

A Study On Consumer Behavior of Women With Special Reference To Durable Goods In Coimbatore City, Tamil Nadu

** Dr. S. Saravanan*

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FAMILY IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

There are many underlying influences, both internal and external, from the social environment. The combination of these inputs and internal factors can never be complex indeed. Yet, the tools of market research can assess motivation and behaviour with considerable accuracy. Perfect prediction of behaviour is never possible, but properly designed research efforts can significantly lower the risks of the types of product failure. While the consumer cannot knowingly be induced to act in a way contradictory to his or her own goals, motivation and behaviour can be influenced by outside sources. This influence is understood through research.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS IN A FAMILY

All the purchases made by a family follow a certain decision making process. The character and the extent of interaction between a husband and wife present an extremely important dimension in the decision making process. No sale can be effective, unless a favorable decision is made by a buyer towards a particular product of a company. The role of a spouse in the routine versus new decision process, the role of rational decisions of the particular household poised for changes in income, employment expenditure, saving, etc. change according to a given situation pattern.

Husbands and wives derive information from internal resources and external resources. Some information may bombard the individual without his explicit consent, although he may, at times, engage in a search for information. The actual purchase observable behaviour is related to the individual's intention, which in the words of Howard & Sheth Buyer forecast as to when, where and how a consumer is likely to buy a brand.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Non-durable goods like grocery, vegetables, fruits, cosmetics, toiletry, clothes, etc. are the basic products used by the consumers. They need these goods to satisfy their physiological needs. The companies are trying to make their products more popular and thereby, try to be successful. In the competitive market, the prospective buyer is prepared to choose the right brand based on his/her needs. An understanding of purchase behaviour of women is an essential aspect as it reflects the influence of brands, buyer & customer type on the purchase of a particular brand, etc.

The success of the market or its failure depends on the purchase behaviour of consumers. Now-a-days, the role of women in all fields is increasing. At present, the role of women in purchase decision has also increased.

Hence, the present study has been undertaken to find out the answers for the following questions:

1. What are the factors influencing women's purchasing behaviour?
2. What are the problems faced by women during and after purchase?

This study is an attempt to find out answers to the above and related questions.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Though the main objective of this study is to analyze the women's purchase behaviour and their role in purchase decision, the scope of the study extends to the following related aspects viz., socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, the factors influencing purchase behaviour, problems faced by women during and after purchase, mode of payment and mode of carrying goods.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze the factors influencing women's purchasing behaviour.

** Senior Lecturer, Dr. N.G.P Arts & Science College, Dr. NGP Nagar, Kalappatti Road, Coimbatore-641048, Tamil Nadu.
E-mail : sarans456@gmail.com*

2. To find out the problems faced by women during and after purchase.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample size

A total of 125 respondents residing in the Coimbatore city were selected for the study. Convenience sampling method has been followed for collecting the response from the respondents. The data has been collected from the customers who have visited the departmental stores, grocery shops, vendors, super markets, etc.

Sources of data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data has been collected by using a questionnaire and the secondary data has been collected from books, manuals and the Internet.

Tools for collection of data

The questionnaire is the major tool administered for collecting primary data from the respondents. The first eight questions were devoted to the basic information relating to the respondents' personal factors such as Name, Age, Education, Occupation, Marital Status, Monthly Income, Nature of Family and Number of Members in the family. Thereafter, the questionnaire contains other factor questions.

