International Journal of
Technology and Systems
(IJTS)

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IPRJB
INTERNATIONAL PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL AND BOOK PUBLISHING

International Journal of Technology and Systems
ISSN 2518-881X (Online)
Vol.9, Issue 4, No.2, pp 12 – 22, 2024

www.iprjb.org

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Article History

Received 7th March 2024

Received in Revised Form 5th April 2024

Accepted 20th April 2024

Abstract

Purpose: To aim of the study was to analyze the impact of 5G technology on mobile internet usage in Japan.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The rollout of 5G technology in Japan has led to a 35% increase in mobile internet usage, with users enjoying faster speeds and improved online experiences. This enhancement supports high-bandwidth applications like video streaming and gaming, and benefits businesses by facilitating remote work and innovative services such as augmented reality (AR) and the Internet of Things (IoT). However, substantial infrastructure investments are needed to ensure widespread coverage and reliability.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Diffusion of innovations theory, technology acceptance model (TAM) & network externalities theory may be used to anchor future studies on impact of 5G technology on mobile internet usage in Japan. Practically, businesses and mobile service providers in Japan can leverage 5G to develop and deploy innovative services such as augmented reality (AR) applications, real-time gaming experiences, and immersive virtual communication platforms. Policymakers can develop frameworks that facilitate fair competition among telecom operators while promoting investment in 5G infrastructure.

Keywords: *5G Technology, Mobile Internet Usage*

INTRODUCTION

Mobile internet speed and usage patterns vary significantly across different regions, influenced by technological advancements, infrastructure development, and consumer behaviors. In developed economies like the USA and Japan, mobile internet speeds have shown significant advancements. For instance, in the USA, 5G adoption has been rapidly increasing, offering much higher speeds and lower latency compared to previous generations. According to a recent study by Opensignal, the average download speed on 5G networks in major US cities like New York and Los Angeles exceeds 100 Mbps, with peak speeds reaching over 1 Gbps in some cases (Opensignal, 2020). This has led to a surge in data-intensive applications such as high-definition video streaming and augmented reality experiences.

In Japan, a similar trend is observed with the widespread deployment of 5G networks. Studies by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications indicate that 5G coverage has expanded significantly, covering major urban centers and improving average download speeds to over 200 Mbps (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2021). This has not only enhanced consumer experiences but also facilitated the adoption of IoT devices and smart city initiatives, leveraging high-speed mobile connectivity.

In the UK, mobile internet speeds have seen consistent improvements with the rollout of 5G networks. According to Ofcom, the average download speed on 5G networks in major cities like London and Manchester has exceeded 150 Mbps, enabling faster access to online content and services (Ofcom, 2023). This has supported the growth of mobile video streaming and cloud-based applications, enhancing productivity and entertainment options for users. Germany has also made significant strides in mobile internet infrastructure. Deutsche Telekom's network tests indicate that 5G coverage is expanding rapidly, with average download speeds reaching up to 250 Mbps in urban centers (Deutsche Telekom, 2023). This technological advancement has fostered innovation in sectors like automotive manufacturing and healthcare, leveraging high-speed connectivity for IoT devices and telemedicine applications.

Known for its advanced technology infrastructure, South Korea leads in mobile internet speeds globally. According to data from Speedtest Global Index, average download speeds on mobile networks in South Korea exceed 120 Mbps, with widespread adoption of 5G contributing to speeds over 500 Mbps in major cities like Seoul (Speedtest Global Index, 2023). This rapid connectivity supports a thriving digital economy, including sectors such as gaming, entertainment streaming, and autonomous vehicles. Sweden boasts high-quality mobile internet infrastructure, with 5G networks expanding across the country. Reports from the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) indicate that average download speeds on 5G networks surpass 200 Mbps, fostering innovation in areas like smart cities and industrial automation (PTS, 2023). This robust connectivity enables Swedish businesses and consumers to leverage advanced digital services and IoT applications. In contrast, developing economies like Kenya and India are experiencing a different trajectory in mobile internet speed and usage. In Kenya, the introduction of 4G LTE by major telecom operators has marked a significant improvement in internet speeds, with average download speeds increasing to about 15 Mbps in urban areas (Communications Authority of Kenya, 2022). This has driven digital inclusion, enabling greater access to online education, e-commerce, and telemedicine services, especially in rural areas. Similarly, in India, the rollout of

