

# An Empirical Study on the Rural Consumer Behaviour with Reference to Refrigerator

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## ABSTRACT

Now a day refrigerator is one of the widely used household appliances in the rural area, which used to preserving food, reducing frequent purchasing and minimize the wastage. India is one of the fast developing countries in the world and also rapidly change in rural consumers. At present the refrigerator is an appliance owned and used by the urban rich. It is slowly becoming a necessity and has started reaching the rural too. Rural people have started to realize its importance in preserving food, reducing frequent purchasing and minimize the wastage. With this back draft, this study makes an attempt to analyze the reason for using Refrigerator, problem faced while using of Refrigerator, and also determine the behaviour of the consumer's, in case of Price, and overall satisfaction level of refrigerator users in rural area of vadgam and danta taluka.

**KEYWORDS:** Refrigerator, Price, satisfaction level, reason for use, problem

## INTRODUCTION

With Indian economy increasingly witnessing structural transformation from a rural agricultural one to a more urban industrialized one, consumer durable goods sector is fast emerging as an important segment of the economy. Consumption of manufactured durable consumer goods is recognized as one of the most widely accepted measures of standard of living and quality of life. Consumer durable goods manufacturing industry provides the driving force for stimulating rapid economic growth. The growth rate of manufacturing and consumer durable goods industry normally surpasses that of agriculture and service sectors. It is for this reason that the manufacturing of consumer durable goods industry is considered as the backbone of economy.

In economics, durable goods or hard goods are the goods that do not quickly wear out or more specifically, one that yields utility over time rather than being completely consumed in one use. Items like bricks or jewels could be considered perfectly durable goods, because they should theoretically never wear out. Highly durable goods such as Refrigerator, Washing Machine, Air- Conditioner and Television usually continue to be useful for three or more years of use. So, durable goods are typically characterized by long periods between successive purchases.<sup>1</sup>

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Today, business around the world recognizes that the consumer is the king. Knowing why and how people consume products helps marketers to improve their existing products, to know what type of products that are needed in the market and how to attract consumers to buy their products. The era of liberalization, privatization and Globalization has brought changes in society and life style of people. The study of consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals make decision to spend their available resources (time, money and effort) on consumption related items. In the wake of liberalization, media explosion and societal changes in India, roles of different members in a family are changing.

Therefore, the supply of quality products, popular brand, reasonable cost and supply in time are considered as very important for regular customers. So, it is necessary to study whether pre - purchase decision helps the consumer to choose a better product and whether he is satisfied with the product.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the researcher covers to the study the rural consumer behaviour with reference to refrigerator users and analysis of the reason for using Refrigerator, problem faced while using of Refrigerator, and also determine the behaviour of the consumer's, in case of Price, and overall satisfaction level of refrigerator users in rural area of vadgam and danta taluka.

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The standard of living of the people in the rural area is changing fast. It is evident that the sample respondents in the study area owned more number of durable household products for their day-to-day requirements. The rural consumer behaviour of Refrigerator is covered in the present study.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the consumers of vadgam and danta taluka are taken into account. It also covers the analysis of information in respect of the reason for using Refrigerator, problem faced while using of Refrigerator, and also determine the behaviour of the consumer's, in case of Price, and overall satisfaction level of refrigerator users in rural area of vadgam and danta taluka.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For the purpose of this study a lot of literature has been reviewed, that is, books, journals, magazines, newspapers, thesis etc. Some of the reviewed literature has been discussed below:

**Singh (1999)**<sup>4</sup> Singh has identified some behavioral problem of Indian Color TV marketers and government. The study revealed that the growth of B & W TV has slowed down from 25 percent in 1994-95 to 15 percent in 1995-96. The study concludes with some infrastructural and policy remarks and suggestions.

**Gupta & Verma (2000)**<sup>5</sup> have done a study under convenience sampling of 50 household of New Delhi by

questionnaire. It indicates that husband's influence is considerably higher than the wives. Children also play an active role in brand selection of CTV.

**Jain and Sharma (2000)**<sup>6</sup> studied 584 respondents out of 800 questionnaires of Delhi in five professional categories observed that selected products represent different product categories in terms of both durability and frequency of purchase as required. Study shows that the levels of consumer involvement differ across products. As against non-durables, consumer perceives durables as more involving products.

**SRI - IMRB (2000)**<sup>7</sup> evaluated a comparison of the education and income levels of different clusters, and it indicated that those who give higher priority to consumer electronic products are more educated and affluent. The study also revealed that transportation durables preceded consumer electronic products in the acquisition hierarchy, suggesting a tactical approach.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To know the Demographic profile of refrigerator users.
- To know the reason for using refrigerator in rural area.
- To understand the problem faced while using of Refrigerator.

