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A study on rural consumer behaviour towards durable goods with special reference to rural areas in Bengaluru, Karnataka State

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Abstract

The growth of durable goods in the Indian consumer market is influenced by a number of variables, such as the emergence of middle-class consumers, the expansion of companies' services and manufacturing in the infrastructure sector, and similar factors. Rising demand primarily comes from residents of semi-urban and rural areas, driven by rising incomes, access to communication and information technology, and government policies promoting rural development. Consequently, many prominent Indian and multinational companies are expanding their reach into rural India. First-time purchasers, not the replacement market, are the main source of demand in rural areas.

This study examines the consumer behaviour of rural people in the context of durable goods; A primary field survey provided the data for this study, which was used to anticipate demand. A random sample of consumers in rural Bangalore participated in the study's opinion surveys. In the rural areas, researchers observed that product availability, price and awareness were key determinants in consumer choice.

Subject Classification: *62J05, 62H20, 91B42.*

Keywords: *Rural india, Consumer behaviour, Durable products, Brand awareness.*

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1. Introduction

The Oxford English Dictionary defines consumer behaviour as "The processes of decision making and physical actions of consumers in the purchase, evaluation, use and sale of products and services. "Buying behavior" is defined by Webster as "any emotional, interpersonal, and physical behavior of a potential consumer in learning about, assessing, acquiring, utilizing, and recommending a product or service."

Consumer behavior refers to how people, groups, or cultures choose to buy and use various goods and services at different times and in different ways. The consumer durables industry has changed dramatically in the last several decades. The consumer habits have changed dramatically due to various reasons such as rising disposable income, the popularity of advertising and the growing significance of these sectors. Washing machines, televisions, mixers, fridges, laptops, grinders, water purifiers, cell phones, microwaves, and air conditioners are all examples of long-lasting devices. A customer is a person who buys, thinks about products and services he/she wants to purchase, and assesses their functionality.

In the contemporary business environment, the brand is a company's most valuable asset. There is a lot of competition around, and marketers may find it difficult to be memorable in ways that customers can appreciate. A company's brand count and quality are proportional to its market value. How long the firm can stay in this market is an open issue. Good branding can help address this question. Branding provides a company with a story and an identity. Good branding can help a company improve its revenue, sales, and quality. Branding ultimately is designed to expand market share.

A literature review indicates that many studies have examined the factors driving rising demand in rural areas. As rural purchases grow, it is important to understand these customers' mindsets and emotions about buying name-brand products. One major objective of this study is to examine rural consumers' purchase decisions, brand perceptions, and brand loyalty.

2. Literature Reviews

[1] A study found that customers' views on product identification and quality vs. superiority significantly influenced their purchasing decisions. The research's main focus was on how various factors affected consumers' decisions to buy. These factors included how customers felt

about the product's quality, how much advertising they saw, how devoted they were to the brand, and how well they remembered key brand attributes. The researchers used factor analysis and regression analysis to evaluate this hypothesis.

The survey's goal was to identify the variables influencing Bhavnagar, India citizens' purchases of durable goods as well as the information sources they consult. Manufacturers may boost sales of consumer products by better understanding customer wants, according to the survey, which also found that competition in the consumer durables business is on the rise. Brand recognition, warranty, pricing, and after-sale service rank highest among the criteria influencing long-term purchases [2]. Additionally, some respondents brought up hair oil in a survey of rural consumers' shopping patterns. The main goal of the study was to identify the factors that affect hair oil purchases. Using non-probability convenience sampling, the researchers gathered data from 150 respondents using descriptive research methodologies. The percentage technique was used to quantify the components. Fragrance was determined to be the most important element, with package quality, quantity of packets, and price following closely after. While choosing a hair oil, the majority of respondents ranked affordability higher than brand loyalty or ease of use [3].

Researchers looked at the cultural factors that influence customer loyalty in rural areas. It used regression and factor analysis to look at how culture affects brand loyalty. Study participants' morals, socialness, beliefs, and culture were identified as crucial cultural variables that facilitate MNCs' access to rural markets. The study also showed that brand loyalty may be more significantly impacted by the addition of additional elements [4]. In addition, the correlation between brand loyalty and consumer behavior was examined in a study. Advertising, brand image, and trust all have a role in shaping the link, as shown. The results showed that consumer loyalty and purchase decisions are positively impacted by brand trust, popularity, and advertising influence. The younger generation today is more inclined to buy and believe in name brands due to the opinions of friends. Advertising strongly influences consumer behaviour. Commercials have the power to affect how well a business does financially, how loyal customers are to the brand, and how trustworthy they think the brand is [5].