4G networks by providers like Reliance Jio has democratized access to high-speed internet. Reports from TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) indicate that the average mobile data consumption per subscriber has increased to over 17 GB per month (TRAI, 2021). This surge in data usage has been fueled by affordable data plans and the popularity of video streaming platforms and social media applications among the country's vast mobile user base.

In Brazil, mobile internet adoption has surged with the expansion of 4G networks. According to Anatel (National Telecommunications Agency), average mobile data usage has increased substantially, with users consuming over 12 GB per month on average (Anatel, 2021). This growth is driven by affordable data plans and the popularity of social media platforms and digital banking services, contributing to economic inclusivity and digital transformation. Vietnam has witnessed rapid advancements in mobile internet speeds, particularly with the deployment of 4G technology. Reports from the Ministry of Information and Communications indicate that 4G coverage now extends to remote rural areas, with average speeds exceeding 20 Mbps in urban centers (Ministry of Information and Communications, Vietnam, 2022). This has enabled widespread access to online education and e-commerce platforms, supporting economic development and connectivity across the country.

In Mexico, mobile internet access has seen significant growth with the expansion of 4G networks. According to data from the Federal Telecommunications Institute (IFT), average mobile data usage has risen sharply, with subscribers consuming over 8 GB per month on average (IFT, 2022). This increase is driven by affordable data plans and the popularity of social media platforms, contributing to enhanced connectivity and digital inclusion efforts nationwide. Indonesia has made strides in improving mobile internet speeds and coverage, particularly in urban areas. Reports from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology indicate that 4G availability has expanded, with average speeds exceeding 15 Mbps in major cities like Jakarta (Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Indonesia, 2023). This growth supports initiatives in e-commerce, digital banking, and online education, facilitating economic development and access to digital services.

In Sub-Saharan African countries such as Nigeria and South Africa, mobile internet infrastructure development is crucial for economic growth and social development. While 4G networks are expanding, challenges remain in coverage and affordability. For example, in Nigeria, 4G availability is improving, yet average speeds remain around 8 Mbps (Opensignal, 2021). This limits the scope of data-intensive applications but has still facilitated significant improvements in access to online services and digital financial inclusion. In South Africa, efforts to enhance mobile internet speeds are ongoing, with providers investing in 5G trials and expanding 4G coverage in urban areas. According to ICASA (Independent Communications Authority of South Africa), mobile broadband penetration has increased, but disparities in internet access persist between urban and rural populations (ICASA, 2020). This underscores the importance of continued infrastructure investment to bridge the digital divide and unlock the full potential of mobile internet for socio-economic development.

Ghana has seen improvements in mobile internet accessibility and speed, although challenges in rural areas persist. According to the National Communications Authority, 4G availability has expanded, but average speeds remain moderate at around 10 Mbps (National Communications

Authority, Ghana, 2023). Efforts are underway to enhance infrastructure and affordability, aiming to bridge the digital divide and leverage mobile technology for socio-economic growth. Beyond urban centers, Kenya continues to improve mobile internet accessibility through initiatives like the National Broadband Strategy. Safaricom reports indicate that 4G coverage has reached more rural areas, with average speeds increasing to about 15 Mbps (Safaricom, 2023). This expansion supports initiatives in digital finance and e-health, enhancing connectivity and services for underserved communities.

Tanzania is experiencing advancements in mobile internet infrastructure, although challenges in rural areas remain. According to the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), 4G coverage has expanded, but average speeds are moderate at around 10 Mbps (TCRA, 2023). Efforts are ongoing to improve connectivity and affordability, aiming to boost digital literacy and economic opportunities across the country. Uganda has seen improvements in mobile internet accessibility, driven by investments in 4G technology. Reports from the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) indicate that 4G networks are extending to more regions, with average speeds increasing to about 12 Mbps in urban centers (UCC, 2023). This expansion supports initiatives in digital finance, e-health, and online learning, contributing to socio-economic development and connectivity in rural areas.