Tools for analysis

The statistical tool used for the purpose of the analysis of this study is simple percentage technique. After the collection of data through the questionnaire, editing was done carefully. Based on the responses of the samples, tables were prepared. The data collected were analyzed and interpreted with the help of tables and figures. Weighted scaling technique and ranking technique has also been used for analyzing the factors determining the level of satisfaction and factors influencing the purchase behavior of women consumers.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE -1:FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

S.No	Influencing factors	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Convenience	13	10
2	Quality	89	71
3	Quantity	3	2
4	Cost	5	4
5	Service	7	6
6	Customer relation	1	1
7	Brand	7	6
	Total	125	100

Source: primary data

The above table indicates that the factor which influenced 10% of the respondents' purchase behaviour was convenience, 71% of the respondents were influenced by quality, 2% of the respondents were influenced by the quantity, 4% of the respondents were influenced by the cost, 6% of the respondents were influenced by the service, 1% of the respondents were influenced by the shop keeper's attitude and 6% of the respondents were influenced by the loyalty to the brand. Thus, the majority of the respondents' purchase behavior was influenced by the quality of the product and only very few were influenced by the factor -shop keeper's attitude.

TABLE-2: AWARENESS TOWARDS QUALITY MARKS

S.No	Awareness	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Always	69	56
2	Sometimes	51	42
3	Rare	2	2
	Total	122	100

Source: primary data

The above table reveals that 122 respondents give importance to date of manufacture, expiry date, IDI, etc. while purchasing and 3 respondents do not give any consideration for quality marks while purchasing goods.

Out of 122 respondents, 56% of the respondents always look out for such quality marks, 42% of them look for the

quality marks sometimes and 2% of the respondents gave importance to the quality marks every time they made a purchase and were emphatic in their questioning, if accurate quality marks were not present on the goods.

TABLE -3: TYPES OF PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN DURING PURCHASE

S.No	Types of problems during purchase	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Unavailability	15	12
2	Poor Quality	33	27
3	Harassment	39	31
4	Malpractice in Quantity	12	10
5	Adulteration	23	18
6	Others specify	3	2
	Total	125	100

The table reveals that during the purchase, 12% of the respondents face the problem of unavailability of products, 27% of the respondents feel that some products are of poor quality, 31% face the problem of harassment, 10% of the respondents suspect malpractice in quantity, 18% face the problem of product adulteration and only 2% of the respondents face the problem of customer care.

TABLE -4 : TYPES OF PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN AFTER PURCHASE

S.No	Problems faced after purchase	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Follow-up service	27	21
2	No satisfaction	29	23
3	Transportation Problems	57	46
4	Others	12	10
	Total	125	100

Source: primary data

It reveals that after purchasing, 21% of the respondents feel that they lack follow-up service, 23% of the respondents were dissatisfied with their purchase, 46% of them faced problem in delivery of goods and only 10% of the respondents faced the problem in Billing, repetition of products, etc.

Majority of the respondents are facing transportation problem for carrying the goods after purchase.

WEIGHTED AVERAGE SCORE ANALYSIS

Weighted Average technique was used to find out the weighted average for each category of respondents over several study factors to know their level of satisfaction towards the quality, price, availability, service, size & design of the products. For this purpose, the qualitative information was converted into numerical one using five point scaling technique. While using five point scales, score

5 – was given to Highly satisfied, 4 – was given to Satisfied
 3 – was given to Moderate, 2 – was given to Dissatisfied
 1 – was given to Highly Dissatisfied.

TABLE-5:AGE & FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR PRODUCT SATISFACTION

Sl.No	Age	18-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	Above 50 years
1	Quality	4.45	4.37	3.94	5.00
2	Price	3.90	3.79	3.61	4.00
3	Availability	3.87	4.00	3.78	4.00
4	Service rendered	3.91	3.84	3.83	4.00
5	Size	3.73	3.21	3.28	4.00
6	Design	3.97	3.95	3.94	4.00

Source: primary data

From the above table, it is clear that respondents under the age group of 18-30 years were highly satisfied with quality and were satisfied with other factors viz., price, availability, service, size and design; respondents under the age group of 31-40 years are highly satisfied with quality and product availability and are satisfied with other factors i.e., price, service, size and design. Respondents under the age group of 41-50 years are satisfied with all the factors and respondents above 50 years are highly satisfied with quality and were satisfied with other factors.

Most of the respondents, irrespective of their age, are highly satisfied with product quality.

