

International Journal of Engineering Research and Science & Technology

www.ijerst.org

ISSN : 2319-5991

Vol. 11 No. 1 (2015)



ijerst.editor@gmail.com
editor@ijerst.com

Research Paper

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS WASHING MACHINES

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ABSTRACT

In the modern technological world many innovations and new apparatus are invented by the man for reducing the work burden of the layman. Especially a lot of home appliances are introduced to save the valuable time of the working women. Because in the hurry busy world both husband and wife are working. So the modern women are not having sufficient time to do domestic work like washing their dresses. In this situation washing machine becomes an integral part of their home. The washing machine is not only to reduce their physical work but also save gives quality washing. In a competitive world many well reputed companies manufacture various brands washing machine with varying features to cater to diverse need of consumer. The consumers are not in a position to identify the good brand of a washing machine because of its technical features. Consumer's opinion about the washing machine is paramount importance, so a study of this kind helps the customer to know the features available to the various brands.

Key Word: Brand Image, Home Appliances, Lay man, Washing Machine.

Received: 05-08-2015

Accepted: 12-09-2015

Published: 19-09-2015

INTRODUCTION

In the modern scientific era, numerous home appliances have been developed to enable individuals to perform household tasks with greater ease and comfort. In contemporary life, both men and women are employed across various sectors, leading to increased physical and mental strain. To address these challenges, households increasingly rely on home appliances to reduce physical effort, save time, and alleviate mental stress. In this context, the washing machine has emerged as one of the most essential household appliances.

In earlier years, the demand for washing machines in India was relatively low. However, with the entry of competitively priced Japanese products, particularly portable models, the demand for washing machines has increased significantly. In today's competitive market, many well-established companies manufacture washing machines under various brand names, offering a wide range of features

to attract consumers. The Indian domestic market is currently dominated by washing machines produced through collaborations with foreign companies such as Whirlpool and General Electric from the USA, Bosch-Siemens from Germany, and Sharp and Sanyo from Japan. Middle-class consumers constitute the primary target segment for these products. To appeal to this group, manufacturers offer multiple models with varying features, capacities, and price ranges. This study focuses on examining the attitudes of washing machine users.

Statement of the Problem

With the increasing participation of women in the workforce in India, the time available for performing manual household chores has significantly reduced. Home appliances have become highly beneficial for both working women and homemakers by enabling household tasks to be completed more efficiently and conveniently. As the social and

economic status of women continues to evolve, the demand for washing machines in India has also undergone substantial transformation.

At present, a wide variety of washing machine brands are available in the Indian market, catering to almost all segments of society. However, consumers often face difficulty in identifying the most suitable brand and selecting a particular product. This study aims to provide a clear understanding of the most popular washing machine brands currently available in the market. It also examines the level of satisfaction among consumers and identifies the factors influencing their purchase decisions. The findings of this study will help consumers make informed choices and assist marketers in understanding consumer preferences.

Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on evaluating consumers' brand preferences for washing machines in Chandigarh. It also seeks to identify the problems encountered by consumers and examine the factors that influence their choice of washing machine brands.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of the study are as follows:

To identify the brand preference of consumers regarding washing machines.

To examine the factors influencing consumers' choice of washing machines.

To analyze the factors contributing to the popularity of different washing machine brands.

To assess the level of satisfaction among washing machine users.

To identify the problems faced by consumers in using washing machines.

Hypothesis

Analysis and Interpretation

1.1 Reasons for Preferring Washing Machines

The study examines the reasons that influence consumers to purchase washing machines. These reasons vary among respondents based on their individual needs and preferences. The various reasons for purchasing washing machines are presented in Table 1.1.

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

There is a significant relationship between socio-economic factors and the level of consumer satisfaction.

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design.

Methodology

Primary Data

Primary data were collected directly from consumers using a well-structured interview schedule. The interviews were conducted personally by the researcher to ensure accuracy and reliability of responses. Efforts were made to minimize respondent errors by clearly explaining the purpose and importance of the study, thereby encouraging participants to provide accurate and complete information.

Secondary Data

Secondary data form an essential component of the study and provide valuable insights into key variables relevant to the research. These data were collected from various sources such as books, journals, newspapers, periodicals, unpublished reports, and previous research studies.

Sampling Design

A sampling design was formulated to collect data from consumers in Chandigarh. Since the total number of washing machine users in the area is relatively large and time constraints limited extensive data collection, the researcher adopted the convenience sampling technique. A sample of 150 consumers was selected for the study.

Statistical Tools

Various statistical tools were employed to analyze both primary and secondary data. The analysis involved detailed calculations and computations. Descriptive tools such as tables and percentages were used, along with the Chi-square test to determine the significance of the results.

Table 1.1
Reasons For Purchasing Washing Machine

SL.No.	Reasons	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	To Save time	45	30.00
2.	Easy to Wash	56	37.33
3.	Status	12	8.00
4.	To reduce work	23	15.33
5.	Convenient	14	9.34
Total		150	100

Source: Primary Data

It is evident from Table 1.1 that 30 per cent of the respondents prefer washing machines to save time spent on washing clothes. About 37.33 per cent of the respondents use washing machines because they make washing clothes easier, while 8 per cent purchase them to maintain social status. Additionally, 15.33 per cent of the respondents prefer washing machines to reduce their workload, and the remaining 9.34 per cent use them for convenience.

