

Drivers Of Purchase Decisions Among Women Consumers In The Home Appliance Sector: A Study In Villupuram District

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Abstract

The present study examines the factors influencing the purchase decisions of women buyers towards home appliances in Villupuram District. With the growing importance of home appliances in modern households, women have emerged as key decision-makers in purchase activities. The study aims to analyse the socio-economic profile, buying behaviour, and the various factors affecting their purchase decisions. The study is based on primary data collected from a sample of respondents using a structured interview schedule. Appropriate statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean, and factor analysis were employed to analyse the data. The findings reveal that women consumers exhibit a high level of involvement in the decision-making process, with purchase decisions primarily influenced by product-related factors such as quality, durability, technological features, and energy efficiency. In addition, factors such as price, brand reputation, promotional offers, and after-sales service also play a significant role. Women buyers actively engage in information search and comparison of alternatives, often relying on digital platforms, online reviews, and family influence. However, the study also identifies challenges such as high prices, misleading advertisements, and service-related issues. The study concludes that women consumers are well-informed and rational decision-makers, and their behaviour is shaped by a combination of economic, social, and technological factors. The findings provide useful implications for marketers to adopt consumer-centric strategies and improve service quality.

Key words: Influencing factors, buyer behaviour, rural, urban, home appliances.

Introduction

In recent years, the home appliances market in India has witnessed significant growth, driven by rising income levels, urbanization, technological advancements, and changing lifestyle patterns. Home appliances have become an essential part of modern households, contributing to convenience, efficiency, and improved quality of life. Within this evolving market landscape, women play a crucial role as key decision-makers and influencers in household purchase decisions. Women buyers are increasingly becoming more informed, independent, and actively involved in evaluating and selecting home appliances. Their purchase decisions are influenced by a wide range of factors, including price, product quality, brand reputation, technological features, energy efficiency, promotional offers, and after-sales service. In addition, social influences such as family preferences, peer recommendations, and exposure to digital media further shape their buying behaviour. The decision-making process of women consumers is often characterized by careful evaluation, comparison of alternatives, and emphasis on functional as well as emotional benefits. With the growing access to online platforms, women consumers are also increasingly relying on product reviews, ratings, and digital information sources, making the purchase process more informed and complex. Despite their significant role in the market, there is a need for a focused analysis of the factors influencing the purchase decisions of women buyers, particularly in semi-urban and rural contexts. Villupuram District, with its mix of urban and rural population, provides a suitable setting to examine the diverse socio-economic and behavioural characteristics of women consumers. In this context, the present study aims to analyse the factors influencing the purchase decision of women buyers towards home appliances in Villupuram District. The study seeks to provide insights into the key determinants of consumer behaviour and contribute to a better understanding of women's role in the home appliances market.

Review of Literature

Alex and Maria Selvi (2016) studied family roles and social influences in purchasing refrigerators, washing machines, and air conditioners. The study found that women and children often initiate and influence the demand for white goods, while male members predominantly make the final decision and payment. The study also found no significant association between gender and factors influencing buying decisions for certain products. **Karthika and Vijai Anand (2017)** studied the factors influencing buying behaviour of the products such as refrigerators, washing machines, mixer grinders, wet grinders, and air conditioners. The study found that majority of respondents were influenced by others' opinions, particularly family members. Key factors influencing purchase decisions included price, quality, offers/discounts, brand image, and technical features. **Rana and Jha (2018)** studied the factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behaviour of white products. The findings revealed that family members were the primary purchase initiators for refrigerators and washing machines, while male members initiated purchases for air-conditioners and LCD/LED TVs. Important attributes influencing purchase included price, energy saving, brand name, durability, guarantee, and after-sales service.

