



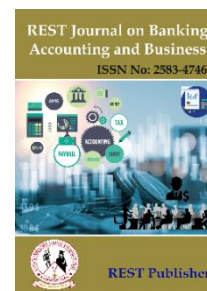
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Brand Preference and Customer Satisfaction Towards Wet Grinders in Coimbatore District

¹N. Gurumurthy, ^{*2}D. Kumaresan

¹Laxminarayana Arts and Science College for Women, Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu, India.

²K.S.R. College of Arts and Science for Women, Tiruchengode, Namakkal District, Tamil Nadu, India.

*Corresponding author: winnerkumaresan@gmail.com

Abstract: Electrical appliances are considered as part and parcel of every household. People tend to use various electrical appliances such as electric fans, mixer grinder, wet grinder, air cooler, microwave oven, iron box, toaster, etc. They satisfy the basic needs of the customers and provide a lot of assistance in cleaning and maintaining houses, preparing food items, etc. Wet grinder is an appliance which helps to grind the rice or cereals mixed with water. Manufacturers supply variety of wet grinders at the disposal of their customers. It is expected that the wet grinder supports the family members to get the benefits of quick cooking and convenient preparation of food. Being an industrial zone, Coimbatore District has a lot of wet grinder manufacturers. So, the customers in Coimbatore District have a lot of brands of wet grinders. The customers have different reasons for the purchase of wet grinders and for the preference of a particular brand. In this study, the researchers have analyzed the brand preference and customer satisfaction on wet grinders in Coimbatore District.

Keywords: Electrical appliances, brand preference, customer satisfaction, wet grinders

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern homes are equipped with a lot of electrical appliances for making the life more comfortable than in the past. People are working more and earning more and therefore, the expectation to enjoy sophisticated life is quite obvious. Electrical appliances are designed in such a way that they could fulfil the expectations of the people. Kitchen of every home is filled with many such appliances like mixer grinder, wet grinder, chimney, microwave oven, etc. As is the demand for these appliances growing so are the brands and varieties of the growth of electrical appliances. The customers of various brands of electrical appliances have a wide range of variants with various price bands and extra ordinary features which attract the users. The manufacturers need to understand the expectations of the customers and fulfil their desires and growing expectations to withstand in the competitive market.

Wet grinder is one of such appliances which help the home makers in easing the food preparation work. The wet grinders are different from mixer grinder whereas the former is used to grind the rice mainly mixed with water. On the other hand, mixer grinder is used for dry as well as wet grinding minimum quantity. The wet grinders are available with automatic and semi-automatic grades and the models varied as table top and tilting. The capacity of wet grinders is also varying according to the needs of the customers. The wet grinders for domestic purposes are available from 1 litre and the capacity is increased to 3 litres, 5 litres, 10 litres, etc. for commercial purposes. The design, structure, performance, price, colour, size, type, grade, number of stones, maintenance, ease in using, etc. could be the factors to be considered before purchase of wet grinders.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Renugadevi, K, et al. (2016) in their paper investigated the customers' preference towards the durable products, factors influencing brand preference and the satisfaction of customers towards the durable goods used by them. The results showed that product performance and price of the product were the factors contributing more towards

the satisfaction of the customers of all the products selected for the study. The major reasons for the purchase of the selected durable products were necessity, technology and quality of the products.

Pinakapani, P (2018) has made an attempt in his paper to assess the level of satisfaction of customers towards household goods in the Indian context. He has categorized refrigerators, washing machines, air-conditioners and speakers as white goods while mixers, grinders, microwave oven, electric fans and cooking range chimneys have been classified as kitchen appliances/brown goods and the consumer electronics according to him were mobile phones, televisions, MP3 players, DVD players and VCD players. His study with 155 sample respondents revealed that the satisfaction of customers was higher in the case of audio system, laptop and digi-cams. It is suggested by him that the manufactures have to review the marketing strategies and change the marketing mix of television, calculator and DVD player.

Sugundhan, N, Arunkumar, S and Rao, B.N, (2018) analyzed the factors influencing customer satisfaction towards home appliances and consumer preferences towards selected home appliances. The study has found that consumers preferred multi brand showroom for the purchase of home appliances to exclusive showrooms or online. The consumers have expressed that they have chosen EMI mode of payment than the full payment of the price of home appliances they bought.

