

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON PERCEPTION AND PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR OF WOMEN CONSUMER TOWARDS WASHING MACHINE (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHENGALPATTU, CHENNAI AND KANCHIPURAM DISTRICTS)

Mrs.M. Meerabai¹, Dr.K.Selvasundaram⁵

¹Part-time Research scholar(Internal),
Department of Commerce, College of Science and Humanities,
SRM Institute of Science and Technology Kattankulathur,Chengalpattu District-
Tamil Nadu

²Associate Professor and Head,
Department of Corporate Secretaryship and Accounting Finance,
College of Science and Humanities,
SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur,Chengalpattu District-
Tamil Nadu

Mrs.M. Meerabai¹, Dr.K.Selvasundaram⁵, An Empirical Study On Perception And Purchase Behaviour Of Women Consumer Towards Washing Machine (With Special Reference To Chengalpattu, Chennai And Kanchipuram Districts) – PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology 17(6) (2020). ISSN 1567-214X.

Keywords: Women Consumer, Washing Machine, Factors Affecting Consumer Behaviour

ABSTRACT

Women are considered to be the most attractive and influential segment of present consumer market as they control almost 80 percent of household spending. Researchers have conducted various studies on unique buying behaviour of women consumers over the past few decades. The main reason for various studies is that the increase in purchasing power of women all over the world as they largely entered into workforce and they have tremendous financial capacity. They influence the majority decision relating family purchases. Especially working women spend their considerable time and income in selecting best for their family. The object of present study is to examine the consumer behaviour with special focus on women consumers and their need for select products and services. In this paper, we shall focus on their general buying behaviour and try to find out if there is an association between certain factors with few variables of women's buying behaviour. The study covered the area of Chengalpattu, Chennai and Kancheepuram District.

INTRODUCTION

Today in a family both husband and wives are job goers and they are in need of consumer durable products which lessen their work burden at home. This necessitates every manufacturers and marketers to innovate and introduce different products in the field of consumer durable market. Especially in case of working women, they suffer a lot both physically and mentally due to their work pressure both at home and work place. To save their time and mental tension, it is essential to have some home appliances which will also help them to reduce their physical work. In this context washing machine becomes an integral part of household needs.

Due to the arrival of Japanese product at economical and competitive price and different models the demand for washing machine in India has gone up considerably. To satisfy the varied needs of the customers and considering their financial capacity and demographic background different models of washing machine with different features, price, size has been introduced in the market.

Indian companies in collaboration with foreign companies such as General electric of the USA, Whirlpool, Sango of Japan, Boschremmen of Germany etc have introduced various models of washing machine. For them consumer satisfaction is considered to be the important factor for their success. Consumers are treated as valuable asset and they must be kept satisfied always. Any successful organization must gone through the following steps such as identifying the target customers, finding out their needs, providing products and various packages which will satisfy the customer needs, and finally achieving their targeted objectives. In a competitive market it is very difficult to retain the customers and it is essential for every organization to develop customers loyalty and their continuous patronage towards their companies product. In order to increase their sales and profitability every organization must encourage the customers to repeat their purchases.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Today most of the women in India are working and they have little time to take care of their household work. They depend on various electronic household appliances such as mixer grinder, micro oven, indexen gas stove, washing machine, etc., to carry out their routine work such as washing, cleaning, cooking etc.,. Washing machine is considered as important both for working and non-working women. Since different brands are available it is difficult to for the consumer to choose a good brand. Women consumer preference is continuously changing due to their change in their needs and economic status. This study helps to have a clear idea about what factors influence them to purchase a particular brand and brings out level of satisfaction gained by customers by choosing a particular brand.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

S.R.Dass andD.P.Misra (2018)“ An empirical study on factors influencing the buying behavior of consumer towards washing machine, Balasore town, Odisha”, observed that consumers are aware of the availability of various brand and prefer to purchase the product from known retailers. They are satisfied with the

performance of the brand they selected. Demographic factor does not affect the choice of particular brand. But various factors such as price quality, model and others have a great influence on purchase choice.

.Ashish Kumar and Poonam Gupta(2015) “To Analyze Consumer Buying Behaviour and Preferences in the Home Appliances Market of Haier” ,found that purchase preference of the consumers influenced by attractive schemes and discounts offered by companies. Choice of brand depends on price of the particular brand and durability of the product. He further concluded that consumers are brand conscious and they dislike to switch over to other brands. Their buying behaviour is affected by advertisement especially television advertisement.

ShenbaghaVadivu (2015) “A study on customer satisfaction towards washing machine with refrence to Tirupur District” concluded that satisfaction of the customer depends on performance of the product. They prefer only that brand of washing machine which consumes less water and power and more durability. The main factor influencing their purchase choice is price and after sales service of the product by the company.