Dhinakaran S.J., and Gomathi (2019) examined consumer buying behaviour towards home appliances in Tirunelveli District. The findings showed that factors such as price, brand name, quality, offers, and service influenced purchase decisions. Further, there was no significant association between gender and age with buying behaviour. **Reddy (2022)** studied the gender differences in consumer buying behaviour. The study found that that women adopt a holistic and emotion-driven approach to shopping, emphasizing brand loyalty, quality, ethical considerations, and experiential value. In contrast, men demonstrate a pragmatic, goal-oriented approach, focusing on functionality, technical specifications, and efficiency. **Qin, Amornruangtrakool, and Kositkanin (2023)** studied factors affecting consumer's decision to purchase household appliances in Chengdu city. The study found that demographic factors such as gender, education, income, housing type, and family size significantly influenced marketing mix perceptions. The study concluded that effective marketing mix strategies and green consumption policies play a crucial role in shaping household appliance purchase decisions. **Yan, Sattabut, and Muangmee (2024)** analysed the factors influenced consumer purchasing intention in live home appliance E-commerce. The results indicated that anchor professionalism, consistency, interactivity, scene entertainment, promotional offers, product display, information quality, product quality, and product appearance all had a significant positive effect on purchase intention. The findings highlight that trust, engagement, and product presentation play a crucial role in influencing consumer decisions in live-streaming e-commerce environments.

Lakshmi, Bose, and Ravi (2024) reviewed psychological, social, cultural, economic, technological, privacy, and security factors influencing purchase decisions. It emphasized that apparel and cosmetics dominate women's online purchases, and influencer marketing and social media engagement significantly impact buying decisions. The study concluded that understanding gender-specific online shopping patterns help marketers design targeted digital strategies. **Sisodiya and Solanki (2024)** examined the determinants influencing purchase decisions of consumer durable goods in Surat city. The study found that Price consciousness, product features, easy accessibility, quality, durability, after-sales service, and look and style were significant influencing variables. **Chandramouly and Laxmi Narsaiah (2025)** found that quality was the most influential factor in purchase decisions, followed by price and brand image. Advertisements and online reviews were major sources of awareness, indicating the growing influence of digital platforms. LG and Samsung emerged as the most preferred brands. **Dhawan and Garga (2025)** examined the determinants shaping online and offline purchasing decisions in India's electronics market. The findings revealed that price, convenience, trust, brand perception, product description, and after-sale service are the most influential factors affecting consumer decisions. The study also highlighted the growing role of AI-driven shopping, digital payments, and omnichannel strategies in shaping consumer habits.

Objectives

The study has been done with the following objectives,

1. To study the factors influencing buyers' behaviour towards select home appliances in Villupuram district.
2. To compare the level of influence of factors on buyers' behaviour of home appliances between urban and rural customers.

Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the factors influencing the purchase decisions of women buyers towards home appliances in Villupuram District. The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected through a structured interview schedule, specifically designed to capture information related to socio-economic characteristics, purchase behaviour, and influencing factors. Secondary data were obtained from journals, books, reports, and relevant online sources to support the conceptual framework. The study area is confined to Villupuram District, Tamil Nadu, which comprises both urban and rural regions, thereby enabling a comprehensive analysis of diverse consumer segments. A total sample of 384 women respondents was selected using a convenience sampling method including 192 from urban and 192 from rural area. The respondents include women who have purchased or are using home appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, air conditioner, and mixer grinder. For the purpose of data analysis, appropriate statistical tools were employed. Percentage analysis, Mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation, factor analysis (Principal Component Analysis), and independent sample T test were used for analysis.

Results and Discussion

The purchase of home appliances is a complex decision-making process influenced by a combination of economic, product-related, social, and promotional factors. Understanding these influencing factors is essential to analyse consumer behaviour, as they determine the preferences, priorities, and final purchase decisions of consumers. In the context of the present study, this section examines the extent to which various factors such as price, brand, quality, durability, design, energy efficiency, after-sales service, promotional offers, and social influences affect the purchase of home appliances among respondents. This section of the paper presents the results and discussion.

