



A Study on Consumer Behaviour Towards FMCG Products in Rural Areas of Farrukhabad District

Archita Dixit

MBA (Dual Specialization) Faculty of Commerce and Management, Rama University, Kanpur
(Uttar Pradesh)

Abstract: This study examines the FMCG product purchasing habits of rural residents in the Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh. Finding the elements impacting brand loyalty and purchasing decisions is the primary goal. Statistical techniques that are both descriptive and inferential are employed. While descriptive statistics explain customer behaviour, correlation and regression analysis look at the connections between influencing factors and brand loyalty.

The results demonstrate that brand loyalty is significantly impacted by psychological elements such as lifestyle, perception, and beliefs. Decisions are also influenced by behavioural factors like frequency of purchases and preference for local stores. Rural customers are price-sensitive, but they place greater value on product availability, quality, and trust.

While new platforms like YouTube and WhatsApp are increasingly influencing consumers, traditional sources like word-of-mouth and television continue to have a strong position. The analysis identifies issues such as restricted product availability, inadequate infrastructure, budgetary limitations, and ignorance. The report draws attention to issues such as low product availability, inadequate infrastructure, budgetary limitations, and ignorance. It recommends that FMCG companies concentrate on inexpensive packaging, enhance rural distribution, and use a hybrid marketing strategy.

In general, Farrukhabad's rural consumers constitute a rising market that necessitates tactics that strike a compromise between traditional values and contemporary trends.

Keywords: FMCG, digital literacy, brand loyalty, psychographic aspects, and rural consumer behaviour;



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Introduction:

One of the biggest and most significant economic sectors in India is fast-moving consumer goods, or FMCG. These products include everyday necessities that people buy on a regular basis, like food, drinks, hygiene, and household items. Due to their necessity, FMCG products are in high demand in both urban and rural locations.

Rural markets have become a significant growth engine for FMCG companies in recent years. FMCG consumption has increased in rural areas due to a number of factors, including rising income levels, growing awareness, improved road connectivity, and the rise of retail networks. Rural markets have enormous unrealized potential for businesses compared to urban ones.

The Farrukhabad district in Uttar Pradesh is an example of a typical rural market where modern consumer habits are progressively blending with traditional lifestyles. Although consumers in this area are growing increasingly conscious of branded FMCG products, price, availability, quality,

and social influence continue to have an impact on their decisions to buy. Local Kirana shops have a big impact on consumer choice and product availability.

The purpose of this study is to examine how consumers in the Farrukhabad district's rural districts purchase FMCG goods. It focuses on determining the main elements such as brand impression, price sensitivity, product availability, and marketing tactics that affect consumers' decisions to buy.

Additionally, the study looks at consumer preferences, purchasing habits, and how conventional and digital media affect rural customers. Rural consumers are gradually connecting to digital platforms due to the growing use of smartphones and internet services, which is affecting their awareness and decision-making.

The results of this study will aid FMCG companies in comprehending the requirements, inclinations, and conduct of Farrukhabad's rural consumers. Additionally, it will offer helpful information for creating successful marketing plans, enhancing product distribution, and raising consumer happiness.

All things considered, this study underscores the growing significance of rural markets and stresses the necessity for businesses to implement tactics that successfully capture this market segment by fusing traditional values with contemporary marketing techniques.

Research Objective:

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To investigate the behavioural and psychographic aspects that affect consumers' decisions to purchase FMCG goods in the Farrukhabad district's rural districts.
2. To examine how availability, quality, and price affect rural customers' choices while buying FMCG goods in Farrukhabad.
3. To assess the impact of marketing tactics (such as advertising, word-of-mouth, and store influence) on rural customers' purchasing decisions in the Farrukhabad district.
4. To evaluate how rural consumers' attitudes about FMCG items are influenced by digital literacy and online resources like YouTube, WhatsApp, and cell phones.
5. To investigate the difficulties rural customers, encounter in obtaining FMCG products, including problems with product accessibility, cost, infrastructure, and ignorance in the Farrukhabad district.

Research Questions:

The following research questions serve as the study's compass

RQ1: What behavioural and psychographic elements affect rural consumers' purchase decisions in the Farrukhabad district, especially with regard to brand loyalty and product preferences?

