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### **A Study on User's Brand Preference Towards Consumer Durable Goods in Thanjavur District**

**Arokiaraj K.A.\*<sup>1</sup> and S. Sekar<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar Department of Management, Meenaakshi Ramasamy Arts and Science College, Thathanur, Affiliated to Bharathidasan University – Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu, India.

[arovino27@gmail.com](mailto:arovino27@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Principal, Meenaakshi Ramasamy Arts and Science College, Thathanur, Affiliated to Bharathidasan University – Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu, India.

[sekarsanath@gmail.com](mailto:sekarsanath@gmail.com)

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#### **ABSTRACT**

India is up surging as a benign market for consumer durables which include any type of durable goods purchased by consumers that is made for lifelong use. But the dynamic environmental aspects and severe competition makes it essential to understand the pattern of consumer durable market. Consumer satisfaction is a key factor for an enterprise to survive in the market. Consumer satisfaction depends on their taste and choice of particular brand. This paper mainly focuses on the study of purchase behavior of consumer durable goods in Thanjavur district. Six brands are considered for study. The analysis includes the consumer durable brand most preferred by the consumers and the reason for choosing a specific consumer durable brand. A sampling technique is adopted, 194 respondents are chosen among the consumer durable goods users in Thanjavur district, randomly selected during the month of October and November 2018. The responses are analyzed through Chi Square Test, Factor Analysis and Garrett Score Method using SPSS-17. It was found that technological modernism, quality and large group of brands against prices for price conscious consumers are the three influencing factors for choosing a specific consumer durable brand.

**KEYWORDS:** Consumer Durable Goods, Purchase Behavior, Consumer Buying Behavior, Consumer Durables Market, Consumers Awareness.

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#### **\*Corresponding author**

**Arokiaraj K.A.**

Research Scholar, Department of Management,

Meenaakshi Ramasamy Arts and Science College,

Thathanur, Affiliated to Bharathidasan University – Tiruchirappalli,

Tamilnadu, India.

Email : [arovino27@gmail.com](mailto:arovino27@gmail.com)

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

India being the second largest consumer market in the world, its half of the population is below the age of 25 and 2/3 of population of the India is below 35<sup>1</sup>. India is having a majority of middle class people with the earnings of 2 Lakhs to 10 Lakhs per year. India's consumer profile has now been grown-up and modified in terms of literacy, earning capacity, job, and media behaviors. A vast variation in preference of selecting consumer brands is found today for durables goods with the arrival of modern technology. The buying preferences of consumer are quickly changing and moving towards elegant technology products. Products which were treated luxury in olden days have become a essentiality today because of the modern lifestyle. The change in life style and increase in disposable incomes have changed the consumer behavior. In addition, the demand for elegant technology products such as television, washing machine, refrigerator, and air conditioners has increased significantly. It is also simplified by the conveniently available finance and preference of nuclear families. The branded items are seen to be costlier compared to the non-branded items and hence there is an increase in ingress of branded items. This abundant shift makes it vital that thorough understanding of the consumer profile is very much essential for the marketers<sup>2</sup>. With increase in input costs and other environmental factors, there is found to be a continuous pressure on margins. This leads to competition among the consumer durable products in India. Effective marketing is needed to create new markets, reduce cost, increase demand and subsequently gain economies of scale. Hence it is very much important for the marketers to continuously watch on markets to meet new challenges and convert them into fruitful opportunities. The consumer is conscious about the brand, but not accordingly loyal to the brand and he may even take up a allegiant private label if it offers good price and quality values. The penetration level of consumer durable products is very low compared to the size of the Indian market and the untapped potential is obviously enormous.

Indian market is very complicate and understanding the dynamics of Indian market takes long duration. According to SL Rao, the former head of NCAER (National Council for Applied Economic Research) described consumer demand in India as the walk of a drunken man. Businesses must invest according to the picture of the walk and it can be studied by more coarse path along with many activities. Companies must recurrently shift their contributing segment<sup>3</sup>. Today the situation is evenly updating in India. A firm's marketing behavior should take the consumer as the focus. By studying the influential factors of consumer behaviors, the firm can identify the consumer demand, improve the factors that provoke consumer purchasing, and change adverse factors, considering the consumer satisfaction as an eventual goal of marketing behaviors. An enterprise can earn more consumers only by providing high-quality products, reasonable costs, and prompt services, and

satisfying spiritual needs of consumer. In addition an enterprise can increase market shares, and generate appropriate core competences and competitive benefits. Over the last decades, the consumer durables trade has become progressively commercialized. Marketing and advertising point the middle to upper income groups that have the disposable income to purchase durable goods and luxury items. A more number of market planners detect the growing uneasiness and ambiguity of the environment hard to survive with. The managements are continuously come across with new problems in their operating environment in all direction<sup>4</sup>. Difficult competitive situation, demand forecast, varying mindset towards branded products, availability of many brands, changing aspects of channel mediators and reduction of the product life span, are the factors which make the marketing decision more difficult and risky<sup>5</sup>. To achieve a better awareness into the setup of consumer demand in India, marketers must also keep an eye over the market by looking at it through the consumer. This paper gives the thorough literature survey, describes the adopted research method and analyses and interprets the data, explains the limitations of the study and future pathways for research before conclusion.

