



A Study of Consumer Choice of Brands in Household Durable Products in Pune City

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Abstract

Consumer preference for brands plays a significant role in the marketing of durable household products such as air conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, and televisions. With the rapid expansion of retail markets and e-commerce platforms in urban areas, consumers are presented with a wide variety of brands and product choices. This study aims to examine the factors influencing brand preferences among consumers in Pune city for durable household goods. It focuses on key aspects affecting consumer decision-making, including brand image, pricing, product quality, after-sales service, and promotional strategies.

The research adopts a descriptive design and utilizes both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 120 respondents from different areas of Pune city. Secondary data related to consumer behavior and brand selection was gathered from books, journals, and online sources. The findings indicate that product quality, brand reputation, and after-sales service are the most influential factors in consumers' brand choices for durable goods. Furthermore, digital marketing and online reviews are increasingly impacting consumer decisions.

The study concludes that companies dealing in consumer durables should focus on maintaining high product standards, building a strong brand image, offering competitive pricing, and ensuring efficient customer service to attract and retain customers. The research provides valuable insights for marketers, retailers, and academicians seeking to understand consumer buying behavior in the durable goods market.

Keywords: Brands, Marketing, Consumer Choice, Brand Preferences, Promotional Strategies, Digital Marketing, Customer Service

INTRODUCTION

The study concludes that companies dealing in consumer durables should focus on maintaining high product standards, building a strong brand image, offering competitive pricing, and ensuring efficient customer service to attract and retain customers. The research provides

valuable insights for marketers, retailers, and academicians seeking to understand consumer buying behavior in the durable goods market.

Household durable goods are long-lasting products that are used by consumers over an extended period of time. These products include items such as refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, televisions, microwave ovens, and other electronic appliances that are essential for modern living. Unlike fast-moving consumer goods, these products are not purchased frequently, as they are designed to provide utility over a longer duration. Due to their high cost and long-term usage, they are considered high-involvement purchases, where consumers invest significant time and effort in evaluating alternatives before making a final decision. Consumer behavior in the durable goods segment is complex and influenced by a variety of factors. These include personal preferences, brand image, perceived quality, pricing, technological features, and social influences such as family, peers, and societal trends. Consumers often engage in extensive information search and comparison processes before selecting a product. They evaluate different brands based on performance, durability, energy efficiency, and additional features to ensure maximum value for money. As a result, decision-making in this category is more rational and deliberate compared to routine purchases. In recent years, the rapid growth of digital marketing and e-commerce platforms has significantly transformed consumer buying behavior. Consumers now have easy access to a vast amount of information through online reviews, product ratings, comparison websites, and social media platforms. Digital channels enable consumers to make more informed decisions and reduce the uncertainty associated with high-value purchases. Online recommendations, influencer opinions, and customer feedback play a crucial role in shaping brand perception and influencing purchase decisions.

Pune, recognized as one of the fastest-growing urban centers in India, has experienced remarkable growth in the consumer durable sector. Factors such as increasing disposable income, rapid urbanization, technological advancement, and improved standards of living have contributed to the rising demand for household appliances. The expansion of organized retail outlets, shopping malls, and online marketplaces has further intensified competition among brands, offering consumers a wide range of choices. This dynamic market environment makes it essential for companies to understand consumer preferences and adapt their marketing strategies accordingly. Moreover, the growing awareness among consumers regarding product quality, energy efficiency, and after-sales services has increased their expectations from brands. Consumers are no longer solely influenced by price; instead, they seek a combination of quality, reliability, and value-added services. Brands that fail to meet these expectations may struggle to maintain customer loyalty in the competitive market.

