

**FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BUYING
BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS SELECTED WHITE GOODS IN
TIRUCHIRAPPALLI DISTRICT**

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Abstract:

Consumer durables have emerged as one of the fastest growing industries in India. Once seeming as luxury items, consumer durables today have become as an essential tool of everyday use for the Indian middle class families. The largest causative sector among durables is white goods, also known as consumer appliances, like air conditioners, refrigerators, mixer grinder, wet grinder and washing machines. Consumers' attitude and purchase preferences have been immensely changing all over the world for the past few years predominantly in the Indian white goods market due to the entry of foreign brands which create grave competition as well as broad choice for buyers. Every marketer is embarrassed to find out factors for which buyers give much importance and how far they are fulfilled with these factors. In this research examines the purchase behaviour and attitude of buyers towards selected white goods such as refrigerator, washing machine and wet grinder. The research is descriptive in nature and data were collected through well-structured online and offline questionnaires with the sample size of 500. The study has been done in Mannachanallur in Tiruchirappalli district. The main objectives of the study are to find out factors which influence buyers for the purchase of white goods. To Study the buying behaviour of the consumer.

Key Words: Factors, Consumer, White Goods

Introduction:

Consumers, their ways of taking purchase decisions and the morality they look for when taking such decisions are constantly sprouting, and hence their study represents a subject of great interest to market researchers across the world. This is all the more accurate in the case of high interest products such as white goods whose purchase is generally rational and is preceded by a long decision making process given that this type of product represents a high financial investment for households (Govind, 2012). In the course of this research, here it is present the white goods sector including its provision and particularities, discuss the Kotler and Keller (2009) buying decision process and identify the criteria consumers look for when making a white goods purchase. This information will then be verified within the Indian context with the help of a consumer focus group, which will answer questions relating to the decision making process including: the identity of the principal decision maker, the motivations behind their purchase, the sources from where they get their information from as well as the principal criteria they base their choices on. White Goods and their Specificities Generally used to designate a wide range of domestic appliances which are chiefly for kitchen or laundry use, and which were historically factory-finished in white enamel, white goods include: cooling appliances such as refrigerators, freezers and iceboxes, cooking appliances like microwave and electrical ovens, and home laundry and dishwashing appliances including washing machines and clothes dryers.

They are differentiated from what professionals refer to as "brown goods" such as TVs, video recorders, hi-fi systems, telephones, computers and cameras, since white goods are considered as "time saving goods" that increase individuals' flexible time, while the latter are referred to as "time using goods" as they increase the perceived quality of flexible time. Furthermore, white goods are usually seen as privately consumed necessities that are consumed out of public view and that virtually everyone owns. Their purchase is heavily governed by the product's attributes rather than by the influences other people exert. Certain traits characterize and are common to all white goods, they include: simplicity and scale-intensive production, product similarity, low exposure to technological advancements, limited research and development, and long product life expectancy.

The study of consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources like time, money, effort on consumption-related items (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1997). The buying process is a combination of mental and physical activities that ends with an actual purchase almost daily. Thus it is interesting to study the connection within "what we buy" and "why we buy it". In this scenario, brands play a leading role in customer decision making. The purchase of a product is both mental and physical activity. Sheth & Mittal 2004, these activities are called behaviours, and their result is a combination of variety determinate by the relation within the type of customer and his/her role.

Review of Literature:

Anand Thakur and Hundal (2008) suggested that both rural and urban consumers differed in their perception about washing machine as an item of necessity. The urban consumers were highly influenced by the washing machine compared to rural and preferred to put them in 'necessity' category.

Mumtaz Ali, Jing Fengjie and Naveed Akhtar Qureshi (2010) provided a detailed view of the consumers' way of thinking and investigated the degree of association of six factors like price, family structure, country of origin, age, culture and advertising on buying behaviour of goods and services. From the study it is understood that price becomes associated with product.

Minakshi Thaman and Priya Ahuja (2010) analysed the consumer behaviour in the purchase of television, refrigerator and food processor with reference to income level. Buying motives differed in various income categories.

Amutha and Nasrin Sulthana (2011) have said that that the attitude of people in Chennai city has become changed due to various reasons such as updated technology, improved status and influence of reference group. Advertisement is nothing but an important sales promotion strategy. From the findings of the study among lower income groups: Price was a major consideration and in middle income group, brand reputation was one of the most important influencing factors. Anilkumar and Jelsey Joseph (2012) analysed the consumer purchase behaviour of urban and rural working women consumers towards durables and opined that the urban and rural markets significantly differed from each other in considering general and product-specific factors while making their purchase decisions for durables. The change of consumer attitude and preferences has been occurring over the world for the past a few years especially in the white goods market. The entry of foreign brands created a heavy competition. Every marketer is constrained to find out the factors for which the buyers are giving more importance and their satisfaction level also. Without such an understanding, marketers find it hard to meet the customer's needs and wants.

