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Research Article

EMPIRICAL STUDY ON CONSUMERS BEHAVIOUR AMONG THE WORKING WOMEN & HOMEMAKERS IN CHENNAI ENVIRON

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ABSTRACT

The study focus on analyzing a behavioral difference between general women's consumer behavior and working women's consumer behavior. The study also aims at analyzing women's consumer behavior with reference to FMCG products, the scope of the study has been limited to certain purchasing behavioral aspects of women consumers such as lifestyle preferences, information search, product awareness, product evaluation process, promotional offers, brand preferences, factors of motivation and past purchase behavior. The study broadly aims at examining the preferences of woman's purchases of the FMCG products mainly in terms of sources of information, location where the purchase is made, influence of communication and promotional mix and the ultimate purchase decision factors and their repeated purchase decision.

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INTRODUCTION

In the present era, consumer is the King. Hence the consumer is the one who pays to consume the goods and services produced. As such, consumers play a vital role in the economic system of a Nation. In the absence of effective consumer demand, it is a difficult task for producers to what to produce to what to produce and how to sell to consumers, since the consumers also form a part of the chain of distribution.

Consumer behavior mainly focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources like, time, money and effort on consumption-related items. It includes what they buy, why they buy, when they buy it, how after they use it, how they evaluate it, after the purchase and they dispose of it. It also expresses the characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics, psychographics and behavioral variables in an attempt to understand peoples want.

The consumer is the nerve center of the modern marketing, understanding his behavior is quite essential for efficient and effective marketing management. Customers may state their needs, wants, but act otherwise. They may not be in touch with their deeper motivations. India's consumer market is riding the crest of the country's economic boom. Driven by a young population with access to disposable incomes and easy finance options, the consumer market has been throwing up staggering

figures. Marketing problem enhancing from the consumer's behavior has a greater degree of similarity behavioral problems relating to the consumer durables.

Consumer behavior also subject to a feature of the product, price, quality, quantity, advertisement, place of availability, life of the product and so on to ensure strong competitive advantage. Consumer behavior towards the FMCG products has received considerable attention from the competitors in the market place.

An Indian women has a great sense of empowerment and economic freedom, which denotes that their consumption has changed. A women makes her values keeping the whole family in mind, rather than an individual-self. We can say, she the women are always being likely to be less selfish.

Today women consumer's are becoming harder to please, they are smarter, more price conscious, more demanding, less forgiving and approached by many more competitors with equal or better offers. Therefore the real challenges are not only to produce satisfied customers, which several competitors can also do, but also to produce delighted and loyal customers. Otherwise, companies suffer from high customer churn I.e. High customer defection.

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Thus, it is high time that the marketers and manufacturers realize, understand and recognize women as a lucrative consumer segment and start developing concepts and create products that are women centric, which reap high growth potential.

Need and Importance of the Study

Liberalization and globalization of Indian economy fetched more jobs for women and this leads to lifestyle changes. This fact has been proved from various national and international reviews, hence, the growth in the number of working wife families is widely acknowledges to be one of the most important social trends of the new era. Now-a-days, women play a dual role in their dual income family, because the majority of the women are the principal shopper in their household, it implies that the women make the majority of household purchases or purchase decisions. But there is a little concrete many findings do imply that spending increases with income.

From women consumer point of view. Customers today are in a tough spot. Because, in the highly developed and technologically advance society, the women consumers have a great deal of choices and options to decide on

- The products of an extreme range of attribute
- The wide range of costs and payment choices
- They can order them to be supplied to their doorstep or anywhere else, which is comfortable for them. And
- Finally, they are bombarded with more communication or interaction from more channels than ever before.

From the point of marketers view. “The purpose of marketing is to sell more stuff to more people more often, for more money in order to make more profit”, this is the basic principle of the requirement for the marketers in earlier days, where the aggressive selling was the aim. Now it can’t be achieved by any force or plain alluring. For the women consumers are today, more informed, more knowledgeable, more demanding and more discerning. So, the marketers have to earn them or win them over.

Statement of the Problem

India has worlds largest number of professionally qualified and also more working women. This includes working women at all levels of skills from airline pilots to bus conductors. But still, on average, many Indian women are socially, politically and economically gained more attention and prominence only after the economy has liberalized which provide them ample work. Ample work opportunities inside and outside countries in the recent years. Along with this, the Indian family system has undergone a dramatic change resulting in more and more nuclear families in the urban cities like Chennai, nowadays. This drastic change in the Indian family system has given a chance to work and actively participate in major family purchase decisions. This role of changing women from house wife to working women or the earning member as been successfully exhausted the attention of both national and international marketers.

Hence, the purchase behavior of women consists of both physical and mental activities. The physical activities involve

visiting a shop, examining the products, selecting the products and eating or drinking outside and this is the actual act of consumption. On the other hand, mental activities involve deliberations and formations of attitude, perceiving communications and learning to prefer a particular brand of products.