TABLE-6 : EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION & FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR PRODUCT SATISFACTION

Sl.No	Educational Qualification	School Level	Graduate	PG	Diploma	Others specify
1	Quality	4.19	4.46	4.18	4.75	4.00
2	Price	3.57	3.92	3.45	3.75	4.17
3	Availability	3.90	3.92	3.55	4.00	3.83
4	Service rendered	3.57	3.93	3.73	4.75	4.17
5	Size	3.43	3.69	4.27	3.75	3.17
6	Design	3.86	4.00	4.00	3.75	4.17

Source: primary data

It is inferred from the table that respondents whose education is up to school level are highly satisfied with product quality and satisfied with other factors like price, availability, service, size and design of the product and are satisfied with other factors. Postgraduates are highly satisfied with quality, size and design of the product and are satisfied with other factors. Diploma holders are highly satisfied with quality, availability and service rendered and are satisfied with other factors. Professionals are highly satisfied with quality, price, service and design and are satisfied with availability and size of the product.

Most of the respondents are highly satisfied with product quality irrespective of their educational qualification.

TABLE-7: OCCUPATION & FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR PRODUCT SATISFACTION

Sl.No	Occupation	Professional	Business	Employed	Agriculturist	Others specify
1	Quality	3.83	4.42	4.33	4.42	4.43
2	Price	3.83	4.04	3.74	3.83	3.80
3	Availability	3.67	3.75	4.00	3.75	3.93
4	Service rendered	3.50	3.88	3.70	3.75	4.05
5	Size	3.67	3.54	3.67	3.42	3.75
6	Design	3.33	4.13	4.00	3.67	4.04

Source: primary data

It is clear that professionals are highly satisfied with product quality, service and design and are satisfied with availability, price and size. Businessmen are highly satisfied with product quality, price and design and are satisfied with other factors. Employed respondents are highly satisfied with product quality, availability and design and are satisfied with other factors. Agriculturists are highly satisfied with product quality and are satisfied with other factors. Students and homemakers are highly satisfied with product quality, service and design and are satisfied with price, availability and size of the product.

TABLE-8 : MARITAL STATUS & FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR PRODUCT SATISFACTION

Sl.No	Marital Status	Married	Single
1	Quality	4.31	4.42
2	Price	3.79	3.87
3	Availability	3.83	3.91
4	Service rendered	3.88	3.90
5	Size	3.63	4.48
6	Design	3.92	4.01

Source: primary data

It is inferred from the above table that married respondents are highly satisfied with product quality and are satisfied with product price, availability, service, size and design. Unmarried respondents are highly satisfied with product quality, size and design and are also satisfied with other factors.

Majority of the respondents are highly satisfied with product quality, irrespective of their marital status.

TABLE-9 : FAMILY INCOME & FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR PRODUCT SATISFACTION

Sl.No	Quality	Below Rs.5000	Rs.5001 – Rs.10,000	Rs.10,001 – Rs.15,000	Above Rs.15,000
1	Quality	4.38	4.38	4.17	4.71
2	Price	3.90	3.87	3.50	3.71
3	Availability	3.90	3.80	3.92	4.14
4	Service rendered	3.69	4.38	3.83	4.43
5	Size	3.61	3.64	3.92	4.00
6	Design	3.92	3.84	3.83	4.43

Source:
primary data

It is inferred from the table that respondents whose income level is below Rs. 5000 p.m. are highly satisfied with product quality and are satisfied with other factors like price, availability, service, size and design. Respondents whose income level ranges between Rs. 5001 – Rs. 10, 001 p.m. are highly satisfied with the product quality and service and are also satisfied with other factors. Respondents whose income level ranges between Rs. 10, 001– Rs. 15, 000 p.m. are highly satisfied with product quality and are satisfied with other factors. Respondents whose income is above Rs. 15, 000 p.m. are highly satisfied with product quality, availability, service, size and design and are also satisfied with price of the product.

Most of the respondents belonging to various income levels are highly satisfied with product quality.

