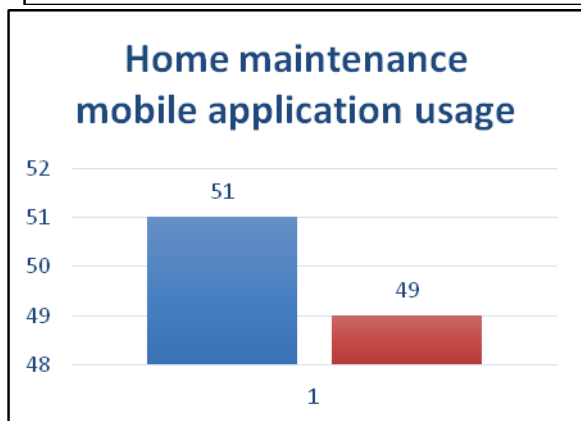
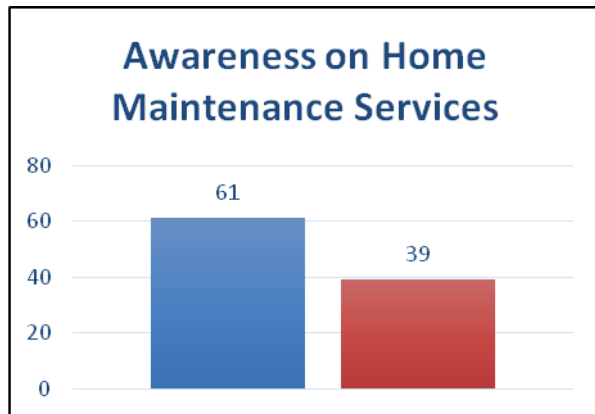


Figure – 1

Figure – 2

Apart from the home makers who are aware of home maintenance applications, 51% of them use home maintenance applications to order for services. Usage of home maintenance applications was observed among 49% of home makers which also includes 10% of home makers who are aware about it. There are many different services available through mobile applications such as House cleaning, Painting, Furniture repair, Renovation and Pest Control. Homemakers can select their required service through mobile applications. House cleaning service was opted by 8% of homemakers. 8% of homemakers have never opted this service. It was observed that 22% often used the applications. House cleaning services was sometimes opted by 31% and rarely by 31% of Home makers. Mobile applications of various companies provide distinct services for home maintenance. Around 30% of homemakers opt for Urban clap applications to get home maintenance services. Home

maintenance services like cleaning, electrical, renovation, plumbing, carpentry and painting are provided by urban clap due to which many of the Homemakers prefer Urban clap.

Painting is the major service provided by Asian Paints and through this application 12% of home makers prefer this service for their home maintenance. There are homemakers who prefer two and more applications for their specific services.

