

**A STUDY ON THE PERCEPTION OF WOMEN CONSUMER'S IN SELECTED WHITE GOODS  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KARUR**

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**ABSTRACT**

The consumer now exhibits a totally different behavior what they used to do in a regulated market. Now-a-days seller is with very difficult task that to make purchaser to purchase goods/services. Today the Indian urban woman is an active pattern in the family. She is the major factors in all purchase decisions of her family. She has acquired a place in the society by virtue of her education and employment. Indian manufacturers realized the need of her patronage and hence communicate with her and try to convince her through every possible media. They plan the marketing strategy to attract this segment, satisfy the needs and retain them. This paper is with objectives to know the socio economic profile of the selected women consumers, to identify the factors influencing the women consumer's in the purchasing of white goods and to examine the problem faced by the women while purchasing white goods. The study area was confined to Karur City and the sample has been chooses there from. A minor pilot work had been done for selection of easily available and more utilized white goods in Karur City.

The study concludes that the competitive market provides opportunity on one hand and threats on the other hand to both the consumer segment of women and products of the product. It is quite important to improve core product with value addition to enrich customer satisfaction more in the similar price range. Not only quality improvements but improvement in after sales service can develop and replace demand for white goods as well as for replacement of the products.

**Keywords:** Consumer Behaviour, Purchase, Globalization, Women.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Today consumers have many options and are much better equipped with information to choose from these available options. The consumer now exhibits a totally different behavior what they used to do in a regulated market. In the present context, the consumers get much information at hand due to the information revolution. Media (electronic and print), TV, Radio and satellite communication have made easy to consumers to choose the best products available in the market for their use. The marketers have to play a key role in attracting the potential buyers in favor of their products. The buying decision varies as per the information available with the women consumer before buying a particular product. Information available through Internet with the help of cable TV has created a new dimension in making decision before the buying any product. Thus, the decision of buyers depends a lot on the information available with the buyers. All the purchases made by a family follow a certain decision making process. The character and the extent of interaction between a husband and wife present an extremely important dimension in the decision making process. No sale can be effective unless a favorable decision is made by a buyer towards a particular product of a company. Now-a-days seller is with very difficult task that to make purchaser to purchase goods/services. Today the Indian urban woman is an active pattern in the family. She is the major factors in all purchase decisions of her family. She has acquired a place in the society by virtue of her education and employment. Indian manufacturers realized the need of her patronage and hence communicate with her and try to convince her through every possible media. They plan the marketing strategy to attract this segment, satisfy the needs and retain them.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To study the socio economic profile of the selected women consumers.
2. To identify the factors influencing the women consumer's in the purchasing of white goods.
3. To examine the problem faced by the women while purchasing white goods.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In the beginning of the research, on pilot work to identify major areas of women consumer behavior in white goods was carried out. It helps to take a lead to study women consumer's behavior for white goods in study area. For this secondary data has carried out with the utilization of available books, business magazines, journals, newspapers, annual reports and newsletters of different companies, web sites etc. Also primary data were collected informally for the purpose of the pilot study. To study any aspects of consumer behavior, it is required to use a proper research method. The study area was confined to Karur City and the sample has been chooses there from.

From the universe of total population of Karur city, the households those paying house tax to the Karur Municipal Corporation were identified as the population for the purpose of this study. From the above population every household utilizing consumer durable white goods were defined as sampling unit for the purpose of the study. Sample size of the study was decided to be 350 women respondents of Karur city, from the total tax payers and households utilizing white goods residing within the limits of Karur Municipal Corporation. Primary data is the information collected or generated by the researcher for the purpose of the project immediately at hand. Questionnaires are used to collect this primary data. Questionnaire deals with the personal information, product knowledge, purchasing period, process, buying habits, sources of information, influence of different people on decision making etc., regarding the purchase of white goods. A minor pilot work had been done for selection of easily available and more utilized white goods in Karur City.

### **REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SUBJECT**

K. Marichamy.k (2013) made an attempt to study “Consumer Behaviour of Women with special reference to durable goods in Madurai City”. In this research study, the consumer behavior was analyzed in respect of their purchase of durable goods in Madurai city. Madurai city one of the biggest districts of Tamilnadu with varied demographic population, culture, religion and employment. There are many show rooms and dealers dealing with variety of consumer durable products who compete with each other for sale. This city is considered to the hub for consumer durables for Tamilnadu and hence companies try to sell the consumer durables both to retailers and ultimate consumers through their creative marketing practices. The most important segment for consumer durables is women flocks that is large in number and have varied taste and preferences. Thus the consumer behavior to the consumer durables changes from time to time owing to their preferences in the available products in the market.

Dr. Saravanakumar .S and Nithyadevi.M (2016) stated in their article regarding Consumer Behaviour Of Women In Durable Goods. This study suggested Since the product is widely available, the sellers must improve the quality of the products. Marketers should focus their efforts to increase the level of consumer. satisfaction through initiating modifications in product related issues like price, design and brand image. Most of the women consumers buy for credit facilities arranged by the same. This study concludes that the competitive market provides opportunity on one hand and threats on the other hand to both the consumer segment of women and products of the product.