The questionnaire in the aspect of analyzing factors influencing the buyers in purchasing home appliances in Villupuram district tested its reliability using Cronbach's Alpha test. The computed Cronbach's Alpha value for factors influencing the buyers in purchasing home appliances in Villupuram district is 0.862. This value is well above the commonly accepted

threshold of 0.70, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability of the factors influencing the purchase of home appliances scale. Factor analysis is a widely used multivariate statistical technique employed to identify underlying dimensions or latent factors that explain the pattern of relationships among a large set of observed variables. The present study, factor analysis is applied to examine the factors influencing the buyers in purchasing home appliances in Villupuram district and to identify the key dimensions of the factors (25 factors). By extracting common factors from the observed variables, factor analysis helps in revealing the structure of the factors influencing the buyers in purchasing home appliances in Villupuram district are interrelated.

Prior to conducting factor analysis, the suitability of the data is assessed using measures such as the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

Table 1: KMO and Barter's Test – Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.781
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	824.258
	df	300
	Sig.	0.000

The calculated KMO value is 0.781, which exceeds the minimum acceptable level. According to standard criteria, a KMO value between 0.7 and 0.8 indicates good sampling adequacy, confirming that the sample size is sufficient and the variables are suitable for factor analysis. Further, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is found to be highly significant, with an approximate Chi-square value of 824.258 at 300 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000. This significant result indicates that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix and that there are meaningful correlations among the factors influencing the buyers in purchasing home appliances in Villupuram district.

Table 2 presents the communalities of the factors influencing the buyers in purchasing home appliances, extracted using Principal Component Analysis (PCA).

Table 2: Communalities of Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision

SN	Variable	Initial	Extraction
1	Price of the products	1.000	0.669
2	Brand of the products	1.000	0.676
3	Availability of varieties / models	1.000	0.605
4	Quality of the product	1.000	0.514
5	Durability of the product	1.000	0.610
6	Product design / appearance	1.000	0.682
7	Colours available	1.000	0.637
8	Energy savings	1.000	0.508
9	Quality & promptness of after sale services	1.000	0.531
10	Warranty period covered	1.000	0.540
11	Terms and conditions of warranty	1.000	0.582
12	Promotional offers / discounts on the product	1.000	0.585
13	Influence of advertisements	1.000	0.519
14	Online ratings offered by existing customers	1.000	0.573
15	Online reviews of existing customers	1.000	0.542
16	Availability of EMI facilities	1.000	0.669
17	Availability of various payment modes	1.000	0.543
18	Influence of family members	1.000	0.573
19	Influence of sales personnel	1.000	0.626
20	Availability of spare parts	1.000	0.635
21	Festival offers available	1.000	0.574
22	Influence of social media	1.000	0.605
23	Suggestions of friends	1.000	0.709
24	Technological features	1.000	0.619
25	Exchange offers	1.000	0.621

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The communalities values presented in Table 2 reveal that all variables exhibit relatively acceptable extraction values, ranging from 0.508 to 0.709, indicating that a substantial proportion of variance in each variable is explained by the extracted factors. This suggests that all the selected variables are adequately represented in the factor model and contribute meaningfully to explaining consumer buying behaviour. The communalities values confirm that the variables included in the analysis are appropriate and sufficiently contribute to the factor structure. The results validate the suitability of applying factor analysis to identify the key dimensions influencing the purchase of home appliances, thereby strengthening the reliability and interpretability of the subsequent factor extraction process.

Table 3 shows the total variance explained through Principal Component Analysis (PCA) for the factors influencing the purchase of home appliances. This table provides information on the number of factors extracted, their eigenvalues, and the percentage of total variance explained by each factor. It helps in identifying the underlying dimensions that significantly contribute to consumer buying behaviour.