The research has been conducted on fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in Mysore, Karnataka. The sample consisted of 50 respondents who were randomly selected from the consumers in the metropolitan

areas, and were limited to 100 respondents. Additionally, the authors think that advertising improves people's lives in both rural and urban places by motivating customers to purchase better goods. Establishing a trademark will also aid in preventing the mass selling of knockoffs in rural areas. [6] In the study of consumer behaviour in rural areas, a researcher came up with a finding that was interesting. They studied a sample of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) and the study design encompassed advertisements, product availability, offers, discounts, etc. The number of sales a fast-moving consumer good brand can make is directly proportional to how familiar with the brand it is. Rural consumers are adapting their consumption habits to suit shifting preferences [7]. Researchers studied people's behaviour when buying long-lasting products. In order to measure customer behavior, the study looked at the link between monetary rewards, quality, after-sales support, brand, and technology. The research shows Samsung is a clear winner compared to other major home appliance manufacturers. Customers familiar with a brand do not change their choice because of money or time. When shopping for kitchen and laundry appliances, many people make their decisions based on advertisements. Television has become a major medium of public awareness. This may indicate higher literacy rates and better communication, as well as customers' preference for branded products for later use [8].

Varma et al. [9] studied changing attitudes and behaviours among customers and retailers toward electronic devices. The survey data collected from both customers and retailers was purely primary. The research also said that televisions and refrigerators are no longer considered luxuries but necessities. The study found that sales and other forms of advertising strongly influence buyers' final brand choice. Merchants most often use freebies to acquire customers. Advertising efforts must include print media such as fliers and paper. Staff training was adequate for most salespeople. When the offers are made, there are hardly any exceptions, and every store follows suit.

3. Methodology

3.1 *Materials and Methods*

Long-term product consumers who lived on Bangalore's rural outskirts made up the sample. There were 242 respondents in all. Both primary and secondary sources of information were used in the data

analysis of the study. The researchers carried out a field survey to collect primary data. Consumer durable goods are at the heart of the consumer behavior characteristics discussed here. These include things like doing product research, learning about the brand, feeling pressured to buy, making the purchase, being satisfied with the purchase, and showing brand loyalty. India's enormous population offers strong potential for consumer durable sales. For this reason, the researcher has concentrated on four durable goods. The study selected air coolers, refrigerators, washing machines, and televisions.

3.2 *Study objectives:*

1. Discuss the economic and social factors of the customers' group.
2. Understand factors that can affect consumers' purchases of durable goods.

3.3 *Research Hypotheses*

H0: In rural areas, customers' purchasing decisions are not significantly influenced by availability, affordability (price), awareness, and brand loyalty.

H1: In rural areas, customers' purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by availability, affordability (price), awareness, and brand loyalty.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 *Descriptive Analysis:*

As seen in Table 1, 190 people identified as male (78.5%) and 52 people identified as female (21.4%). The age groups between 26 and 35 years old made up the largest group with 39.66% (96) of the total population. In addition, 100 respondents (41.32%) said that they had finished their undergraduate degrees. This information gives an idea of the average age and educational background of decision-makers.

Over one-third of study participants (36.78%, n = 89) had a connection to agriculture. Also, 14.46% (n = 35) identified as professionals. Additionally, 49.59% (n = 120) had a monthly income between 20k to 30k (Table 1).

Table 1
Socio-Economic Status

Quantity	Matters	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	190	78.5
	Female	52	21.4
Age (Years)	Below 25	25	10.33
	26-35	96	39.66
	36-45	55	22.72
	Over 46	66	27.27
Education	Basic/Secondary	12	4.96
	Undergraduates	100	41.32
	Master's	45	18.59
	Other	85	35.12
	Housewife	58	23.97
	Agriculture	89	36.78
	Self-employed	60	24.79
	Professional	35	14.46
Income	Below 20000	40	16.53
	20000-30000	120	49.59
	Above 30000	82	33.88

Source: Primary Survey

4.2 *Correlation analysis*

All variables related to factors influencing consumer behaviour are significantly and positively correlated, with p-values below 0.05 (Table 2).

Table 2
Pearson Correlation

		CB	Awareness	Availability	Affordability	Brand loyalty
CB	Correlation	1	0.583	0.531	0.585	0.549
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Awareness	Correlation	0.583	1	0.411	0.544	0.521
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
Availability	Pearson Correlation	0.531	0.411	1.00	0.558	0.521
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
Affordability	Pearson Correlation	.0585	0.544	0.558	1.00	0.586
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
Brand loyalty	Pearson Correlation	0.549	0.521	0.521	0.586	1.00
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Source: Primary survey						

The associations between consumer behavior (CB) and the independent variables (awareness, availability, affordability, and brand loyalty) were investigated using a Pearson correlation analysis. 242 is the sample size (N). A positive and statistically significant correlation between all variables is suggested by a p-value of less than 0.01, which denotes statistical significance at the 1% (2-tailed) level. This shows a positive correlation between the two variables, meaning that as one rises, the other rises too, and vice versa. Consumer behavior is somewhat positively correlated with awareness (r = 0.583); that is, the higher awareness is, the better consumer behaviour is. The value of the correlation with affordability is r = 0.585, which is one of the highest of the model, indicating its high impact. Consumer behaviour is also correlated with brand loyalty (r = 0.549) which indicates that loyal consumers are more likely to exhibit positive purchasing behaviour. The availability and awareness are strongly positively correlated. (r = 0.411), meaning that when market awareness is

increased, the visibility and availability of the product may also be improved.