Need of the Study:

In modern days, more households have two working adults (husband and wife) who do more or less their household tasks at night after work. So, both refrigerator and washing machine have become an inseparable part of every household. In a hot climate country like India, air conditioning has become a need of modern day life in contrast to its earlier perception as a luxury product. The purchase of these house hold products needs high involvement and has a great influence on buyer behaviour and their way of living. This study helps marketers understand the decision making at the choice of the buyers and develop appropriate marketing programmes in order to captivate the consumers.

Objectives of the Study:

- To study the buying behaviour for selected white goods
- To identify the factors that influences the buyers during the purchase of white goods.

About the Study:

This is a deep study of consumer behaviour for consumer's choice brand to purchase white goods through consumer survey. The research is exploratory in nature and is hence descriptive. The aim of study consists of consumers owning the durable or white goods under study (grinder, refrigerator and washing machine) living in Mannachanallur Taluk only. The total sample of consumers is 500planned. Total 400 consumers are taken as a sample for study.

To study the specific product refrigerator, washing machine and wet grinder are selected. Selection of above products due to widely used in consumers who belongs to the middle class family. The middle class families can have enough money to purchase the above products in easy way and many of middle class families can purchase at same price range.

The other reason for choosing these products in particular are:

- The product is widely used in all categories of family
- Consumer is aware to purchase a branded product to maintain their lifestyle
- An hint of advertisement appeals that develop brand preferences based on psychological concept of the consumer must be present.

For data collection, questionnaire is a primary and used as a tool for investigation which was divided into two parts. The part of questionnaire was aimed at getting basic information of the consumers such as age, education, marital status, occupation, monthly income, etc., and in the second part of the study the detailed information for the product, i.e. Washing machine, wet grinder, mixer grinder, refrigerator, and air-conditioners under the study has been included.

Research Methodology:

The current scenario on white goods is analyzed and therefore the present study comes under descriptive research. The sample size of the study is 400. Primary data have been collected from the respondents by using a well-structured, non-disguised questionnaire. Secondary data for the study were collected from books, journals, research articles, magazines, reports, newspapers and websites.

Product Selection:

To identify the products for the present study, the products used for the study were

- Refrigerator
- Washing Machine

- Wet Grinder

Sample Design:

A sample is a representative part of the population. The Probability method of Systematic Random sampling method was followed for study to choose the sample respondents. The researcher has decided to select a sample size of 500 household respondents for different brands of product preferred by consumers. 400 respondents have been selected from the major area of Mannachanallur Taluk.

Results and Discussions:

Table 1: Detail of Respondents

S.No	Demographic Variables		No .of Respondents	%
1	Age	Upto20	64	16
		21-30	200	50
		31-40	56	14
		Above 40	80	20
2	Sex	Male	208	52
		Female	192	48
3	Educational Qualification	Illiterate	32	8
		10 th	32	8
		12 th	32	8
		Graduate	168	42
		P.G	136	34
4	Occupation	Professional	128	32
		Home maker	80	20
		Agriculture	136	34
		Business	56	14
5	Monthly Income	Below 20000	176	44
		20,001-40000	120	30
		40,001-60000	56	14
		60,001-80000	32	8
		Above 80000	16	4
6	Marital Status	Married	216	54
		Unmarried	184	46
7	Family Size	2-3	96	24
		4-5	184	46
		Above 5	120	30
8	Residential Areas	Rural	200	50
		Semi-urban	88	22
		Urban	112	28

From table 1, it shows that 50% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21 - 30 years, 52% of the respondents were male, 42% of the respondents were graduates, 34% of the respondents were employees, 44% of the respondents family monthly income was less than Rs. 20,000, 54% of the respondents were married, 46% of the respondents belong to medium size family. 50% of the respondents belong to rural area.

Table 2: Products Demented by the Respondents

Products	No		Yes	
	N	%	N	%
Refrigerator	104	26	296	74
Washing machine	120	30	280	70
Wet grinder	40	10	360	90

Table 2 90% of the respondents own Grinder, 74% of the respondents own Refrigerator, 70% of the respondents own Washing Machines.

Media of Advertisement:

Advertising aims to prop up the sales of a product or service and also to inform the heaps about its structures. It is a current means of communicating the value of a product or service with people at large. It uses different types of appeals to connect to consumers stretch across the globe. The advertising industry provides a podium for the business entities to spread awareness about the products and services offered by them.

