A Study on Consumer Buying Behaviour in Coimbatore Retail Stores

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ABSTRACT

Consumer buying behaviour is a key factor influencing the performance of retail stores in urban markets like Coimbatore. This study analyzes the purchasing behaviour, preferences, and decision-making patterns of consumers shopping in retail stores in Coimbatore. It particularly examines how demographic factors such as age, income level, education, and social class (middle, upper-middle, and high-income groups) affect buying decisions. The research is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire from retail customers, along with supporting secondary data. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis and ranking methods were used for interpretation. The findings indicate that product quality, price, brand reputation, store ambience, and promotional offers significantly influence consumer purchase decisions. Middle-income consumers are more price-conscious, while higher-income consumers show stronger preference for branded products and shopping experience. The study concludes that retailers in Coimbatore must understand varying consumer expectations to develop effective marketing strategies and improve customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords: Consumer Buying Behaviour, Retail Stores, Coimbatore, Customer Preference, Retail Marketing, Purchase Decision

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Consumer buying behaviour plays a vital role in the success of retail businesses, as it reflects how individuals select, purchase, use, and evaluate goods and services to satisfy their needs and wants. In today's highly competitive retail environment, understanding the factors that influence customers' purchasing decisions has become essential for retailers to design effective marketing strategies and enhance customer satisfaction. Coimbatore, one of the major commercial cities in Tamil Nadu, has witnessed rapid growth in both organized and unorganized retail sectors. The city's diverse population, increasing disposable income, urbanization, and changing lifestyles have significantly influenced consumer preferences and shopping patterns. Retail stores in Coimbatore must therefore closely analyze consumer behaviour to remain competitive and effectively meet evolving customer expectations. This study particularly focuses on the buying behaviour of consumers belonging to middle-class, upper-middle-class, and high-income groups. These segments contribute significantly to retail sales and exhibit distinct purchasing patterns based on their income levels, lifestyle, brand consciousness, and spending capacity. By examining factors such as price sensitivity, product quality, brand image, store ambience, promotional activities, and personal influences across these income groups, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour in Coimbatore retail stores. The findings of this study will help retailers and marketers develop targeted strategies to attract and retain customers from different economic segments, ultimately improving customer satisfaction and business performance.

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To study about the demographic, social and cultural factors on the retail stores
- To learn information regarding consumer awareness in retail stores
- To analyse the attitude of consumers in shopping towards retail stores

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study focuses on analyzing consumer buying behaviour in retail stores located in Coimbatore city. The scope is limited to understanding the purchasing patterns, preferences, and decision-making factors of consumers belonging to different income groups, including middle, upper-middle, and high-income categories. The study covers various aspects such as factors influencing store selection, product preference, brand consciousness, price sensitivity, impact of promotional offers, and the role of store ambience in shaping consumer decisions. It also examines how demographic variables like age, gender, education, occupation, and monthly income affect buying behaviour in retail environments. Geographically, the study is confined to selected retail stores within Coimbatore city and does not extend to rural areas or other cities. The data is collected from consumers who visit organized and selected retail outlets during the study period. The findings therefore reflect the behaviour of urban retail shoppers in Coimbatore and may not be universally generalized. The study is useful for retail managers, marketers, and researchers to understand current consumer trends and to design effective retail strategies that improve customer satisfaction and loyalty in the Coimbatore retail market.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the present competitive retail environment, understanding consumer buying behaviour has become essential for the success and sustainability of retail stores. Coimbatore, being one of the rapidly growing commercial cities in Tamil Nadu, has witnessed significant expansion in organized and unorganized retail sectors. With the increasing number of retail outlets, consumers are exposed to a wide variety of products, brands, pricing strategies, and promotional activities. This has made consumer purchasing behaviour more complex and dynamic. Retailers in Coimbatore often face challenges in accurately identifying the changing preferences, expectations, and decision-making patterns of consumers belonging to different income and social groups. Factors such as price sensitivity among middle-income consumers, brand consciousness among higher-income groups, influence of store ambience, and the impact of promotional offers create variability in buying behaviour. Without a clear understanding of these factors, retailers may fail to design effective marketing strategies, leading to reduced customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Moreover, the rapid growth of organized retail formats and increasing consumer awareness have intensified competition among retail stores in Coimbatore. There is a need to systematically study how demographic, personal, social, and psychological factors influence consumer buying decisions in this specific urban retail context. Therefore, the present study attempts to analyze consumer buying behaviour in retail stores in Coimbatore, identify the key factors influencing purchase decisions, and provide insights that can help retailers develop more customer-oriented retail strategies.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making decisions. The methodology may include publication research, interviews, surveys and other research techniques.

