



## Consumer Durables and Buyer Behaviour – A Study of Gulbarga City

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### KEYWORDS :

#### Introduction:

Over the past forty years or so, India has achieved a substantial industrial advancement and now it is a fifth largest economy in the world. A solid industrial base has been created and considerable degree of diversification and sophistication has also been accomplished in this sector. At present, this sector is contributing nearly 43 percent of India's Gross Domestic Product (G.D.P). It was just 15 percent during the period between 1951 to 1956. This denotes that the industrial sector is registering a substantial growth. The growth has been particularly striking in segments like electronics, electrical machinery, power generation, petroleum products, chemical, metal products and transport equipments. This study is confined to the electronic or electric consumer durables and that too the service aspect of these consumer durables.

The history of the electronic industry of India can broadly be divided into three phases – the era of controls till the seventies, limited liberalization in the eighties, and near total liberalization in the nineties. As per the findings of the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), the electronic industry registered a very high growth during the eighties. While the median growth rate of industrial production in the manufacturing Sector during these years worked out to 9.5 percent per annum; most of the electronics industries showed growth rates more than 30 percent. Even though all the segments have contributed to this growth, the predominant thrust has come from consumer electronics. By 1993, the production of consumer electronics had grown to Rs.3,760 crores which consist a dominant share from entertainment electronics.

The market for consumer goods in India has experienced a real boom in recent years. It was Ra.2, 400 crores in 1960-61, it grew up to Rs.30,000 crores in 1989-90; it has now become Rs.50,000 crores market.

While throughout the last twenty years there has been a steady expansion in the consumer products market, a big spurt has taken place only during the last eighties and the early nineties. The same can be presented through the table below:

**Table**  
**Growth rate of Consumer goods in India (in percent)**

Particulars	1970-71 to 1979-80	1980-81 to 1989-90	1990-91 to 1999 - 2000	2000-01 to 2009-10
Total Consumer Products	3	6.2	8.5	11.8
Non durables	2.8	5.2	7.4	9.2
Durables	5	12.8	14.9	16.3

The study concentrates totally on five consumer durable products – refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, vacuum cleaners and mixers.

The following are the brands selected for the various Consumer Dura-

ble Products under study:

- 1) Four brands have been selected for refrigerators. The brands chosen are – Samsung, LG, Kelvinator and Voltas.
- 2) Sony, Samsung and LG are the brands selected for Televisions.
- 3) LG, Whirlpool and Haier brands selected for Washing Machines.
- 4) For vacuum cleaners, the Eureka Forbes and Philips are the two brands which are selected.
- 5) The Pigeon and Maharaja brands have been selected in the case of Mixers.

#### The Concept:

In order to understand the concept of consumer durables and buyer behaviour, it is necessary to understand the product concept and the classification of the same. As consumers buy different kinds of products so as to satisfy their unfulfilled needs, and their decision to buy a product depends upon not only on its tangible attributes, but also on a variety of associated intangible and psychological attributes such as services, brand, packaging, warranty, image etc. Physical components of the product possessing different values to different customers ranging from zero or negative to the extreme attractiveness. Perception of the product image perceived by the customers. This determines the purchase or rejection of the product consists of packaging, advertising, word – of – mouth recommendations, personal selling, display tactics etc., that modify the product image.

#### Objectives:

The present study has undertaken with the following three-fold objectives:

- 1) To elicit the perception of the manufacturers of four brands of refrigerators, three brands each for washing machines and televisions, two brands each for vacuum cleaners and mixers with regard to the provision of service.
- 2) To elicit views of the customers with regard to the service rendered by the manufacturers of different brands of various products selected for the study.
- 3) To suggest the suitable forms and means in the provision of service by manufacturers.

#### Need of the Study:

The present study is needed very much in the light of the following reasons:

- 1) There is a wide-spread feeling that the Indian consumers get a raw deal in the provision of service by the manufacturers. They rarely honour the guarantees and warranties promised by them and always take the customers for granted. The problem is acute in the context of the consumer durables. It is thus, necessary to examine to what extent the manufacturers honour their commitment and how do they perceive their role in the provision of service. Further, it is quite essential to study whether or not the manufacturers attach importance to the service aspect while promoting their products, since they are product-oriented rather than market-oriented.
- 2) In these days, there is an increasing awareness within the con-

sumers about their rights and remedies that they can rely on in case of non-deliverance of the service promises. Further the emergence of several consumers organizations like Consumers Guidance Society of India, Akhil Grahak Panchayat Committee etc., underline the importance of the service and the growing awareness among the consumers about their rights. Besides, the Government of India has passed an Act known as Consumer Protection Act in the year 1986 to protect the interests of the consumers. Consequently, consumers are becoming more vociferous and are compelling the manufacturers to improve their service.

#### **Statement of the Problem:**

Though many measures are available to the consumers, a larger section of the customers including so called highly educated are unaware with regard to their rights and fall prey to the fraud by the manufacturers at the time of the purchase. Further, consumers residing in rural areas comprise a dominant proportion, many of whom are ignorant about their rights. That is why some of the manufacturers or the concerned officers of the company are indulging in cheating the consumers in order to gain a mere personal profit. So, the study assumes importance since it becomes necessary to understand the specific problems cited above.

#### **Methodology:**

The study confines itself mainly to the reactions of the manufacturers and consumers towards the provision of Service. Data relating to the reactions of both the manufacturers and consumers are obtained through schedules. Besides the schedules, the researcher had also held personally, the discussions with the manufacturers and dealers. To sort out the views of the manufacturers, the researcher has interacted with the Branch Manager / Area Sales Manager of Area Sales Office and Chief Service Engineers of the company's service centers. Therefore, the data used for the purpose of the study are in "Primary nature". Apart from this, researcher has also gathered information from magazines, journals, online materials etc.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The consumer durables selected for the study are those which are of great use in the routine life of people and the manufacturers chosen are branded ones. In terms of service form adopted by the manufacturers, different companies have adopted different policies of providing service. Some are providing service through their service centers and some are through the dealer technicians who got proper training about the service of products from the manufacturers. It is suggested that the customers should be made aware of the service contract offered by the companies and should also give more attention towards the timely service of the consumer durables which will enable to boost the trust and confidence of the costumers about the branded manufacturers.

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