CONSUMERS' ACQUISITION PATTERN FOR DURABLE GOODS

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Abstract

Durable consumption goods and private capital investment factor into durables trade. Durable goods yield service or utility over time. Examples include such capital goods as machinery and such consumer goods as automobiles, appliances and big-screen TVs.

When the economy is expected to turn sour, households can put off purchases of consumer durables but can't easily delay purchases of food and other goods for quick consumption.

When inventories start to grow, firms don't expand capacity, and they cancel or postpone new investments. Thus, demand is generally much more volatile for durable consumer goods and investment than for nondurable goods.

Introduction

The present day market situation in India is highly competitive across all the product segments. With the continuous evolution in the demographics and psychographics of the target consumers, the competitive marketsituation is becoming more and more complex. The ever changing customer preferences, rising consumerism, new entrants in the market, and continuously evolving technological innovations resulting in product differentiation in the short run which further resulting in shorter life cycles for durables particularly and also for other

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lifestyle products are adding new dimensions to already complex situation. The market situation and its outcome are becoming increasingly uncertain. In the light of this scenario, the organizations are becoming more and more desperate to hold the customers, to retain the market share and survival in this market industry. The scenario in the durable goods industry is equally challenging. The leading companies Whirlpool, LG, Samsung, Godrej, Voltas, Sony, Philips, Onida, Videocon, Panasonic etc., and others are introducing brands at various price points and have effectively segmented the market which has resulted in faster market expansion and penetration. Product differentiation and innovative marketing efforts have resulted in attracting more and more customers to their brands.

Key words: Acquisition, Brand, Consumer, Durable Goods, Standard of Living

Significance of the Study

The country is witnessing the creation of many new markets and a further expansion of the existing ones. The Consumer durables products purchased by consumers that are manufactured for long-term use, as conflict too many goods that are proposed for use in the short term. Consumer durables are intended to tolerate regular usage for several years or longer before replacing the required consumer product. Every household contains at least a few items that may be properly considered to be of a consumer durable nature. A combination of consumer depends upon lifestyles; income, product awareness and pricing have been instrumental in changing the pattern and amount of consumer expenditure leading to strong growth of consumer durables industry. Demographic, socio -economic and cultural status impact the buying behavior of consumers. It is a fact that in these aspects, the differences are decreasing progressively. Till these differences remain, the groups require different treatments. These allied questions call for scientific enquiry to find out the prospects of consumer behavior towards durable goods. Against this background, a humble attempt is made in this study with reference to Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu state in India.

Scope of the Study

The study aims at focusing on consumer behavior of durable goods in Tirunelveli district. Researcher limits its scope to selected consumer durables such as Air conditioners, Refrigerator, Television, Washing machine and, Computer. Hence, it is necessary to concentrate on consumers' perception, consumers' pre-purchase and post-purchase behavioural activities.

There are many sides of consumer behaviour that possibly need elaboration and how ever this study concentrates on individual consumer purchase behaviour regarding the purchase of consumer durable goods already stated. This research study is exploratory in nature. Moreover, the area of the study is confined to Tirunelveli district.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is ascertain to the socio-demographic characteristics of the customers of durable goods in Tirunelveli district.

Hypothesis

There is no relationship between personal factors of respondents and brand preferences of consumer durable goods.

Area of the Study

The present study aims at investigating the study on consumer behaviour of durable goods in Tirunelveli District. Tirunelveli district is located on the southern part of Tamilnadu. Tirunelveli is the headquarters of the district. A unique feature of this district is that it consists of all five geographical traditions of Tamil Literature. Kurunji (mountains), Mullai (forest), Marudham (paddy fields), Neithal (coastal) and Palai (desert).

Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu has been chosen as the area of study, which comprises of three revenue divisions namely, Tirunelveli, Cheranmadavi and Tenkasi. There are 15 taluks in this district. Out of the 15 taluks five taluks have been selected for this study. They are Ambasamudram, Nanguneri, Palayamkottai, Tenkasi and Sankarankovil taluks This study area was purposefully selected for two reasons. The first reason is that in these five taluks there are a large number of durable goods consumers and the second reason is a large number of durable goods sellers are in the study area.

Period of the Study

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data are collected for the period from April 2013 to March 2014. The secondary data are collected for 5 years and it covered the period from 2012 to 2017.