1.5.1 Data Collection

The data is collected from both primary and secondary sources.

1.5.1.1 Primary Data

The source of primary data is through questionnaire based on the objectives.

1.5.1.2 Secondary Data

The secondary data were collected from books, journals, websites and other published sources.

1.5.2 Sample Design

A self-designed questionnaire was developed and given to general public.

1.5.2.1 Sample Population

The population of the study is general public of Coimbatore areas (i.e. Coimbatore North, South, Race course, Gandhipuram etc...)

1.5.2.2 Sample Size

The sample size of the study is 120.

1.5.2.3 Sampling Technique

The technique used for selecting the sample is non-random or non-probability sampling techniques. Convenient sampling is used for collecting data in this study.

1.5.3 Tool for analysis
Major tool used in the analysis process has been graphs and chart for interpreting the data collected.
- Simple Percentage Analysis
- Rank Analysis
- Correlation Analysis

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Muruganantham et al. (2025) in the study titled *"Impulse Buying Behaviour of Consumers towards FMCG Products in Coimbatore"* found that spontaneous purchase decisions are strongly triggered by marketing stimuli, with attractive displays, discounts, and product visibility significantly increasing impulse purchases.

Suregka Felix and Hema Nalini (2024) in *"Consumer Perception and Buying Behaviour towards Organized Retail Stores"* reported that promotion, competitive pricing, product quality, and convenience positively influence buying decisions and strengthen customer preference.

Anitha and Mohan (2023) "Consumer Buying Behaviour in Organized Retail Outlets in Tamil Nadu" studied consumer buying behaviour in organized retail outlets in Tamil Nadu. The findings revealed that store ambience, promotional offers, and product assortment significantly influence customer purchase decisions. The researchers concluded that retailers should focus on experiential shopping environments to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Karthikeyan and Sadhika Sultana (2022) in *"Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions in Retail Outlets in Coimbatore"* concluded that price, product quality, store ambience, and promotional offers are key determinants that improve repeat purchases when supported by good service quality.

Chandrasekar and Divyadharshini (2021) in *"Customer Satisfaction towards Departmental Stores in Coimbatore City"* found that product availability, service quality, pricing, and store facilities strongly influence satisfaction, which in turn enhances repeat buying and consumer loyalty.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION ANALYSIS
3.1 GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	GENDER	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	Male	61	50.8
2	Female	59	49.2
3	Prefer Not To Say	0	0.00
	Total	120	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION
The table reveals that 50.8% of respondents are male and 49.2% in Female. This shows an almost equal gender representation among the respondents, indicating higher participation of male consumers in social media–based clothing purchase decisions.
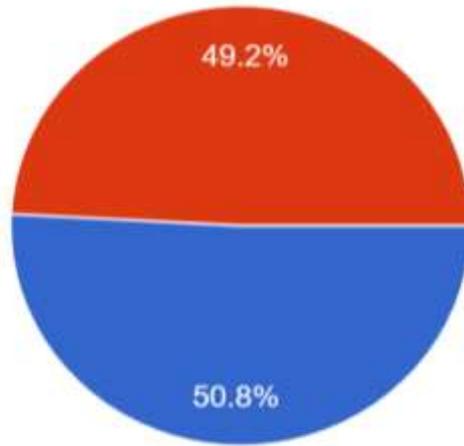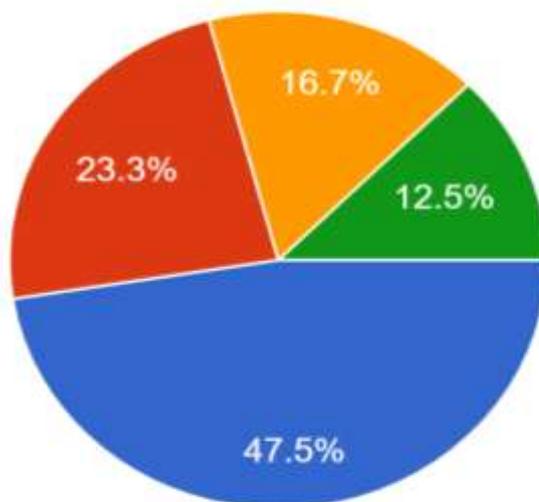
3.2 AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	AGE GROUP	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	18-25	57	47.5
2	26-35	28	23.3
3	36-45	20	16.7
4	Above 45 Years	15	12.5
	TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The data shows that 47.5% of respondents belong to 18-25, followed by 23.3% in 26-35, 16.7% in 36-45, and 12.5% in Above 45 Years. This indicates that the sample is dominated by respondents in the 18-25 age category.
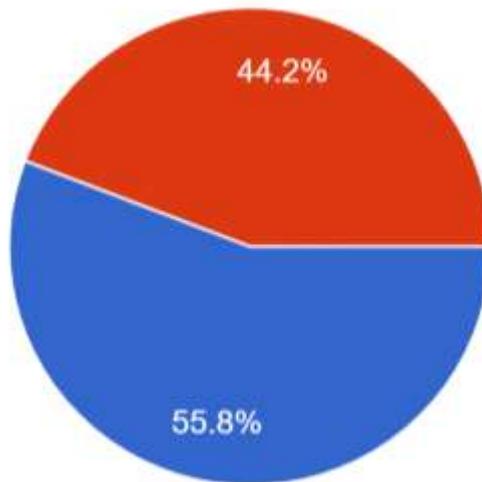
3.3 MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	Married	67	55.8
2	Unmarried	53	44.2
	TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The results indicate that 55.8% of respondents fall under married, while 44.2% belong to unmarried. This suggests that the majority of respondents are married (as per coding), forming the dominant group.