## **2. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

Consumer behaviour is a study of consumer thinking and mindset towards specific product. The taken study has been chosen with intention to detect the numerous aspects of the consumer behaviour towards consumer durable goods. Consumer behaviour is one of the vital area of the marketing management and gives a chance to the marketers to get a knowledge about what the user really wants as well as how users' are behaving towards particular product/ brand. The necessity and significance of studying buying behaviour of consumers is deeply rooted in the digital-marketing concept and this concept is well established by solving consumption problems of consumers. For this an enterprise has to understand deeply the buying behaviour of the consumers and strives to grasp the process of buying and the factors that influence the process of buying.

## **3. BACKGROUND AND RELATED WORK**

The present work is related to consumer's purchasing attitude on the household durable goods. The literature survey has been made regarding the purchase decision of durable goods. The findings of some research works have been described for the period of 17 years. It was found the transformation of Indian market with respect to sophistication and variety. The work analyzed the result and its substantial change in the complexion of the customers against quality, price, delivery, and service leading to new developments<sup>6</sup>. It was found that consumers are expecting more brands/choices for their selection both in foreign and Indian companies for their purchase in this modern environment. The reason behind this is based on our recent government policies on

globalization and liberalization and also he observed that high level of advancement in technology in both operational and manufacturing areas are also the reason for the choices and more selective nature of Indian consumers<sup>7</sup>. It was found key challenges, accosted by Indian durable household manufacturers. They observed consumption pattern analysed socio-economic and psychological factors in purchasing of household durable goods in 2001<sup>8</sup>. It was explained the various modifications that transformed the Indian market for consumer goods between the year 1991-2001. He found that a move from market of sellers to buyers indicating intense competition mixture and consumer demand for money value leads to the reformulation of needs and comforts<sup>9</sup>. It was found that socio-economic circumstances, type and costs of product considerably disturb consumer buying pattern<sup>10</sup>. It was studied that women are the decision makers in this modern society and the family decision making process is disturbed by number of socio economic factors<sup>11</sup>. It was studied that the middle class people in India also frequently purchase households items. They found in their study that the average lifetime of refrigerator was 5 1/2 years and for a colour TV was 5 years according to their preliminary study at Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee<sup>12</sup>. It was studied that the brand consciousness between children effects family buying behaviour in Bangalore city. The work found that the children have only independence in decision making for items such as chocolates, chips and soft drinks and they have no independence in decision making for durable goods<sup>13</sup>. It was studied the factors affecting teenagers in purchasing of two wheelers in Chennai, India and found that the updated information of the product in terms of price, technology and companion compulsion and fascinating talk of the dealers<sup>14</sup>. It was found that the consumer behaviour chiefly depends on the combination of inner self and outer stimulus and he explained that the consumption decision made in the market is related closely with values and public relationship and cultural adherence<sup>15</sup>. It was determined the potential for customer satisfaction and unhappiness in mobile hand set using Komo model<sup>16</sup>. It was explained the customers spiritual perceptions of the extra value due to brand name and also explained that any firm that creates a new product for society invariably takes care of quality, price, brand name, and consumer perceptions<sup>17</sup>. It was empirically examined consumer perception and brands and observed that consumers are prominent towards quality money, packaging, cost, and brand image of products<sup>18</sup>. An exploratory research was done using primary data collected through purposive sampling method and studied that company/ brand name, cost, and after sale service and support are prominent factors influencing consumers purchasing behavior, especially durable goods significantly<sup>19</sup>. It was studied buying pattern and consumer perception towards brand in shopping malls and found that consumer purchasing power is the major factor in buying behaviour and brand perception in shopping malls<sup>20</sup>. It was studied the impact of consumer involvement of buying decision consumer involvement varies across different individuals, product,

brands and situations<sup>21</sup>. It was examined using sample data that tolerance for unethical consumer behaviour provides a vision to people's behavior as consumers globally<sup>22</sup>.