- To determine the behaviour of the consumer's, in case of Price, and overall satisfaction level of refrigerator users.
- To give suitable suggestions on the basis of the findings of the study.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is an empirical research and it is based on the survey method. This study is descriptive and analytical in nature based on primary and secondary data.

##### ➤ Data Collection

Primary data have been collected from the respondents by using a well structured, non-disguised questionnaire. Secondary data for the study were collected from books, journals, research articles, magazines, reports, newspapers and websites.

##### ➤ Sampling size and design

Total rural area of Vadgam And danta taluka will be identifying as population of this study. Simple random sampling method was employed to select the sample respondents. Respondents those who are using refrigerator were chosen from ten villages of Vadgam and danta taluka in the study. a sample size of 200 was considered as reasonable. Hence, selecting 5 villages from each taluka and 20 respondents from each village. totally 200 respondents were selected randomly from ten villages of Vadgam and danta taluka are below:

**Table - 1 Village wise classification of respondents**

Sr. No.	Name of Village	Respondents	Sr. No.	Name of Village	Respondents
<b>Vadgam taluka</b>			<b>Danta taluka</b>		
1	Meta	20	1	Navavas	20
2	Sherpura	20	2	Ratanpur	20
3	Pirojpura	20	3	Bhankhri	20
4	Memadpur	20	4	Nagel	20
5	Rupal	20	5	Pujpur	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>
<b>Total - 200</b>					

##### ➤ Analysis of Data

The primary data collected from the consumers will be analyzed by using MS EXCEL to obtain the results concerning the objectives of the study. Percentages method and Mean score analysis applied for analyzing the responses of rural consumers of refrigerator users in Palanpur and Danta Taluka.

#### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this section presented demographic Profile and opinion of the Sample Respondents with select criteria and also Analysis and interpretation data with use of tabulation and percentage method.

The study has examined the age, sex, educational status, occupation and monthly income of the family and whereas reason for uses of refrigerator, mode of payment prefer by respondents and problem faced while using refrigerator. also interpretation of opinion about price and overall satisfaction level of the respondents for using refrigerator.

The following tables shows the Demographic classification and opinion of the respondents.

**TABLE - 2 GENDER WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Sr. No.	Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	138	69
2	Female	62	31
<b>Total</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents, 69.00 % are male whereas 31.00 % are female.

Thus, It can be seen that, the majority i.e. 69.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are male.

**TABLE - 3 AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Sr. No.	Age (year)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 20	28	14.00
2	20 to 30	42	21.00
3	30 to 40	72	36.00
4	40 to 50	47	23.50
5	Above 50	11	05.50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents,

36.00 % are of the age group of 30 to 40 years, 23.50 % are of the age group of 40 to 50 years, 21.00 % are of the age group of 20 to 30 years, 14.00 % are of the age group of below 20 years, and 5.50 % are of the age group of above 50 years.

Thus, it can be seen that, the majority 36.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are in the age group of 30 to 40 years.

**TABLE - 4 EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Sr. No.	Education	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below SSC	27	13.50
2	SSC	58	29.00
3	HSC	32	16.00
4	Graduate	14	07.00
5	Post Graduate	11	05.50
6	Professional	08	04.00
7	Technical/Diploma	07	03.50
8	Illiterate	43	21.50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents, 29.00 % are SSC, 21.50 % are Illiterate, 16.00 % are HSC , 13.50 % are Below SSC, 07.00 % are Graduate, 5.50 % are post-graduates, 4.00 % are Professional, and 3.50 % are Technical/Diploma

Thus, it can be seen that, the majority i.e.29.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are educated SSC level.

**TABLE - 5 OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Sr. No.	Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Government Service	11	05.50
2	Private Service	19	09.50
3	Own Business	19	09.50
4	Agriculture	73	36.50
5	Self Employed	17	08.50
6	Labor	29	14.50
7	Unemployed	19	09.50
8	Student	13	06.50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents,

36.50 % are agriculturists, 14.50 % are labour, 9.50 % are engaged in Private Service, business activity and unemployed, 8.50 % are self employed, 5.50 % are engaged in government service, and 6.50 % are student.

Thus, it can be seen that, the majority 36.50 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are agriculturists.