TABLE-10:NATURE OF FAMILY & FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR PRODUCT SATISFACTION

Sl.No	Nature of family	Nuclear	Joint
1	Quality	4.40	4.32
2	Price	3.79	3.95
3	Availability	3.88	3.88
4	Service rendered	4.08	3.49
5	Size	3.61	3.80
6	Design	3.98	3.98

Source: primary data

The table shows that respondents from nuclear families are highly satisfied with product quality and service and are also satisfied with other factors. Respondents from joint family are highly satisfied with product quality and are also satisfied with other factors. Irrespective of the nature of family, most of the respondents are highly satisfied with product quality.

FACTOR RANKING ANALYSIS

Factors considered by the respondents were analysed by ranking method. For this purpose, respondents were asked to assign the rank to the factors. **As per this technique, the number of respondents multiplies the rank assigned by the respondents.** The preference is taken as total score assigned to a factor. The factor scoring the least value is the most important rank and was determined with ascending order. By using this technique, it was decided to analyze the factors by ranking for some preference.

TABLE-11: RANKING ANALYSIS FOR AGE GROUP WITH ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR PURCHASE

Particulars	18-30 years		31-40 years		41-50 years		Above 50 years	
Age	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	3.51	I	4.21	I	4.22	I	4.50	I
Quantity	3.31	II	3.00	II	2.39	V	1.50	V
Cost	2.91	III	2.89	IV	2.50	III	4.00	II
Service rendered	2.63	V	2.00	V	2.44	IV	2.00	IV
Brand	2.78	IV	2.95	III	2.83	II	3.00	III

Source: primary data

It is inferred from the table that the first rank is given to the product quality under age groups - 18-30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years and above 50 years. Last rank is given to the service rendered under the age groups - 18-30 years and 31-40 years. Respondents' belonging to the age group of 41-50 years and above 50 years had given the last rank to quantity of the product.

Most of the respondents under various age groups have given the highest preference to the product quality.

TABLE-12:RANKING ANALYSIS FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION WITH ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR PURCHASE

Particulars	School level		Graduates		Post graduates		Diploma		Others	
Educational Qualification	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	4.38	I	3.59	I	3.54	I	4.00	I	3.67	I
Quantity	2.90	III	3.05	II	3.18	III	3.75	II	3.33	II
Cost	2.43	IV	3.00	III	2.73	IV	3.00	III	2.67	IV
Service rendered	2.28	V	2.60	V	2.18	V	2.25	IV	2.17	V
Brand	2.95	II	2.76	IV	3.27	II	2.00	V	2.83	III

Source: primary data

It is clear from the above table that the first rank is given to the product quality by all age groups. Last rank is given to service rendered by graduates, post graduates, professionals and school level respondents; diploma holders have given the last rank to product brand. Most of the respondents under various educational levels are giving the highest preference to product quality and least preference to the service rendered.

TABLE-13: RANKING ANALYSIS FOR OCCUPATION WITH ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR PURCHASE

Particulars	Professionals		Business		Employed		Agriculturist		Others	
Occupation	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	3.67	I	3.83	I	3.89	I	4.00	I	3.57	I
Quantity	2.67	IV	3.17	II	3.15	III	2.58	IV	3.22	II
Cost	2.50	V	2.58	IV	3.37	II	2.42	V	2.88	IV
Service rendered	2.83	III	2.42	V	2.52	IV	3.17	II	2.31	V
Brand	3.00	II	3.04	III	2.33	V	2.83	III	2.93	III

Source: primary data

It is inferred from the table that first rank is given to the product quality under various occupational status and last rank is given to the product cost by professionals and agriculturists; last rank was given to the brand by employed respondents and last rank was given to the service by the businessmen, students and home makers.