#### **4. RESEARCH GAP IN THE LITERATURE**

The thorough literature review is made from the year of 2000 to till date including both Indian and international journals. The various studies related to consumer behavior, rural market and urban market have been conducted by different social scientists at micro as well as macro level in India and abroad. Urban and rural area is the two basic divisions in Indian economy. Rural area is now contributing an ample potential and promising opportunity to marketers in overcoming today's challenges and threats. The review revealed that only limited work was available in purchase behavior towards consumer durable goods in the background of changing scenario of rural and urban markets and very less attention towards consumer behavior studies. In this paper, special effort is taken to the marketing strategies endorsed by the manufacturing sectors for effective out-reach is also made. The current work covers the Consumer Behavior towards consumer durable goods in urban and rural area in eight Taluks in Thanjavur district of Tamilnadu, India.

#### **5. EXPERIMENTAL SECTION**

##### ***5.1 PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY***

The study of attitudes of consumers is very important for marketers and this information is applied to find out the consumers desires and needs. This knowledge and information helps a common man in all its practical thrust. It is necessary for the marketers to make a survey on the consumers for their success in today's competitive marketing environments. The consumer behaviour and consumer needs play a vital in the lives of public at a great extent. Consumers solely make the decision on buying the products, place and brand to buy, and expenditure for purchase/budget over the purchase. Consumer also considers his/her own status and prestige. Hence number of economical, social, and psychological factors must be evaluated in many of the purchases. Hence marketers must continuously involve in the field of studying consumer buying behaviors. Only limited researches are done in India on the factors influencing the consumer buying behaviour and brand equity on consumer durables. Most of the research work considered non-durable products. Hence, this research work has been undertaken. The study mainly focuses on the purchase behavior of consumer durable goods in Thanjavur district. The research is limited to six selected consumer durable goods such as Sony, Whirlpool, Voltas, Samsung, LG, and Onida. In this research work, the perception, pre-purchase and post-purchase attitudes of the consumers towards the purchasing of the above said durable goods is concentrated.

## **5.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study concentrates on the consumers' brand preference for consumer durable goods with the following

### **OBJECTIVES.**

- To analyze the brand preference of the customers perception towards purchasing consumer durable goods
- To examine the factors influencing brand preference for five consumer durable goods.

## **5.3 HYPOTHESIS FOR THE STUDY**

The paper involves the data collection process and analysis of consumers' brand preference for consumer durable goods. The set of assumptions constructed for the study are

H0; Aspects uncorrelated with the population

H1; Aspects correlated with the population

H2; No association between occupation of respondents and the factors which influence choice of branded durables

H3; Association exists between the chosen brand of consumer durable and price reasonability of branded durables

## **5.4 TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY**

- Chi Square Test

## **5.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The data was collected through questionnaire were distributed to consumers in different areas of Thanjavur District in the month of May June 2014. The questionnaire contain several scopes that were continuous and categorical in disposition. The sampling technique is probabilistic. The study uses data collected directly from the sample of consumers through a well-formulated interview schedule for the six durable goods namely Sony, Whirlpool, Voltas, Samsung, LG, and Onida as samples. An interview schedule has been established to collect data from consumers of Thanjavur District in order to collect information related to consumer durable goods, with the demographic, socio-economic and cultural plights of consumer. All the responses are collected directly from the consumers by visiting the respondents several times at their convenient time. Among all the responses, the incomplete and inaccurate responses are withdrawn. all the respondents are chosen from an age group residing in Thanjavur District in age group of 20 - 60 years including the different levels of consumer durable goods. 220 interview schedules are conducted to the respondents spread over in Thanjavur district. Among them 194 interview schedule were collected. In which 34

interview schedule are found useless. Hence, the accurate sample of the study is 160. The method of collection is demonstrated in the table 1.

**Table 1 Selection of Sample Distribution (Primary Data)**

S.No	Specifications	Distributed	Collected	Dropped	Considered
1.	Vallam	25	19	02	17
2.	Nanjikottai	25	21	03	18
3.	Achampatti	25	18	04	14
4.	Sengipatti	25	17	02	15
5.	Palliagraharam	25	15	04	11
6.	Budalur	25	20	02	18
7.	Thittai	25	23	03	20
8.	Palaiyapatti	25	14	04	10
9.	Manangorai	25	19	05	14
10.	Vennalodai	25	17	02	15
11.	Thirumalai Samudram	25	11	03	08
12.	Soorakkottai	<b>300</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>160</b>

## 5.6 VARIABLES MEASUREMENT

Questionnaire measured Technology, Performance, Quality, Overall Brand Image, Cost perceptions of the consumers of durable goods. Customers rated the products on a Likert scale consisting of five points (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree) and six questions related to Technology, Performance, Quality, Overall Brand Image, Cost perceptions of the consumers. In addition the customers were asked to rank the brand of their own preference.

