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A STUDY ON CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND AFTER SALE SERVICES OF SELECTED WHITE GOODS IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

The concept of PPCR (Post Purchase Consumer Regret) is gaining more importance in the modern day's consumerism. The PPCR is directly related to the consumer regret as well as consumer satisfaction. In the era of digital evolution, the electronic goods are being appealing by the buyers for its day-to-day requirements. However, the market dynamics with regard to the white goods (Home appliances) like stoves (British: cookers), refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, tumble driers, dishwashers, and air conditioners and consumer electronic goods, the shelf life of the goods is quite less, which compels the customer for frequent association and buying behaviour. White goods are major household appliances and may include air conditioner, dishwasher, and clothes dryer, drying cabinet, freezer, refrigerator, kitchen stove, water heater, washing machine, microwave ovens and induction cookers. During the course Covid-19 pandemic, it is estimated that the white goods industry in India reached US\$13.66 billion in the financial year 2021 alone. Out of this, the largest market share belonged to Air Conditioners, Refrigerators and LED products.

KEY WORDS: White Goods, Post Sales Services, Consumer Satisfaction, PPCR

INTRODUCTION

White goods are large home appliances such as stoves (British: cookers), refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, tumble driers, dishwashers, and air conditioners. They are large electrical goods for the house which were traditionally available only in white. Even though you can purchase them today in a wide range of different colours, they continue being called *white goods* Major appliances. – Consumer durables made of enamel-coated sheet steel – are the same as white goods. The term may also refer to white fabrics, especially linen or cotton – articles such as curtains, towels, or sheets that historically used to be made of white cloth. In the beverage industry, white goods are colourless spirits, such as vodka or gin.

White Goods are household appliances or heavy consumer durables. Usually, the type of appliance you have depends on a person's lifestyle. The average cost of running an electric stove is about ten times more than an electric oven. Also, using a stove means that you can only prepare small amounts of food, unlike in an oven, which can accommodate more food at once. Water heaters also require natural gas or fuel oil which is expensive to buy and costly to dispose of when it is no longer needed, instead of using electricity for artificial heat. In India, people don't want to buy White Goods from other countries where products are cheaper because they don't trust their quality and do not think that the products can be equally good as the expensive ones in the local markets.

The government anticipates that the Indian electronics manufacturing sector will reach US\$ 300 billion (Rs. 22.5 lakh crore) by 2024–25. According to India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), a government export promotion agency for the distribution and sale of Indian products internationally, the white goods industry in India is highly concentrated, with a select few segments like that of AC's, refrigerators and washing machines capturing over 75 percent of the market share. This trend is a positive sign in the future for those looking to invest in companies from this segment. Ease of entry and other government policies that make running a business in this segment easy are also aided by the digital era, constantly providing a platform for established brands like LG and Havells or even upcoming brands like Virtuoso and PG Electro to reach out to their clients.

Besides positive government policies, 42 companies, including Virtuoso Optoelectronics Limited, Blue Star, Daikin, Havells, and Orient Electric, were selected under the PLI scheme which further boosted the growing white goods manufacturing companies in India. The potential of a bright future in this field owing to a number of factors like lifestyle patterns, better standard of living and much more, is what gives brands like Virtuoso and PG Electro, opportunities to reach their truest potential. As the bigger brands like LG, Voltas, Philips, Daikin and Havel's keep their position in the market steady, up and coming companies, who actually work on the grassroots level and focus on customer satisfaction and success, along with developing a vibrant community are soon rising to the top. Tapping into their potential one client at a time, these companies are the future.

REVIEW OF LITRETURE

Irini .D. Rigopoulou et.al (2008) analysed after sales service quality as an Antecedent of Customer Satisfaction. It is observed that service quality has been rightly treated as one reliable vehicle for gaining sustainable competitive advantage, which means that service quality aspects possess a substantial strategic role for companies. The concept of “service quality” can be used to all sectors, since practically everywhere the total product-offering is a mixture comprised by a tangible and an intangible part. As a term, “after-sales services” has been used the most, to describe services that are provided to the customer after the products have been delivered. After sales consumer satisfaction deals with both the tangible as well as the intangible part of the offering are treated to their full potential. The positive perceptions and attitudes of the target customers towards the quality-elements offered by the firm, leads toboth attraction of new customers thanks to word-of-mouth (WOM) communication andrecommendations of the existing customers.