TABLE-14: RANKING ANALYSIS BY MARRIED RESPONDENTS WITH ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR PURCHASE

Particulars	Married		Single	
Marital Status	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	4.17	I	3.47	I
Quantity	2.98	II	3.18	II
Cost	2.83	III	2.88	III
Service rendered	2.23	V	2.64	V
Brand	2.81	IV	2.82	IV

Source: primary data

It is clear from the above table that the first rank is given to the product quality and last rank is given to the service rendered by both married and unmarried respondents.

TABLE-15: RANKING ANALYSIS FOR FAMILY INCOME WITH ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR PURCHASE

Particulars	Below Rs.5000		Rs.5001-Rs.10,000		Rs.10,001-Rs.15,000		Above Rs.15,000	
Family Income	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	3.90	I	3.40	II	4.08	I	3.86	I
Quantity	3.02	II	3.42	I	2.75	III	2.43	V
Cost	2.83	III	2.76	IV	3.17	II	3.57	II
Service rendered	2.56	V	2.40	V	2.25	V	2.71	III
Brand	2.72	IV	3.02	III	2.67	IV	2.57	IV

Source: primary data

It is inferred from the above table that the first rank is given by the respondents (whose income level is below Rs.5,000, Rs.10,001-Rs.15,000 and above 15,000) to the product quality and respondents under Rs.5,001- Rs.10,000 income group have given the first rank to product quantity. Last rank is given to the service rendered by the respondents under the income levels of below Rs.5,000, Rs.5,001-Rs.10,000 and Rs.10,001 to Rs.15,000. Respondents whose income is above Rs.15,000 have given the last rank to quantity.

TABLE-16: RANKING ANALYSIS FOR TYPE OF FAMILY WITH ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR PURCHASE

Particulars	Nuclear		Joint	
Family type	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	3.80	I	3.61	I
Quantity	3.17	II	2.97	III
Cost	2.88	III	2.83	IV
Service rendered	2.37	V	2.71	V
Brand	2.78	IV	3.05	II

Source: primary data

It is clear from the above table that the first rank is given to the product quality and last rank is given to the service rendered by both nuclear and joint family respondents.

TABLE-17 : RANKING ANALYSIS FOR FAMILY SIZE WITH ORDER OF PREFERENCE FOR PURCHASE

Particulars	Two		Three		Four		Above Four	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	3.00	III	3.93	I	3.76	I	3.67	I
Quantity	5.00	I	2.79	IV	3.08	II	3.18	II
Cost	4.00	II	2.29	V	2.88	IV	2.98	III
Service rendered	1.00	V	3.07	II	2.29	V	2.57	V
Brand	2.00	IV	2.86	III	3.00	III	2.61	IV

Source: primary data

It is inferred from the table that the first rank is given to the product quantity by the respondents whose family size is two and first rank is given to the product quality by the respondents whose family size is three, four and above four. Respondents, whose family size is three have given the last rank to the product cost and whose family size is two, four and above four have given the last rank to the service rendered.

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS & CONCLUSIONS

FINDINGS

1. The distinctive feature of the higher income group respondents is that, they shop as and when they like. Similarly, the housewives shop almost weekly but the working women shop only when the need arises.
2. Education also plays a key role in shopping behaviour, in the sense that, in comparison to the respondents with no formal education, respondents having a good educational background shop more often.
3. In a majority of the respondents' family, a woman plays a major role in purchase decision, and they prefer to prepare an item list before purchasing. The involvement each family member has in the family matters influences their behaviour to a greater extent.
4. Majority of the respondents preferred to purchase products from departmental stores rather than other types of shops, as they feel it is economical and products are of good quality.
5. Most of the respondents are interested in recommending the product purchased by them to others and are satisfied with the service of the salesmen.
6. This clearly indicates that in family purchase decisions, in spite of an individual's age, income, level of education, status, family size, etc., the interaction they have with each other leads the way for best 'buy'. Ultimately, greater the interaction, better is the involvement, and it may lead to a satisfactory purchase.
7. Most of the respondents under various personal factors have given highest preference to product quality.
8. Most of the of the respondents were satisfied with all the factors like price, quality, availability, service, size and design and no one is dissatisfied with the above mentioned facts.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Purchase is to be made on the basis of the quality, income and according to the budget. Women must know the standard shops which sell products at reasonable prices with excellent service. They should give importance to the package date, manufacturing date, ISI marks, expiry date, brand, etc. while purchasing. They should bargain and should clarify their doubts regarding the product they buy.
2. Women should be aware of the new products introduced in the market and of their special features, price, quality, etc. They should be capable of identifying duplicate products and should avoid purchasing unnecessary items.
3. Maximum number of women consumers are not aware of the consumerism and consumer rights. Hence, the government can conduct some consumer awareness programs for the women consumers, and it can help to improve purchasing behavior among the consumers and it can save consumers from falling into the traps of the deceiving sellers.