**TABLE - 6 MONTHLY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Sr. No.	Monthly income	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below Rs.5000	102	51.00
2	Rs.5000 - 15000	43	21.50
3	Rs.15000 - 25000	21	10.50
4	Rs.25000 - 35000	13	06.50
5	Rs.35000 - 45000	12	06.00
6	Above Rs.45000	09	04.50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Primary data**

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents,

51.00 % are below Rs. 5000, 21.50 % are from the Rs.5000 to 15000 income group, 10.50 % are from the Rs.15000 to 25000 Income group, 6.50 % are from the Rs.25000 to 35000 income group, 6.00 % are from the Rs.35000 to 45000 income group and 4.50 % are of the above Rs.45000 Income Group.

Thus, it can be seen that, the majority i.e.51.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are from the Below Rs. 5000 Income Group.

**TABLE - 7 REASON FOR USES REFRIGERATOR**

Sr. No.	Brand posses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	To preserve food	48	24.00
2	Reduce frequent purchasing	18	09.00
3	Minimize the wastage	27	13.50
4	Possessed by other	22	11.00
5	Improve stand of living	17	08.50
6	Basic need for today	68	34.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents,

34.00 % of the respondents have purchased refrigerator as a basic need of today, 24.00 % of the respondents have purchased refrigerator to preserve food, 13.50 % of the respondents have purchased to minimize the wastage, 11.00 % of the respondents have purchase to possessed by other, 9.00 % of the respondents have purchased to reduce frequent purchasing, and only 8.50 % of the respondents have purchased for improve stand of living.

Thus, it can be seen that, the majority i.e.34.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents have purchased refrigerator as a basic need for today and also to preserve food.

**TABLE - 8 MODE OF PAYMENT**

Sr. No.	Factor	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	By cash	39	19.50
2	By cheque	29	14.50
3	On credit	44	22.00
4	By credit card	02	01.00
5	By Installment	86	43.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents,

43.00 % of the respondents are preferred mode of payment by installment, 22.00% of the respondents are preferred purchase on credit, 19.50% of the respondents are preferred payment by cash, 14.50% of the respondents are preferred payment by cheque, and only 1.00 of the respondents are preferred mode of purchase is through credit card.

Thus, it can be seen that, the majority i.e.43.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are preferred mode of payment by installment.

**TABLE - 9 PROBLEM FACED**

Sr. No.	Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	178	89.00
2	No	22	11.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents, 89.00 % respondents are problem faced whereas only 11.00 % respondents are problem not faced.

Thus, It can be seen that, the majority i.e. 89.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are problem faced.

**TABLE - 10 WHICH TYPE PROBLEM FACED**

Sr. No.	Problem	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Leakage of water	47	23.50
2	Producing horrible noise	29	14.50
3	Difficult to clean	10	05.00
4	Consumption of more electricity	36	18.00
5	After sales service not available	78	39.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

It can be observed from the above table that, Out of the total 200 sample rural consumer respondents,

39.00 % of the respondents are faced a problem of after sales service not available, 23.50 % of the respondents are faced a problem of leakage of water, 18.00 % of the respondents are faced a problem of consumption of more electricity, 14.50 % of the respondents are faced a problem of producing much noise and remaining 5.00 % of the respondents are faced a problem of difficult to clean.

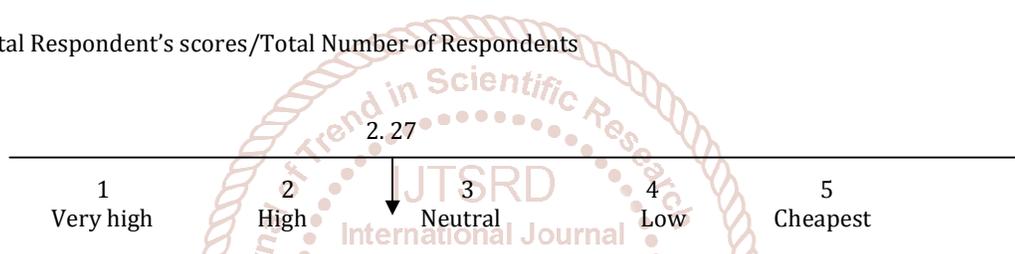
Thus, it can be seen that, the majority i.e.39.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are faced a problem of after sales service not available, and also leakage of water is the biggest problem while using refrigerator.