3.4 MONTHLY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	MONTHLY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	Below 10000	38	31.7
2	10001 - 20000	20	16.7
3	20001 - 30000	33	27.5
4	Above 30000	29	24.2
	TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The data shows that 31.7% of respondents belong to income Below 10000, followed by 27.5% in 20001 - 30000, 24.2% in above 30000, and 16.7% in 10001 – 20000. This indicates that income below 10000 respondents form the largest group.
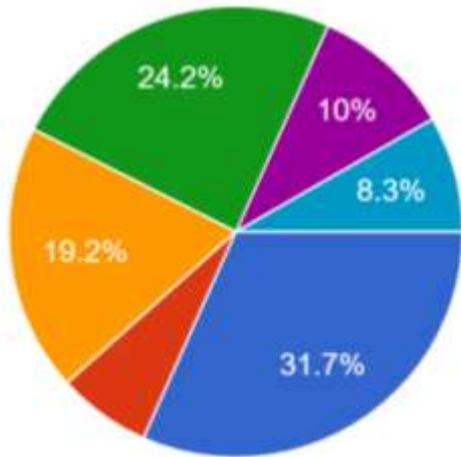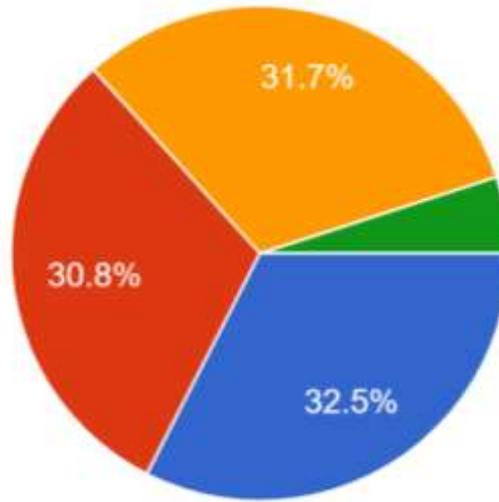

3.5 HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT RETAIL STORES

S.NO	FREQUENCY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	Daily	39	32.5
2	Weekly	37	30.8
3	Monthly	38	31.7
4	Occasionally	6	5.0
	TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The results show that 32.5% visit Daily, 31.7% under Monthly, 30.8% under Weekly, and only 5% are. This indicates that respondents visit retail stores fairly regularly.

3.6 WHAT INFLUENCE YOU TO PURCHASE THE MOST

| S.NO	INFLUENCE YOU TO PURCHASE BY THE RESPONDENTS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	Price	25	20.8
2	Quality	39	32.5
3	Brand	32	26.7
4	Offers / Discounts	15	12.5
5	Store Location	9	7.5
	TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The findings show that 32.5% of respondents are influenced most by factor category 2, followed by 26.7% category 3, 20.8% category 1, 12.5% category 4, and 7.5% category 5. Thus, factor 2 is the strongest purchase influencer.
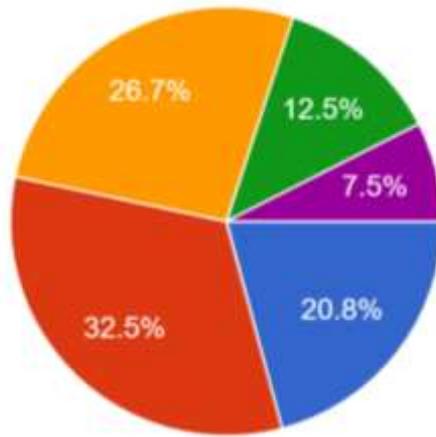
3.7 PURPOSE OF VISITING RETAIL STORE

