

A Study On Consumer Preference Towards Computers In Thoothukudi District

Dr.J.Ravi

Associate Professor in Economics, V.O.Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi– 628 008
Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli – 627012,
Tamil Nadu, India.

Abstract

The upcoming digital world is in the hands of the people. Computers used in education, profession, business and research. The study has the following objectives

1. To study the socio-economic outline of the sample respondents.
2. To find out the place of use of the computer and frequency of usage of computer.
3. To examine various brands of computers and motivators to buy the brand.
4. To understand the purpose of using computer and satisfaction of using preferred brands.
5. To analyse the satisfaction of using computer based on gender

The study confined to Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu. The data to be collected from primary and secondary sources is to be analysing with the help of some statistical tools like average, percentages, standard deviation, t test, chi-square test etc. It reveals that out of 180 respondents, 20% of the respondents use the personal computer once a day, 16.11% of the respondents use the personal computer twice a day, 13.33% of the respondents use the personal computer weekly once, 11.67% of the respondents use the personal computer monthly once and 38.89% of the respondents use the personal computer when their necessity. It brings out the fact that 6.67% of the respondents use the personal computer for listening to music, 19.44% of the respondents use the personal computer for browsing/email purposes, 11.67% of the respondents use the personal computer for typing purpose, 14.44% of the respondents use the personal computer for educational purpose, 35.56% of the respondents use the personal computer for business purposes and 12.22% of the respondents use the personal computer for listening to entertainment. In order to find out the significant difference in satisfaction of using computer based on gender, the 't' value was calculated and the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in satisfaction of using computer between the male and female respondents. The present study attempted to explore the demographic factors that influence the decisions of the customers on purchase of the computers, the selection and satisfaction of the same in Thoothukudi district.

Key words: computers, storage capacity, reliability, accuracy, versatility, demographic factors.

INTRODUCTION

In today's hard competitive world, everything can be quickly done using computers. Now computers are highly helpful to rule a nation itself (Srinivasa Vallabhan, 2005). The increasing use of computers in science, industry, commerce, medicine, education and various other fields can be attributed to their speed, accuracy, versatility, storage, diligence, storage capacity, reliability and automation (Parameswaran, R. 1999).

To fulfil their needs and wants, based on their preference and taste, they purchase branded computers. Purchase decision-making pattern is a complex amalgam of needs and desires and influenced by factors such as consumer's, familiar role, social and cultural environment and norms and aspiration and inhibitions. The brand is a mark, name, logo or trademark that identifies a product or service or organisation and distinguishes it from its competitors. The study examines the consumer preference towards computers in Thoothukudi district of Tamilnadu.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

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METHODOLOGY

The study confined to Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu. Both primary and secondary data have used for the present study. The primary data obtained 136 respondents from male and 44 respondents from female, totally 180 respondents were selected for the study. The personal interview method carried with a pre-tested schedule. The primary data collected about the year 2018-19. Secondary data collected from various Government reports, research reports, journals, libraries, magazines, books, newspapers and internet. The data to be collected from primary and secondary sources is to be analysing with the help of some statistical tools like average, percentages, standard deviation, t test, chi-square test etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Attiya Kanwal (2011) aimed at determining consumer preference of international brands instead of national or local brands. Consumers are seen to give preference to international brands if asked to choose between an international brand and a national brand. Consumers regard international brands to be of better quality, more durable and reliable. Furthermore, they are more price and quality conscious and not very brand loyal. Local companies need to emphasize on the quality of their products in advertisements and their advertisements need to be more targeted and up-beat to attract the younger market segment.

Annamalai Solayappan, Jothi Jayakrishnan (2010) noted that purchase decision making is a complex amalgam of needs and desires. It is influenced by factors such as consumer's societal role, social and cultural environment, aspiration and inhibitions. In this article, the researcher's tries to find out the customers' preference for branded computers. Exploratory research has been made with postgraduate students of various disciplines in leading institutions in Chennai to find out the most important factors influencing the purchase of branded computers. According to this study, quality, specification / configuration, reasonable price, credit, service, experience person, offers, style, guarantee, warrantee and product availability are the inducing factors for the purchase of branded computers among post graduate students of Chennai.

Banumathy and Hemameena (2006) on their article studying consumer brand preference with respect to soft drinks, found that after globalization most of the consumers like the international brands such as Pepsi and Coco-cola. Consumers preferred a certain brand or a particular drink mainly because of its taste and refreshing ability.

Narang (2006) opined that, a buyer does not stick to one brand in case of food purchasing. They should be able recall different brand names when they go for purchase. Repetitive advertising can be used to promote brand recall. The product should be associated with style and trend, so that it appeals to the youth and the brand name should be developed as a fashion statement. Promotional schemes such as discounts and free offers with purchase were suggested to increase rates.