Das, S.R, and Misra, D.P, (2018) in their paper analyzed the influence of age, educational qualification and monthly income of the respondents on the preference of mixer / grinder. They have found that among the various brands considered for the study, Bajaj and Philips were the most preferred brand and the majority of the respondents were found to be using mixer/grinder for more than 5 years and they have no brand switching intention in the near future. According to the researchers, the respondents have bought the mixer/grinder by cash payment of price. Television has played a vital role in providing information about the products to the consumers. The respondents have stated that they alone have made the final decision of purchase of mixer/grinder.

Research Gap: From the review of previous studies, it is learned that many studies have been made on the customer satisfaction, consumer behaviour and brand preference of the customers towards electronic goods, household appliances and durable goods. However, there was only minimum number of studies relating to customer satisfaction towards electrical appliances, particularly wet grinders.

Statement of The Problem: It is given to understand from the existing literature that no much attention was paid by the previous scholars to the studies relating to kitchen appliances and particularly wet grinders. The wet grinders have occupied the kitchen in every household and it has become an essential home appliance. Having realized the demand for wet grinders, many players come to the field for manufacturing and marketing the wet grinders. The consumers are at the competitive advantage of high range of brands available in the market. They tend to buy a new brand or replace the existing one with another brand. Therefore, it is the need for every manufacturer of wet grinder to understand the brand preference, satisfaction level of their customers and the factors contributing to the satisfaction of customers. Hence, the following questions are needed to be answered from this study:

1. Which brand of wet grinder is widely preferred by the customers in Coimbatore District?
2. How far the demographic variables contribute to the satisfaction of the customers towards wet grinders?
3. Do the grinder attributes make an impact on the customer satisfaction towards wet grinders?

Objectives of The Study:

The present study aims at fulfilling the following objectives:

1. To examine the demographic variables and the brands of wet grinders used by the customers in Coimbatore District.
2. To analyze the attributes of wet grinders that influence the satisfaction of customers towards wet grinders in Coimbatore District and
3. To study the relationship between brands used and satisfaction of customers about the wet grinders in Coimbatore District.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is dependent on the primary data obtained from the sample respondents using a structured questionnaire. In this regard, a structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed among the sample respondents for the collection of data required for the study. The researchers have selected 300 respondents on the basis of convenience sampling method among the citizens of Coimbatore District. The statistical tools like

percentage analysis, independent samples t test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used for analysing the data.

Analysis of Data: The data collected from the sample respondents were grouped and regrouped for the analysis made for this study. The analysis has been divided into four parts – demographic profile of the respondents, brand preference, brand attributes and customer satisfaction.

4. DEMOGRAPHICS AND BRANDS OF WET GRINDERS USED

For the purpose of the present study, demographic variables like age, gender and monthly income have been selected and among the various brands of wet grinders available in Coimbatore District, the top five brands - Vijayalakshmi, Usha, Sowbaghya, Vidiem and Butterfly have been selected. The brands used by the sample respondents have been by each sub groups of age, gender and monthly income have been analyzed with percentage analysis in order to draw a conclusion that which brand is most widely used or popular among the different categories of customers.

TABLE 1. Age and Brands Used

Age	Vijayalakshmi	Usha	Sowbaghya	Vidiem	Butterfly	Total
Up to 20 years	14	5	4	13	0	36
	38.90%	13.90%	11.10%	36.10%	0.00%	100.00%
20 to 40 years	37	27	20	36	6	126
	29.40%	21.40%	15.90%	28.60%	4.80%	100.00%
40 to 60 years	38	15	7	24	7	91
	41.80%	16.50%	7.70%	26.40%	7.70%	100.00%
Above 60 years	17	10	6	10	4	47
	36.20%	21.30%	12.80%	21.30%	8.50%	100.00%
Total	106	57	37	83	17	300
	35.30%	19.00%	12.30%	27.70%	5.70%	100.00%

From the Table 1, it is divulged that out of 36 customers in the age group of up to 20 years, 38.9 per cent of them have been using Vijayalakshmi wet grinders while Butterfly brand was found to be used by none of the sample respondents. Among 126 customers pertaining to the age group of 20 to 40 years, 29.4 per cent of them have been found to be the customers of Vijayalakshmi wet grinders while 4.8 per cent of them were customers of Butterfly wet grinders. The proportion of customers in the age group of 40 to 60 years and using Vijayalakshmi wet grinders was found to be 41.8 per cent and that of Sowbaghya and Butterfly wet grinders was 7.7 per cent each. It is further noted that out of 47 customers belonging to the age group of above 60 years, 36.2 per cent of them were using Vijayalakshmi wet grinders and 8.5 per cent of them were the users of Butterfly wet grinders. It denotes that in all the age groups, the most widely used wet grinder was Vijayalakshmi brand and the least used one was Butterfly wet grinder.