Sources of Data

The study is basically a field survey of the customers in Tirunelveli district. A structured questionnaire was administered to obtain relevant information from a sample of customers in Tirunelveli district. The data of the questionnaire survey was supplemented by data obtained by other methods of data collection such as formal and informal discussions with relevant government officers and Personal Data Base (PDB) and field sample collections.

Research Design

Tirunelveli is one of the main districts in Tamilnadu. On the basis of the pilot study and information obtained from dealers of Tirunelveli, purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents. In Tirunelveli district, five taluks namely Ambasamudram, Nanguneri, Palayamkottai, Tenkasi and Sankarankovil taluks were selected for the present study on the basis of large number of durable goods sellers and customer. The sample has the size of 500 respondents which consisted of businessmen, professional, employed people and retired people. The sample respondents were chosen from the selected five taluks, 100 samples were selected from each taluk in Tirunelveli district area. The respondents were met personally by the researcher at their residence, place of work, place of purchase etc. in order to collect the information.

Collection of Data

This study is empirical in nature. The study area was confined to Tirunelveli and sample size of the study was decided to be 500 respondents of Tirunelveli district. The sources of information are generally classified as primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected informally through structured questionnaire is order to collect the information for the purpose of indepth study. Questionnaire deals with personal information, product knowledge, purchasing period, process, buying habits, sources of information, factors of influence on decision making etc., regarding the purchase of consumer durable goods.

Analysis and Discussion

1.Age-wise Classification of the Respondents

Consumer behavior of sample consumers differs according to their age. Hence age is considered as an important factor for this study. The age-wise classification of the sample respondents is given below.

Table: 1 - Age-wise Classification of the Respondents

Age (in years)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 20	30	6.00
20-45	277	55.40
Above45	193	38.60
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

Majority of the respondents, that is 55.40 per cent belong to the age group of 20-45 years, 38.60 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of above 45 years and the remaining six per cent of the respondents are in the age of group of below 20 years. Majority (55.40per cent) of the respondents are in the age group 20-45 years.

2. Gender-wise Classification of the Respondents

The gender plays a vital role in the selection of consumer durables in any household. It is a known factor that both male and female consumers constitute the family. The habit of thrift is common both to male and female consumers. They save to meet their life expectations. The classification of respondents according to gender is presented in table.2 below.

Table: 2- Gender-wise Classification of the Respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	192	38.40
Female	308	61.60
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

The gender–wise classification shows that female consumers dominate among the respondents with 61.60 percent over the male consumers.

3. Working Women-wise Classification of the Respondents

The working women of the sample consumers of durable products is presented in table 3 below.

Table: 3 - Working Women-wise Classification of the Respondents

Working Women	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	186	60.39
No	122	39.61
Total	**308**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

The above table shows that out of 308 female respondents, 60.39 per cent respondents are working women and the remaining 39.61 per cent respondents are not working women.

4. Marital Status-wise Classification of the Respondents

Another important factor to determine consumer behavior of consumers is marital status. Marital Status is one of the factors which may influence them, the consumer behavior of unmarried woman / man is entirely different from that of a married couple. The marital status is one of the important social factors which influence the consuming behaviors of the respondents.

Table: 4 - Marital Status-wise Classification of the Respondents

Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Married	283	56.60
Unmarried	217	43.40
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

The above table shows that Marital Status wise classification. Out of 500 respondents, 56.60 per cent respondents are married and 43.40 per cent respondents are unmarried. It is inferred from the above analysis that the majority of the respondents were married.

5. Educational Qualification-wise Classification of the Respondents

Educational is a signification variable which determines the social status of the sample respondents. The educational status of the sample is given in the table 5.

Table: 5 - Educational Qualification-wise Classification of the Respondents

Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
No Formal Education	73	14.60
School Level	189	37.80
Degree/ Diploma	168	33.60
Professional Degree / Diploma	70	14.00
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

From the above table it is clear that majority 37.80 per cent of the respondents completed their education up to the school level, about 33.60 per cent of the respondents completed their degree/diploma, about 14.60 per cent of the respondents have no formal education and the remaining 14 per cent of the respondents completed their professional degree / diploma. It is observed that 37.80 per cent of the respondents completed their education up to the school level.