RQ2: What impact do availability, quality, and price have on rural customers' decision-making when they buy FMCG goods in the Farrukhabad district?

RQ3: How do various marketing and promotional tactics (including advertising, word-of-mouth, and retailer influence) affect rural consumers' purchase decisions?

RQ4: How does digital literacy affect rural consumers' use of internet platforms (including YouTube, WhatsApp, and cell phones) and their FMCG product purchasing behaviour?

RQ5: In terms of availability, cost, infrastructure, and awareness, what are the main obstacles rural consumers in the Farrukhabad district encounter when trying to obtain FMCG products?

Research Hypotheses:

H₀₁ (Null Hypothesis):

Rural customers' brand loyalty is not significantly impacted by psychographic characteristics (lifestyle and beliefs).

H_{a1} (The alternative hypothesis):

Rural customers' brand loyalty is significantly impacted by psychographic characteristics (lifestyle and beliefs).

H₀₂ (Null Hypothesis):

Rural consumers' purchasing decisions are not much influenced by product aspects (price, quality, and availability).

H_{a2} (The alternative hypothesis):

Rural consumers' purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by product aspects (price, quality, and availability).

H₀₃ (Null Hypothesis):

Digital media, word-of-mouth, and advertising are examples of marketing elements that have little effect on consumer purchasing decisions.

H_{a3} (The alternative hypothesis):

Digital media, word-of-mouth, and advertising are marketing aspects that have a big impact on customer purchasing decisions.

A Brief Description of the Hypotheses:

Customers' thoughts and feelings about a company are influenced by psychographic elements including lifestyle and values, which has an impact on their loyalty. Rural consumers' purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by product aspects such as availability, quality, and price. Digital media, word-of-mouth, and advertising are examples of marketing elements that aid in raising awareness and influencing consumer purchasing decisions.

Review of literature:

According to Kumaravel & Vikramin's (2013) research on consumer behaviour with regard to FMCG products, factors such product quality, price, promotion, psychological characteristics, and location have a big impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. The study also made clear that both market-specific and product-specific factors affect customer satisfaction.

Consumer preferences are greatly influenced by brand awareness, product satisfaction, and consumption patterns, according to Pallavi & Shashidhar's (2015) analysis of shifts in consumer purchasing behaviour toward FMCG products. Price sensitivity is a major factor in purchasing decisions, according to Kundu's (2013) analysis of rural consumer behaviour. Additionally, the study indicated that advertising is a crucial instrument for raising awareness among rural consumers.

Price has a greater impact on FMCG purchasing decisions than social and promotional factors, according to Kumar & Joseph's (2014) study of rural and semi-urban consumers.

A study on customer purchasing behaviour by Vibhuti & Pandey (2014) found that consumer decisions are significantly influenced by product, price, advertising, and psychological variables. According to Aamir Yousuf's (2011) research, television commercials have a significant impact on rural customers' decisions to buy. Additionally, the survey found that rural consumers have a high level of brand loyalty.

Ads have a big impact on customer behaviour and brand preference, according to Lekshmi Bhai (2012). Brand identity, quality, price, and advertising are important elements influencing purchasing decisions, according to the survey.

Literature review's conclusion:

The aforementioned research indicates that rural consumers' purchasing decisions regarding FMCG products are significantly influenced by price, product quality, psychological aspects, and promotional tactics.

Research Methodology:

Because it aims to comprehend the current consumer behaviour about FMCG products in the rural parts of the Farrukhabad district, the study is descriptive in character.

Data Collection:

Both primary and secondary data are used in the study

Primary Data:

Gathered from rural customers via standardized questionnaires. **Secondary Data:**

Gathered from books, journals, research papers, and online resources.

Sample Size:

A sample of respondents from the Farrukhabad district's rural areas participated in the survey.

108 respondents make up the study's sample size.

Method of Sampling:

Respondents are chosen using the convenience sampling approach.

Data Collection Instruments:

Consumer responses are gathered using a standardized questionnaire with a Likert scale.