Kubendran and Vanniarajan (2005) studied that, the change in consumption pattern was due to changes in food habits. If income and urbanization increase among consumers, the percentage of income spent on consumption increased. The urban consumers preferred mostly branded products compared to rural consumers. The most significant factors influencing buying decisions were accessibility, quality, regular supply, door delivery and the mode of payment.

ANALYSIS

The study describes the distribution of the respondents based on their demographic characteristics.

Table 1
Gender-Wise Classification

Sl. No.	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Male	136	75.56
2.	Female	44	24.44
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The table 1 shows that out of the total 180 respondents, 75.56 per cent of them are male and the rest female. It inferred that the vast majority of respondents are male.

Table 2
Age-wise classification of the respondents

Sl. No.	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	20-30	14	7.78
2.	30-40	53	29.44
3.	40-50	94	52.22
4.	50-60	19	10.56
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

A total of 180 respondents surveyed. From the table 2, it revealed that the percentage of 40-50 age respondents is 52.22%, followed by the percentage of 30-40 age respondents is 29.44% the percentage of 50-60 age respondents is 10.56% and the remaining 7.78% are 20-30 age respondents. As per the survey, 40-50 age groups, involvements are higher than the other age groups in the study area.

Table 3
Educational Qualification of the respondents

Sl. No.	Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Illiterate	12	6.67
2.	Primary	26	14.44
3.	Secondary	32	17.78
4.	Hr. Sec	48	26.67
5.	Graduate	62	34.44
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Education makes a difference in the articulation of opinions. 6.67% of the respondents are Illiterate. About 14.44% of the respondents had primary education, about 17.78% had a high school education; about 26.67% possessed higher secondary level education and 34.44% computer using respondents had pursued degrees.

Table 4
The number of respondents and their family size

Sl. No.	Size	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	1-3	29	16.11
2.	4-5	93	51.67
3.	Above 5	58	32.22
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The majority of the respondents 93(56.67) percentage of families are having 4 -5 members, 58(32.22) percentage of families are having above five members. Only 29(16.11) percentage of families are having 1 -3 members.

Table 5
Marital status of the respondents

Sl. No.	Marital status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Married	141	78.33
2.	Unmarried	39	21.67
	Total	180	100

Source: Primary Data

The table 5 reveals that out of 180 sample respondents, about 78.33% married, and 21.67% were unmarried.

Table 6
Monthly Income of the respondents

Sl. No.	Monthly Income (Rs.)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Blow 10000	17	9.44
2.	10000-15000	28	15.56
3.	15000-20000	31	17.22
4.	20000-25000	69	38.33
5.	Above 25000	35	19.45
	Total	180	100

Source: Primary data

The study revealed that 9.44% of the respondents are earning an income up to Rs.10000; 15.56 % of the respondents are earning Rs.10000-Rs.15000 monthly 17.22% of the respondents are earning Rs.15000-Rs.20000 monthly, 38.33% of the respondents are earning Rs.20000-Rs.25000 monthly and the others (19.45%) are earning above Rs.25000 monthly. The average monthly income of the family is Rs. 19638.89.

Table 7
Brands of computers

Sl. No.	Type of computer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Dell	33	18.33
2.	Apple	22	12.22
3.	Acer	23	12.78
4.	Sony	16	8.89
5.	Lenovo	31	17.22
6.	Samsung	19	10.56
7.	HP	36	20.00
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table 7 shows that 33 (18.33%) of the respondents use the Dell brand, 22 (12.22%) of the respondents use the Apple brand, 23 (12.78%) of the respondents use the Acer brand, 16 (8.89%) of the respondents use the Sony brand, 31 (17.22%) of the respondents use the Lenovo brand, 19 (10.56%) of the respondents use the Samsung brand, and 36 (20%) of the respondents use the HP brand.

Table 8
Motivators to buy the Brand

Sl. No.	Motivators to buy the Brand	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Friends	36	20.00
2.	Family members	32	17.78
3.	Colleagues	21	11.67
4.	Co-workers	24	13.33
5.	Special offers	19	10.55
6.	Advertisement	23	12.78
7.	Computer sellers	25	13.89
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table 8 exposed that majority of the respondents 20% have been motivated to buy the brand through their friends 17.78% through family members, 11.67% through colleagues, 13.33% through co-workers. 10.55% because of special offers advertisement and the remaining 13.89% has motivated 12.78% through computer sellers.