Table 3: Different Media of Advertisement

Media	1		2		3		4		5		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Print	32	8	88	22	104	26	88	22	88	22	400	100
Radio	40	10	120	30	80	20	72	18	88	22	400	100
TV	200	50	128	32	32	8	24	6	16	4	400	100

Hoardings& Banners	32	8	96	24	80	20	96	24	96	24	400	100
Displays& Exhibits	16	4	64	16	96	24	136	34	88	22	400	100

From the above table it is clear that 200 respondents have given first rank to television, 120 respondents have given second rank to radio, 104 respondents have considered print as third rank, 136 respondents have marked four to displays/exhibitions and 96 respondents have given rank five to hoardings and banners.

Respondents Influenced by Others Opinions:

People believe another individual to be realistic for a choice of reasons, such as perceived experience, attractiveness, knowledge, etc. Those with exact to use to the media may use this access in an attempt to influence the public. An effort was made to find out if the respondents are influenced by others opinion.

Table 4: Influence by Other People

S.No	Influenced Opinion	No. of Respondents	%
1	Yes	384	96
2	No	16	4
	Total	400	100

From the above table it infers that 96% of the respondents were influenced by others opinion about white goods and the remaining 4% of the respondents were not influenced by others opinion.

Sources of Influence in Purchasing White Goods:

People’s opinions or behaviours can be changed as a result of social influences from a multitude of resources and individuals. The following table provides that sources of influence in purchasing white goods.

Table 5: Sources of Influences in Purchasing White Goods

S.No	Sources of Influence	No. of Respondents	%
1	Spouse	56	14
2	Family Members	216	54
3	Friends	969	24
4	Relatives	32	8
	Total	400	100

Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision of Consumer White Goods:

The marketing group must assist the consumers to act on their purchase objective. The organization can use a variety of techniques to achieve this. The relevant internal psychological process that is associated with purchase decision is integration. Once the amalgamation is achieved, the organization can influence the purchase decisions much more easily. Consumer goods are normally more valued, high priced products and not frequently purchased products. The following table presents the opinion of the respondents about the factors influencing the purchase decision of consumer white goods.

Table 6: Factors Influencing Purchasing Decision

	SDA		DA		N		A		SA		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Price	24	6	56	14	64	16	176	44	100	20	500	100
Colour	16	4	32	8	80	20	160	40	140	28	500	100
Brand Pref.	24	6	56	14	96	24	144	36	100	20	500	100
Offer Discounts	8	2	64	16	80	20	168	42	80	20	500	100
Technical Features	16	4	40	25	80	20	160	40	104	26	500	100
Quality	16	4	32	8	112	28	176	44	64	16	500	100
Shape & Size	24	6	48	12	112	28	136	34	80	20	500	100
Brand Image	24	6	56	14	64	16	168	42	88	22	500	100
Model & Design	24	6	40	10	80	20	160	40	96	24	500	100
Celebrity	8	2	24	6	80	20	144	36	144	36	500	100

From the above table it is clear that majority 44% of the respondents are agreed with the factor of “Price” and “Quality”, 42% of the respondents are agreed with the factor of “Offers/Discounts” and “Brand Image”, 40% of the respondents are agreed with the factor of “Colour”, “Technical Features” and “Model / Design”. 36% of the respondents are agreed with the factor of “Brand Preference” and “Celebrity”.

Suggestions:

- Demand for consumer white goods is unpredictable since it moves rapidly or disperses quickly in relation to business conditions. Marketers separate the current demand for white goods in terms of substitute old products and expansion of the total stock demand for such goods.
- Consumers prefer high valued consumer white goods of well established brands. The marketers and manufacturers of the consumer goods must try to convert the brand realization into brand loyalty for their well established brands. The consumer behaviour in this direction should properly be subjugated by the manufacturers and dealers to maximize their sales.
- The buyers of consumer goods have largely shown their preference to make wide-ranging enquiry from the dealers of different brands of the products. This attribute should be matched with all the

buyers in order to avoid post purchase dissatisfaction about the quality and performance of the products.

- The buyers of the consumer goods should insist that all the technical information are revealed on the use of durable products to enable them to use the products without any technical mistake leading to frequent repairs, free servicing of the durables by dealers during the guarantee period insisted upon the buyers.

Conclusion:

The market for consumer goods is becoming more cut-throat now a days. Therefore, the producer of white goods products should understand consumer interest much to find higher sale of their products. Marketers communicate with consumers and try to encourage through every possible media. Highly foreseeable to produce goods as preferred by the customer, as he is the kingpin around whom the entire marketing activity revolves. Thus, a marketer who understands the behaviour of the consumers and plan his marketing strategies to suit the needs and aspirations of the target market will definitely have an advantage over his competitors.

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