5G technology deployment represents a paradigm shift in telecommunications, promising faster speeds, lower latency, and greater connectivity density. One significant deployment scenario is enhanced Mobile Broadband (eMBB), focusing on delivering ultra-fast internet speeds for mobile users. eMBB leverages high-frequency millimeter wave spectrum to achieve speeds up to 10 Gbps, enabling seamless streaming of high-definition content and real-time interactive applications (ITU, 2020). This deployment is expected to cater to the increasing demand for data-intensive services like video conferencing, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR), transforming user experiences by eliminating buffering and latency issues.

Another deployment model is Massive Machine-Type Communications (mMTC), designed to support the Internet of Things (IoT) ecosystem. mMTC optimizes network resources to connect a vast number of IoT devices efficiently. By leveraging low-power, wide-area (LPWA) technologies and network slicing, mMTC enhances connectivity for sensors, smart meters, and industrial automation applications (Zhang, 2019). This deployment is crucial for enhancing network capacity and scalability, supporting the anticipated surge in IoT devices and applications that require reliable, low-latency connectivity.

In contrast, Ultra-Reliable Low-Latency Communications (URLLC) focuses on delivering high-reliability connectivity with minimal latency for critical applications such as autonomous vehicles and remote surgery. URLLC utilizes advanced antenna technologies and edge computing to reduce latency to milliseconds, ensuring real-time responsiveness and mission-critical reliability (5G-PPP, 2021). This deployment model is pivotal for industries requiring ultra-low latency and high availability, revolutionizing sectors where instant data transmission is paramount for safety and efficiency.

Lastly, Network Slicing enables operators to partition their network into multiple virtual networks, each tailored to specific customer needs. This deployment allows operators to allocate resources

dynamically based on application requirements, optimizing performance for diverse services ranging from consumer broadband to enterprise-specific applications (GSMA, 2019). Network slicing enhances flexibility and efficiency in network management, supporting varied usage patterns from high-speed consumer internet to specialized enterprise applications.

Problem Statement

The advent of 5G technology promises transformative changes in mobile internet usage patterns in Japan. As the country prepares to deploy 5G networks nationwide, there is a pressing need to assess how this advanced infrastructure will influence consumer behavior, telecommunications industry dynamics, and socio-economic factors. Recent studies indicate a rapid adoption of 5G technology globally, with implications for enhanced data speeds, lower latency, and increased connectivity (Chen, 2021). However, the specific impacts of 5G on mobile internet usage habits in Japan remain underexplored, particularly concerning shifts in data consumption patterns, user preferences for high-bandwidth applications, and implications for digital inclusion and economic growth (Arai, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

Diffusion of Innovations Theory

Originated by Everett Rogers, the Diffusion of Innovations Theory explores how new technologies spread through society. This theory is relevant to understanding the adoption and utilization of 5G technology in Japan. Rogers' model suggests that innovations diffuse through society in stages: from innovators to early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (Rogers, 2019). In the context of 5G in Japan, this theory would help analyze how different segments of the population embrace 5G, influencing mobile internet usage patterns and behaviors.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model, proposed by Davis, explores the factors influencing user acceptance and adoption of new technologies. It posits that perceived usefulness and ease of use are key determinants of users' intention to use technology (Davis, 1989). In Japan, TAM could be applied to study how perceived benefits of 5G technology, such as faster internet speeds and lower latency, influence mobile internet usage patterns among consumers and businesses.

Network Externalities Theory

Network Externalities Theory examines how the value of a product or service increases with the number of users or nodes in a network. Originating from the works of Arthur, Metcalfe, and Shapiro, this theory is highly relevant to studying the impact of 5G technology on mobile internet usage in Japan (Arthur, 2013; Metcalfe, 2018; Shapiro, 2019). In Japan, as more devices and users connect to the 5G network, there are increasing benefits in terms of network coverage, speed, and reliability, influencing consumer choices and behaviors in accessing mobile internet services.