Table 3: Total Variance Explained - Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.519	18.076	18.076	4.519	18.076	18.076
2	3.409	13.636	31.712	3.409	13.636	31.712
3	2.369	9.476	41.188	2.369	9.476	41.188
4	2.006	8.024	49.212	2.006	8.024	49.212
5	1.803	7.212	56.424	1.803	7.212	56.424
6	1.760	7.040	63.464	1.760	7.040	63.464
7	0.988	3.952	67.416			
8	0.892	3.568	70.984			
9	0.783	3.132	74.116			
10	0.676	2.704	76.820			
11	0.653	2.612	79.432			
12	0.571	2.284	81.716			
13	0.501	2.004	83.720			
14	0.484	1.936	85.656			
15	0.467	1.868	87.524			
16	0.431	1.724	89.248			
17	0.404	1.616	90.864			
18	0.386	1.544	92.408			
19	0.343	1.372	93.780			
20	0.317	1.268	95.048			
21	0.296	1.184	96.232			
22	0.271	1.084	97.316			
23	0.234	0.936	98.252			
24	0.229	0.916	99.168			
25	0.208	0.832	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3 indicate that six components have eigenvalues greater than one and are therefore retained for further analysis, in accordance with Kaiser’s criterion. These six factors together explain a cumulative variance of 63.464 per cent, which is considered satisfactory in social science research, indicating that a substantial proportion of the total variance in the data is accounted for by the extracted factors. The extraction of six meaningful factors indicates that consumer buying behaviour towards home appliances is multi-dimensional, influenced by a combination of economic, product-related, social, and promotional factors. The satisfactory level of cumulative variance explained further validates the adequacy of the factor model and supports its use in identifying the key determinants of purchase behaviour.

Table 4 presents the rotated component matrix derived through Principal Component Analysis using Varimax rotation. The rotation of factors facilitates a clearer interpretation by grouping related variables under distinct components. This enables the identification of underlying dimensions that significantly influence consumer buying behaviour towards home appliances.

Table 4: Factor Analysis: Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision (Rotated Component Matrix^a)

Variables	Factors						Factor Name
	1	2	3	4	5	6	

1	0.846						
12	0.814						
16	0.786						
17	0.743						
21	0.733						
25	0.724						
2		0.873					
9		0.855					
10		0.831					
11		0.792					
4			0.869				
5			0.840				
8			0.828				
20			0.804				
24			0.762				
3				0.834			
6				0.811			
7				0.788			
13					0.874		
14					0.859		
15					0.832		
22					0.819		
18						0.850	
19						0.821	
23						0.809	

The rotated component matrix reveals that the 25 variables are grouped into six distinct factors, each representing a specific dimension influencing the purchase of home appliances. The grouped factors are labelled as Economic Factors, Brand and Service Factors, Product Quality and Performance Factors, Product Appearance and Variety Factors, Promotional and Information Factors and Social Influence Factors. The extraction of six meaningful factors confirms that consumer buying behaviour towards home appliances is multi-dimensional, influenced by a combination of economic, product-related, brand, promotional, and social factors.

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of the major factors influencing the purchase of home appliances, derived from factor analysis. The table includes the mean (\bar{x}), standard deviation (σ), coefficient of variation (CV), and rank for each factor. This analysis helps in identifying the relative importance and consistency of each factor in influencing consumer buying behaviour.

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision

SN	Factors	\bar{x}	σ	CV	Rank
1	Economic Factors	3.11	1.39	44.82	V
2	Brand and Service Factors	3.27	1.39	42.58	I
3	Product Quality and Performance Factors	3.07	1.42	46.15	VI
4	Product Appearance and Variety Factors	3.14	1.42	45.28	IV
5	Promotional and Information Factors	3.26	1.41	43.06	II
6	Social Influence Factors	3.20	1.38	43.03	III
	Overall	3.18			

