



## Brand Preference of Consumers for Select Consumer Durables- A Study in Select Municipal Wards of Tinsukia Town

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**ABSTRACT**

Understanding consumers' choice regarding purchase of any goods and services is a difficult task. The task becomes even harder when it comes to consumer durables. So it is important to know the factors affecting brand preference of consumer durables. The present study is conducted in select municipal wards in Tinsukia town taking 65 households as the sample. Convenient sampling technique is adopted for study.

**KEYWORDS**

Brand preference, consumer durable, customer satisfaction

**INTRODUCTION**

Consumer durables are those products which do not wear out quickly and can be used for a long period of time. Today so many brands of consumer durables are available in the market.

Brand & price are two most important variables which influence consumer's decision regarding purchase of consumer durables. "Brand is a name that influences buyers"- J.N. Kapferer. In purchasing of a single consumer durable, people generally come across so many brands. The study is intended to find out different brands used and preferred by consumers in the market. People tend to buy quality products or top brands when it comes to consumer durables. But price sometimes becomes a barrier. So it is seen that people tend to compare brands with price. Because there are customers who are willing to buy several trusted brands of consumer durables but because of high price they cannot afford to purchase those. It is also seen that some consumers are very much loyal to some brands when it comes to consumer durables. The study also focuses on those consumers in the sense that what propels them to buy only selected brands i.e., to find out the reasons for brand preference.

Developing countries such as India and China have largely been shielded from the backlash of the recession, as consumers continued to buy basic appliances. In fact, China has been ranked the second-biggest market in the world for consumer electronics. Despite the recession, their strong domestic economy and growing high-income population have buoyed demand leading to aggressive market growth. In India too same situation prevails.

MNCs hold an edge over their Indian counterparts in terms of superior technology combined with a steady flow of capital, while domestic companies compete on the basis of their well-acknowledged brands, an extensive distribution network and an insight in local market conditions. The largest MNC incorporated in India are Whirlpool India, LG India, Samsung India and Sony India and homegrown brands are Videocon, Godrej Industries and IFB. The market for consumer durables is expanding day by day. The biggest attraction of MNCs dealing in consumer durables is middle class households. Due to increase in job opportunities in recent years there is a sharp increase income of households. It has also raised the demand for top branded high priced products. Even for purchasing of most commonly used durables now a days it is seen that people prefer to buy top branded products because they do not want to compromise the quality by any means.

Changes in lifestyle, tastes & habits, easy availability of loans to purchase those products, easy availability of credit cards, introduction of new models, innovative outlook to modern consumer durables market, consumer awareness etc. have also played a part to it. Brand preference is always related to satisfaction level of consumers because a consumer will prefer a brand only when he/she is satisfied to that brand. The present study therefore focuses on these issues..

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The study endeavors to find out brand preference of consumers of mostly used consumer durables and also to assess their satisfaction level. In this context several literature on brand preference of consumer durables and customer satisfaction on brand and consumer durables are studied.

Ramesh Sardar (2012) conducted a study on 'brand preference of passenger cars in Aurangabad district' with the objective of finding out the factors influencing the brand preference of passenger cars and also to assess the profile of passenger car consumers. The study was also intended to analyze the satisfaction level of consumers of passenger cars. A total of 150 respondents from Aurangabad district of Maharashtra was taken as sample. The study found that personal factors like age, educational qualification, gender, occupation, income status had

significant influence over factors affecting brand preference. The study also found that 70% of the respondents were satisfied with the car which they were using.

P.sathyapriya, R.P. Suganesh (2011) conducted a study on 'factors influencing brand preference of passenger cars among existing car owners'. The objectives of the study were to identify brands of cars preferred by prospective consumers and also to understand factors that influence their choice in different segments of cars. The study also intended to assess the impact of demographic variables on the brand. Of passenger car preferred. A total of 603 samples were taken from Chennai. The study found that Maruti was the most preferred brand in mid car segment while Hero Honda was the most preferred brand in premium car segment. The study also found that performance safety and brand name of cars were the most influential factors in their purchase decision making. Age and income did have a direct role to play in influencing brand preference.

Most of the previous researches in this field were conducted to identify the factors influencing brand preference and also to find out the satisfaction level of consumers for any one

consumer durable or consumer durables in general. But the researcher has not come across any study where endeavor was given to understand the factors influencing brand preference and to judge the satisfaction level of consumers for mostly used consumer durables in a household. The present study endeavours to compensate that gap.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Understanding consumers’ choice regarding purchase of any goods and services is a difficult task. The task becomes even harder when it comes to consumer durables. Existing literature on consumer durables show that brand preference is the most important determinant that influences consumers’ purchase decision making. Very limited number of studies has been made to examine the brand preference of consumers of mostly used consumer durables. Although in odd occasions such attempt is made the researcher is not inclined to determine consumers’ satisfaction level. Henceforth an initiative is taken to determine the brand preference of consumers for mostly used consumer durables like color television, electric mixer, electric iron, refrigerator, pressure cooker and ceiling fan.