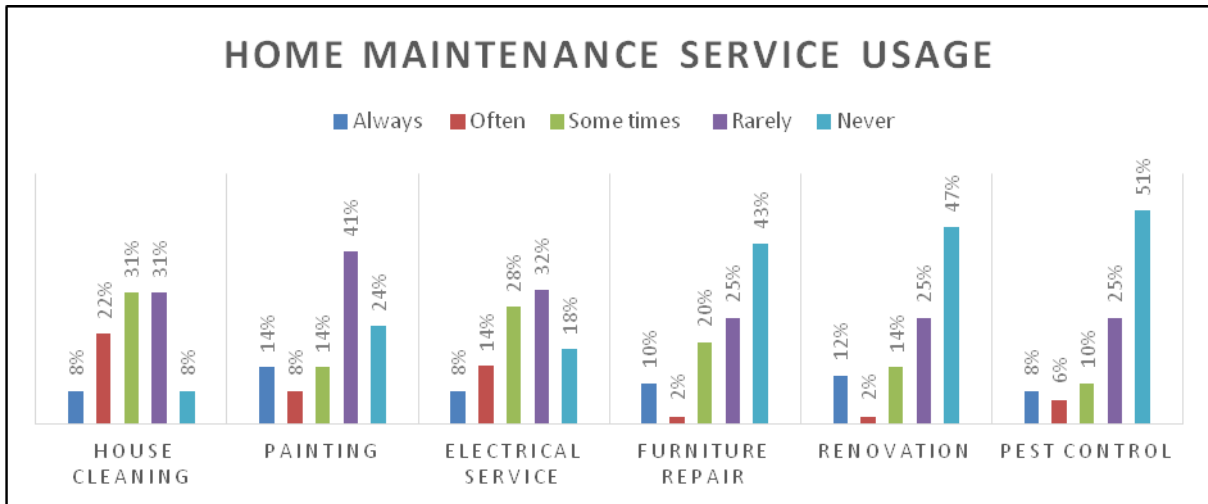


Figure – 3

Ho1: There is no significant difference among the respondents with varied income levels (Rs. 2-3 lakhs, Rs. 3-4 lakhs, Rs. 4-5 lakhs, Rs. 5-6 lakhs and above Rs. 6 lakhs) with regards to the type of service used by the respondents.

Table no. 1 One-way ANOVA for type of service used and income levels among the respondents.

	Income Levels	N	Mean	S.D.	f- value	p- value
Type of service used	Rs. 2-3 Lakhs	22	7.86	6.274	.256	.905
	Rs. 3-4 Lakhs	10	7.00	3.916		
	Rs. 4 -5 Lakhs	6	9.83	6.401		
	Rs. 5 -6 Lakhs	8	8.50	4.309		

	Above Lakhs	Rs.6	5	8.20	6.458		
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A One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the type of services used and income. The value of f-value is .256, which reaches significance with a p-value of .905 (which is more than 0.05 alpha level). There is no significant difference in the type of services used and income levels [Rs. 2-3 lakhs (M= 7.86 S.D. = 6.274), Rs. 3-4 lakhs (M=7.00 S.D. =3.916), Rs. 4-5 lakhs ((M=9.83 S.D. = 6.401), Rs. 5-6 lakhs (M=8.50 S.D. =4.309) and above Rs. 6 lakhs (M= 8.20 S.D. =6.458)]. Hence the hypothesis is accepted. However, it is observed that, with respect to income levels Rs.4-5 lakhs have a higher mean score of 9.83. Hence it can also be concluded that respondents with an income level of Rs.4-5 lakhs are found to use the services predominately compared to other income groups.

Frequency of using home maintenance services through mobile application was shown in below figure - 4. Mobile applications are used by 12% of home makers to book home maintenance services while 22% of the homemakers often use these applications. Around 31% of them were found using it occasionally. Even though the applications were installed in their phone, it was observed that around 35% of homemakers used the applications rarely.

