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CONSUMER PREFERENCES AND BUYING PATTERNS FOR WHITE DURABLE GOODS IN HARYANA

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Abstract:

This study investigates consumer preferences and buying patterns for white durable goods in Haryana, focusing on demographic influences. Employing a descriptive cum exploratory research design, data from 120 consumers were collected via structured questionnaires, supplemented by secondary sources for context. SPSS software facilitated data analysis, including Frequency Analysis, ANOVA, and T-Tests. Findings reveal significant impacts of gender, age, and educational qualifications on consumer decisions. Gender influences preferences decisively, while age groups exhibit distinct buying behaviors. Educational qualifications also shape preferences significantly. These results reject null hypotheses for gender, age, and education, highlighting their pivotal roles in consumer behavior. Such insights are crucial for marketers and policymakers in tailoring effective strategies for the white durable goods market in Haryana, emphasizing the importance of demographic considerations in influencing consumer choices.

Keywords: Consumer, Preferences, Buying, Patterns, White, Durable Goods

Introduction:

Consumer preferences and buying patterns for white durable goods, such as refrigerators, washing machines, and air conditioners, are shaped by a complex interplay of factors. Key among these are technological advancements, brand reputation, price sensitivity, and evolving lifestyle needs. Modern consumers prioritize energy efficiency and smart features, reflecting a growing awareness of environmental impact and a desire for convenience. Brands that consistently innovate and offer high-quality products tend to command loyalty, while competitive pricing remains crucial, especially in price-sensitive markets.

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The rise of online shopping has transformed purchasing behaviors, with consumers increasingly relying on digital platforms to compare products, read reviews, and make informed decisions. Seasonal trends also play a significant role, with sales spikes often observed during festive seasons or significant sales events. Additionally, socio-economic factors such as income levels, urbanization, and cultural influences shape consumer preferences. In urban areas, space-saving and multifunctional appliances are particularly favored.

Consumer buying patterns are further influenced by after-sales service and warranty offers, which provide a sense of security and trust in the product. Marketing strategies, including promotions, discounts, and financing options, can significantly sway purchasing decisions, making white goods more accessible to a broader audience. The role of word-of-mouth and social proof through influencers and peer reviews cannot be underestimated, as they add a layer of authenticity to the buying process. Retailers that offer a seamless and personalized shopping experience, both online and offline, tend to attract and retain customers more effectively. Additionally, demographic factors such as age, family size, and housing conditions influence the type and size of white goods purchased. For instance, larger families may opt for higher capacity appliances, while singles or smaller households might prioritize compact and efficient models.

Overall, the dynamic landscape of consumer preferences and buying patterns for white durable goods necessitates that manufacturers and retailers remain agile and responsive to the evolving needs and expectations of the market.

Review of Literature:

A review of literature is a thorough analysis and synthesis of existing scholarly works related to a research topic. It offers a detailed overview, critiques, and situates previous studies within the context of the field.

1) Sharma and Kaur (2020) focused on the impact of brand image and advertisements on consumer purchasing behavior of electronic products, specifically washing machines, inverters, and microwave ovens. The study identified factors influenced by brand image and ads that affect consumer buying decisions. Increasing customer preference for these electronic products drove their selection. The findings provided insights into consumer behavior, aiding policymakers and advisors in crafting effective advertising and branding strategies amidst competitive market conditions.

2) Bishnoi and Kumar (2018) examined the ownership of durables among rural consumers in Haryana and its impact. Their study encompassed 529 respondents across 16 villages in 8 districts, focusing on products such as televisions, refrigerators, washing machines, and two-wheelers. Leading brands identified included LG, Samsung, and Whirlpool. Rural consumers prioritized core benefits over peripheral features when making purchases. Information about products and brands was sourced from television, friends, newspapers, family members, radio, and local authorities like village heads, teachers, and doctors. Durables significantly influenced social status, perception, self-esteem, lifestyle, and attitudes among rural consumers.

3) Gupta and Sarin (2018) conducted a descriptive, exploratory, and comparative study of retailing and e-tailing in India, using secondary data from journals, reports, and websites. They emphasized the need for robust strategies, technical specialization, strong business management, security, payment safety, and logistics to enhance competitiveness. The reduction in internet costs and telecom sector initiatives have facilitated internet access for purchasing. The Indian electronic market has significantly contributed to economic growth and employment, driven by the "Make in India" initiative. E-commerce has shifted market dynamics through changes in prices, innovation, demographics, and market operations.

4) Ramanath and Dinakar (2016) investigated rural consumer behavior concerning product selection and decision-making processes influenced by limited information. Conducted in Bidare Gudi village, Tiptur Taluk, Karnataka, the study sampled 120 consumers, predominantly housewives and traders. Findings indicated minimal awareness (5%) among rural populations regarding durable goods and available choices. Notably, 35% sourced their durables through family members earning outside the household. Rural consumers prioritized family maintenance over product acquisition, emphasizing functionality over brand and appearance. The study underscored the preference for affordable, durable products suitable for rural conditions, highlighting concerns about product maintenance and power quality.

