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 the 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. 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. 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. 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) 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) 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) studied 584 respondents out of 800 questionnaires of Delhi in five professional category 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) 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 gives 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:

| Sr. No. | Name of Village | Respondents | Sr. No. | Name of Village | Respondents |
|---------|----------------|-------------|---------|----------------|-------------|
|         | Vadgam taluka  |             |         | Danta taluka   |             |
| 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          |
| Total   | 100            |             | Total   | 100            |             |

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 interpretion 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.

| Sr. No. | Gender | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------|--------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1       | Male   | 138                   | 69         |
| 2       | Female | 62                    | 31         |
| Total   | 200    | 100                   |            |

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      |
| Total   | 200        |                        | 100        |

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      |
| Total   | 200           |                        | 100        |

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      |
| Total   | 200             |                        | 100        |

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      |
| Total   | 200            |                        | 100        |

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.

| Sr. No. | Reason for Uses Refrigerator | 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      |
| Total   |                             | 200                   | 100        |

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.

| Sr. No. | Mode of Payment | 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      |
| Total   |                 | 200                   | 100        |

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.34.00% of the sample rural consumer respondents are preferred mode of payment by installment.

| 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      |
| Total   |                        | 200                   | 100        |

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.
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       |
| Total   | 200           |                        | 453                |

Source: Primary data

\[
\text{Mean Score} = \frac{\text{Total Respondent's scores}}{\text{Total Number of Respondents}} = \frac{453}{200} = 2.27
\]

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       |
| Total   | 200              |                        | 639                |

Source: Primary data

\[
\text{Mean Score} = \frac{\text{Total Respondent's scores}}{\text{Total Number of Respondents}} = \frac{639}{200} = 3.20
\]

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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