RohitS.Kunder and M.Devaraj, (2010) made an attempt to study the “Changing Patterns of Food Consumption in Karnataka”. This analysis points out that the consumption basket of the rural and urban households is getting diversified. With urbanization the non-cereal / animal product food is emerging as an important source of nutrition. The food gap between urban and rural masses are widening much and within themselves as well. Agricultural policies needs framed in a pragmatic manner to have impact on the structure of production, processing, marketing system to ensure intersect oral food security of the state.

Lilly J., (2010) made an attempt to study, “Customer Perception and Preference towards Branded Products with special Reference to Television sets”. This study suggested that pricing, promotion deals and product availability, all have tremendous impact on the position of the brand in the consumer's preference set. This study concludes that the demographic valuable such as age, gender, educational qualifications are quite popular with the rural folks.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research study aims at identifying the consumer preference of women with special reference to white goods in Karur City. The following are the outcomes from the above said study;

**Table – 1**  
**Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents**

S.No.	Type	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Age	Up to 40 years	217	72
		More than 40 years	133	38
		<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>100</b>
2	Occupation	Service	157	45
		Business	103	29
		Profession	90	26
		<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>100</b>
3	Education	Up to HSC	87	25
		Graduate	109	31
		Post Graduate	91	26
		Others	63	18
		<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>100</b>
4	Type of family	Joint family	161	46
		Nuclear family	189	54
		<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>100</b>
5	Monthly Income	Up to Rs. 15,000	94	27
		Rs. 15,001 – Rs. 25,000	135	38
		Rs. 25,001 – Rs. 35,000	76	22
		Rs. 35,001	45	13

		<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>100</b>
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### I. Findings related to the socio-economic profile of the respondents:

- Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 40. This age group is very common as the family responsibility in the Indian context emerges from this age group.
- Majority of the respondents are home makers and part of them are involved in business and service Sectors like textile show rooms, beauty parlours, nursing, teaching and bank employees.
- Most of the respondents are graduates which show that the educated people are more involved in the Purchase of consumer durables than the other segments. It may be a reason that the study area is a corporation which mostly has educated population.
- Majority of the respondents live in a nuclear family style. The nuclear family style has become the order of the day particularly in cities like Karur. The reason behind this is that there is an employment potential available to the family head or the respondents only in cities.
- The family income of the respondents is observed between Rs. 15,001 – Rs. 25,000. The nominal income prevailing in Indian context is the above stated income range.
- Most of the respondents purchase through authorized dealers. The dealers through their attractive advertisements in the news papers, distribution of pamphlets, representatives meeting at the door steps of the customers, etc., make the buyers to rely on the authorized dealers and move on to purchase their choice of goods to their houses.

**Table – 2**

#### **Factors influencing the purchase of white goods (Factor analysis)**

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1.	Company Advertising	.985	First
2.	Company Reputations	.740	
3.	Friends Advice	.645	
4.	Relative Advice	.620	
5.	Quality of the Product	.890	Second
6.	Free Gift	.575	
7.	Price	.555	

8.	Retailers Advice	.780	Third
9.	Joint Decision of Family	.620	
10.	Credit Facilities	.670	

## II. Findings related to the factors influencing the purchase of white goods:

- There are ten factors identified to be influencing the purchase of white goods by women consumers. Of all these the most dominating factor is observed to be company's advertising followed by the quality of the product and the joint decision of the family. The other factors are not found to be influencing the purchase of white goods.
- Companies owing to competition try to enter into the minds of the consumers through various convenient method of influencing women segment that are the prime source of purchase of house hold goods. The door step interactive advertisements through the sales representatives convince the women flock to a larger extent and make them to buy the product by all means.
- The easy availability of loan facilities by banks and finance companies with convenient method of settlement as EMI (equated monthly installments) appears to be the most influential factor for women to buy the households without any hesitation.

**Table – 3**

### REASON BEHIND THE PURCHASE OF WHITE GOODS

S.No.	Particulars	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total agree	Total
1.	Enhances the efficiency	72	148	50	38	42	350
		20.6	42.2	14.3	10.9	12	100
2.	Increase in social status	58	138	79	45	30	350
		16.6	39.4	22.6	12.9	8.5	100
3.	Traditional image	140	99	51	38	22	350
		40	28.3	14.5	10.9	6.3	100
4.	Concentrate on chores	102	170	38	25	15	350
		29.1	48.6	10.9	7.1	4.3	100
5.	Free time	78	102	82	59	29	350
		22.3	29.1	23.4	16.9	8.3	100
6.	Savings	48	195	79	15	13	350
		13.7	55.7	22.6	4.3	3.7	100

7.	Savings is false idea	101	50	135	44	20	350
		28.9	14.3	38.6	12.5	5.7	100
8.	Better care of health	68	58	121	56	47	350
		19.4	16.6	34.6	16	13.4	100
9.	More efforts in house work	55	58	66	80	91	350
		15.6	16.6	18.9	22.9	26	100