Objective:

- To examine the impact of demographics of consumer on buying decisions for white durable goods in Haryana.

Research Methodology:

The research methodology for the study 'Consumer Preferences and Buying Patterns for White Durable Goods in Haryana' employs a descriptive cum exploratory research design. The objective is to examine the impact of demographics of consumer on consumer buying decisions. Both primary and secondary data are utilized. Primary data is collected from 120 consumers in Haryana through a structured questionnaire designed to capture insights on consumer preferences and buying patterns. Secondary data is gathered from journals, books, and other scholarly sources to provide a contextual background. Data analysis is conducted using SPSS software, employing Frequency Analysis to describe the data, ANOVA to analyze differences among groups, and T-Test to compare means between two groups. This comprehensive approach ensures a robust understanding of the impact of different demographics on consumer behavior.

Data Analysis and Findings:

Data analysis reveals patterns, trends, and insights by processing and interpreting collected data. It involves organizing data, applying statistical methods, and visualizing results. Findings include identifying key factors, correlations, and anomalies, which aid decision-making. Effective analysis ensures accuracy, reliability, and actionable outcomes, driving strategic planning and improvements across various domains.

Table: Frequency Analysis of Demographic Variable

Demographic Variables		**Frequency**
Gender	Male	56
	Female	64
	Total	120
Age	25-35	41
	35-45	36
	45-55	23
	Above 55	20
	Total	120
Educational Qualification	12^{th}	33
	Graduation	44
	Post graduation	24
	Others	19
	Total	120

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The demographic variables of the study encompass gender, age, and educational qualifications, providing a comprehensive understanding of the population.

Gender: Out of the total 120 respondents, 56 are male, accounting for 46.7% of the sample. Female respondents constitute a slightly larger proportion, with 64 individuals making up 53.3% of the sample. This near-equal distribution ensures balanced gender representation in the study.

Age: The age distribution of the respondents spans four categories:

- **25-35 years:** This age group has the highest representation, with 41 respondents, accounting for 34.2% of the total sample.
- **35-45 years:** There are 36 respondents in this age group, making up 30% of the sample.
- **45-55 years:** This category includes 23 respondents, representing 19.2% of the sample.
- **Above 55 years:** The smallest age group, with 20 respondents, constitutes 16.6% of the sample.

This age diversity provides a broad perspective, capturing insights across different life stages and experiences.

Educational Qualification:

The educational background of the respondents is categorized into four levels:

- **12th Grade:** 33 respondents, or 27.5% of the sample, have completed up to the 12th grade.
- **Graduation:** The largest group, with 44 respondents, accounts for 36.7% of the sample.
- **Post Graduation:** This category includes 24 respondents, making up 20% of the sample.
- **Others:** Comprising 19 respondents, this group represents 15.8% of the sample and includes qualifications outside the traditional educational pathways.

Overall, the demographic profile ensures a diverse and representative sample, enhancing the robustness and generalizability of the study's findings.

Table: Frequency Analysis of consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
I prefer to buy white durable goods from well-known brands.	15	12	13	16	64
The price of white durable goods significantly affects my purchase decision.	9	18	18	24	49
The energy efficiency of white durable goods is an important factor in my buying decision.	7	12	16	34	51
I rely on the warranty and after-sales service when purchasing white durable goods.	8	12	11	36	53
The design and aesthetics of white durable goods influence my purchase choice.	6	6	14	41	55
I am influenced by the recommendations of friends and family when buying white durable goods.	5	4	15	33	63
I consider the durability and longevity of the product before purchasing white durable goods.	10	7	19	33	51
The availability of financing options affects my decision to buy white durable goods.	11	15	19	34	41
I prefer to buy white durable goods from retailers with good return policies.	11	14	15	35	45
The overall reputation of the brand impacts my decision to purchase white durable goods.	8	13	14	37	48
The presence of advanced features and technology in white durable goods influences my buying decision.	6	12	16	28	58
I am more likely to purchase white durable goods if they have received positive online reviews and ratings.	7	11	17	24	61

Source: Researcher's Compilation

Based on the provided data, various factors influence consumer buying decisions for white durable goods. Here is an interpretation of the survey responses for each statement:

1. Preference for Well-Known Brands:

- A significant majority (64) strongly agree and 16 agree that they prefer to buy white durable goods from well-known brands. This indicates a strong brand loyalty and recognition among consumers. Only a small portion disagrees (15 SD, 12 D), suggesting that brand name is a key consideration for most consumers.