Table 5 indicates that Brand and Service Factors hold the highest influence on consumer purchase decisions, with a mean score of 3.27, and are ranked first. This highlights the importance of brand reputation, warranty, and after-sales service in shaping consumer preferences. Closely following this, Promotional and Information Factors (mean = 3.26) are ranked second, indicating the growing impact of advertisements, online reviews, and social media in influencing purchase decisions. Social Influence Factors (mean = 3.20) are ranked third, suggesting that interpersonal influences such as family, friends, and sales personnel play a significant role in the decision-making process. Product Appearance and Variety Factors (mean = 3.14) and Economic Factors (mean = 3.11) are ranked fourth and fifth, respectively, indicating moderate influence. These findings suggest that while price and aesthetic aspects are important, they are relatively less dominant compared to brand and informational influences. Product Quality and Performance Factors (mean = 3.07) are ranked sixth, reflecting the lowest relative influence among the identified factors. However, the mean values across all factors are

closely clustered around the overall mean of 3.18, indicating that all factors have a fairly balanced influence on purchase behaviour. The coefficient of variation (CV) values range from 42.58 to 46.15, suggesting a moderate level of variability in respondents' opinions. The relatively lower CV for Brand and Service Factors indicates greater consistency in responses, reinforcing its significance as a key determinant.

Table 6 presents a comparative analysis of the mean scores of various factors influencing the purchase of home appliances between urban and rural respondents.

Table 6: A comparative Analysis of Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision

SN	Factors	\bar{x} Urban	\bar{x} Rural	\bar{x} Overall	\bar{x} Difference
1	Economic Factors	3.13	3.09	3.11	0.04
2	Brand and Service Factors	3.37	3.17	3.27	0.20
3	Product Quality and Performance Factors	3.04	3.11	3.07	-0.07
4	Product Appearance and Variety Factors	3.13	3.16	3.14	-0.03
5	Promotional and Information Factors	3.19	3.33	3.26	-0.14
6	Social Influence Factors	3.21	3.20	3.20	0.02

The comparative analysis reveals notable differences as well as similarities between urban and rural consumers in terms of the factors influencing their purchase decisions. Economic Factors show a marginal difference, with urban respondents (mean = 3.13) slightly higher than rural respondents (mean = 3.09), resulting in a minimal difference of 0.04. This indicates that financial considerations are almost equally important for both groups, suggesting a similar level of price sensitivity. A significant variation is observed in Brand and Service Factors, where urban respondents (mean = 3.37) place considerably higher importance compared to rural respondents (mean = 3.17), with a difference of 0.20, the highest among all factors. This suggests that urban consumers are more brand-conscious and place greater emphasis on after-sales service, warranty, and brand reputation. In contrast, Product Quality and Performance Factors show a slightly higher mean for rural respondents (mean = 3.11) compared to urban respondents (mean = 3.04), with a difference of -0.07. This indicates that rural consumers may prioritize durability and functional efficiency more strongly. Similarly, Product Appearance and Variety Factors exhibit a marginally higher preference among rural respondents (mean = 3.16) compared to urban respondents (mean = 3.13), though the difference (-0.03) is minimal. This suggests that aesthetic and variety-related aspects are relatively consistent across both groups. A notable difference is seen in Promotional and Information Factors, where rural respondents (mean = 3.33) show greater influence compared to urban respondents (mean = 3.19), with a difference of -0.14. This implies that rural consumers are more responsive to promotional activities, advertisements, and informational sources. Social Influence Factors show almost identical mean scores for both urban (3.21) and rural (3.20) respondents, with a negligible difference of 0.02, indicating that interpersonal influences such as family and peers are equally important across both segments.

Table 7 presents the results of the independent sample t-test conducted to examine whether there are significant differences between urban and rural respondents with respect to the factors influencing the purchase of home appliances. Levene's Test is used to assess the equality of variances, while the t-test evaluates whether the mean differences between the two groups are statistically significant. For the purpose of the analysis the researcher framed the following null hypothesis.

H₀: There is no significant difference between urban and rural respondents with respect to factors influencing the purchase of home appliances.