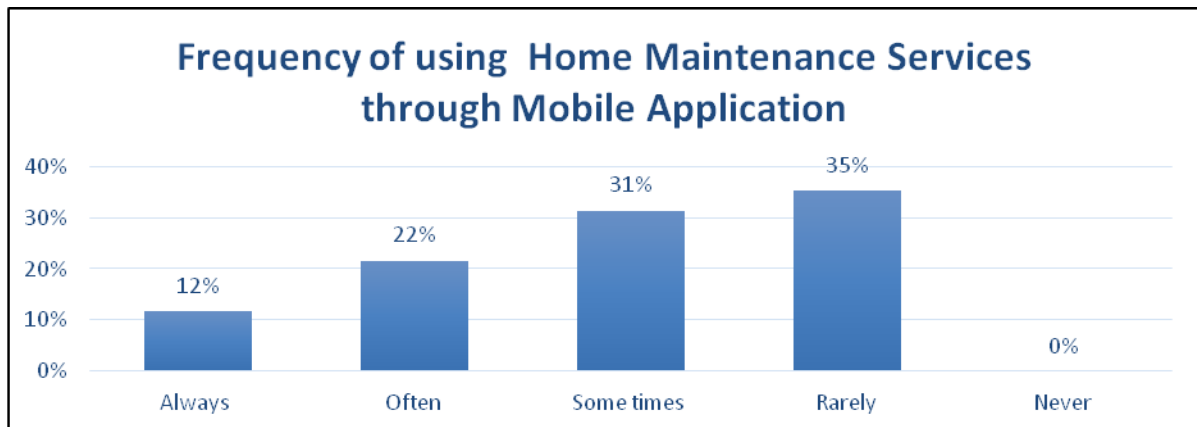


Figure - 4

Homemakers need to find the required service that they are looking for through mobile applications and it can pose a challenge for them to find the required service. The discovery of specific applications for specific services was preferred by 14% of home makers. 37% of the respondents often used the applications and occasionally 31% used. 18% among the home makers rarely operated them. Using a home maintenance application for a certain

service is a task for home makers since few mobile applications provide selected services and others provide various specific services. 20% of homemakers strongly agree that they found the required service that they were looking for and 7% of home makers agreed that they always found the required services. After opting for the required services, the homemaker has to book the service that they require and a service personnel will be assigned. Around 16% of home makers strongly agree that they booked the service and called the service person for the required work.

Frequency of mobile application usage for booking home maintenance services differs where 33% of home makers use mobile application for booking home maintenance service once a month while 7% of Home makers use mobile application twice a month for booking. Around 8% of Home makers use mobile applications thrice a month and 3% of Home Makers use mobile applications four times in a month for maintaining the house works as shown in figure-5. This shows the frequency of usage and the need for usage of home maintenance service.

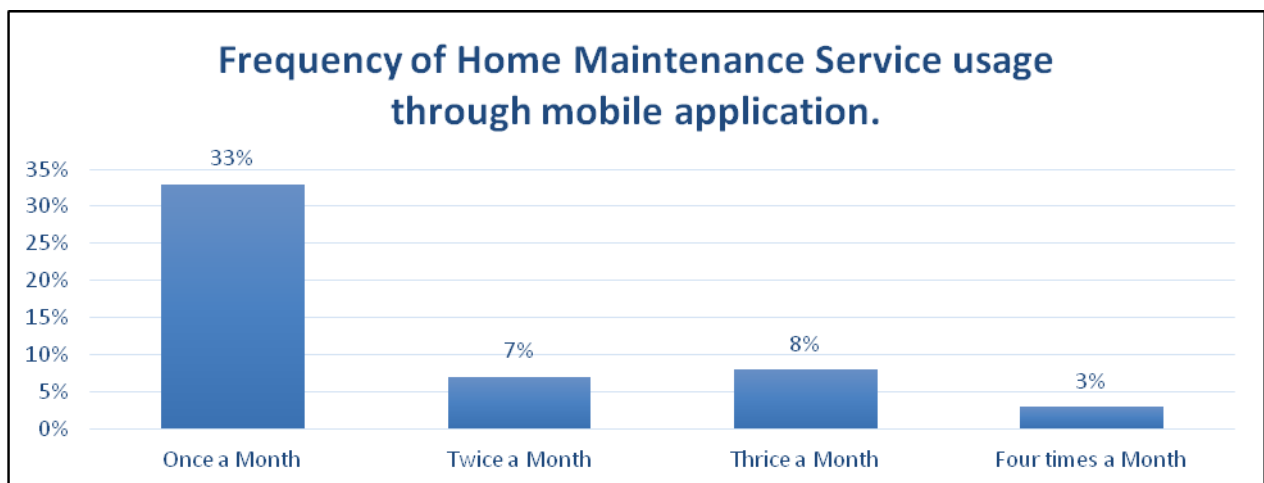


Figure-5

The cost of home maintenance is available on the mobile application which can be identified by home makers while booking the services. Home makers said that the various online maintenance services have affordable prices while compared to calling a local service person. According to the survey, 30% of homemakers strongly agree and 42% of them agree about cost effective and affordability in using the mobile application for booking the maintenance service.