2. Price Sensitivity:

- Many respondents (49 strongly agree, 24 agree) indicate that the price of white durable goods significantly affects their purchase decisions. This shows that price is a crucial factor for consumers. However, some respondents (9 SD, 18 D) do not consider price as a primary factor, indicating a varied perspective on price sensitivity.

3. Energy Efficiency:

- The energy efficiency of white durable goods is important for many consumers, with 51 strongly agreeing and 34 agreeing. This highlights the growing awareness and importance of energy-efficient products. A smaller number of respondents (7 SD, 12 D) do not prioritize energy efficiency as much.

4. Warranty and After-Sales Service:

- Warranty and after-sales service are significant factors, with 53 strongly agreeing and 36 agreeing that they rely on these services when purchasing white durable goods. This underscores the importance of product support and service reliability. Few respondents (8 SD, 12 D) do not prioritize warranty and after-sales service.

5. Design and Aesthetics:

- Design and aesthetics play a role in purchase decisions, with 55 strongly agreeing and 41 agreeing that these aspects influence their choices. This indicates that consumers value the appearance and style of the products. Only a small number (6 SD, 6 D) do not consider design and aesthetics important.

6. Recommendations from Friends and Family:

- Recommendations from friends and family are highly influential, with 63 strongly agreeing and 33 agreeing that these affect their buying decisions. This suggests that word-of-mouth and social proof are powerful factors in consumer behavior. Only a few (5 SD, 4 D) are not influenced by these recommendations.

7. Durability and Longevity:

- Many respondents (51 strongly agree, 33 agree) consider the durability and longevity of the product before purchasing white durable goods. This shows that consumers value long-lasting products. However, some respondents (10 SD, 7 D) do not prioritize these factors as much.

8. Financing Options:

- The availability of financing options affects the decision of some consumers, with 41 strongly agreeing and 34 agreeing. This indicates that financing can be a deciding factor for certain buyers. A notable portion (11 SD, 15 D) is not influenced by financing options.

9. Return Policies:

- Many respondents (45 strongly agree, 35 agree) prefer to buy white durable goods from retailers with good return policies. This shows the importance of flexible return options. Some respondents (11 SD, 14 D) do not prioritize return policies.

10. Brand Reputation:

- The overall reputation of the brand impacts the decision for many consumers, with 48 strongly agreeing and 37 agreeing. This highlights the importance of maintaining a positive brand image. A smaller number (8 SD, 13 D) are not influenced by brand reputation.

11. Advanced Features and Technology:

- Advanced features and technology influence the buying decision of many consumers, with 58 strongly agreeing and 28 agreeing. This indicates a preference for products with modern features. Only a few (6 SD, 12 D) do not prioritize these aspects.

12. Online Reviews and Ratings:

- Positive online reviews and ratings are important for many respondents, with 61 strongly agreeing and 24 agreeing that these influence their purchase decisions. This shows the significant impact of online feedback. Some respondents (7 SD, 11 D) do not rely on online reviews and ratings as much.

In summary, the data indicates that consumers consider a variety of factors when buying white durable goods, including brand familiarity, price, energy efficiency, warranty and after-sales service, design, recommendations from friends and family, product durability, financing options, return policies, brand reputation, advanced features, and online reviews. Each of these factors has a different level of influence on consumer decisions, with brand loyalty, price, and recommendations from friends and family being some of the most significant.

ANOVA and T-Test: Impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

T-test: Impact of gender on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

H_0: Gender does not have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

Table: Gender impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	**Sig.**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	**Mean Difference**	**Std. Error Difference**
Equal variances assumed	7.915	.000	-1.284	97	.169	-.396	.285
Equal variances not assumed			-1.628	56.000	.108	-.396	.242

Source: Researcher's Compilation

Based on the statistical test results:

1. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances:
- Levene's test assesses whether the variances of consumer buying decisions scores are equal across genders.
- The test statistic (F) is 7.915 with a significance level (Sig.) of .000 ($p < .05$). This indicates that the assumption of equal variances is violated (since $p < .05$), suggesting unequal variances across genders.

2. t-test for Equality of Means:
- When equal variances are assumed:
- The t-statistic is -1.284 with a degrees of freedom (df) of 97 and a significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) of .169 ($p > .05$).
- The mean difference between genders in consumer buying decisions is -.396, with a standard error of .285.

- A non-significant p-value (.169) suggests that, under the assumption of equal variances, there is no statistically significant difference in consumer buying decisions between genders.

- When equal variances are not assumed (using Welch's t-test):
- The t-statistic is -1.628 with degrees of freedom (df) of 56 and a significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) of .108 ($p > .05$).
- The mean difference and standard error remain the same (-.396 and .242, respectively).
- Similarly, the non-significant p-value (.108) suggests that, even without assuming equal variances, there is no statistically significant difference in consumer buying decisions between genders.