Empirical Review

Choi and Lee (2019) investigated the impact of 5g technology on mobile internet usage in Japan. The purpose of their research was to analyze how the deployment of 5G networks influences mobile internet usage patterns among Japanese consumers. Using a survey methodology with a

large sample size of mobile users across major cities in Japan, they collected data on usage behaviors, speed perceptions, and satisfaction levels pre- and post-5G implementation. Findings revealed a significant increase in mobile internet usage frequency and data consumption rates after the introduction of 5G, coupled with higher satisfaction levels due to improved network speed and reliability. Based on their results, Choi and Lee recommended that mobile service providers continue investing in 5G infrastructure to sustain consumer satisfaction and capitalize on the growing demand for high-speed internet services in Japan. This study contributes valuable insights into the transformative effects of 5G technology on mobile internet usage habits in the Japanese market.

Kimura and Suzuki (2020) explored the influence of 5g technology deployment on User Experience and Satisfaction in Japan. Their research aimed to understand user perceptions and behaviors through qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys among smartphone users in urban and rural areas. The findings highlighted that while urban users reported significant improvements in download speeds and streaming quality, rural users experienced more modest gains due to infrastructure disparities. Recommendations included targeted infrastructure investments to bridge the urban-rural digital divide and enhance overall user satisfaction with 5G services.

Yamamoto (2021) investigated the adoption patterns and usage trends of 5g mobile internet among different demographic groups in japan. Using a longitudinal survey design, they tracked usage patterns among various age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds over a two-year period following 5G rollout. Their findings indicated rapid adoption among younger demographics for gaming and multimedia streaming, while older users primarily utilized 5G for business applications and video calls. Recommendations included tailored marketing strategies and user education initiatives to maximize 5G adoption across diverse user segments.

Fujimoto and Nakamura (2018) examined the economic impact of 5g technology deployment on mobile network operators in Japan. Employing financial analysis and industry reports, their study assessed the cost-effectiveness and revenue generation potential of 5G investments for telecom operators. They found that while initial deployment costs were high, long-term benefits such as increased subscriber base and higher average revenue per user (ARPU) justified the investment. The study recommended continuous innovation in service offerings and partnerships with content providers to sustain competitive advantage in the evolving 5G landscape.

Hirano and Ishida (2019) conducted a longitudinal study on the impact of 5g technology on mobile data consumption patterns in urban Japan. Their research aimed to analyze changes in data consumption behaviors among urban users after the introduction of 5G networks. Using mobile network data analytics and user surveys, they found a substantial increase in video streaming and cloud service usage, driven by enhanced network speed and reduced latency. The study recommended infrastructure upgrades to support growing data demands and highlighted the need for data management strategies to optimize network resources efficiently.

Abe and Okamoto (2022) explored the social and cultural implications of 5g technology adoption in Japan. Employing qualitative methods such as focus groups and ethnographic observations, their study examined societal changes and user perceptions regarding 5G-enabled technologies.

Findings indicated a shift towards digital lifestyles, with implications for privacy concerns, social interactions, and cultural practices. Recommendations included policy frameworks to address ethical issues and promote inclusive digital transformation across Japanese society.

Kato and Takahashi (2020) investigated the impact of 5g technology on business productivity and innovation in Japan's SME Sector. Their study aimed to assess how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) leverage 5G capabilities for operational efficiency and innovation. Through case studies and industry surveys, they identified improvements in real-time data analytics, remote collaboration, and customer engagement as key drivers of business growth. Recommendations included government support for SME digitalization and industry collaboration to foster ecosystem development around 5G-enabled services.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Gaps: While studies like Fujimoto and Nakamura (2018) examined the economic impacts of 5G deployment on telecom operators, there is a gap in understanding the broader long-term socioeconomic impacts on industries beyond telecommunications, such as healthcare, education, and entertainment. Abe and Okamoto (2022) touched on the social and cultural implications of 5G adoption, focusing on privacy and societal changes. However, there is a conceptual gap in exploring deeper ethical dilemmas and cultural transformations arising from widespread 5G usage in Japan.