KiruthigaElangovan “A study on consumer behaviouur towards premium washing machine in Coimbatore city” analysed the various factors influencing consumer behaviour and concluded that brand image is the most factor influences the purchase decision. Due to the increase in the purchasing power of the customers and product awareness it is important for every companies to provide quality products at affordable price in order to satisfy and to retain the customers.

M.J..Senthilkumar and others(2013) “A study on consumer attitudes towards washing machine” observed that customer give preference to quality of the product while making a purchase decision. It is important for every manufacturers to create an awareness among customers through advertisements and other promotional methods about their brand and product features.

R.Karthika, Dr. N.VijaiAnand(2017) “A study on consumer buying behavior towards selected white goods with special refrence to Tirchirapallii District”found that demand for consumer white goods is highly flexible due to the change in the business condition. Consumer insists for the reveal of all technical details relating to the product. They decide to purchase the product after through enquiry of the product with the dealers of a particular brand.

G.Purushothaman and K.Krishnamurthy(2015) “A study on consumer buying behavior (with special refrence to Home Appliances in Vellor District) analysed that consumer prefer to purchase home appliances using modern technology such as credit cards and based on product quality. The most influencing factor for their purchase decision are family members, friends and relatives.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The current study gives an insight to women consumer behavior and satisfaction towards washing machine. It enables to understand the factors influence the women consumer behavior and their level of satisfaction toward purchase of particular brand of washing machine. The analysis is mainly deals with

urban consumers residing at Chengalpet District. Thus the scope of the study is limited to one district and one consumer durable product.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The present analysis based both on primary and secondary data. The primary data collected through structured questionnaire. The secondary data collected through books journals, articles and books and website. The researcher adopted convenient sampling method to collect the data primarily. The data is collected from 120 women respondents in total from Chengalpet, Chennai and Kanchipuram District

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- a. To know the socio-economic profile of the women consumer respondents in Chengalpet, Chennai and Kanchipuram district.
- b. To study the factors affecting the purchasing behaviour of consumer respondents with regard to washing machine in the said area.
- c. To analyse the brand preference of women respondents regarding washing machine
- c. To examine the consumer view regarding service/after sales service.
- d. To offer suggestions based on the findings of the study for the benefit of consumers and manufacturers.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study covered only Chengalpet, Chennai and Kanchipuram District, hence the result arrived from the study may not extended to the other parts. The study is confined to a finite period. The data collection is based on the questionnaire and the result would be varying according to the opinion of the individual. The study is based on the present buying behaviour of the customers, but behaviour subject to frequent changes, because of changes in Technological development and style of living. The sample size is limited to 120 respondents only.

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED FOR THE STUDY

The formal statistical tools are used for analysis

- 1. Simple Percentage Analysis
- 2. Weighted average mean
- 3. Rank analysis.

ANALYSIS AND INTREPRETATION

1. SOCI-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The analysis of socio-economic profile was depicted in the following table.

Table 1- Socio-economic profile of Respondents

Serial No	Particulars	Classification	Number	Percentage
1	Age	Below 25 years	50	41.67
		26-45 years	36	30

		Above 45 years	34	28.33
2	Educational Qualification	Below HSC	24	20
		Undergraduate	44	36.67
		Post graduate	24	20
		Others	28	23.33
3	Marital status	Married	64	53.34
		Unmarried	56	46.67
4	Occupation	Private sector	40	33.33
		Government sector	30	25
		Home maker	26	21.67
		Others	24	20.00
5	Monthly Income	Below 20,000	28	23.33
		20,001-30,000	50	41.67
		30,001-40,000	26	21.67
		Above 40,000	16	13.33
6	Family Type	Nuclear family	25	20.83
		Joint family	95	79.17
7	Size of the family	2 -3members	25	20.83
		4-5 members	65	54.17
		Above 5	30	25

Source: Primary Data

As per the above table out of total 120 respondents 41.67% respondents are below 25 years of age and 36.67% are undergraduates, 53.34% are married, 33.33% are private sector employee, and they belong to 20,000-30,000 (41.67%) group, 79.17% are in Joint family and there are 4-5 members in a family.

II. BRAND PREFERENCE OF WOMEN RESPONDENTS

Different brands are available in the consumer durable market of washing machine. Out of these which brand is mostly liked by women respondents is depicted in the following table.

Table 2- Brand preference of women consumers

Serial No	Brand of Washing Machine	No.of respondents	Percentage
1	LG	36	30
2	SAMGSUNG	24	20
3	WHIRLPOOL	16	13.33
4	IFB	10	8.34
5	VIDEOCON	20	16.67
6	OTHERS	14	11.67
	TOTAL	120	100

Source: Primary Data

It is clear from the above table that out of 120 respondents 30% prefer LG washing machine and 20% like Samsung brand, 13.33% prefer Whirlpool, 16.67% like Videocon, and IFB 8.34%.