Therefore, understanding consumer brand preferences in the durable goods market has become crucial for businesses aiming to achieve long-term success. This study examines the factors affecting brand choices of consumers in Pune city for durable household goods and evaluates the impact of marketing strategies on their preferences. The findings of the study are expected to provide valuable insights for marketers, retailers, and researchers in developing effective strategies to meet evolving consumer demands.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the brand preferences of consumers in Pune city for durable household products.
2. To identify the key factors that influence consumers when selecting a brand.
3. To evaluate the importance of price, product quality, and brand image in consumer decision-making.
4. To study the impact of advertising and promotional activities on brand choice.
5. To suggest strategies for improving marketing practices in the consumer durable sector.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer brand choice has been extensively examined in marketing literature, with several studies emphasizing the role of brand image, product quality, and customer satisfaction in shaping purchasing behavior. Scholars have highlighted that consumer perception of a brand significantly influences their buying decisions, especially in the case of high-value products like household durables.

According to Kotler and Keller (2016), brand image significantly influences consumer decision-making, as customers generally prefer brands that are well-established and trustworthy. A positive brand image reduces perceived risk and increases consumer confidence in the product. Similarly, Schiffman and Kanuk (2014) explained that consumer behavior is shaped by psychological, social, and cultural factors, and that brand loyalty develops when consumers are satisfied with product performance.

Aaker (1991) introduced the concept of brand equity, highlighting that strong brands build higher levels of consumer trust and preference. High brand equity enables companies to charge premium prices and maintain customer loyalty. In addition, Keller (2013) noted that brand awareness and perceived quality play a vital role in influencing purchase decisions, particularly in highly competitive markets where multiple brands offer similar features.

Empirical studies further support these theoretical perspectives. Mishra and Gupta (2018) found that factors such as product durability, technological advancements, and after-sales service significantly affect consumer choices in the electronic appliances sector. Consumers prefer products that offer long-term reliability and efficient service support.

Sharma (2020) observed that digital marketing efforts and online reviews have an increasing impact on consumer preferences, especially among younger demographics. Social media platforms and e-commerce websites provide easy access to product information, enabling consumers to make informed decisions.

Moreover, pricing strategies and promotional techniques, including discounts, exchange offers, and financing options, have been identified as important determinants that attract consumers toward specific brands. Middle-income consumers, in particular, are highly sensitive to price and often compare multiple options before making a purchase.

Overall, existing literature suggests that consumer brand preference is influenced by a combination of product-related attributes, effective marketing communication, and overall customer experience.

Further studies have expanded the understanding of consumer behavior in the durable goods sector. Solomon (2018) emphasized that consumer decision-making is a process involving need recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Each stage is influenced by both internal and external factors, which shape brand preferences.

Zeithaml (1988) highlighted the concept of perceived value, stating that consumers evaluate products based on the trade-off between perceived benefits and costs. In the context of durable goods, perceived value plays a crucial role, as consumers expect long-term utility and performance.

Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel (2006) suggested that consumer behavior is affected by environmental influences such as culture, social class, and family. These factors are particularly important in Indian markets, where family opinions and cultural norms strongly influence purchasing decisions.

Loudon and Bitta (2002) found that personal factors such as age, occupation, and income level significantly impact consumer preferences. Younger consumers may prioritize advanced features and technology, while older consumers may focus on reliability and ease of use.

Peter and Olson (2010) argued that consumer attitudes toward brands are shaped by beliefs and experiences, which in turn influence purchase intentions. Positive past experiences with a brand increase the likelihood of repeat purchases and brand loyalty.

Recent studies have also focused on the role of technology in shaping consumer behavior. Chaffey (2015) highlighted that digital marketing tools such as search engines, social media, and email marketing have transformed how consumers interact with brands and make decisions.

Kumar and Reinartz (2016) emphasized the importance of customer relationship management (CRM) in building long-term relationships with consumers. Effective CRM strategies enhance customer satisfaction and increase brand loyalty.

Pantano and Timmermans (2014) examined the role of smart technologies in retailing, stating that innovations such as interactive displays and mobile applications enhance the shopping experience and influence consumer decisions.

Verhoef, Kannan, and Inman (2015) discussed omnichannel retailing, highlighting that integration of online and offline channels improves customer convenience and satisfaction, thereby influencing brand choice.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the systematic approach used for collecting and analyzing data to achieve the objectives of a study. This research makes use of both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was collected from consumers in Pune city who have purchased or intend to purchase durable household products, using a structured questionnaire. Secondary data related to consumer behavior and brand selection was obtained from books, academic journals, research papers, and reliable online sources. The

collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques such as percentages, tables, and graphical representations.