Krishnan Ramasamy (2013) conducted a study on A Study on Customer Satisfaction of Consumer Durable White Goods – Regression Model. The highlights that the consumer durablewhite goods industry is operating in a highly competitive, complex and rapidly changing business environment. Classifications of Consumer Durables is distinguished as white goods and brown goods. Refrigerators, washing machines, Air-conditioners and Speakers and Audioequipment’s are considered as white goods. Customer satisfaction measures how well a company's products or services meet or exceed customer expectations. These expectations often reflect many aspects of the company's business activities including the actual product, service, company, and how the company operates in the global environment. Customersatisfaction measures are an overall psychological evaluation that is based on the customer's lifetime of product and service experience.

Mohan B Rao (2017) analysed Value Marketing Strategy for After Sales Service of Select White Goods Using the Value Gap Model. It is noted that customers, who acquire various types of durables ranging from refrigerators to computers, require customer support atsome time during their utilization or product lifespan to ensure that products perform as and when required in a trouble-free manner, thereby giving peace of mind to customer. Customer service an essential component of customer support is used by most to mean set of related activities to connect to consumer with respect to product the customer acquired. From the study it is found that call centre services play the Vitol role in minimizingthe gap between expected and observed level of services.

Mohan B Rao et.al (2017) explained the concept of After Sales Service – A Customer Binderin VUCA World. VUCA is an acronym which means Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, andAmbiguity. VUCA World paves the way for change management with regard to the concept ofAfter Sales Service and improving customer satisfaction. When customers bought a product they had certain expectation for the post purchase support offered with the product or services.Constant change can set people on edge because consumers look for the certainty. As a company it is important to accurately anticipate, reassure the stability, transparency of process and plan for the future.The success lies in the strategies to mange such kind of ambiguity and uncertainty

among the customers to increase their satisfaction beyond the level of expectation during the course of post purchase.

Karthika et.al (2017) conducted a study on consumer buying behaviour towards selected white goods with special reference to Tiruchirappalli district. The study observed that Consumer durables have emerged as one of the fastest growing industries in India. The largest contributing sector among durables is white goods, also known as consumer appliances, like air conditioners, refrigerators, mixer grinder, wet grinder and washing machines. Consumers' attitude and purchase preferences have been vastly changing all over the world for the past a few years particularly in the Indian white goods market due to the entry of foreign brands. From the study it is found that Consumers prefer high valued consumer white goods of well-established brands. The marketers and manufacturers of the consumer goods must try to convert the brand consciousness into brand loyalty for their well-established brands.

Binil.V.Rajan (2019) conducted a study on Consumer's Online Buying Behavior with Reference to Home Appliances in Kerala. From the study it is revealed that there has been a paradigm shift in all aspects of life, country the internet revolution. The World Wide Web or simply the web was invented by the British Scientist Tim Bernner Lee in 1989 is an information space where documents and other web-resources are identified URLs interlinked by hypertext links and can be accessed online. Home appliances are broadly classified into three types: From the study it is found that Online shopping of Home Appliances in Kochi is still at its infant stage despite of the fact that it is striving to progress with the global mode of shopping. According to the conducted pilot survey it was identified, four factors along with their criteria. While analysing questionnaire it was noticed that though majority of the customers have never conducted online purchase of Home Appliances most of the potential customers are interested to buy all the three mentioned categories of home appliances.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on descriptive method of research, where brands Whirlpool, LG, Samsung, Haier Godrej and Kent, consumer durables are considered. The consumer goods like audio, washing machine, air conditioner, refrigerator and kitchenware products are considered for the study. Convenient method of sampling is used to collect the data by using questionnaire survey method. The sample size is limited to 106 respondents. The statistical techniques like descriptive statistics, and F test are used to verify the stated objectives