The availability is positively associated with affordability (r = 0.558) and brand loyalty (r = 0.521). This implies that they are more inclined to stick with the brands which are consistently available and reasonably priced.

4.3 *Multiple Regression*

Table 3
ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	68.146	2.00	17.037	61.192	**0.000**
	Residual	69.046	238	0.278		
	Total	137.192	242			

Source: Primary Survey

To assess the overall relevance and fit of the regression model that investigated variables impacting customer behavior, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out (Table 3). The ANOVA table shows whether all of the independent factors account for a substantial amount of the variance in the dependent variable. The model's Regression Sum of Squares (SSR) is 68.146, and this value represents the amount of variation in consumer behaviour accounted for by the predictors in the model. The variance in the data that the model cannot account for is represented by the Residual Sum of Squares (SSE), which is 69.046. Total Sum of Squares (SST) is 137.192 and it represents the variation in consumer behaviour. The ANOVA table indicates an F-value of 61.192, which is fairly high. The larger the F-value, the more important the independent variables are to predict consumer behaviour. The significance level is less than 0.05 when the p-value is less than 0.000. The model is deemed significant at the 1% level of significance. ⇑Consequently, the null hypothesis (H0) that "the independent variables do not significantly influence consumer behaviour" is rejected, supporting the alternative hypothesis (H1).

One of the most important aspects of the analysis is the regression coefficients or b values can show how strongly independent factors affect the dependent variable (Table 4). The stronger the b value, the greater the influence of the predictor. The findings show that availability has a large

Table 4
Coefficients of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.344	0.269		1.278	0.202
	Awareness	0.318	0.060	0.204	5.281	0.000
	Availability	0.306	0.060	0.298	3.586	0.000
	Affordability	0.239	0.069	0.216	3.455	0.001
	Brand loyalty	0.171	0.064	0.161	2.667	0.008
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Behaviour						

Source: Primary Survey

influence on consumers' decisions regarding durable goods (DG) and is particularly relevant in rural markets. Consumers are more interested in the availability of items than in brand awareness, brand loyalty, and prices because typical b-value is 0.298. Affordability (b=0.216, p=0.00), Awareness (b=0.204, p=0.000), and Brand Loyalty (b=0.161, p=0.008) are additional significant factors. With t values larger than 1.96 and p values less than 0.05, every factor is statistically significant. These findings underscore the importance of understanding what influences customers' durable goods choices. Based on the unstandardized coefficients in Table 4, the regression equation is: CB = 0.344 + 0.318 (Awareness) + 0.306 (Availability) + 0.239 (Affordability) + 0.171 (Brand Loyalty). These factors strongly influence consumer behaviour in rural areas toward durable products.

Table 5
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.721	0.520	0.512	0.52196
a. Predictors: (Constant)				

Table 5 shows a substantial relationship, with a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.721. R2 = 0.520. Thus, the independent factors explain

52% of the variance in customer purchasing behavior. Together, awareness, availability, affordability, and brand loyalty explain 52% of the variance in durable goods purchasing behaviour in rural locations; R = 0.721 is the multiple correlation coefficient, not the share of variance explained. The research area shows a notable correlation between accessibility, brand loyalty, affordability, brand awareness, product availability, and consumer purchasing behaviour.

4.4 *Discussion and Conclusion:*

The information acquired also reflects what consumers have learnt about the company over time through personal experience. This helps ensure that the target audience receives the overall brand knowledge and image. Customers are therefore more inclined to research a product, expand their encoding capacity, and generate higher-quality encoded data. Evaluation criteria may typically be based on features or attributes on customer expectations or price. Many people prefer automatic washing machines as labour-saving appliances.

5. Conclusion

Rural consumers require durable and reliable appliances. They are not totally trusting of products from the metropolitan market, however. They also require hard-wearing goods which can cope with the conditions of the countryside. Manufacturers marketing products to rural areas need to be sensitive to local conditions and people's tastes. Understanding these areas is important before marketing and selling to people in rural areas. The urban market is mature and saturated, but the rural market for consumer durables is still growing.

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