Buying preferences followed by homemakers while purchasing selected household goods

■ **Kushavarta M. Gadge and Madhuri S. Kulkarni**

■**ABSTRACT :** The research on buying preferences followed by homemakers while purchasing selected household goods was conducted through questionnaire investigation by personal interview method among 150 randomly selected full time homemakers. Scales of preferences for purchase of grocery, clothes, furniture, bed linen and electrical appliances developed by Revanwar *et al.* (2009) were used to assess the preferences of selected homemakers while buying these items. Statistical analysis was carried out by applying 'Z' test and ANOVA technique. The results of the study indicated that majority of the homemakers were between the age group of 25 and 35 years and school educated. It was noticed that quality secured highest rank by homemakers while buying grocery, clothes and electrical appliances whereas material secured highest rank for purchase of bed linen and design secured highest rank for purchase of furniture. Statistical analysis with ANOVA indicated significantly higher differences in preferential scores for various factors while buying selected household goods.

■**KEY WORDS:** Household goods, Homemaker, Buying preferences

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Family is a main consuming unit and is in process of struggling for the fulfilment of their basic needs, tries to find a way of making the things available with them. Thus the purchasing is an essential and unavoidable activity for all the families in order to fulfil their basic needs (Rewanwar *et al.*, 2009). In a family system a women as a homemaker is rigorously involved in procuring, using and managing various goods and services for wellbeing of the family. In the procuring of household items she is the purchasing agent and principal decision maker in the family. So the homemakers are major consumers of household purchases. Consumers play a pivotal role in the growth of nation's economy. With the advancement in science and technology, the market is flooded with variety of products and selling schemes to attract the buyers that makes the decision making process difficult for the consumer to buy a product from the market. They face problems regarding quality, product range, and prices of the goods available in the market (Singh and Gandhi, 2009).

Consumer preference is defined as the subjective tastes of individual consumers. Consumer preferences for products or brands arise from the combination of many different factors. Some factors come from features

of the product itself (eg., price, durability), while others are attributes of consumers themselves (eg., goals, attitudes, discretionary income) (Venktaraman *et al.,* 2012).

Brand preference regarded as a key step in consumer decision making, involving elements of choice. In establishing brand preference, consumers compare and rank different brands by focusing on their uniqueness. Customer's advisory has a positive effect on establishing a positive effect on brand and consumer preferences. (Gungor and Bilgin, 2011).

In order to understand the consumer's preferences. It is necessary to determine their demands and desires regarding the performance (Functionality) involved in the purchase, the expected emotional results, as well as the subjective standards consumers use to identify the tendency for a product or a service (Voicu, 2007). Preferences can be triggered by the features related to the material substance of the goods (shape, size, taste, colour, consistency, package etc.), elements referring to label, name, use instructions that accompany the product, the statute granted to the person owing and using that particular product (Kochadai and Thanulingam, 1989).

The home becomes the primary unit of consumption, where homemakers are primary consumer buyers and her influence in each family decision, buying practices and her marketing behaviour can bring tremendous change hence in this study an attempt was made to know the buying preferences of homemakers for selected household goods such as grocery, clothes, electrical appliances, furniture and bed linen.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The present study was conducted in selected areas of Parbhani town of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state. Random sampling method was adopted to select 150 full time homemakers residing in Parbhani city. Scales of preferences for purchase of grocery, clothes, furniture, bed linen and electrical appliances developed by Revanwar *et al.* (2009) were used to assess the preferences of selected homemakers while buying these items. The preferential scale of grocery consisted 10 factors of preferences. The preferential scale of clothes consisted total 12 factors of preferences. The preferential scale of electrical appliances consisted total 14 factors of preferences. The preferential scale of furniture consisted total 13 factors of preferences. The preferential

scale of bed linen consisted total 10 factors of preferences. These five scales of preferences were administered on selected homemakers to note their own preferences against variousfactors notified in the scale while buying grocery, clothes, furniture, bed linen and electrical appliances. The results of the study were assessed by applying Z test, and ANOVA technique (Sharma, 2005).