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research study is confined to the consumers of white goods in Mysore district of Karnataka state. The scope of the study is limited by geographical constraint whereas the results of the study is accurate and appropriate with regards to set objectives of the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the demographic profile of the consumers of white goods
2. To evaluate the after-sales services of white goods
3. To study consumer satisfaction on different brands of white goods

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on descriptive method of research, where brands Whirlpool, LG, Samsung, Haier Godrej and Kent, consumer durables are considered. The consumer goods like washing machine, air conditioner, refrigerator and kitchenware products are considered for the study. Convenient method of sampling is used to collect the data by using questionnaire survey method. The sample size is limited to 106 respondents. The statistical techniques like descriptive statistics, and F test are used to verify the stated objectives

DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Demographic features of the consumers of white goods.

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	38	38.0
Female	62	62.0
Total	100	100.0

Age (Years)	Frequency	%
15-29	20	20.0
30-39	43	43.0
40-50	30	30.0
50 <	7	7.0
Total	100	100.0

Education	Frequency	%
Under graduate	42	42.0
Post graduate	58	58.0
Total	100	100.0

Table 1,2,3 shows demographic profile of the respondents. The demographic profile such as Gender, Age and Education are considered in the study. From the study it is found that 62% of the respondents are females, 73% are in the age group of 30-50 years. The major share of the educational qualification is constituted by post graduate (58%) qualification.

Are you aware of Consumer goods?				Brand of the refrigerator purchased:					Total		
				Whirlpool	LG	Samsung	Haier	Godrej			
Yes	Age	15-29 years	F	9	0	5	0	2	16		
			%	10.8	0.0	6.0	0.0	2.4	19.3		
		30-39 years	F	7	13	14	4	0	38		
			%	8.4	15.7	16.9	4.8	0.0	45.8		
		40-50 years	F	4	9	7	0	4	24		
			%	4.8	10.8	8.4	0.0	4.8	28.9		
		More than 50 years	F	3	0	0	0	2	5		
			%	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	6.0		
		Total			F	23	22	26	4	8	83
					%	27.7	26.5	31.3	4.8	9.6	100.0
no	Age	15-29 years	F	0	4	0	0	0	4		
			%	0.0	44.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	44.4		
		30-39 years	F	2	0	1	0	0	3		
			%	22.2	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	33.3		
		More than 50 years	F	2	0	0	0	0	2		
			%	22.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.2		
		Total			F	4	4	1	0	0	0
					%	44.4	44.4	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
		May be	Age	30-39 years	F	0	0	1	1	0	2
					%	0.0	0.0	12.5	12.5	0.0	25.0
40-50 years	F			0	0	2	0	4	6		
	%			0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	50.0	75.0		
Total				F	0	0	0	1	4	8	
				%	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	50.0	100.0	
Total	Age	15-29 years	F	9	4	5	0	2	20		
			%	9.0	4.0	5.0	0.0	2.0	20.0		
		30-39 years	F	9	13	16	5	0	43		
			%	9.0	13.0	16.0	5.0	0.0	43.0		
		40-50 years	F	4	9	9	0	8	30		
			%	4.0	9.0	9.0	0.0	8.0	30.0		
		More than 50 years	F	5	0	0	0	2	7		
			%	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	7.0		
		Total			F	27	26	30	5	12	100
					%	27.0	26.0	30.0	5.0	12.0	100.0

Table 4 shows the cross tabulation of awareness of consumer goods, exclusively for refrigerators. The refrigerators being quite often preferred consumer goods, the data is crosstabulated with regard to the different brands like Whirlpool, LG, Samsung, Haier and Godrej & different age groups such as 15-29 years, 30-39

years, 40-50 years and more than 50 years respectively. From the study it is found the refrigerators of the brand Whirlpool, LG and Samsung are more preferred than the other brands under consideration. The customers of the age group 30-39 years reveal that Samsung brand well known for refrigerators, followed by LG and Whirlpool.