III REASON FOR PURCHASING WASHING MACHINE

There are various reasons for purchasing a product. Thus the following table shows for what reason washing machine is purchased by women consumers.

Table 3- Reason for purchasing a washing machine

Serial No	Reason for purchase	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Easy usage	46	38.33
2	Time saving	32	26.67
3	Prestige	12	10
4	convenient	16	13.33
5	Work reduction	14	11.67
Total		120	100

Source: Primary Data

The above shows that most of the women purchase (38.33%) due to ease of usage, 26.67% for saving in time, Others purchased either for prestige value (10%), convenient (13.33%), work reduction (11.67%).

IV REASON TO PREFER PARTICULAR BRAND

The following table shows why a consumer chooses a particular brand of washing machine.

Table 4 -Reason to prefer particular brand

Serial No	Reason	No of Respondents	percentage
1	Price/EMI Scheme	35	29.17
2	Technology & Features	41	34.17
3	Electricity consumption	14	11.67
4	Water Consumption	10	8.33
5	Advertisement	20	16.66
Total		120	100

Source: Primary data.

As per the table it is clear that consumer prefer particular brand mainly because of Technical and product features (34.17%) and next reason to choose is price/EMI scheme availability (29.17%) and others choose a particular brand due to advertisement (16.66%), electricity consumption (11.67%), and for water consumption (8.33%).

V TYPE OF WASHING MACHINE POSSESSED

Different type of washing machine is available with regard to a particular brand to satisfy different requirements of consumers. The following shows which type is liked by women respondents.

Table 5- Type of washing machine possessed by Respondents

Serial No	Category	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Top loader	12	10
2	Front loader	24	20

3	Fully Automatic	52	43.33
4	Semi-Automatic	27	22.5
5	Dry Washer	5	4.17
Total		120	100

Source: Primary Data

It is clear that fully automatic type of washing machine is mostly preferred (43.33%) by women respondents and next comes Semi-automatic (22.5%), and then Front loader (20%), 10% preferred Top loader and 4.17% preferred Dry washer.

VI MODE OF PAYMENT OF PURCHASE

The payment of purchase can be made by cash or through credit card/debit card or it can be purchased on credit/Instalment basis

Table 6 -Mode of payment for purchase

Serial No	Mode of payment	No of Respondents	percentage
1	Cash	50	41.67
2	Credit card/Debit card	54	45
3	Installment/Credit Basis	16	13.33
Total		120	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that most of the respondents buy by payment of cash (41.67%), 45% buy through Credit card/Debit card and 13.33% on credit basis.

VII PERIOD OF USAGE AND FREQUENCY OF USAGE

The following table shows the period and frequency usage of washing machine by respondents.

Table 7- Period of usage and Frequency of usage of washing machine

Serial No	Period of usage	No of respondents	percentage	Frequency of usage	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Less than 5 years	24	20	Daily	64	53.33
2	5-10 years	44	36.67	Once in Two days	34	28.33
3	10-15 years	32	26.67	2 days in a week	12	10
4	Above 15 years	20	16.67	Once in a week	10	8.33
Total		120	100		120	100

Source: Primary Data.

The table shows that out of 120 respondents 36.67% of respondents are using washing machine between 5-10 years, 26.67% uses for 10-15 years, 20% uses for less than 5 years and 16.67% for above 15 years.

With regard to Frequency of usage out of total 120 respondents 53.33% uses daily, 28.33% uses once in 2 days, 10% uses for 2 days in a week, and 8.33% uses for once in a week.

VIII FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE DECISION OF WOMEN

There are factors like Price, quality, Advertisement etc., influences the buyer to make a purchase decision. The following table shows the relationship between various factors and purchase decision.

Table8- Factors influencing women consumer purchase decision

Factors	SDA		DA		N		A		SA		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
PRICE	7	5.83	15	12.5	20	16.67	54	45	24	20	120	100
COLOUR	6	5	8	6.67	24	20	48	40	34	28.33	120	100
BRAND IMAGE	7	5.83	14	11.67	22	18.33	45	37.5	32	26.67	120	100
AFTER SALE SERVICE	8	6.67	18	15	20	16.67	42	35	32	26.67	120	100
OFFER & DISCOUNTS	4	3.33	8	6.67	24	20	45	37.5	39	32.5	120	100
MODE/DESIGN	6	5	12	10	20	16.67	48	40	34	28.33	120	100
ADVERTISEMENT	4	3.33	14	11.67	25	20.83	42	35	35	29.17	120	100
QUALITY	7	5.83	10	8.33	22	18.33	54	45	27	22.5	120	100
TECHNOLOGY	4	3.33	12	10	20	16.67	48	40	36	30	120	100
SHAPE/SIZE	6	5	14	11.67	24	20	42	35	34	28.33	120	100

Source: Primary Data

SDA: Strongly Disagree, DA: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree.

