

“A Study on Consumer Buying Behaviour towards White Goods in Junagadh city”

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Abstract: The study was projected to identify consumer buying behaviour towards white goods in Junagadh city. The Heavy consumer durables such as air conditioners, refrigerators, stoves, etc., which used to be painted only in white enamel finish. White Goods Industry is rising at a decent step but still the elementary queries in this sector remain unanswered as to what factors influences consumer perception / preference, status symbols / proportion of income spent and factors that motivates consumer brand switching. Exploratory and descriptive research had been used. Sample size taken for the study was 6 brand outlets which are located in Junagadh city and 60 consumers, 10 consumers from each outlet. Judgemental Sampling method was used. Structured Questionnaires had been filled up from the prospective customers of White Goods. Correlation, percentage analysis and Likert's scale were used to analyse the data. Result found that 59% of the respondents agree that they expect schemes and offers in the festivals. About 42% of respondents agree that they buying according to the opinion of the sales persons in the Retail Stores. According to consumers, television, website, dealers, demonstration, word of mouth are the effective medium for advertising white goods.

Key Words: White goods, buying behaviour, Correlation, percentage analysis and Likert's scale

INTRODUCTION:

Consumer durables such as air conditioners, refrigerators, and stoves were traditionally finished with a white enamel paint. Despite the fact that these items are now available in a variety of colours, they continue to be referred to as “white goods”. This category includes household appliances like water heaters, refrigerators, clothes dryers, air conditioners, dishwashers, microwave ovens, and washing machines. In recent years, the Indian consumer durables industry has undergone significant changes. Factors such as changing lifestyles, increased affordability, and a surge in advertising have dramatically altered consumer behaviour patterns. These shifts have been instrumental in driving the evolution of this industry. As per the survey conducted by the FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) on consumer durables industry, a shift in the consumer preferences towards higher end, technologically advance branded products have been quite dissembling. This shift can be clarified by contraction differentials between the prices of branded and unbranded products added with the high quality of after sales service provided by the branded companies. The shift has also been caused by the accessibility of foreign branded products in India owing to lower import duties coupled with other generous measures as introduced by the government. The size of domestic consumer electronics and durables, or white goods, market might touch Rs 52,000 crore by 2015 on version of rising demand for these goods, particularly among youngsters, a study by industry body Assocham has said.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The term “White Goods” is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as large electrical appliances used internally, such as fridges and washing machines, which are characteristically white in colour. These heavy consumer durables, including air conditioners, refrigerators, and stoves, were traditionally finished with a white coating paint. Despite the fact that these items are now available in a variety of colours, they continue to be referred to as “white goods”. This term has tolerated due to its antique context and continues to be used as a broad category for these household appliances.

The Policy Studies Institute, in its project titled “Designing Policy to Influence Consumers,” conducted an in-depth study on consumer buying behaviour towards white goods (2006, pp. 73-77). The research revealed that consumer choice is not exclusively a rational evaluation of information on quality and price. Instead, it is meaningfully influenced by mental cutoffs and emotional factors. These mental shortcuts often lead to biases, resulting in consumers not always purchasing the product that is best suited to their needs. Therefore, operative policy must take these mental shortcuts into explanation and consider the horde of factors that influence consumer choice. In the context of white goods, this means understanding that consumers may be influenced by factors such as brand reputation, aesthetics, perceived reliability, and even the historical association of these products with a white enamel finish. By admitting and working with these influences, policies can be designed to guide consumers towards making choices that are helpful for them.

The current value of the consumer electronics and durable goods industry is projected to be around Rs 34,000 crore. This demand is mainly driven by the increasing popularity of these goods among the younger population, which is further amplified by their rising disposable incomes. Assocham Secretary General D.S Rawat attributes this growth to these key factors. To elaborate, as the younger population becomes more financially independent, their purchasing power increases. This, attached with a growing interest in consumer electronics and durable goods, fuels the demand in this industry. Therefore, the industry’s growth is closely tied to demographic drifts and economic situations.