Data Analysis Tools:

The statistical instruments utilized are as follows Regression analysis

Correlation analysis Percentage analysis **Study Limitations:**

The study is restricted to a few Farrukhabad district rural areas. The sample size is small and might not accurately reflect the whole population. Consumer behaviour is dynamic and subject to change.

Analysis and interpretation:

Age Group	Age Group Frequency	Percentage
20–30 years	29	26.9%
30–40 years	16	17.26%
50-60 years	27	25.6%
Above 40 years	33	30.6%
Gender		
Male	58	53.7
Female	50	46.3
Education qualification		
Under graduate	18	16.7
Graduate	25	23.1
Post graduate	38	35.2
Professional qualification	27	25.0
Occupation		
Employee	26	24.1
Business	32	29.6
Student	26	24.1
Home maker	24	22.2
Income		

Below Rs. 10,000	28	25.9
Rs. 10,000 to Rs.20,000	21	19.4
Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000	19	17.6
Total	108	100

Age analysis:

According to the data, the bulk of responders (30.56%) are older than 40. 20–30 years old (26.85%) and 50–60 years old (25%) come next, with 30–40 years old having the lowest percentage (14.81%).

Gender: Male respondents (53.7%) are marginally higher than female respondents (46.3%), according to the data. This suggests that in rural locations, male consumers participate more actively and make more purchases.

Income:

According to the data, 37.04% of respondents are in the income range above ₹30,000. Below ₹10,000 (25.93%), ₹10,000–₹20,000 (19.44%), and ₹20,000–₹30,000 (17.59%) come next.

This suggests that a sizable percentage of rural consumers have moderate to higher income levels.

Education qualification:

According to the analysis, postgraduates make up the majority of respondents (35.19%), followed by professionals (25%) and graduates (23.15%). The lowest percentage are undergraduates (16.67%). This suggests that consumers in remote areas have a reasonable level of education.

Analysis of Occupation:

The majority of respondents (29.63%) are involved in business, according to the analysis. The lowest percentage is represented by homemakers (22.22%), followed by workers and students (24.07% each). This suggests that rural consumers have a varied distribution of occupations.

Consumer Behaviour in Rural:

According to the analysis, rural customers mostly buy FMCG products from neighbouring and local retail establishments. Depending on their demands, they purchase on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. This suggests that availability and convenience are significant factors in their purchasing decisions.

Place of Purchase Frequency:

Place	Purchase	Frequency Table
Local/Kirana shop	60	55.5%
Retail store	25	23.5%
Wholesale	23	21.3%
Total	108	100%

Purchase Frequency Table

Purchase	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	30	27.8%
Weekly	40	37.0%
Monthly	20	18.5
Whenever needed	18	16.5%
Total	108	100%

Location of Purchase Analysis:

Because they are easily accessible and convenient, most rural consumers choose to buy FMCG products from nearby Kirana stores. Wholesale and retail stores are not as popular.

Analysis of Purchase Frequency:

The majority of customers buy FMCG goods every day and every week, demonstrating consistent consumption habits.

General Evaluation (Paragraph):

The entire analysis reveals that because local Kirana shops are convenient and easily accessible, rural consumers primarily prefer to buy FMCG products from them. Since the majority of consumers make daily or weekly purchases, their purchasing habits are consistent. For them, product quality is just as crucial as price. Their purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by conventional sources like word-of-mouth and television. Simultaneously, their knowledge and purchase behaviour are being impacted by the steadily rising use of digital channels like YouTube and WhatsApp.

Conclusion:

The study's conclusions show that most rural consumers like buying FMCG goods from nearby Kirana stores since they are convenient and easily accessible. Customers are seen to have a consistent buying pattern, making frequent purchases on a daily or weekly basis. They are price sensitive, but they also place a high value on trust and product quality. Additionally, the study demonstrates that rural customers exhibit brand loyalty. Their purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by traditional information sources like television and word-of-mouth, but digital awareness is steadily rising thanks to websites like YouTube and WhatsApp. According to the study's findings, FMCG companies have a lot of chances in the constantly expanding rural market. When making purchases, consumers in rural areas take both quality and price into account. They are cost-conscious, but they don't sacrifice trust or product quality. Therefore, in order to effectively capture and serve this growing market, businesses must implement efficient rural marketing tactics.

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