S.NO	PURPOSE OF VISIT BY THE RESPONDENTS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	Grocery	62	51.7
2	Clothing	25	20.8
3	Household Items	29	24.2
4	Personal Care	4	3.3
	TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Primary data
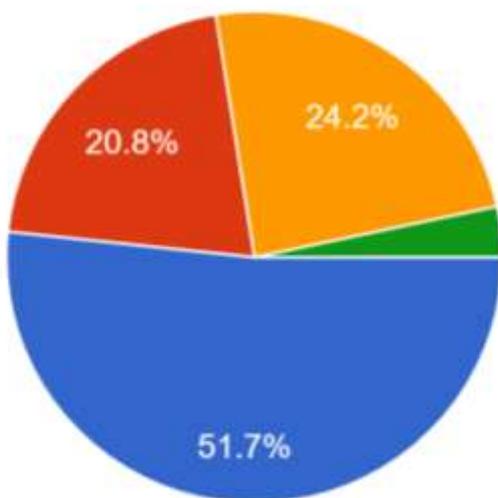
INTERPRETATION

The table indicates that 51.7% of respondents visit stores for purpose category 1, followed by 24.2% category 3, 20.8% category 2, and 3.3% category 4. This shows purpose 1 is the primary reason for store visits.

3.8 TYPE OF RETAIL STORE YOU PREFER

S.NO	TYPE OF RETAIL STORE CHOOSEN BY THE RESPONDENTS	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	Supermarket	17	14.2
2	Department Stores	40	33.3
3	Local Stores	55	45.8
4	Shopping mall	8	6.7
	TOTAL	120	100.0

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION
The data reveals that 45.8% prefer Local stores, followed by 33.3% Departmental stores, 14.2% Super market, and 6.7% Shopping mall. Hence, category 3 stores are the most preferred.
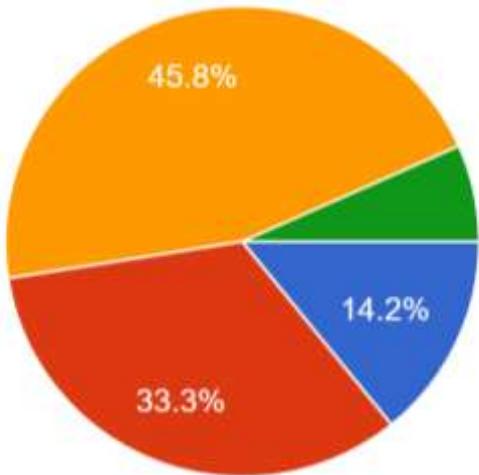
4. FINDINGS

4.1 SIMPLE PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

- Majority(50.8) of the respondents are male.
- Majority(47.5) of the respondents are between the age 18-25.
- Majority(55.8) of the respondents are the married.
- Majority(31.7) of the respondents monthly income is below 10000.

- Majority(32.5) of the respondents are often visiting retail stores .

- Majority(51.7) of the respondents are using purpose of visiting retail stores for grocery.

- Majority(45.8) of the respondents are choosing local stores.

4.2 SUGGESTIONS

- Retailers should focus on maintaining consistent product quality and competitive pricing to attract price-sensitive middle-income consumers.

- Stores need to improve ambience, layout, and visual merchandising to encourage impulse buying and enhance shopping experience.

- Attractive promotional strategies such as discounts, combo offers, and loyalty programs should be used regularly to increase customer footfall.

- Retailers should ensure better customer service, quick billing, and product availability to improve customer satisfaction and repeat purchases

- Adoption of digital payment options and basic online engagement (WhatsApp updates, social media promotions) can help retailers connect with younger consumers.

- Retailers in Coimbatore should segment customers based on income and preferences to design more targeted marketing strategies.

5. CONCLUSION

The study on consumer buying behaviour in Coimbatore retail stores reveals that purchasing decisions are influenced by a combination of price, product quality, promotional offers, brand image, and store ambience. Consumers from different income groups exhibit varied preferences, with middle-income shoppers being more price-sensitive and higher-income consumers placing greater emphasis on brand value and shopping experience. Customer satisfaction, driven by service quality, product availability, and convenience, plays a crucial role in repeat purchases and loyalty.

The findings highlight that the retail sector in Coimbatore is becoming increasingly competitive and consumer-driven. Therefore, retailers must adopt customer-oriented strategies, improve in-store experience, and implement effective promotional activities to meet evolving consumer expectations. Understanding these behavioural patterns will help retailers enhance customer satisfaction, strengthen loyalty, and achieve sustainable growth in the retail market.

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