Objective 2: To evaluate the after-sales customer satisfaction of among the different brands of Consumer goods.

Hypothesis

H (0): There is no significant difference among the after-sales customer satisfaction and different brands of consumer goods.

H (1): There is significant difference among the after-sales customer satisfaction and different brands of consumer goods.

Consumer durables & Brands		Whirlpool	LG	Samsung	Haier	Godrej	Kent	Total
Refrigerator; Washing Machine; Water Purifier	F	20	6	13	5	4	0	48
	%	20.0	6.0	13.0	5.0	4.0	0.0	48.0
Washing Machine	F	2	4	3	0	0	0	9
	%	2.0	4.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.0
Washing machine Air Conditioner; Water Purifier	F	4	6	3	0	4	0	17
	%	4.0	6.0	3.0	0.0	4.0	0.0	17.0
Refrigerator	F	1	2	9	0	0	0	12
	%	1.0	2.0	9.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.0
Water Purifier	F	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	4.0
Washing machine, Air Conditioner	F	0	4	2	0	0	0	6
	%	0.0	4.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0
Air Conditioner; water purifier	F	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.0	4.0
Total	F	27	26	30	5	12	0	100
	%	27.0	26.0	30.0	5.0	12.0	0.0	100.0

Table no 5 is developed to evaluate consumer choice to associate with the buying behaviour with regard to the consumer durables like Refrigerator; Washing Machine, Refrigerator; Air Conditioner and Water Purifier of the brands Whirlpool, LG, Samsung, Haier, Godrej and Kent respectively. From the study it is found that Samsung is the leading brand in consumer durables, followed by Whirlpool and LG. Kent is the preferred brand for water purifier

Verification of Hypothesis Table -6					
Parameters of Consumer satisfaction	Brands of Consumer Durables	Mean	Std. Deviation	F-ratio	P Value
The self-service portal reduces the service cost.	Whirlpool	4.15	0.36	1.60	0.18
	LG	4.08	0.27		
	Samsung	4.30	0.48		
	Haier	4.00	0.57		
	Godrej	4.20	0.46		
I get instant responses for the information required from the portal.	Whirlpool	4.15	0.36	1.47	0.22
	LG	4.23	0.43		
	Samsung	4.37	0.50		
	Haier	4.00	0.48		
	Godrej	4.30	0.48		
I get regular reminders regarding due services.	Whirlpool	4.56	0.51	0.96	0.43
	LG	4.58	0.50		
	Samsung	4.67	0.47		
	Haier	4.00	0.49		
	Godrej	4.70	0.50		
The chatbot support is helpful for solving the issues related to products.	Whirlpool	4.04	0.19	0.73	0.44
	LG	4.00	0.00		
	Samsung	4.37	0.46		
	Haier	4.00	0.48		
	Godrej	4.30	0.37		
Regular feedback is taken after each service and repair.	Whirlpool	4.33	0.48	0.87	0.58
	LG	4.33	0.48		
	Samsung	3.57	0.39		
	Haier	4.00	0.67		
	Godrej	3.70	0.35		

Table no 6 shows verification of hypothesis with regard to the hypothesis of no significant difference among the after-sales customer satisfaction and different brands of consumer goods. The parameters to assess consumer satisfaction is considered based on the factors, self-service portal and cost minimisation, instant responses for the information required from the portal, regular reminders regarding due services, Chatbot support is helpful for solving the issues related to products and Regular feedback to improve customer satisfaction. From the study it is found that Whirlpool, LG, Samsung, Haier, Godrej are the leading brands in the consumer durables Industry.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The null hypothesis stands accepted hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference among the after-sales customer satisfaction and different brands of consumer goods. All the leading consumer brands are equally good in delivering the consumer satisfaction. Therefore, the consumers express their opinion that they are satisfied with the after sales service of the consumer durable brands.

CONCLUSION

From the study is found that the Whirlpool, LG, Samsung, Haier, Godrej are the leading brands in the consumer durables Industry. The consumers happy and satisfied with the after sales services offered by the retail outlets of the leading consumer durable brand.

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