6. Occupational Status-wise Classification of the Respondents

Occupation is one of the important factors to determine the standard of living of an individual. People who are better employed or well placed in business have a status in society and accordingly they change their pattern of life. Occupation is one of the important variables which influence the consumers. Table 6 presents the occupational classification of selected respondents.

Table: 6 - Occupational Status-wise Classification of the Respondents

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Private Company	131	26.20
Self Employed	87	17.40
Government Sector	130	26.00
Home Maker	81	16.20
Professional	54	10.80
Student	17	3.40
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

There are 131 (26%) respondents who worked in private sector and 130 (26%) are in government sector .The farmers and businessmen included in the sample are self employed people who were 87 (17.40%), 81 respondents (16.20%) were home maker, 54 respondents (10.80%) were professional and 17 respondents with a share of 3.40 percent belonged to students category . So it is inferred that majority of the respondents were employees.

7. Residential Status-wise Classification of the Respondents

The area wise classification of respondents is analyzed in the following table.

Table.7 - Residential Status-wise Classification of the Respondents

Place	No of Respondents	Percentage
Urban	138	27.60
Semi Urban	213	42.60
Rural	149	29.80
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

The table shows that out of 500 respondents, 42.60 per cent of the respondents are in semi urban area, 29.80 per cent of the respondents are in rural area and 27.60 per cent of the respondents belong to urban area .Majority 42.60 per cent of the respondents are living in semi urban.

8. Monthly Income-wise Classification of the Respondents

Monthly income is one of the important factors to determine consumer behavior of durable goods purchase. The income of an individual depends on his personal background, his individual abilities, his education, lifestyle, and factors like the employment of the family women, the perception of durable goods. In the past it was considered as a luxury and a proof of a family's social status. As it reduces household chores to a great extent it is liked by the middle income group also. The distribution of respondents on the basis of their monthly income is as follows.

Table: 8 – Monthly Income-wise Classification of the Respondents

Monthly Income (in Rs.)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below Rs.10000	42	8.40
Rs.10001 - 20000	85	17.00
Rs.20001 - 30000	105	21.00
Rs.30001 - 40000	156	31.20
Above Rs. 40000	112	22.40
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

From the above table it is clear that out of 500 respondents, 31.20 per cent of the respondents having a monthly income between Rs.30001-40000, about 22.40 percent of the respondents earn above Rs.40000, 21 percent of the respondents earn between Rs.20001-Rs. 30000, about 17 percent of the respondents earn between Rs.10001-Rs.20000 and 8.40 percent of the respondents having less than Rs.10000. It is observed that majority of the respondents 31.20 percent earn a monthly income between Rs.30001-Rs.40000.

9. Type of Family-wise Classification of the Respondents

Under Indian family system, families are divided into two kinds namely, joint and nuclear. Normally the joint family is the more popular in villages, whereas the semi-urban and the urban mass prefer nuclear family system. Type of family will also determine the decision making process. The family purchase practices are very much influenced by the type of family, the family type of the respondents is shown in table 9 below.

Table: 9 - Type of Family-wise Classification of the Respondents

Type of Family	No of Respondents	Percentage
Nuclear	258	51.60
Joint family	242	48.40
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

The table shows the type of family. 51.60 percent of the respondents belong to nuclear type of family and the remaining 48.40 percent of the respondents belongs to joint family. Majority 51.60 per cent of the respondents are nuclear families.

10. Family Size-Wise Classification of the Respondents

Another deciding factor of consumer behavior is the number of members in the family. The family is not just a social group. It is also an earning consuming and decision making unit and it is of importance to the marketers because of the influence that family members have on purchase and consumption decisions. In purchase decisions, purchase roles or tasks are assigned and carried out by one and more family members. It is assumed that small families require less money for their day to day expenses than large families. Size of the family is divided into four kinds, namely those having less than 4 members, five members, six members, seven members and above seven members. It is essential to know the number of members in every respondents families the following table clearly indicated the family size of the respondents.

Table: 10 - Family Size-wise Classification of the Respondents

Size of Family	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Upto 4	170	34.00
5 members	150	30.00
6 members	101	20.20
Above 7 members	79	15.80
Total	**500**	**100.00**

Source: Primary Data.

The table shows the family size of the respondents. Out of 500 respondents, 34 percent of the respondents are having up to 4 members in their family, 30 percent of respondents are having 5 members in their family, 20.20 percent of respondents are having 6 members in their family and the remaining 15.80 percent of respondents are having above 7 members in their family. The table reveals that majority 34 percent of the respondents have up to 4 members in their family.