**OBJECTIVES**

The study intends to fulfill the following objectives:

1. To find out the brands of select consumer durables those are mostly preferred by the respondents.
2. To identify the reasons for such preference.

**HYPOTHESES**

The hypotheses drawn for the study is:

H<sub>0</sub>. Customers are satisfied and loyal towards the brands of consumer durables that they are using.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study is all about to assess the brand preference of consumers for selected consumer durables. The consumer durables selected for the study are color television, ceiling fan, pressure cooker, refrigerator, electric iron, & electric mixer keeping in view that these are mostly used consumer durables. The study is carried out in Tinsukia town.

**Collection of data**

The study is based on primary data. The primary data is collected with the help of structured questionnaire.

**Universe of the study**

For this study the respondents will be the households in Tinsukia town. As per Tinsukia municipality records (w.e.f. 21.2.2013) there are 10,171 households comprising in the 15 wards Tinsukia town. For this study, we have taken three (3) wards namely ward no 2, ward no 3 and ward no12. The total households comprising these three wards are 1780.

**Sampling unit**

The households in Tinsukia town who buy & use any of these selected durables are the sampling unit.

**Determination of sample**

For the purpose of the study we have taken 65 households comprising three wards of Tinsukia town as sample. Convenient sampling technique has been used for the study.

Ward name	Total household	Sample size
Ward no. 2	455	17
Ward no. 3	1002	36
Ward no. 12	332	12

**Period of study**

The study was conducted during the period between 2012-13 and 2013-14

**Hypothesis testing**

**Observed frequencies**

Consumer durables	Satisfaction level towards brands of consumer durables	Loyalty towards to brands	Total
Colour television	43.85	30	73.85
Ceiling fan	45.35	33.85	79.2
Pressure cooker	44.6	32.3	76.9
Refrigerator	32.3	23.8	56.1
Electric iron	30.8	19.2	50
Electric mixer	26.95	25.35	52.3
Total	223.85	164.5	n= 388.35

**Expected values**

Consumer durables	Satisfaction level towards brands of consumer durables	Satisfaction level towards brands of consumer durables
Colour television	42.57	31.28
Ceiling fan	45.65	33.55
Pressure cooker	44.32	32.57
Refrigerator	32.33	23.76
Electric iron	28.82	21.18
Electric mixer	30.14	22.15

$$\chi^2_{obs} = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

$$\chi^2_{.05, 4} = 1.263 \text{ (calculated value)}$$

$$\chi^2_{.05, 4} = 11.07 \text{ (table value)}$$

Null hypothesis is accepted so we can say that customers are satisfied and loyal towards brands of consumer durables that they are using.

**Findings**

The study highlighted on following aspects:

1. LG (33.8%) is the most preferred brand of colour television used by the respondents.
2. Usha( 53.8%) is the most preferred brand of ceiling fan used by respondents.
3. Hawkings ( 61.5%) is the most preferred brand of pressure cooker used by respondents.
4. LG (26.5%) is the most preferred brand of refrigerator used by the respondents.
5. Usha (24.6%) is the most preferred brand of electric mixer used by the respondents.
6. Usha (30.8%) is the most preferred brand of electric iron used by the respondents.
7. Most of the respondents are satisfied with the brands that they are using for all the consumer durables selected and they hardly like to switch over to other brands.
8. Cost effectiveness is the most important reason behind brand preference of select consumer durables followed by product appearance and brand status.

**Conclusion**

Consumer durable is one of the fastest growing industry segments in India accounting for US\$6.58 billion in 2009-10. According to Cygnus estimates, consumer durables market is further expected to cross the US\$20.0 billion milestone by the year 2014-15, growing at a CAGR of 33.8. Today in the era of competition so many brands of consumer durables are available in the market. So onus is on the marketers to find out the factors influencing the brand preference of consumers for consumer durables and also to know the level of satisfaction customers of consumer durables. The study reveals that several factors like cost effectiveness, brand status, product style and appearance and after sales services are important in influ-

encing brand preference of consumers for consumer durables. The present study also reveals that customers are satisfied and loyal towards the brands of consumer durables that they are using.

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