## 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 6.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Table 2 shows the census of the respondents for the survey conducted. The respondents were asked to rank the various brands of consumer durable goods they preferred to buy. The consumer durable goods namely Sony, Whirlpool, Voltas, Samsung, LG, and Onida were ranked as per the consumer preferences and the ranks are given in the Table 3. The existence of consumer durable brands on four social media are tabulated in Table 4.

**Table 2 Demographics of the respondents for the Survey.**

Gender	Categories	Count	Percentage
Gender	Male	178	59.3
	Female	122	40.7
Age	21-30	67	22.2
	31-40	102	34.1
	41-50	82	27.3
	>50	49	16.4
Education	Under Graduate	116	38.7
	Graduate	128	42.8
	Post Graduate	56	18.5
Occupation	Self Employed	84	28.1
	Employed	67	22.4
	Not working/ Part time	149	49.5
Monthly Income	<15,000	29	9.8

	15,000-30,000	79	26.2
	30,000-40,000	91	30.5
	> 40,000	101	33.5

Table 3 Respondents' Preference for the Brands.

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sony	62	59	47	44	5	6
Whirlpool	58	50	47	37	41	47
Voltas	50	59	47	53	61	47
Samsung	59	61	46	46	52	39
LG	59	46	47	48	45	43
Onida	19	36	61	57	51	49

Table 4 Respondents' Preference for the Brands on Social Media.

Brand	Facebook	YouTube	LinkedIn	Twitter
Sony	1,924,003	46,620	184,564	437300
Whirlpool	213,684	945	86,436	325
Voltas	4,420	4,246	11,049	366
Samsung	4,529,625	1,234,476	235,232	42,3521
LG	1,654,649	129,346	1,346	336441
Onida	1,326	292	7,646	182

## 6.2 CHI SQUARE TEST

### A) Association between occupation of respondents and the factors which influence choice of branded durables

The Chi-square analysis is used to test the independence of two factors. Out of the respondents who are service holders, price is the most important factor for 24.9% while making a buying decision for the choice of branded good. Brand image is important for 22%, durability is important for 15.8%, country of origin is important for 2.3%, product features are important for 27.3%, availability is important for 1.9% and style and design is the most important factor for 5.7% of the total respondents who are in service. Majority 35.6% of the professionals' primary aspect is price while buying a branded consumer good. Brand image is important for 16.3%, durability is important for 12.5%, product features are important for 23.1%, availability is important for 8.6% and style and design is most important factor for 3.8% of the total population who are professionals. The calculated chi-square value is 75.634 with  $df = 35$ . This value of chi-square is significant ( $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ ) implying that there exists an association between occupation of respondents and the factors which influence choice of branded durables.

### B) Association exists between the chosen brand of consumer durable and price reasonability of branded durables

Among the respondents' who strongly disagreed that their home appliances are of good quality, majority of them (60%) are neutral and 40% agreed to the statement that their consumer

products are affordable. Among the respondents' who were neutral to the statements are of good quality, 10.7% disagreed, 42.0% are neutral, 41.5% agreed and 5.8% strongly agreed are affordable. Among the respondents' who agreed to the statements that their home appliances are of good quality, 1.6% strongly disagreed, 2.3% disagreed, 31.7% were neutral, 52.7% agreed and 11.6% strongly agreed are affordable. Among the respondents' who strongly agreed to the statement are of good quality, 3.4% strongly disagreed, 27.6% are neutral, 34.5% agreed and 34.5% strongly agreed are affordable. The calculated value of chi-square is 68.108 with  $df = 12$ . This value of chi-square is highly significant ( $p = 0.000 < 0.01$ ) implying that association exists between the chosen brand of consumer durable and price reasonability of branded durables.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The study indicates that factors such as technology, quality and price have statistically proved to be convincing in deciding the attitude towards consumer durable goods. Consumer satisfaction is a key factor for an enterprise to survive in the market. The research is conducted based on data acquired from the buyers of Thanjavur District to understand the nature of purchase and consumption behavior. A consumer prefers a specific brand based on the benefits of that brand offered to the consumer. Due to this behavior of the consumer, the specific brand can charge more prices and loyalty. Brand loyalty is not sufficiently found among the consumers durable goods. Consumer satisfaction depends on their taste and choice of particular brand and they have tendency to change brand to gain more advantages from the product. It is also realized that the market share can be improved by adopting new types of marketing strategies along with the product refinement which is the main motivation of the study.

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