It is clear that out of total respondents 120 most of them (45%) are influenced by price,colour, Model/design, and technology (40%) are the second influencing factor, brand and offer and discount (37.5%) are the third influencing factor, and aftersales service, advertisement and size are the fourth influencing factor for purchase decision.

IX SOURCE OF INFLUENCE OF PURCHASE DECISION

Respondents receive information about product, price and availability through various sources. From the table given below one can understand which source is the most influencing factor.

Table 9- Sources of influence on Respondents in respect of Purchase decision

Serial Number	Sources of Influence	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Family	28	23.33
2	Relatives	24	20
3	Friends	15	12.5
4	Spouse	13	10.83
5	Advertisement	26	21.67

6	Others	14	11.67
	Total	120	100

Source: Primary data

From the above table it is clear that Family is the most influencing factor (23.33%) in respect of women respondents, advertisement (21.67%) is next source of influence for making purchase decision, Relatives (20%) is the third influencing factor and friends (12.5%), is the fourth influencing factor and spouse(10.83%), and other factors(11.67%) such as celebrity, peer group are also source of influence of purchase decision.

X SATISFACTION LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

Table 10-Satisfactin level of Respondents

S.NO	Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	Total score	Weighted average mean	Rank
	Score	7	6	5	4	3	2	1				
1	Quality	28	18	26	06	06	22	14	120	534	4.45	II
2	Price	42	16	06	24	10	06	18	120	578	4.81	I
3	After sale service	10	10	10	25	35	20	10	120	435	3.63	VII
4	Technology	21	20	12	13	16	20	18	120	485	4.04	III
5	Performance	06	34	24	10	06	18	22	120	482	4.01	IV
6	Design &size	06	10	24	20	21	21	18	120	405	3.38	VI
7	Durability	14	10	18	24	23	11	20	120	455	3.79	V

Source: Primary data

The above table reveals that satisfaction level of the consumers towards a product depends on various factors. Out of these price occupies the I rank, next comes the quality of the product, Technology comes III rank, performance of the product Fourth, Durability forms V rank, Design and size forms Vi and after sales service forms VII rank.

Table 11- Problem faced by Respondent

S.No	Problem Faced	1	2	3	4	Total	Total Score	Weighted average mean	Rank
	Score	4	3	2	1				
1	Power consumption	36	30	34	20	120	322	2.68	II
2	Water consumption	42	28	26	24	120	328	2.73	I
3	Maintenance cost	24	32	34	30	120	290	2.42	III
4	Others	22	32	32	36	120	284	2.37	IV

Source: Primary data

From the above it is understood that the main problem faced by consumer is high water consumption which forms the first position, next Power consumption (II), High maintenance cost (III), and others (IV).

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Based on the above analysis following findings were made:

1. 41.67% of female consumers are below 25 years of age.
2. 36.67% of female consumers are undergraduates.
3. 53.34% are married.
4. 33.33% of women respondents are privately employed.
5. 41.67% of women consumers have a monthly income from 20,001-30,000.
6. 79.17% of respondents belong to Joint family.
7. 54.17% of the female respondents belong to family size of 4-5 members.
8. 30% of respondents prefer LG washing machine.
9. 38.33% of women consumers purchase washing machine for easy to use.
10. 34.17% consumers prefer a particular brand because of high technology and features.
11. 43.33% of the respondents have fully automatic washing machine.
12. 45% of consumers uses Debit card/Credit card for product purchase.
13. 36.67% of total respondents are in use of washing machine for more than 5 years.
14. The main factor influences the purchase is Prize.
15. Satisfaction level of consumers depends on Price, Quality and technology.
16. The main problem faced by women consumer is high water consumption.

SUGGESTION

1. The demand for washing machine is highly volatile and women consumers expect new features and high performance it is important to add new features and improve quality.
2. It is important for the manufactures to convert brand consciousness into brand loyalty, so as to retain their customers.
3. The respondents are not highly satisfied with after-sale service, it is essential to offer service at a free of cost by the dealers during the guarantee period and the manufactures should insist the dealers to improve the sales.
4. The women respondents give importance to price of the product other than quality it is suggested that to offer discounts to the consumers at the time of purchase.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing analysis reveals that women consumer behavior depends on their family members though they are financially independent. The main factor influencing their purchase decision is price of the product. Consumer satisfaction is essential for success of any business. The manufacturers should study the behaviour of consumers and their individual needs are satisfied through their product.

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