TABLE 2. Gender and Brands Used

Gender	Vijayalakshmi	Usha	Sowbaghya	Vidiem	Butterfly	Total
Male	25	17	27	9	1	79
	31.60%	21.50%	34.20%	11.40%	1.30%	100.00%
Female	81	40	10	74	16	221
	36.70%	18.10%	4.50%	33.50%	7.20%	100.00%
Total	106	57	37	83	17	300
	35.30%	19.00%	12.30%	27.70%	5.70%	100.00%

It is purported from the Table 2 that the highest proportion of male respondents (34.2 per cent) were using Sowbaghya wet grinders and the lowest proportion of male respondents (1.3 per cent) were using Butterfly wet grinders. According to the female respondents, Vijayalakshmi wet grinders were used by 36.7 per cent of them and Sowbaghya wet grinders were used by 4.5 per cent of them. It implies that male customers preferred Sowbaghya wet grinders the most whereas female customers preferred it the least rather they preferred Vijayalakshmi wet grinders.

TABLE 3. Monthly Income and Brands Used

Monthly Income	Vijayalakshmi	Usha	Sowbaghya	Vidiem	Butterfly	Total
Below Rs. 10000	16	11	11	30	3	71
	22.50%	15.50%	15.50%	42.30%	4.20%	100.00%
Rs.10001 to Rs.20000	25	24	23	13	2	87
	28.70%	27.60%	26.40%	14.90%	2.30%	100.00%
Rs.20001 to Rs.30000	59	13	3	32	2	109
	54.10%	11.90%	2.80%	29.40%	1.80%	100.00%
Above Rs.40000	6	9	0	8	10	33
	18.20%	27.30%	0.00%	24.20%	30.30%	100.00%
Total	106	57	37	83	17	300
	35.30%	19.00%	12.30%	27.70%	5.70%	100.00%

According to the Table 3, among the customers in the lowest slab of monthly income (Below Rs.10000), Vidiem wet grinders was preferred by the greatest proportion of them (42.3 per cent) and the least preferred brand was Butterfly wet grinders (4.2 per cent). The customers in the next slab of income (Rs.10001 to Rs.20000) preferred Vijayalakshmi wet grinders to a greater extent (28.7 per cent) and Butterfly wet grinders to a lower extent (2.3 per cent). The choice of the highest proportion of customers (54.1 per cent) in the next higher slab of income (Rs.20001 to Rs.30000) was found to be Vijayalakshmi brand and the choice was very low in the case of Butterfly brand (1.8 per cent). The greatest proportion of (30.3 per cent) customers in the highest income slab (Above Rs.40000) preferred Butterfly brand while none of them have chosen Sowbaghya brand. It implies that the low income group of customers preferred Vidiem brand and the choice of middle income group of customers was Vijayalakshmi wet grinders while the higher income group of customers preferred Butterfly brand.

TABLE 4. Brand Used and Wet Grinder Attributes

Brand used	Type		Grade		Total
	Table Top	Tilting	Automatic	Semi-Automatic	
Vijayalakshmi	45	61	24	82	106
	42.50%	57.50%	22.60%	77.40%	100.00%
Usha	22	35	14	43	57
	38.60%	61.40%	24.60%	75.40%	100.00%
Sowbaghya	17	20	5	32	37
	45.90%	54.10%	13.50%	86.50%	100.00%
Vidiem	34	49	40	43	83
	41.00%	59.00%	48.20%	51.80%	100.00%
Butterfly	10	7	1	16	17
	58.80%	41.20%	5.90%	94.10%	100.00%
Total	128	172	84	216	300
	42.70%	57.30%	28.00%	72.00%	100.00%

It is evinced from the Table 4 that tilting wet grinders (57.5 per cent) and semi automatic wet grinders (77.4 per cent) were the choice of the majority of the customers of Vijayalakshmi brand. The same trend was observed among the customers of Usha brand wet grinders – tilting wet grinders were preferred by 61.4 per cent of them and semi automatic grinders were the choice of 75.4 per cent of them. Sowbaghya wet grinders have also reflected the similar customer preference – the choice of 54.1 per cent of them was tilting grinders and that of 86.5 per cent of them was semi automatic grinders. It could be understood from the responses given by the customers of Vidiem customers that their preference was tilting (59 per cent) and semi automatic grinders (51.8 per cent). On the other hand table top grinders were preferred by Butterfly customers (58.8 per cent) and very high proportion of Butterfly customers were the users of semi automatic grinders (94.1 per cent). It denotes that the preference of Butterfly customers was different from the customers of other brands.