Raju and Sheth (1974) identified four crucial types of consumers buying behaviours: Habitual, Exploratory, Impulsive, and Belief-based. Each of these behaviours characterizes a different approach to making purchasing decisions. Habitual buying behaviour refers to purchases that are made out of habit, without much believed. Exploratory buying behaviour involves seeking out new products or brands out of interest. Impulsive buying behaviour is characterized by impulsive, often unplanned purchases. Lastly, Belief-based buying behaviour involves making purchases based on personal beliefs or values. The present study goals to integrate these four behaviours into a broader framework. It further enlarges that these consumer behaviours are complete and reliably influence the purchasing process. In the middle of this process, it’s important to note that consumers don’t always fall neatly into one category. They may exhibit different behaviours depending on the situation or the product in question. For example, a consumer might make an unwary purchase when they see a sale, but take a more examining approach when buying a new type of product. The study concludes that consumers are simplified by a logical decision-making process that drives them to the next level of the purchase cycle where habit-controlled choice behaviour prevails. This suggests that while consumers may start their buying journey with exploratory or belief-based behaviours, over time, their purchasing decisions may become more habitual as they become more acquainted with the product or brand.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

The study employed the snowball sampling method to select a sample size of electronic respondent. This bring about in a total of 60 potential consumers being selected, with these people being interested in four different products: washing machines, refrigerators, microwave ovens, and air conditioners. The supply of these samples according to the white goods products chosen by the scholar is detailed in [Table 1]. This study was mainly based on primary data, which was composed through a structured questionnaire during a field survey. The data was then analysed using correlation, percentage analysis, and Likert’s scale techniques to understand consumer buying behaviour towards white goods in Junagadh city. To classify the factors influencing consumer behaviour towards white goods, a comprehensive questionnaire was designed. This questionnaire covered key aspects of the production and marketing of electronic products, safeguarding a thorough understanding of the factors that affect consumer decisions.

Table 1: Products wise Samples Taken for Consumer Buying Behaviour study

Sr. No.	Electronic Products	Prospective Consumer
1	Refrigerator	18
2	Washing Machine	16
3	Microwave Oven	12
4	Air Conditioner	14
Total		60

Table 2: A Model of Consumer Decision Making (INPUT)

Sr. No.	Marketing Efforts	Sr. No.	Sociocultural Environment
1	Product	1	Family
2	Promotion	2	Informal Sources
3	Prices	3	Noncultural Sources
4	Channels of Distribution	4	Social Class & Culture

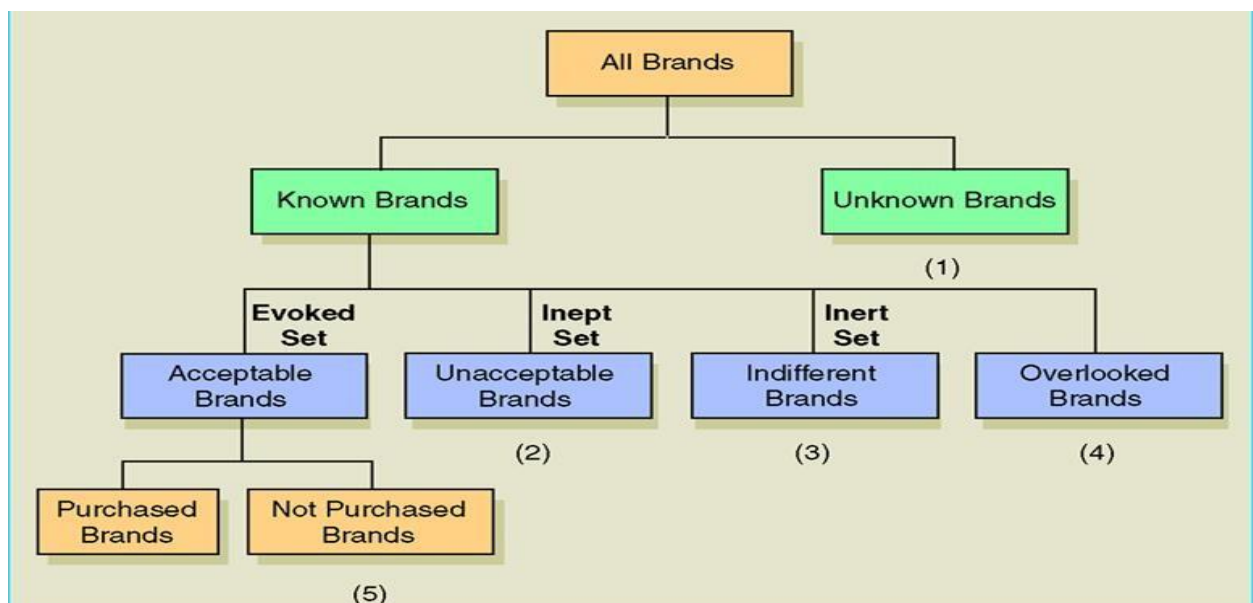
Table 3: A Model of Consumer Decision Making (PROCESS)