Table 9
Place of Use of the Computer

Sl. No.	Place of Use	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	At home	83	46.11
2.	Friend's home	21	11.67
3.	Workplace	76	42.22
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table 9 brings out the fact that 83 (46.11%) of the respondents mostly use the computer in their home, 21 (11.67%) of the respondents mostly use the computer in their friends home, and 76 (42.22%) of the respondents mostly use the computer in their workplace.

Table 10
Frequency of Usage

Sl. No.	Frequency of Usage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Once a day	36	20.00
2.	Twice a day	29	16.11
3.	Weekly once	24	13.33
4.	Monthly once	21	11.67
5.	When necessity	70	38.89
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table 10 reveals that out of 180 respondents, 36 (20%) of the respondents use the personal computer once a day, 29 (16.11%) of the respondents use the personal computer twice a day, 24 (13.33%) of the respondents use the personal computer weekly once, 21 (11.67%) of the respondents use the personal computer monthly once and 70(38.89%) of the respondents use the personal computer when their necessity.

Table 11
Usage Time

Sl. No.	Usage Time	No. of Respondents	Percentage
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1.	Below 1 hour	24	13.33
2.	1 – 2 hours	29	16.11
3.	2 – 3 hours	33	18.33
4.	Above 3 hours	39	21.67
5.	Above 6 hours	55	30.56
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table 11 reveals that 24 (13.33%) of the respondents use the personal computer for below 1hour, 29 (16.11%) of the respondents use the personal computer 1 to 2hours, 33 (18.33%) of the respondents use the personal computer for 2 to 3 hours 39 (21.67%) of the respondents use the personal computer for more than 3 hours. However, the majority 55 (30.56%) of the respondents are using the computer above 6 hours for their official purpose.

Table 12
Purpose of Using Computer

Sl. No.	Purpose of Using Computer	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Listening to music	12	6.67
2.	Browsing/ e mail	35	19.44
3.	Typing	21	11.67
4.	Educational purpose	26	14.44
5.	Business	64	35.56
6.	Entertainment	22	12.22
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table 12 brings out the fact that 12 (6.67%) of the respondents use the personal computer for listening to music, 35 (19.44%) of the respondents use the personal computer for browsing/email purposes, 21 (11.67%) of the respondents use the personal computer for typing purpose , 26 (14.44%) of the respondents use the personal computer for educational purpose, 64 (35.56%) of the respondents use the personal computer for business purposes and 22 (12.22%) of the respondents use the personal computer for listening to entertainment.

Table 13
The satisfaction of Using Preferred Brands

Sl. No.	The satisfaction of Using Preferred Brands	No. of Respondents	Percentage
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1.	Highly satisfied	59	32.78
2.	Satisfied	46	25.56
3.	Neutral	35	19.44
4.	Dissatisfied	23	12.78
5.	Highly dissatisfied	17	9.44
	Total	180	100.0

Source: Primary Data

From the above table 13, it is found that majority of the respondents say 59% are highly satisfied in using personal computer's brand, 25.56% are satisfied, 19.44% neutral followed by 12.78% who are dissatisfied and 9.44% who are highly dissatisfied.

Table 14

The effect of socio economic factors that influence the decisions of the customers on purchase of the computer using chi-square test

Socio- Economic variables	Chi – Square values	P Values	Significance
Gender	42.34	0.001*	Significant
Age	21.91	0.386	Not Significant
Family Size	5.37	0.473	Not Significant
Marital Status	23.05	0.001*	Significant
Educational Qualification	4.68	0.451	Not Significant
Monthly Income	19.13	0.002*	Significant

* Significant level 5 per cent.

The above table 14 reveals that the association between decisions of the customers on purchase of the computer and socio-economic variables namely gender, marital status and income per month is significant at 5 per cent level as the P value is less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis has been rejected for these variables. The rest of the socio economic variables namely, age, family size and educational qualification, are not significantly associated at 5 per cent level with decisions of the customers on purchase of the computer. Hence, the null hypothesis has been accepted for these variables.

Table 15

Significant difference in satisfaction of using computer based on gender

Sex	N	Mean	S.D	't'Value	Interpretation
Male	136	18.53	5.19	0.482	Not Significant
Female	44	4.67	1.63		

Source: Computed from Primary Data

In order to find out the significant difference in satisfaction of using computer based on gender, the 't' value was calculated and the calculated 't' value was found to be 0.482

which is lower than the table value 1.97 which is significant at 0.05 level .Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in satisfaction of using computer between the male and female respondents.

CONCLUSION

The present study attempted to explore the demographic factors that influence the decisions of the customers on purchase of the computers, the selection and satisfaction of the same in Thoothukudi district. The study concludes that demographic factors such as age, income, gender and education are having a significant role in the product selection. Shopper groups mainly vary in choosing a product based on their significance for patronage factors of a shop or dealer.

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