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

General information of selected homemakers is presented in Table 1. It is clear from the table that majority of the homemakers were in the age group of 25-35 years (58%) followed by 35-45 years (30%) and 45-55 years (12%). The percentage of school educated homemakers (61.33%) was higher than the college educated homemakers (38.67%). Majority of the homemakers were belonging to nuclear families (58.67%) followed by joint families (41.33%) having 1-4 members (58%) in the family. Forty two per cent of the homemakers were belonging to big families having 5-8 members in the family. Majority of the homemakers were having monthly family income between Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 35,000. (45.33%) followed by Rs. 35,000 and Rs. 50,000 (30.67%) and Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 20,000 (24%). On the whole, it was observed that majority of the homemakers were between the age group of 25 and 35 years and

Table 1 : General information of selected homemakers (n = 150)		
Independent variables	Frequency of homemakers	Percentage of homemakers
Age (Years)		
25-35	87	58.00
35-45	45	30.00
45-55	18	12.00
Education		
School educated	92	61.33
College educated	58	38.67
Type of family		
Nuclear	88	58.67
Joint	62	41.33
Family size (No.)		
1-4	87	58.00
5-8	63	42.00
Family income (Rs.)		
5,000-20,000	36	24.00
20,000-35,000	68	45.33
35,000-50,000	46	30.67

school educated. Majority of the homemakers were belonging to nuclear and small families. The monthly family income between Rs. 20,000/- and Rs. 35,000/- was reported by higher percentage of the homemakers.

Comparative assessment of ranking scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential scale of grocery is reported in Table 2. It is apparent from the table that secured mean preferential scores for quality (8.60/10), cost (8.92/9), accessibility of shop (6.53/8), packaged products (6.54/7), special schemes (4.47/6) and acquaintance with shopkeeper (1.24/2) were lower than the rank values on preferential scale of grocery whereas the secured preferential score of homemakers for fresh stock (5.86/4), neatly arranged goods (5.00/3) and home service (4.04/1) were more than the rank values on preferential scale of grocery.

Statistically it was noticed that the secured preferential scores of homemakers were varying significantly from the rank value of preferential scale for all factors ($Z \leq 0.01$). The rank value of the cost was at par with secured preferential scores on the scale of grocery.

Statistical analysis with ANOVA indicated significantly higher mean preferential scores for cost (8.92) and quality (8.60) and significantly lowest score for acquaintance with shopkeeper (1.24) while buying grocery. This indicates that cost and quality were highly preferred factors for purchase of grocery and acquaintance with shopkeeper was non preferred factor for purchase of grocery by homemakers.

Comparative assessment of mean ranking scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential

Table 2 : Comparative assessment of mean preferential scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential scale of grocery				
Preferential factors	Scale rank	Rank value	Secured preferential scores (Mean ± SD)	'Z' values
Quality	1	10	8.60 ± 1.50	11.37**
Cost	2	9	8.92 ± 1.26	0.70 NS
Accessibility of shop	3	8	6.53 ± 1.84	9.74**
Packaged products	4	7	6.54 ± 2.11	2.65**
Special schemes	5	6	4.47 ± 1.27	14.67**
Credit facility	6	5	6.15 ± 2.94	4.79**
Fresh stock	7	4	5.86 ± 1.68	13.54**
Neatly arranged goods	8	3	5.00 ± 2.96	8.30**
Acquaintance with shopkeeper	9	2	1.24 ± 0.42	21.79**
Home service	10	1	4.04 ± 1.70	21.79**
F value = 325.78** S.E.± = 0.13 C.D. (P=0.05) = 0.35				
** indicates significance of value at P=0.01 NS=Non-significant				

Table 3 : Comparative assessment of mean preferential scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential scale of clothes				
Preferential factors	Scale rank	Rank value	Secured preferential score (Mean ± SD)	'Z' values
Quality	1	12	11.52 ± 0.85	6.88**
Texture	2	11	8.93 ± 1.86	13.60**
Price	3	10	8.98 ± 2.72	4.58**
Durability	4	9	9.3 ± 1.45	2.51 NS
Pattern	5	8	8.88 ± 0.92	11.79**
Colour fastness	6	7	5.80 ± 1.11	13.07**
Colour combination	7	6	6.72 ± 1.29	6.80**
Maintenance cost	8	5	3.98 ± 1.19	10.48**
Special care required	9	4	2.98 ± 1.17	10.63**
Accessibility of shop	10	3	2.7 ± 0.45	8.017**
Credit facility	11	2	2.51 ± 2.53	2.48 NS
Type of shop	12	1	5.88 ± 3.74	15.99**
F value = 373.74** S.E.± = 0.15 C.D. (P=0.05) = 0.41				
** indicates significance of value at P=0.01 NS=Non-significant				

scale of clothes is reported in Table 3. It is revealed from the table that secured preferential scores for quality (11.52/12), texture (8.9/11), price (8.98/10), colour fastness (5.80/7), maintenance cost (3.98/5), special care factors (2.98/4) and accessibility of shop (2.7/3) were lower than the rank value of preferential scale of clothes. On the other hand secured preferential scores for durability (9.3/9), pattern (8.88/8), colour combination (6.72/6), credit facility (2.51/2) and type of shop (5.88/1) were higher than the rank value of preferential scale of clothes.