11. Products Possession of the Respondents

The durable goods selected for the study are Television, Air conditioner, Washing machine, Refrigerator and Computer. The sample respondents for the study did not possess all the five products. The following Table 4.11 shows the products Possession status of the respondents.

Table: 11 - Products Possession of the Respondents

Product	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Television	472	94.40
Air conditioner	206	41.20
Washing machine	305	61.00
Refrigerator	387	77.40
Computer	157	31.40

Source: Primary Data.

From the selected samples of 500, maximum 94.40 percent of the respondents own Television, 77.40 percent of the respondents have refrigerator, 61 percent of the respondents have washing machine, 41.20 percent of the respondents have air conditioner and only 31.40 percent of the respondents possess computer.

12. Brand Owned by the Respondents

The following Table 12 shows the brands possessed by the respondents.

Table : 12 - Brands Owned by the Respondents

Product	Brands Owned by the Respondents										
	Whirlpool	LG	Samsung	Godrej	Voltas	Philips	Sony	Onida	Videocon	Panasonic	Total
Television	10	25	109	5	-	135	50	105	30	3	472
Refrigerator	84	100	71	91	13	8	-	-	15	5	387
Washing machine	62	82	75	15	18	26	-	14	13	-	305
Air Conditioner	18	50	30	32	35	10	-	9	7	15	206
Computer	-	48	53	-	-	7	15	-	-	34	157

Source: Primary Data.

The above table shows the details of brands owned by the respondents. In the case of Television, majority of the respondents have Philips and the next place is got by Samsung. In the case of Refrigerator, most of the respondents own the brand LG and next owned brands are Godrej and Whirlpool. In the case of Washing machine, maximum of respondents own LG followed by Samsung and Whirlpool. In the case of Air conditioner, most of the respondents own the brand LG and next owned brands are Voltas and Godrej. In the case of Computer, majority of the respondents have Samsung and the next place is got by LG.

13. Period of Usage of the Products

The durable goods market has seen a paradigm shift in consumer behavior in the past decade. With rising disposable incomes, consumers are increasingly showing interest in these products (Ojha 2013). The following table 13 represents the usage of the selected durable goods by the respondents and it indicates that in the recent years, the products usage percentage is high.

Table: 13 - Period of Usage of the Products

Product		Product Using Period					Total
		Less than 2	2-4	4-6	6-8	Above 9	
Television	Frequency	125	98	90	80	79	472
	Percentage	26.48	20.76	19.07	16.95	16.74	100
Refrigerator	Frequency	145	92	85	32	33	387
	Percentage	37.47	23.77	21.96	8.27	8.53	100
Washing Machine	Frequency	96	70	62	45	32	305
	Percentage	31.48	22.95	20.33	14.75	10.49	100
Air Conditioner	Frequency	72	56	39	27	12	206
	Percentage	35.1	27.0	19.0	13.11	5.83	100
Computer	Frequency	57	45	28	16	11	157
	Percentage	36.94	28.66	17.83	10.19	7.01	100

Source: Primary Data.

The table shows that in the case of Television, 26.48 percent of the respondents are using television for the past 2 years. Small percentages (16.74percent) of the respondents have been using television for more than 8 years. In the case of refrigerator, 37.47 percent of the

respondents are using refrigerator for the past 2 years. A small percentage (8.53%) of the respondents have been using refrigerator for more than 8 years. In the case of washing machine, 31.48 percent of the respondents have been using washing machine for the past two years. In the case of air conditioner, 35.1percent of the respondents have been using washing machine for the past two years. Regarding computer also usage percentage is high in the past two years and small percentage (7.01%) of the respondents is only using air conditioner for more than 8 years.

The results indicate that in the past two years, the usage of the products viz television, refrigerator, washing machine, air conditioner and computer has increased when compared with previous years.

14. Purchase Initiator of Selected Durable Goods

In Indian Society, a transformation from traditionalism to modernism is taking place. Women working outside the homes are being encouraged. Today, it is female who influences the family purchase decision. In the purchase of the selected durable goods, which are used by the entire family unit, the children may initiate the purchases. According to Manoharan et al., (2012), family is considered as a decision making unit and a buying center for recognizing product needs. The following Table 14 indicates the initiates of purchases made by the respondents.