Sr. No.	Psychological Efforts	Sr. No.	Psychological Field
1	Need Recognition	1	Motivation
2	Prepurchase Search	2	Perception
3	Evaluation of Alternatives	3	Learning
		4	Personality
		5	Attitudes

Table 4: A Model of Consumer Decision Making (OUTPUT)

Sr. No.	Purchase	Sr. No.	Post-Purchase
1	Trial	1	Evaluation
2	Repeat Purchas		

Figure 1: Evaluation of Alternatives



RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

The survey results specify that 50% of respondents agree, and an extra 26% strongly agree, that they tend to make purchases during the off-season. This trend could serve as a valuable insight for manufacturing companies to adjust their production plans and marketing strategies accordingly. Also, 59% of respondents expect to see schemes and offers during festivals. However, it's important to note that such schemes and offers have become a basic anticipation among consumers and may not serve as a strong stimulus for purchases as they once did. The influence of sales managers in stores is significant, with 42% of respondents agreeing that their purchases are prejudiced by the opinions of sales staffs in retail stores. This suggests that marketers of white goods should focus on store-level promotions. Fascinatingly, 31% of consumers believe that promotions at the dealer level would be a more effective advertising strategy. According to the survey, consumers find television, websites, dealers, protests, and word-of-mouth to be the most effective mediums for advertising white goods. Consumers are primarily attracted by modest pricing and tend to purchase from stores offering the best deals. This is also reflected in their preference for shopping during off-seasons when more schemes and offers are characteristically available. Before making a purchase, consumers often research product features on the internet. A good understanding of different brands and products also influences their buying decisions. The survey also revealed that consumers value sales services and often decide on product features before purchasing white goods. This loyalty towards specific stores further highlights the importance of effective in-store promotions.

Figure 2: Consumer Consider After Sales Services in Purchase Decision of the Product