Statistically the secured preferential scores were significantly different than the rank values of preferential scale of clothes ($Z \leq 0.01$) except for the durability and credit facility (Z = NS).

Statistical analysis with ANOVA indicated the significantly higher mean preferential score for quality (11.52) followed by durability (9.3) and significantly lowest score for credit facility (2.51) and accessibility of shop (2.7) while buying clothes. This indicated that quality and durability were highly preferred factors for purchase of clothes and credit facility as well as accessibility of shop were non preferred factors for purchase of clothes by homemakers.

Comparative assessment of ranking scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential scale of bed linen is presented in Table 4. It is obvious from the table that secured preferential scores of homemakers were lower than the rank value of factors on preferential scale of bed linen for material (9.3/10), design (7.27/9), colour combination (5.16/8), texture (6.79/7), credit facility (4.4/5) and accessibility of shop (3.48/4). The mean

preferential scores secured by homemakers for cost (6.10/6), durability (7.21/3), colour fastness (2.86/2) and maintenance cost (2.34/1) were higher than the rank values on preferential scale of bed linen. Application of 'Z' test indicated significant differences between secured preferential scores and actual rank values of all the factors except for texture and cost of bed linen.

Statistical analysis with ANOVA indicated the significantly higher mean preferential scores for material (9.3) followed by design (7.27) and durability (7.21). Significantly lowest scores for maintenance cost (2.34) and colour fastness (2.86) were noticed while buying bed linen. This indicated that material, design and durability were the highly preferred factors for purchase of bed linen and maintenance cost and colour fastness were non preferred factors for purchase of bed linen by the homemakers

Comparative assessment of mean ranking scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential scale of electrical appliances is denoted in Table 5. It is apparent from the table that preferential scores secured by homemakers on preferential scale of electrical appliances for the factors such as quality (12.76/14), safety (11.32/13), utility (8.62/12), initial cost (5.17/9), operating cost (5.32/8), maintenance cost (3.77/7), installation cost (5.32/6) and accessibility of shop (2.02/5) were lower than the actual scale rank values of the corresponding factors on preferential scale of electrical appliances.

Statistically these secured scores were significantly lower than the scale rank values ($p \leq 0.01$). On the contrary the secured preferential scores of homemakers

Table 4 : Comparative assessment of mean preferential scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential scale of bed linen				
Preferential Factors	Scale rank	Rank value	Secured preferential scores (Mean ± SD)	'Z' values
Material	1	10	9.3 ± 1.26	6.75**
Design	2	9	7.27 ± 1.17	17.96**
Colour combination	3	8	5.16 ± 1.70	20.38**
Texture	4	7	6.79 ± 1.80	1.40 NS
Cost	5	6	6.10 ± 2.56	0.50 NS
Credit facility	6	5	4.4 ± 3.13	2.34**
Accessibility of shop	7	4	3.48 ± 2.15	2.91**
Durability	8	3	7.21 ± 1.95	26.44**
Colour fastness	9	2	2.86 ± 1.67	6.29**
Maintenance cost	10	1	2.34 ± 1.14	14.36**
F value = 150.22** S.E.± = 0.17 C.D. (P=0.05) = 0.46				
** indicates significant of value at P=0.01 NS- Non Significant				

for guarantee (12.4/11), size (12.22/10), credit facility (5.9/4), availability of shop (6.76/3), durability (10.41/2) and ease of cleaning (2.07/1) were higher than the rank values on preferential scale of electrical appliances. Statistically the secured preferential scores were significantly more than the rank values of scale.

Statistical analysis with ANOVA indicated significantly higher mean preferential score for quality (12.76) and size (12.22) and significantly lowest score for accessibility of shop (2.02) and ease of cleaning (2.07)

while buying electrical appliances. These values indicated that quality and size were highly preferred factors for purchase of electrical appliances and accessibility of shop and ease of cleaning were non preferred factors for purchase of electrical appliances by homemakers. The study conducted by Desai *et al.* (2019) indicated somewhat similar results that users ranked price as the major influencing factor followed by utility, quality and design as the influencing factors on purchase of induction stove and refrigerator.