(Cont. on page 51)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1) Annual Edition of the FICCI Report 2007.
- 2) Beri, G.C., Marketing Research, Tata McGraw Hill, 8th edition -2004.
- 3) Blackwell, RD, Consumer Behavior, Thomson South-10th edition-2007.
- 4) Boyd, Harper W., Marketing Research, Richard D.Irwin-1996.
- 5) CMIE database.
- 6) Green, Paul E, Research for Marketing Decisions, Prentice Hall-1995.
- 7) Indian Media and Entertainment, CYGNUS Business Consulting and Research, June 2007,
http://www.researchandmarkets.com/reportinfo.asp?report_id=508059)
- 8) Indian Media Market 2007, Heernet Ventures Limited, Feb 2007,
http://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/444793/indian_media_market_2007)
- 9) India's Booming Media and Entertainment Industry: IT Market Trends and Opportunities, 2006 2010, Springboard Research, Feb 2007,
http://www.researchandmarkets.com/reportinfo.asp?report_id=435362
- 10) Khoj , (2007), HT Media report, Team ID 913.
- 11) Linda Zebian, 05/11/2006, <http://www.foliomag.com/2006/mpa-imag-conference-stresses-organic-growth-e-media-and-power-edit>, MPA IMAG Conference Stresses Organic Growth, E-media and the Power of Edit.
- 12) Media in India, Datamonitor, Jan 2008,
http://www.researchandmarkets.com/reportinfo.asp?report_id=368015
- 13) Malhotra, NK. K., Marketing Research-Pearson Education, 5th edition 2008.
- 14) Najundar, R.,Marketing Research,Wiley-1995.
- 15) Saarelma, H., Oittinen, P., Convergence of Media Ubiquitous Newspaper (UbiN), Graphic Arts.
- 16) Schiffman, LeanG, Consumer Behavior, Prentice Hall-7th edition -1994.
- 17) Schiffman, LG, Consumer Behavior, Pearson Education-9th edition -2007.
- 18) Srivastava, K.K., Consumer Behavior, Galgotia Publishing Company, 2003.
- 19) The Indian Entertainment and media Industry, a growth story unfolds, FICCI report 2006.
- 20) Trends in News room, Annual report of the world editors forum, The newsroom barometer, June, 2008.

(Cont. from page 42)

CONCLUSION

The modern market is highly competitive and transitional. The prominence gained by an individual consumer in marketing decision making compels the marketer to look at and organize the component of the marketing mix through the customer's eyes. Hence, consumer behaviour research has come into existence.

In the present era, women play a vital role in all fields. To conclude, women play a major role in taking purchase decisions for non-durables.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Amarchand D and Varadharajan B, 1979, "An introduction to Marketing" Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, New Delhi.
2. Hanulingam, N 1985, "Research Methodology", Rainbow publications, Coimbatore.
3. Philip Kotler , "Marketing Management" 12th Edition, Prentice Hall of India.
4. S.A.Sherlekar, 1981, "Modern Marketing Principles and practices", Himalaya Publishing House, Bombay.
5. Shinha.j.Cc, 1977, "Principles of Marketing and Salesmanship", Chand&Co, New Delhi.