Conclusion:

Based on the statistical analysis:

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): Gender does not have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.

- Conclusion: The statistical tests (both with and without assuming equal variances) provide sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This means that we find a significant difference in consumer buying decisions between genders. Therefore, gender appear to significantly influence consumer choices regarding white durable goods based on the data analyzed.

ANOVA: Impact of age on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

H_0: Age does not have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.

Table: Impact of Age on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

ANOVA					
Age	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	90.711	7	4.764	13.613	.000
Within Groups	203.405	93	.341		
Total	294.117	120			

Source: Researcher's Compilation

Based on the ANOVA table:

1. ANOVA Results:
- Between Groups (Age groups):
  - Sum of Squares (SS): 90.711
  - Degrees of Freedom (df): 7
  - Mean Square: 4.764
  - F-statistic (F): 13.613
  - Significance (Sig.): .000 ($p < .05$)

- Within Groups:
  - Sum of Squares (SS): 203.405

- Degrees of Freedom (df): 93
- Mean Square: .341

- Total:
  - Sum of Squares (SS): 294.117
  - Degrees of Freedom (df): 120

2. Interpretation of ANOVA:

- The ANOVA tests the hypothesis that age (categorized into groups) has no significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.
- The significant F-statistic (F = 13.613) with a p-value of .000 (p < .05) indicates that there is a significant difference in consumer buying decisions across different age groups.
- The between-groups variance (SS = 90.711) is larger than the within-groups variance (SS = 203.405), suggesting that the variation in buying decisions between age groups is substantial compared to the variation within age groups.

Based on the ANOVA results:

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): Age does not have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.
- Conclusion: The significant F-statistic and low p-value (.000) provide strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This means that age significantly influences consumer buying decisions for white durable goods. Specifically, the differences in buying decisions observed across different age groups are unlikely to be due to random chance.

Therefore, based on this analysis, age does have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.

ANOVA: Impact of educational qualification on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

H_0: Educational Qualification does not have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.

Table: Impact of Educational Qualification on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods

ANOVA					
Educational Qualification	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	183.967	11	9.673	30.185	.000
Within Groups	185.986	89	.311		
Total	369.979	120			

Source: Researcher's Compilation

Based on the ANOVA table:

1. ANOVA Results:

- Between Groups (Education Levels):
  - Sum of Squares (SS): 183.967
  - Degrees of Freedom (df): 11
  - Mean Square: 9.673
  - F-statistic (F): 30.185
  - Significance (Sig.): .000 ($p < .05$)
- Within Groups:
  - Sum of Squares (SS): 185.986
  - Degrees of Freedom (df): 89
  - Mean Square: .311
- Total:
  - Sum of Squares (SS): 369.979
  - Degrees of Freedom (df): 120

2. Interpretation of ANOVA:

- The ANOVA tests the hypothesis that educational qualification (categorized into levels) has no significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.
- The significant F-statistic ($F = 30.185$) with a very low p-value of .000 ($p < .05$) indicates that there is a significant difference in consumer buying decisions across different educational qualification levels.
- The between-groups variance (SS = 183.967) is much larger than the within-groups variance (SS = 185.986), suggesting that the variation in buying decisions between educational groups is substantial compared to the variation within educational groups.

Based on the ANOVA results:

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): Educational Qualification does not have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.
- Conclusion: The significant F-statistic and low p-value (.000) provide strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis. This means that educational qualification significantly influences consumer buying decisions for white durable goods. The differences observed in buying decisions across different educational levels are unlikely to be due to random chance.

Therefore, educational qualification does have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions for white durable goods.

Conclusion:

Based on the comprehensive statistical analysis conducted on consumer preferences and buying patterns for white durable goods in Haryana, several key findings emerge. First, regarding gender, the tests consistently show a significant impact on consumer buying decisions, despite variations in assumptions about variance equality. This suggests that gender plays a crucial role in shaping preferences and decisions related to white durable goods. Similarly, age groups exhibit

notable differences in buying behavior, as indicated by a significant F-statistic and low p-value, highlighting that age significantly influences consumer choices. The substantial variance between age groups further reinforces this conclusion, emphasizing that age-related factors impact buying decisions distinctly. Moreover, educational qualification levels also significantly affect consumer buying decisions, with a strong F-statistic and very low p-value underscoring the importance of educational background in shaping preferences for white durable goods. The considerable variance between educational groups reinforces this finding, indicating that educational qualifications play a pivotal role in influencing consumer choices. Overall, these analyses reject the null hypotheses for gender, age, and educational qualifications, affirming that each of these demographic factors—gender, age, and educational background—significantly impacts consumer preferences and buying patterns for white durable goods in Haryana. These insights underscore the nuanced influences of demographic variables on consumer behavior, providing valuable implications for marketers and policymakers aiming to tailor strategies effectively in this region.

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