Table 5 : Comparative assessment mean of ranking scores secured by homemakers and rank value on preferential scale of electrical appliances

Preferential factors	Scale rank	Rank value	Secured preferential scores (Mean ± SD)	'Z' values
Quality	1	14	12.76± 2.15	7.00**
Safety	2	13	11.32 ± 1.61	12.71**
Utility	3	12	8.62 ± 2.36	17.52**
Guarantee	4	11	12.4 ± 0.82	20.79**
Size	5	10	12.22 ± 0.90	30.20**
Initial cost	6	9	5.17 ± 1.11	42.14**
Operating cost	7	8	5.32 ± 1.95	16.82**
Maintenance cost	8	7	3.77 ± 1.48	26.63**
Installation cost	9	6	5.32 ± 2.16	3.85**
Accessibility of shop	10	5	2.02 ± 1.188	30.63**
Credit facility	11	4	5.9 ± 3.47	6.70**
Availability of shop	12	3	6.76 ± 2.15	21.40**
Durability	13	2	10.41 ± 0.91	113.16**
Ease of cleaning	14	1	2.07 ± 0.75	17.34**
F value = 668.98**	S.E. ± = 0.14	C.D. (P=0.05) = 0.38		

** indicates significance of value at P=0.01   NS=Non-significant

Table 6 : Comparative assessment of mean preferential scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential scale of furniture

Preferential factors	Scale rank	Rank value	Secured preferential scores (Mean ± SD)	'Z' values
Design	1	13	11.43 ± 1.50	12.76**
Material	2	12	12.13 ± 0.86	1.89 NS
Constructional features	3	11	6.08 ± 2.78	21.62**
Cost	4	10	9.74 ± 2.86	1.08 NS
Durability	5	9	9.7 ± 1.26	6.75**
Overall appearance	6	8	2.78 ± 2.20	28.91**
Utility	7	7	6.46 ± 0.49	13.09**
Comfort	8	6	9.15 ± 2.58	14.94**
Finish	9	5	5.97 ± 2.95	4.027**
Currently in fashion	10	4	3.84 ± 1.98	0.94 NS
Accessibility of shop	11	3	2.90 ± 2.09	0.54 NS
Credit facility	12	2	4.89 ± 3.04	11.64**
Suitability	13	1	5.86 ± 2.40	24.80**
F value = 220.71**	S.E.± = 0.19	C.D. (P=0.05) = 0.52		

** indicates significance of value at P=0.01   NS=Non-significant

Comparative assessment of mean ranking of scores secured by homemakers and rank values on preferential scale of furniture is given in Table 6. It is notified from the table that the preferential scores secured by homemakers for design (11.43/13), constructional features (6.08/11), cost (9.74/10), overall appearance (2.78/8), utility (6.46/7), current fashion (3.84/4) and accessibility of shop (2.90/3) were lower than the rank values of scale of preferences for furniture. The preferential scores secured by homemakers for material (12.13/12), durability (9.7/9), comfort (9.15/6), finish (5.97/5), credit facility (4.89/2) and suitability (5.86/1) were higher than the rank values of preferential scale of furniture.

Statistically the significant differences were observed between secured scores and actual rank values of preferential scale for design, constructional features, finish, credit facility and suitability ($p \leq 0.01$). Secured preferential ranks and actual rank values for material (Z = 1.89NS), cost (Z = 1.08NS), current fashion (Z = 0.94NS) and accessibility of shop (Z = 0.54NS) while buying furniture showed non-significant results.

Statistical analysis with ANOVA indicated significantly higher mean preferential scores for material (12.13) and design (11.43) and significantly lowest scores for overall appearance (2.78) and accessibility of shop (2.90) while buying furniture. This indicated that material and design were highly preferred factors for purchase of furniture and overall appearance as well as accessibility of shop were least preferred factors for purchase of furniture by homemakers.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, it was observed that majority of the homemakers were between the age group of 25 and 35 years and school educated belonging to nuclear and small families. The monthly family income between Rs. 20,000/- and Rs. 35,000/- was reported by higher percentage of the homemakers. Preferential scales used in study were showing variation in scale rank and homemaker's rank of preferences for various scale factors for buying grocery, clothes, electrical appliances, furniture and bed linen. The homemakers from different age groups, educational level and family size were significantly varying in participation of purchases of majority of the selected items.

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