5. SATISFACTION OF CUSTOMERS

The satisfaction of customers of the selected brands of wet grinders has been analyzed in this study. In this regard, the respondents were asked to give their response in a five-point rating scale towards the following features of wet grinders:

1. Design
2. Functioning
3. Size
4. Colour variants

5. Maintenance and
6. Corrosion resistance

The choices were assigned weights as 5 for highly satisfied; 4 for satisfied; 3 for neutral; 2 for dissatisfied; and 1 for highly dissatisfied. For each of the respondents, the total score of satisfaction was computed by summing up the above weights for the selected features of wet grinders. Based on the total satisfaction score, further inferential analysis was made to know how the demographics and wet grinder attributes influenced the satisfaction of the customers.

Age and Satisfaction: With a view to examine the relationship between age of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders the following hypotheses have been tested:

Null Hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant relationship between age of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : There is a significant relationship between age of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

TABLE 5. Age and Satisfaction

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F value	P value	Result
Between Groups	47.546	3	15.849	0.984	0.400	NS
Within Groups	4765.85	296	16.101			
Total	4813.397	299				

NS – Not Significant

Table 5 reveals that the F value stating the relationship between age of the customers and their satisfaction was computed to be 0.984 and the p value was 0.400. Since the p value is greater than 0.05, it falls in the acceptance region. The null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there exists no significant relationship between age of the customers and their satisfaction on their wet grinders. It denotes that the satisfaction of customers belonging to different age groups did not vary significantly.

Gender and Satisfaction: In order to understand the relationship between gender of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders the following hypotheses have been tested:

Null Hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant relationship between gender of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : There is a significant relationship between gender of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

TABLE 6: Gender and Satisfaction

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t value	p value	Result
Female	79	18.33	4.443	1.527	0.129	NS
Male	221	17.47	3.832			

NS – Not Significant

According to the Table 6, the t value indicating the relationship between gender of the customers and their satisfaction of the wet grinders they are currently using is ascertained to be 1.527 while the related p value is 0.129. The p value is found to be greater than 0.05 which leads to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. Therefore, it is inferred that gender and satisfaction had no significant relationship.

Monthly Income and Satisfaction: The relationship between monthly income of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders has been examined by testing the following hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant relationship between monthly income of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : There is a significant relationship between monthly income of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

TABLE 7: MONTHLY INCOME AND SATISFACTION

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F value	P value	Result
Between Groups	128.665	3	42.888	2.71	0.045	Significant @ 5%
Within Groups	4684.732	296	15.827			
Total	4813.397	299				

It is divulged from the Table 7 that the F value measuring the relationship between monthly income of the respondents and their satisfaction on wet grinders currently using is computed to be 2.71 whereas the p value is 0.045. The p value, less than 0.05 results in the rejection of null hypothesis and acceptance of alternative hypothesis. It is therefore disclosed that the satisfaction of customers on the wet grinders currently using has been influenced by their monthly income.

Type of Grinder and Satisfaction: The purpose of testing the following hypotheses is to examine the relationship between type of grinder of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders:

Null Hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant relationship between type of grinder of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : There is a significant relationship between type of grinder of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

TABLE 8. Type of Grinder and Satisfaction

Type	N	Mean	SD	t value	p value	Result
Table Top	128	17.72	4.004	0.082	0.935	NS
Tilting	172	17.68	4.030			

NS – Not Significant

It is depicted in the Table 8 that the mean satisfaction score of the customers using table top wet grinders was 17.72 and that of customers using tilting wet grinders was 17.68. These scores seem to be very close and the same has been supported by the t value of 0.082 and the p value of 0.935. The p value was found to be greater than 0.05. It indicates that the null hypothesis is accepted and the conclusion derived from the p value is that there exists no significant relationship between type of grinder used and satisfaction of the customers.

Grade and Satisfaction: In order to understand the relationship between grade of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders the following hypotheses have been tested:

Null Hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant relationship between grade of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : There is a significant relationship between grade of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

TABLE 9: Grade and Satisfaction

Grade	N	Mean	SD	t value	p value	Result
Automatic	84	17.58	2.897	-0.363	0.717	NS
Semi-Automatic	216	17.74	4.375			

NS – Not Significant

From the Table 9, it is highlighted that the mean scores of satisfaction pertaining to the customers using automatic and semi-automatic wet grinders were 17.58 and 17.74 respectively. The t value scaling the relationship between grade of the wet grinder used and the satisfaction of customers was found to be -0.363 while the p value was ascertained to be 0.717. The p value exceeding 0.05 leads to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. Hence, it is concluded that the grade of wet grinder has no significant impact on the customer satisfaction towards wet grinders.