Table: 14 - Purchase Initiator of Selected Durable Goods

Product		Initiator of Purchase					Total
		Own (Male)	Own (Female)	Spouse	Parents	Children	
Television	Frequency	99	124	113	90	46	472
	Percentage	20.97	26.27	23.94	19.07	9.75	100
Refrigerator	Frequency	91	128	105	42	21	387
	Percentage	23.51	33.08	27.13	10.85	5.43	100
Washing machine	Frequency	46	116	68	65	10	305
	Percentage	15.08	38.03	22.30	21.31	3.28	100
Air	Frequency	64	53	32	24	33	206

conditioner	Percentage	31.17	25.73	15.53	11.65	16.02	100
Computer	Frequency	65	32	34	14	12	157
	Percentage	41.40	20.38	21.66	8.92	7.64	100

Source: Primary Data.

From the above table it is understood that the purchase of television, refrigerator and washing machine (26.27per cent, 33.08per cent, and 38.03 per cent) were initiated by female respondents. In the case of air conditioner (31.07per cent) and Computer (41.40%) of the purchases were initiated by the male respondents. In the purchase of the selected durable goods the spouses are playing role as purchase initiator.

15. Consumer Behaviour towards Durable Goods among Different Socio Economic Variables-ANOVA Test

Consumer behavior towards durable goods in Tirunelveli district has relationship with many socio-economic variables. These variables have influence on consumer behavior towards durable goods. Consumer behavior towards durable goods is analyzed in terms of the demographic variables. The result of 'ANOVA' test is presented in table

Table: 15 - Consumer Behaviour towards Durable Goods among Different Socio Economic Variables-ANOVA Test

Demographic Variables	Source of Variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square Variance	'F' Value	'P' Value	Remarks at 5% level
Age	Between Groups	3	178.54	59.5133		0.452	NS
	Within Groups	497	3247.52	6.53	9.108		
	Total	500	3426.06				
Gender	Between Groups	2	132.56	66.28		0.327	NS
	Within Groups	498	3578.45	7.19	9.224		
	Total	500	3711.01				

Marital Status	Between Groups	2	166.57	83.285		0.118	NS
	Within Groups	498	6879.21	13.81	6.029		
	Total	500	7045.78				
Occupation	Between Groups	6	648.87	108.145		0.345	NS
	Within Groups	97	5287.23	54.51	1.984		
	Total	103	5936.1				
Educational Qualification	Between Groups	4	201.65	50.4125		0.214	NS
	Within Groups	496	5798.12	11.69	4.313		
	Total	500	6033.547				
Monthly Income	Between Groups	5	163.24	32.648		0.321	NS
	Within Groups	495	4187.65	8.46	3.859		
	Total	500	4350.89				
Residential Area	Between Groups	3	161.25	53.75		0.368	NS
	Within Groups	497	3884.56	7.82	6.877		
	Total	500	4045.81				
Type of Family	Between Groups	2	234.58	117.29		0.345	NS
	Within Groups	498	7245.33	14.55	8.062		
	Total	500	7479.91				
Size of Family	Between Groups	4	198.67	49.6675		0.214	NS
	Within Groups	496	5748.56	11.59	4.285		
	Total	500	5947.23				

It is inferred from the above Table that the obtained value of F for demographic variable such as age (9.108), gender (9.224), marital status (6.029), occupation (1.984), educational qualification (4.313), monthly income (3.859), residential area (6.877), type of family (8.062) and size of family (4.285) are greater than the table value. So, there is significant relationship between consumer behavior towards purchase of durable goods and the socio-economic variables in the study area.

16. Summary

The study reveals that majority 55.40 percent of the respondents are in the age group 20-45 years. The female consumers dominate among the respondents with 61.60 percent over the

male consumers and majority 37.80 percent of the respondents completed their education up to school level. Further, it is observed that majority of the respondents 31.20 percent earn a monthly income between Rs.30,001-Rs.40,000.

Further, the demographic variable such as age (9.108), gender (9.224), marital status (6.029), occupation (1.984), educational qualification (4.313), monthly income (3.859), residential area (6.877), type of family (8.062) and size of family (4.285) are greater than the table value. So, there is significant relationship between consumer behavior towards purchase of durable goods and the socio-economic variables in the study area.

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