**TABLE - 11 OPINION ABOUT PRICE FACTORE**

Sr. No.	Opinion	Number of Respondents	Respondent's score
1	Very high	82	82 * 1 = 82
2	High	44	44 * 2 = 88
3	Affordable	34	34 * 3 = 102
4	Less	19	19 * 4 = 76
5	Very less / Cheapest	21	21 * 5 = 105
<b>Total</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>453</b>

Source: Primary data

Mean Score = Total Respondent's scores / Total Number of Respondents  
 = 453 / 200  
 = 2.27



It can be observed from the above table and calculation that, the mean score for opinion about price factor of rural consumers of refrigerator comes out to be 2.27 which is nearer to the high value.

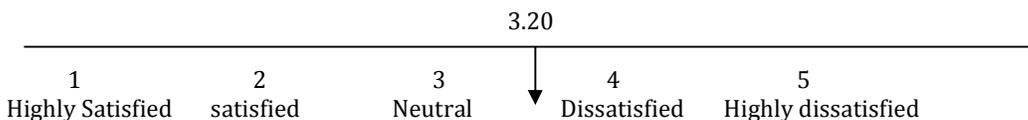
Thus, it can be clearly indicates that, the opinion about price factor of average number of rural consumers are high with using of refrigerator. It means the price of the refrigerator which they are using is high.

**TABLE - 12 OPINION ABOUT OVERALL SATISFACTION LEVEL**

Sr. No.	Opinion	Number of Respondents	Respondent's score
1	Highly satisfied	11	11 * 1 = 11
2	Satisfied	39	39 * 2 = 78
3	Neutral	79	79 * 3 = 237
4	Dissatisfied	42	42 * 4 = 168
5	Highly dissatisfied	29	29 * 5 = 145
<b>Total</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>639</b>

Source: Primary data

Mean Score = Total Respondent's scores / Total Number of Respondents  
 = 639 / 200  
 = 3.20



It can be observed from the above table and calculation that, the mean score for overall satisfaction level of rural consumers of refrigerator comes out to be 3.20 which is nearer to the neutral value.

Thus, it can be clearly indicates that, the level of overall satisfaction of average number of rural consumers are neutral with using of refrigerator. It means the level of overall satisfaction of the refrigerator which they are using is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

**FINDINGS**

From the study, it is found that,

- The majority i.e. 69.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are male.
- The majority 36.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are in the age group of 30 to 40 years.
- The majority i.e.29.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are educated SSC level.
- The majority 36.50 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are agriculturists.
- The majority i.e.51.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are from the Below Rs. 5000 Income Group.
- The majority i.e.34.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents have purchased refrigerator as a basic need for today and also to preserve food.
- The majority i.e.34.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are preferred mode of payment by installment,
- The majority i.e. 89.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are problem faced.
- The majority i.e.39.00 % of the sample rural consumer respondents are faced a problem of after sales service not available, and also leakage of water is the biggest problem while using refrigerator.
- The opinion about price factor of average number of rural consumers are high with using of refrigerator. It means the price of the refrigerator which they are using is high.
- The level of overall satisfaction of average number of rural consumers are neutral with using of refrigerator. It means the level of overall satisfaction of the refrigerator which they are using is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

**SUGGESTIONS**

- As the rural respondents who are prefer more to buy through installment purchase, it provides an opportunity for the marketers to advice an appropriate strategy to cater to this segment.
- It was found that the majority of the sample rural consumer respondents are from the Below Rs. 5000 Income Group. Hence, it is suggested that proper steps could be taken by the manufacturer to reduce the prices of refrigerator. If they do so, it can be expected that more number of lower class people may come forward to buy more products. Turnover of refrigerator may be increased.
- It was found that a respondents opined about the price of refrigerator is high. Hence, it is suggested to manufacturer do try best to reduce the prices of refrigerator for the rural consumer specially.
- It was found that a respondents opined about the level of overall satisfaction about refrigerator is neutral than should be try do to manufacturer for the keep up the level of satisfaction of rural consumer and for that doing changes in the product.
- It was found that, the sample rural consumer respondents are faced a problem of after sales service

not available, and also leakage of water is the biggest problem while using refrigerator. Hence, it is suggested that provided the service center in rural area and also could be taken action to solved the water leakage problem.

**CONCLUSION**

Consumer behaviour consists of all human behaviour which reflects in making purchase decisions. An understanding of the consumer behaviour enables a marketer to take marketing decisions which are compatible with its consumer needs. One of the most important areas for marketers to understand in planning their strategies is how families reach their purchase decisions. The present study highlights the reason for using Refrigerator, problem faced while using of Refrigerator, and also determine the behaviour of the consumer's, in case of Price, and overall satisfaction level of refrigerator users in rural area of vadgam and danta taluka. the findings of the study will enable the marketers to lay an emphasis on an effective marketing of products.

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