Brand Preference of Washing Machines

Washing machines are available in the market under numerous brand names, offering a wide range of options to consumers. As a result, consumers often find it challenging to select a particular brand from the many alternatives available. To address this issue, the researcher collected information on the brands preferred by consumers, and the findings are presented in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2
Brand Preference of Washing Machine

Sl.No.	Brand of Washing Machine	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Videocon	20	13.33
2	Samsung	23	15.33
3	BPL	21	14.00
4	Whirlpool	33	22.00
5	L.G.	41	27.34
6	IFB	12	8.00
	Total	150	100

Source: Primary Data

It is observed from the above table that, out of the 150 respondents, 27.34 per cent prefer LG washing machines, followed by Whirlpool with 22 per cent. Samsung is preferred by 15.33 per cent of the respondents, while 14 per cent intend to purchase BPL. Additionally, 13.33 per cent of consumer's favour Videocon, and the remaining 8 per cent of respondents use IFB washing machines.

Reasons for Preferring a Particular Brand

Consumers' preference for a particular brand is influenced by several factors. Brand choice is determined by attributes such as price, quality, performance, technological advancement, and other

related features. To identify the reasons for selecting specific brands, the researcher gathered information from consumers, and the results are presented in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3
Reasons for Preferring Particular Brand

Sl.No.	Reasons	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Performance	30	20.00
2	Price	38	26.00
3	Advertisement	41	27.00
4	Electricity Consumption	26	17.00
5	Water Consumption	15	10.00
	Total	150	100.00

Source: Primary Data

It is evident from Table 1.3 that 20 per cent of the respondents are attracted by the performance of the washing machine. Advertisements influence 27 per cent of the respondents, while 26 per cent prefer a particular brand due to its price compared to other brands. Furthermore, 17 per cent of the respondents consider electricity consumption as an important factor, and the remaining 10 per cent prefer a brand based on its level of water consumption.

Factors Influencing Consumers

Several factors influence consumers in selecting a particular washing machine brand. To identify these influencing factors, the study analyzed consumer responses using the ranking method. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4 Factors Influencing

S. No.	Factors	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total
1.	Brand Image	42	54	39	15	-	-	150
2.	Price	39	33	48	30	-	-	150
3.	Model and Color	30	27	27	48	18	-	150
4.	Technology Used	27	18	21	15	33	36	150
5.	Advertisement	6	9	6	12	45	72	150
6.	Guarantee and After Sales Services	6	9	9	30	54	42	150
	Total	150	150	150	150	150	150	

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.4 presents the ranking analysis of factors influencing consumer choice. Among the various factors considered, brand image ranks first, followed by price in the second position. After-sales service occupies the third rank, while the technology used in the product is ranked fourth. Advertisement and models and colour are placed in the fifth and sixth ranks, respectively.

Factors Influencing Consumers (Customer Satisfaction)

Every consumer seeks to maximize their level of satisfaction, and higher satisfaction often leads to brand loyalty. Accordingly, the researcher collected information on consumers' levels of satisfaction with their chosen washing machine brands. The distribution of respondents based on their opinions regarding satisfaction levels is presented in Table 1.5.

Table 1.5 Level of Satisfaction

Sl.No.	Satisfaction Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Satisfied	110	73.33
2	Partly Satisfied	34	22.67
3	Dissatisfied	6	4.00
	Total	150	100.00

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.5 reveals that 73.33 per cent of the respondents are highly satisfied with their chosen brand, while 22.67 per cent are partially satisfied. The remaining 4 per cent of the respondents are dissatisfied with their brand.

Testing of Hypothesis

To examine the relationship between socio-economic factors and the level of consumer satisfaction, the Chi-square test was employed for hypothesis testing.

Table 1.5 (a) Chi Square Table

Socio-Economic Factors	Chi Square Value (Calculated Value)	Table Value	Degree of freedom	Inference
Age	4.56	15.50	8	Accepted
Sex	0.51	5.99	2	Accepted
Marital Status	2.22	5.99	2	Accepted
Income	7.13	12.59	6	Accepted

At the 5 per cent level of significance, the calculated value for the socio-economic factors is less than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Result

Based on the hypothesis testing, it is evident that there is a significant relationship between advertisement and consumer attitude.

Suggestions

Since most consumers expect high quality, manufacturers should adopt the latest technology to enhance the quality of washing machines, thereby improving their marketability.

In the modern business environment, advertising is essential for creating product awareness. Advertisements should clearly highlight product features and avoid providing misleading information.

Washing machines may be packaged in durable and reusable containers, which can help attract consumers and contribute to increased sales.

As many customers consider product demonstrations and after-sales service to be

important, companies should focus on providing efficient and reliable after-sales services to enhance customer satisfaction.

Many people lack adequate knowledge about washing machines, their usage, and spare parts. Therefore, proper awareness should be created among the public through advertisements or other suitable media.

CONCLUSION

In the present-day market, a wide variety of washing machines are available to consumers. Customers place significant importance on product quality and efficient after-sales service when making purchasing decisions. Hence, manufacturers must focus on producing high-quality washing machines to remain competitive. The study clearly indicates that effective television advertisements play a major role in creating awareness about new brands and their features. It also reveals that consumers behave rationally while making purchase decisions. Therefore, manufacturing companies should carefully consider consumer preferences and expectations while designing and offering products to enhance customer satisfaction and overall welfare.

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