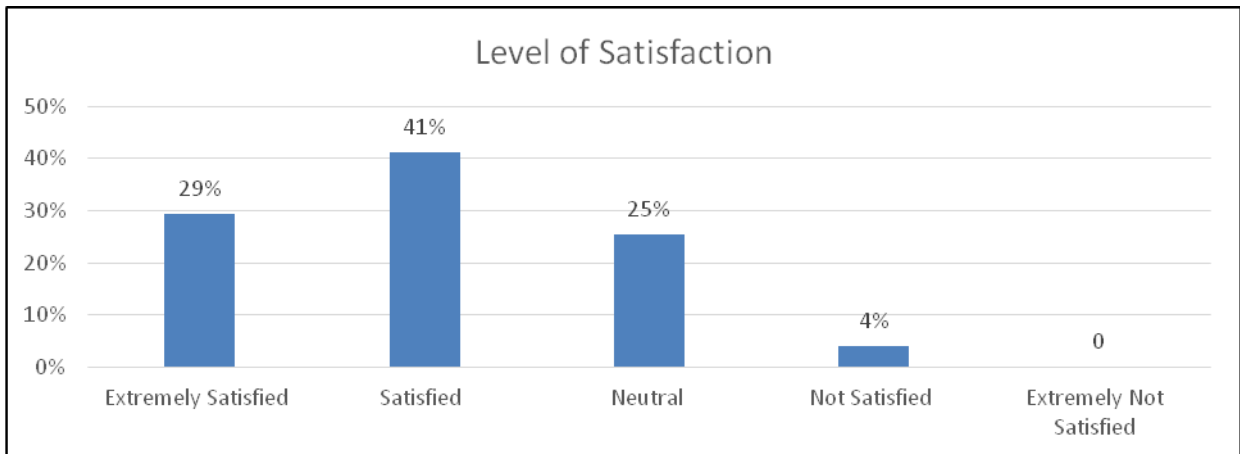


Figure-6

Every user will have an experience of using various mobile applications. The above figure -6 shows the level of satisfaction among the home makers in using the mobile application. According to the survey, 29% of home makers are extremely satisfied, 41% of them are satisfied, 25% of them are neutral and 4% of them are not satisfied when using mobile applications. This indicates that usage of home maintenance mobile applications among the home makers and their levels of satisfaction. The survey also found that some of the services are difficult for people to identify. According to the respondents, services like house cleaning, painting, electrical, carpentry were found to be difficult to search for. Around 47% of them "Agree" that it is difficult to get service personnel for house cleaning, 71% for painting service personnel, 57% for carpentry service personnel, 57% for electrical service personnel and 45% of them for pest control service personnel. This states that it is difficult for the homemaker to find the home maintenance service person. The research survey also found that 49% of the total sample has their own house and 51% have rented but house home makers with both types of housing prefer to get home maintenance service. Many homemakers are not aware of basic maintenance works and also they are fear to the maintenance services which are little complicated in that case they need to depend on the service person. Homemakers who stay in an apartment need the help of a person and it is also difficult to do all sorts of maintenance work. So home makers have to depend on the service people who are professional to do all required services.

Conclusion:

Mobile applications are the most required source in our daily life. Every individual who uses a smartphone is dependent on mobile applications to accomplish their work easily and smartly. Home makers are also in need of mobile applications to do their home maintenance work by calling the service personnel to their homes. The development of technology has increased the use of mobile applications in all kinds of works and it has saved time and money. Home makers should be made aware of the developed technologies and make their work easy. Home maintenance is the most challenging work which needs the help of family members for homemakers to accomplish. In case of lack of knowledge, homemakers

depend on the service personnel and having knowledge about these services will be easy to book the required home maintenance service. The research can be further conducted on specific home maintenance applications along with its pros and cons. This will guide one's understanding about the application and its usage among home makers. Some applications provide services including salon services and grocery shopping for research to find the knowledge about mobile application and its usage among home makers.

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