Moreover, women have better peripheral vision than men and it would benefit them as gatherers. So, women are always preferred to have more personal interaction with the sales associate, with more eye contact, support and collaboration during the buying process. Thus, the women consumers deliberate within her before she finally makes a purchase move. This deliberation relates to many variables and it is aimed at solving their consumption problems. Among these problems, the first and foremost is to decide whether to spend money the second ultimate problem is what to buy. Because needs are multiple and the resources are scarce, so, by taking the above problems this study aims to find out the significant difference between homemakers and working women towards their buying behavior . As all women consumers are not alike and their shopping pattern and preferences are constantly changing, they prefer varieties of product which reflect their own needs and depend upon the life styles.

The study relates to fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), that are sold quickly at a relatively moderate price. This study provides a meaningful insight into analyzing the home makers and working women’s behavior, when selecting FMCGS products.

The aim of this paper is to study and compare the purchase decision process of FMCG products among working women and homemakers.

Hypothesis

- HO. significant difference between working women and homemakers with regards to their purchase decision.
- HO. significant difference between working women and homemakers with regards to their satisfaction.

Sample Size

A sample size of 572 respondents is taken for the study. Among the 572 respondents only 556 returned the filled in questionnaire. Out of the sample 556, it is found that 500 are usable. So the exact sample of the study is 500. These samples are collected in a stratified random sampling, which implies that the samples are proportionately collected from 3 blocks of North, South and Central regions of the Chennai metropolitan city.

Data Analysis

Comparing the Purchase Decision between Working Women and Home Makers with Respect To FMCG Products

Generally, Women have a more complex and detailed decision making process when making a purchase. They tend to advance toward a decision in a series of cycles, often looping back to a earlier stages of the process as they reconsider the previous decision factors and integrate new information, seeking the perfect answer. Thus women are always great influencers when it comes to buying decision of the family. So, no doubt when it

comes to individual buying, women are the sole decision makers in their decision.

Hypothesis1: significant difference between working women and homemakers with regards to their purchase decision

The Purchase decision working women and homemakers are compared in the following table.

Table 1 Comparing The Purchase Decision between Working Women and Home Makers With Respect To FMCG Products

	Consumers	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T-value	Sig
Purchase Decision	HM	250	3.6441	.91959	.06172		
	WW	250	3.6547	.90641	.05173	-.132	.895

Source: Computed Data

From the above table it is found that mean values for Purchase Decision of home makers(3.64) and working women (3.65) and T- value = -0.132, P=0.895 this reveals that T-value is insignificant at 5 % level and concluded that there is no significant difference between homemakers and working women with respect to purchase decision for FMCG products. Therefore, the hypothesis5 is accepted at 5 % level.

Comparing the Satisfaction between Working Women and Home Makers With Respect To FMCG Products

Satisfaction refers to the behavior of women consumers after purchasing FMCG products. It is the outcome regarding the product, it may satisfaction or dissatisfaction. If the consumer satisfied with the product, she would regularly buy the brand and develop a loyal and also recommend the brand to others. If she dissatisfy with the product, she may stop buying, more products of that particular brand this negative feeling which arises after purchase causing inner tension is known as cognitive dissonance.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between working women and homemakers with regards to their satisfaction.

The satisfaction between working women and homemakers are compared in the following table:

Table 2 Comparing The Satisfaction between Working Women and Home Makers With Respect To FMCG Products

	Consumers	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T-value	Sig
Satisfaction	HM	250	3.5856	.85584	.05744		
	WW	250	3.5700	.87306	.04983	.204	.839

Source: Computed Data

From the above table it is found that mean values for satisfaction of home makers (3.58) and working women (3.57) and T-value = .204 , P = 0.839 this denotes that T-value is insignificant at 5 % level and concluded that there is no significant difference between homemakers and working women with respect to satisfaction for FMCG products. Therefore, the hypothesis 6 is accepted at 5 % level.

CONCLUSION

The women consumers of FMCG products in Chennai city are very much attracted to consumer preferences followed in the marketing of products like cosmetics, toiletries, household cleaning products, health drinks, beverages and soft drinks. They enjoy the attractive offers, the satisfaction of getting good deals, the excitement of shopping for deals, the monetary savings and the value addition to the products. This leads them to impulse buying, purchasing more quantity than planned, and make them pre-poned their decisions to buy. Sales promotion also encourages them to repurchase the brand, even when not on promotional offer and generally gives satisfaction in buying the products on the deal. Sales promotion gives an edge over other competing brands, attracting brand switchers. But the consumers are very particular about the quality of the products and feel that whatever may be the inducements offered, they will buy only if the quality is assured. They are not willing to compromise on quality.

Women, particularly working women are vital part of buying behavior. It has been found that working women are, more involved with the purchasing activities. They are more price conscious and quality conscious as compared to homemakers. This study finally prevails that there is a no significant difference in the buying behavior of working women and homemakers in Chennai. Therefore, a woman developed has an important segment for the marketers. So marketers should consider them with utmost importance.

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