Brand Used and Satisfaction: With a view to examine the relationship between brand used of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders the following hypotheses have been tested:

Null Hypothesis H_0 : There is no significant relationship between brand used of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : There is a significant relationship between brand used of the customers and their satisfaction on wet grinders.

TABLE10: BRAND USED AND SATISFACTION

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F value	P value	Result
Between Groups	657.529	4	164.382	11.669	0.000	Significant @ 1%
Within Groups	4155.868	295	14.088			
Total	4813.397	299				

According to the Table 10, the relationship between brand of wet grinder used and the customer satisfaction was measured in terms of F value (11.669) and p value (0.000). The p value was observed to be less than 0.01. It influences the decision to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. Accordingly, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that the satisfaction of customers varied significantly according to the brands of wet grinders used by them.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

From the analysis made in this study, the following findings have been observed:

It is found that Vijayalakshmi wet grinders were the most widely used brand of wet grinders by the customers in Coimbatore District, followed by Vidiem and Usha brands while the Butterfly brand was the least consumed brand of wet grinder.

The customers belonging to various age groups have expressed that most of them have been using Vijayalakshmi wet grinders and it is also understood that Butterfly brand was not preferred by the customers.

It is surprising to note that the choice of male customers was Sowbaghya wet grinders while it was not preferred by female customers. On the other hand, female customers have preferred Vijayalakshmi wet grinders to the other brands.

The results obviously indicated that the low income and middle income groups of customers have been using Vijayalakshmi wet grinders whereas the higher income group of respondents have been using Butterfly wet grinders.

Brand wise comparison of type of wet grinders disclosed that the customers of all the brands of wet grinders preferred tilting wet grinders except the customers of Butterfly brand. Table top wet grinder was found to be the choice of Butterfly customers.

The comparison of brand used and grade of wet grinders revealed that higher proportions of customers of Vijayalakshmi, Usha and Sowbaghya brands were using semi automatic wet grinders while the proportions of customers using automatic and semi automatic wet grinders was close with each other in the case of Vidiem brand. On the other hand, very great proportion of customers of Butterfly brand preferred semi automatic wet grinders while the proportion of them using automatic wet grinders was very low.

The satisfaction of customers has been influenced by monthly income of the customers while their age and gender had made no significant impact on the satisfaction of customers towards wet grinders.

Type and grade of wet grinders have no significant effect on the customer satisfaction about the wet grinders used. However, the satisfaction of customers has been significantly influenced by the brands of their wet grinders.

Recommendations:

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations have been offered:

Since the Butterfly brand was mostly used by the higher income group of customers only, it is suggested that Butterfly has to introduce low price models to attract the low income and middle income group customers.

It seems from the results that the semi automatic model has been preferred by most of the customers while automatic model was not that much preferred by the customers of all brands. Hence, it is recommended that the

wet grinder manufactures have to introduce automatic models with more attractive features like time setting option and alarming option after the completion of grinding

It is also suggested that automatic model of wet grinders with the options of cleaning the drum after grinding work is over and the waste water outlet shall be installed without shaking the drum.

Monthly income of the customers is found to have significant impact on the satisfaction towards wet grinders. Therefore, the manufactures are required to introduce wet grinders with various price bands which would be affordable to all the income groups.

CONCLUSION

The present study has been undertaken with the main aim of examining the customer satisfaction towards the wet grinders in Coimbatore District. For this purpose, top five brands of wet grinders were considered. The analysis made in this study revealed that Vijayalakshmi wet grinder was the most popular brand and the Butterfly was the least used brand of wet grinder by the customers in Coimbatore District. However, Butterfly was the preference of higher income group customers. The satisfaction of customers is determined by their monthly income while their age and gender did not have any contribution to the customer satisfaction on wet grinders. The satisfaction of customers towards wet grinders is found to be varying in accordance with the brands of wet grinders currently using.

Limitations of The Study and Scope for Further Research

The present study has focused on the customer satisfaction towards wet grinders with reference to the customers in Coimbatore District only. The future researchers shall undertake studies on factors influencing purchase decision making and brand preference towards wet grinders. Consumer behaviour and brand loyalty towards wet grinders shall be studied exclusively in the further studies.

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