### Findings related to the reasons behind the purchase of white goods

- Women are very sensitive and they aim at the purchase of consumer white goods in-order to enhance their efficiency, to improve their social status and to ensure their social image. These are found to be the most important reason behind the purchase of white goods.
- The other reasons are to enjoy the benefit of convenience in the use of varied products. The ownership of these products at home lifts the image of women in the midst of their neighbors and relatives.
- In-order to state that they are busy in their purchase of consumer white goods; they aim at the purchase of white goods which lead them to enhance their knowledge over the market, product and other marketing practices. The interaction with various groups associated with the purchase of white goods provide a rich knowledge as to what to buy? How to buy? Where to buy? And the effective cost of purchase.
- The curiosity to purchase the product on their own leads them to be economical in their purchase process which is often a problem to male members. The frequent interaction with sales representatives and comparison with other similar products in the purchase zone make the women to be more prudent in negotiating with the seller during the time of purchase.
- The occupation and income of the family makes women to safe guard the status through the purchase of white goods with the convenient method of purchase using the availability of finance from banking and non-banking companies.
- The status of relatives and neighbors and their attitude towards the purchase of white goods is another reason for women to be more addicts towards the purchase of white goods.

**Table – 4**

### Problems in the purchase of white goods

S.No.	Particulars	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total agree	Total
1.		78	108	72	51	41	350

	Non-Availability of spare parts	22.3	30.9	20.6	14.5	11.7	100
2.	Repair and service	68	148	77	34	23	350
		19.4	42.3	22	9.7	6.6	100
3.	Low quality material	96	117	79	35	23	350
		27.4	33.4	22.6	10	6.6	100
4.	Defective spare parts	68	148	76	30	28	350
		19.4	42.3	21.7	8.6	08	100
5.	Time consuming	89	120	76	35	30	350
		25.4	34.3	21.7	10	8.6	100

#### IV. Findings related to the problems faced in the purchase of white goods:

- Majority of the respondents feel that there is problem in the availability of spares which sometime lead to forego the product and opt for some new products in a short span of time. This situation sometimes leads them to go for some other product than the ones that already bought.
- There is no immediate or frequent service available to the buyers which provide a strong sense of dissatisfaction which sometimes make the women buyers to share with other people that ultimately affect the sale of the product in one form or the other.
- In the name of AMC (Annual maintenance charge) a lump sum is annually charged and the service is not properly done. Women being the sensitive group either fire at the office personnel and complaints their default with the head office.
- Complaints are not attended in time and as years pass by, the company does not respond to queries and complaints.
- Exchange and replacement cost of the product is very less when customers go on to change the product due to wear and tear, defect identified, adopting to the new and updated version of the product. However, the purchase through exchange and replacement is inevitable as women consumers are prone to change and adapt to the modern and updated products that invade the market very frequently.
- The charges to the credit purchase are heavy. A huge sum of money is sanctioned and credit settlement period is very less and for white goods it is only eight dues for the loan amount and hence the banking and private finance companies stand to charge heavily for this short term loan.

#### V. Mode of payment for the purchase of white goods:



- Majority of the consumers buy their product through cash only. However, a meager percentage of the consumers buy for credit facilities arranged by the same dealers either in banking or private finance companies.
- The availability of credit facilities make the buyers to buy costly products and make them to pay in installments conveniently.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this research study, the consumer behavior was analyzed in respect of their purchase of white goods in Karur city. Karur city is one of the Districts of Tamil Nadu with varied demographic population, culture, religion and employment. There are many show rooms and dealers dealing with variety of consumer white products who compete with each other for sale. This city is considered to the hub for white goods for Tamil Nadu and hence companies try to sell the consumer white goods both to retailers and ultimate consumers through their creative marketing practices. The most important segment for white goods is women flocks that is large in number and have varied taste and preferences. Thus the consumer behavior to the white goods changes from time to time owing to their preferences in the available products in the market. The middle class house wife is a cautious buyer. Women are not averse to change and therefore willing to try new products, but does not adopt any product instantly. The women consumers possess a good degree of awareness of the change taking place in their environment. Women grew in education level and the growth in the media has contributed to their development. Women are not only cost conscious but also a quality conscious buyer. The sales promotional activities sometimes may help women consumers to purchase more but it cannot remain same. Thus, creating and enhancing consumers is one of the most important aspects of companies and the companies must always aim at the same. Selling white goods is not an easy joke and that too to women consumers and hence companies must make and adopt new methodology to create and retain customers in the competitive environment. The producers of white goods should understand consumer interest much to find increase the sale of their products. The study concludes that the competitive market provides opportunity on one hand and threats on the other hand to both the consumer segment of women and products of the product. It is quite important to improve core product with value addition to enrich customer satisfaction more in the similar price range. Not only quality improvements but improvement in after sales service can develop and replace demand for white goods as well as for replacement of the products. The dealers / producers and the retailers must understand the importance of the consumers and their change attitude in the process of marketing. Only then the companies can withstand and survive in the sale of white goods.

## **Future Study:**

In future it may be studied with other gender of consumer known as Male consumer. In future it may be studied with challenges of sellers on the women consumer's in the purchasing of white goods, impact of women consumer's in the purchase of white goods, etc.

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