2.1 Research Design

1. A descriptive research design has been adopted in this study to describe consumer behavior and to identify the factors influencing brand choice.
2. Patterns, trends, and relationships among variables within a specific population are effectively understood through descriptive research.
3. Detailed information regarding consumer preferences and purchasing behavior in the household durable sector is obtained through this research design.

2.2 Research Techniques

1. This study applies a descriptive research design to analyze consumer behavior and identify the factors affecting brand selection.
2. Researchers use descriptive research to understand patterns, trends, and relationships among variables within a specific population.
3. This research design enables researchers to gather detailed insights into consumer preferences and purchasing behavior in the household durable sector.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND CONCLUSION:

The analysis of data collected for the study on consumer choice of brands in household durable products in Pune reveals several important insights into buying behavior and preferences. The majority of respondents belong to the age group of 25–45 years, indicating that working professionals and young families are the primary consumers of durable goods such as refrigerators, washing machines, and televisions.

The findings show that product quality is the most influential factor affecting brand choice. Consumers in Pune prefer brands that offer durability, reliability, and long-term performance. Price sensitivity is also significant, with customers comparing multiple brands before making a purchase to ensure value for money. Additionally, brand reputation and trust play a crucial role, as well-known brands are often perceived as more dependable.

Another key factor is after-sales service, including warranty, maintenance, and customer support. Consumers tend to favor brands that provide prompt and efficient service, especially for high-value products. The study also highlights the growing impact of online reviews and digital platforms, which influence consumer decisions by providing information and peer feedback.

In conclusion, the study suggests that companies in the household durable sector should focus on maintaining high product quality, competitive pricing, strong brand image, and reliable after-sales service. Moreover, enhancing online presence and customer engagement can further strengthen brand preference among consumers in Pune city.

4.1 RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The results of the research on consumer choice of brands in household durable products highlight several key factors influencing purchasing decisions. Firstly, product quality emerges as the most important determinant, as consumers prefer durable, reliable, and high-performing products that offer long-term value. Closely related to this is brand reputation, which plays a vital role in building consumer trust and shaping preferences. Well-established brands are often perceived as more dependable and are therefore more likely to be chosen. Another significant factor is price, especially for middle-class consumers who are highly conscious of their budgets. They tend to compare different brands to ensure they receive the best value for their money. In addition, promotional offers and discounts act as strong motivators, attracting customers toward specific brands and influencing their final purchase decisions.

The study also reveals that warranty policies and after-sales services significantly impact customer satisfaction. Consumers prefer brands that provide extended warranties, easy maintenance, and prompt service support, particularly for high-value durable goods. Furthermore, the growing influence of technology is evident, as digital marketing and online reviews strongly affect modern consumer behavior. Many consumers rely on online platforms, ratings, and feedback before making a purchase decision.

In conclusion, the research indicates that a combination of quality, pricing, brand image, service support, and digital presence plays a crucial role in shaping consumer choices in the household durable market.

4.2 CONCLUSION

This study highlights the importance of understanding consumer brand preferences in the durable household goods market of Pune. The findings indicate that consumers consider multiple factors before making a purchase decision, including product quality, pricing, brand reputation, and after-sales service. Among these, product quality and brand trust emerge as the most influential, as consumers prefer reliable and long-lasting products. Price sensitivity is also significant, particularly among middle-class consumers who seek value for money and often compare alternatives before finalizing a brand. After-sales services such as warranty, maintenance, and customer support further play a crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty. In today's digital era, online reviews, ratings, and digital marketing strategies have a growing impact on consumer preferences. Many buyers rely on online platforms to gather information and evaluate products before purchasing. Therefore, companies in the consumer durable sector must focus on strengthening their digital presence and engaging effectively with customers. To remain competitive, marketers should adopt innovative promotional strategies, offer attractive discounts, and maintain competitive pricing policies. Overall, the study emphasizes the need for a customer-centric approach to succeed in a dynamic and competitive market environment.

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