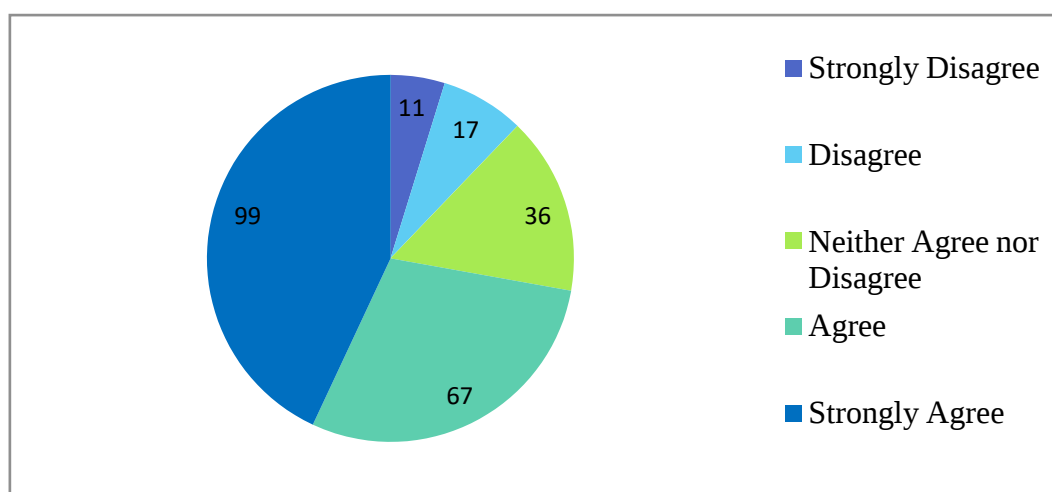
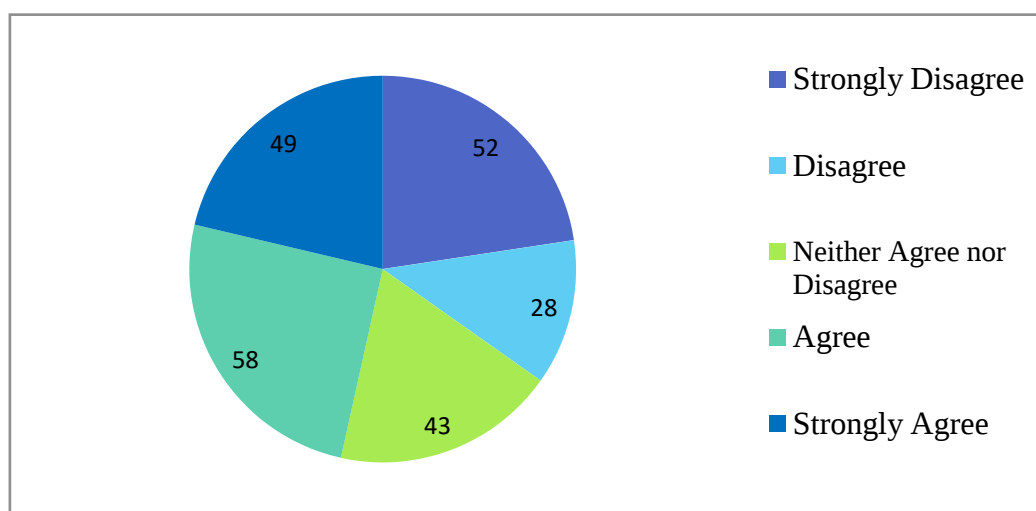


Figure 3: Repeat the Brand for Next Purchase



RECOMMENDATIONS:

To resolve the production constraints, beekeeper entrepreneurs should attend more training programs and keep updated themselves to acquire more technical knowledge. To resolve the constraints of the low selling price, beekeeper entrepreneurs should invest more in beehives to increase the production and primary processing like filtering of the honey to be made to increase the share in consumer's rupee. To obtain the FASSI/ISI standards certification and laboratory testing of the honey, beekeeper entrepreneurs should approach the extension agencies departments of SAUs that are working on beekeeping, FPOs, NGOs, etc. to find help regarding particular procedures.

CONCLUSION:

In Junagadh city, consumers classically engage in wide research before purchasing white goods. This research often involves visiting multiple stores and browsing the web to compare prices across different outlets. Schemes and discounts are an important factor in their purchasing decisions. Many customers prefer to buy white goods during special schemes such as festivals, dealer-specific discounts, or company promotional discounts. The study found that 62% of respondents were married and 38% were unmarried, suggesting that married individuals are more likely to purchase white goods. An important number of customers, about 64%, wait for festival seasons to make their purchases. They anticipate receiving gifts or buying products at reduced prices during these periods. Moreover, 36% of respondents wait for dealer-specific discounts, while a smaller percentage (22%) wait for company promotional schemes. Word of mouth plays a vital role in influencing the purchase decisions of 34% of respondents. This finding underscores the importance of customer gratification and positive customer knowledges in promoting products. The study's findings provide valuable insights for manufacturing companies to reallocate their production plans and marketing strategies. It emphasizes the importance of after-sales services, which are considered a critical factor by consumers. Therefore, manufacturers should focus on improving these services to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. Moreover, consumers tend to be loyal to specific stores and consider sales services before making a purchase. They also decide on the features of the product before purchasing white goods. These insights can help businesses adapt their marketing strategies to meet consumer expectations and preferences.

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