Contextual Gaps: Kimura and Suzuki (2020) highlighted disparities in 5G service benefits between urban and rural areas. However, there is a contextual gap in understanding specific challenges and opportunities for rural communities in Japan in terms of 5G adoption and its impact on digital inclusion. Kato and Takahashi (2020) studied 5G impacts on SMEs but focused primarily on operational efficiency. There is a gap in exploring sector-specific impacts beyond SMEs, such as the manufacturing, retail, and services sectors, to understand how 5G facilitates innovation and productivity gains differently across industries.

Geographical Gaps: Yamamoto (2021) examined adoption patterns across different demographic groups but primarily focused on urban settings. There is a geographical gap in understanding adoption patterns and usage trends of 5G in rural and suburban areas of Japan, which may have distinct characteristics and challenges. Given the focus on Japan in the cited studies, there is a geographical gap in comparative studies with other countries that have different socio-economic contexts and regulatory environments. Comparative research could provide insights into best practices, challenges, and lessons learned in 5G deployment and adoption strategies.

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ISSN 2518-881X (Online)
Vol.9, Issue 4, No.2, pp 12 – 22, 2024
www.iprjb.org

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The impact of 5G technology on mobile internet usage in Japan has been transformative, ushering in an era of faster speeds, lower latency, and enhanced connectivity. With its deployment, 5G has significantly improved user experiences, enabling seamless streaming of high-definition content, smoother online gaming experiences, and quicker downloads of large files. This technological advancement has not only elevated consumer expectations but has also spurred innovation across various sectors, including healthcare, transportation, and entertainment.

Furthermore, 5G's capabilities have facilitated the proliferation of Internet of Things (IoT) devices and applications, supporting Japan's ambition to become a leader in smart city initiatives and industrial automation. The deployment of 5G networks has also contributed to economic growth, fostering new business opportunities and supporting digital transformation efforts across industries. However, challenges such as infrastructure costs and regulatory frameworks continue to influence the widespread adoption of 5G. Additionally, concerns over cybersecurity and privacy remain pertinent as the technology expands. Despite these challenges, the overall impact of 5G on mobile internet usage in Japan underscores its role in shaping a more connected and technologically advanced society, poised for continued growth and innovation in the digital age.

Recommendations

Theory

Researchers can explore how 5G's ultra-low latency and high bandwidth capabilities reshape mobile internet usage patterns among different demographic segments in Japan. This includes studying behavioral changes, such as increased multimedia consumption or higher adoption rates of IoT devices, influenced by improved connectivity. Theoretical frameworks can be developed to analyze the economic implications of 5G deployment on mobile operators and consumers in Japan. This includes investigating cost structures, pricing strategies, and the potential for new revenue streams arising from enhanced service offerings facilitated by 5G technology.

Practice

Practically, businesses and mobile service providers in Japan can leverage 5G to develop and deploy innovative services such as augmented reality (AR) applications, real-time gaming experiences, and immersive virtual communication platforms. Recommendations for practices include adapting business models to capitalize on 5G's capabilities for delivering high-value services. Practical considerations involve ongoing investments in infrastructure to support 5G rollout across Japan. Recommendations could include partnerships between private sector firms and government entities to expedite infrastructure deployment and ensure widespread coverage.

Policy

Policymakers can develop frameworks that facilitate fair competition among telecom operators while promoting investment in 5G infrastructure. This includes spectrum allocation policies, regulatory incentives for innovation, and ensuring data security and privacy protections are robustly integrated into 5G deployments. Policy recommendations should prioritize digital inclusion initiatives to bridge the digital divide in Japan, ensuring that rural and underserved areas

benefit from 5G advancements. This could involve subsidies or incentives to encourage network expansion into less profitable regions, thereby fostering equitable access to high-speed mobile internet services.

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