Table 7: Independent Sample T Test of Influencing Factors between Urban and Rural Buyers

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Economic Factors	Assumption 1	6.846	0.012	2.049	382	0.041	0.042	0.130	-0.027	0.329
	Assumption 2			2.049	381	0.041	0.042	0.130	-0.027	0.329
Brand and Service Factors	Assumption 1	7.534	0.006	2.393	382	0.017	0.201	0.141	-0.076	0.332
	Assumption 2			2.393	381	0.017	0.201	0.141	-0.076	0.333
Product Quality and Performance Factors	Assumption 1	5.439	0.021	2.014	382	0.045	-0.070	0.146	-0.268	0.120
	Assumption 2			2.014	381	0.045	-0.070	0.146	-0.268	0.120
Product Appearance and Variety Factors	Assumption 1	6.113	0.008	-2.429	382	0.016	-0.033	0.144	-0.517	-0.054
	Assumption 2			-2.432	381	0.016	-0.033	0.144	-0.517	-0.054

Promotional and Information Factors	Assumption 1	4.737	0.042	3.245	382	0.002	-0.141	0.150	-0.121	0.268
	Assumption 2			3.315	381	0.002	-0.141	0.150	-0.120	0.266
Social Influence Factors	Assumption 1	0.589	0.444	0.732	382	0.465	0.016	0.144	-0.142	0.309
	Assumption 2			0.734	381	0.464	0.016	0.144	-0.141	0.309

Assumption 1: Equal variances assumed; Assumption 2: Equal variances not assumed

The results of Levene’s Test indicate that for most factors (except Social Influence), the significance values are less than 0.05, implying that the assumption of equal variances is violated. However, since both rows yield similar significance levels, the results can still be interpreted reliably. The calculated t-value (2.049) with a significance level of 0.041 ($p < 0.05$) of influence of Economic Factors on purchase of home appliances was significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Indicates a statistically significant difference between urban and rural respondents. This shows that urban and rural consumers differ in their sensitivity towards economic aspects such as price, EMI options, and promotional offers. The t-test result ($t = 2.393, p = 0.017$) of influence of Brand and Service Factors on purchase of home appliances shows a significant difference between urban and rural respondents. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that urban consumers place relatively greater emphasis on brand reputation, warranty, and after-sales service compared to rural consumers. The t-value (2.014) with a significance level of 0.045 of Influence level of Product Quality and Performance Factors on home appliances indicates a significant difference between the two groups. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This reveals that perceptions regarding quality, durability, and performance vary between urban and rural consumers. A statistically significant difference is observed on influence of Product Appearance and Variety Factors on purchase of home appliances ($t = -2.429, p = 0.016$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The negative mean difference indicates that rural consumers give relatively higher importance to product design, colour, and variety compared to urban consumers. The t-test result of influence of Promotional and Information Factors on purchase of home appliances ($t = 3.245, p = 0.002$) saw significant hence the hull hypothesis was rejected. It indicates a highly significant difference between urban and rural respondents. This shows that rural consumers are more influenced by promotional activities, advertisements, and information sources compared to urban consumers. The t-value (0.732) with a significance level of 0.465 ($p > 0.05$) of influence of Social Influence Factors on purchase of home appliances was significant hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It indicates no significant difference between urban and rural respondents. This implies that social influences such as family, friends, and sales personnel affect both groups in a similar manner.

Conclusion

The study reveals that women buyers play an active role in purchasing home appliances, with decisions largely driven by product quality, durability, technological features, and energy efficiency. Factors such as price, brand reputation, promotional offers, and after-sales service also significantly influence their choices. Women consumers exhibit high involvement, engaging in information search and comparison, supported by family influence and digital platforms. However, challenges such as pricing issues, misleading information, and service-related problems persist. Overall, the study concludes that women are key decision-makers in the home appliances market, and their behaviour is shaped by a combination of economic, social, and technological factors. The findings highlight the need for consumer-centric strategies and improved service quality to enhance satisfaction.

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