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BUYER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS COSTUME JEWELLERY IN RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU

DR. C. VIJAYAKUMAR
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
THE AMERICAN COLLEGE
MADURAI

R. KALYAN KUMAR
ASST. PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
CAUSSANEL COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE
RAMANATHAPURAM

ABSTRACT

This article is an outline of the study conducted on the topic "Buyer behaviour towards costume jewellery in Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu" The main objectives of the study is to find the awareness level of the buyers towards Costume jewellery, to analyse the attitude of the buyer towards Costume jewellery and to trace out the impact while buying and using Costume jewellery. This study mainly focuses the preferences, attitude and behaviour of the Buyer towards Costume jewellery in Ramanathapuram district only. The present study is an empirical research based on survey method. The researchers have collected primary data by comprehensive questionnaire and Secondary data have been collected from websites, books and journals. This study was carried out for a period of two months. The data which were collected from the respondents were analysed by using percentage analysis. Five point scales that are Likert's scale analysis, weighted average ranking, Garattee Ranking Technique and chi-square tests are used.

KEYWORDS

Jewellery, Costume jewellery, buyer, buyer behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Costume jewellery has been part of culture for almost 300 years. During the 18th century, jewellers began making pieces with inexpensive glass. In the 19th century, Costume jewellery made of semi-precious material came into the market. Jewels made of semi-precious material were more affordable, and this affordability gave common people the chance to own Costume jewellery. But the real golden era for the Costume jewellery began in the middle of the 20th century. The new middle class wanted beautiful, but affordable, jewellery. The demand for jewellery of this type coincided with the machine-age and the industrial revolution. The revolution made the production of carefully executed replicas of admired heirloom pieces possible. Costume jewellery was also made popular by various designers in the mid-20th century. Some of the most remembered names in Costume jewellery include both the high and low priced brands like Crown Trifari, Dior, Chanel, Miriam Haskell, Monet, Napier, Coro craft, Coventry, and Kim Craftsmen.

A significant factor in the popularization of Costume jewellery was the Hollywood movies. The leading female stars of the 1940s and 1950s often wore and then endorsed the pieces produced by a range of designers. Costume jewellery is considered a discrete category of fashion accessory, and displays many characteristics of a self-contained industry. Costume jewellery manufacturers are located throughout the world, with a particular concentration in parts of China and India, where entire city-wide and region-wide economies are dominated by the trade of these goods. There has been considerable controversy in the United States and elsewhere about the lack of regulations in the manufacture of Costume jewellery.

The use of Costume jewellery has been prevalent much before in the West but its acceptance is finally catching up in India since the past decade or so. Some of the sellers entered the Costume jewellery market 10 years back seeing the huge demand and necessity for semi precious jewellery. "In India, the trend is recent as compared to western countries especially in affluent families. They wear it as a fashion statement but now due to increasing prices of precious metal, more and more people are settling for Costume jewellery". At present Costume Jewellery has varieties of designs and models and are available easily rather than gold ornaments. This attracted the researchers to study the consumer buying behaviour of Costume or Costume jewellery. Hence the study titled "Buyer Behaviour towards Costume Jewellery in Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu" has been undertaken for the purpose of current research.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

During II world war Costume jewellery was incorporated but there is no demand for the products because there is no awareness among the consumers. Now-a-days increase in the demand for Costume jewellery include volatile gold prices which have jumped four times in the past one decade, easy to carry, Costume jewellery being comparatively cheaper, to worry in case lost or stolen. Rising of gold prices is not the only reason for the rise in demand for fashion jewellery. Considering the high disposable incomes in cities like Gurgaon, Mumbai, Chennai, everyone can afford to buy gold or diamond if they want to. The rise in Costume jewellery demand is all about fashion. Accessories have become an important part of dressing up and looking good in India. Women's passion for jewellery can never die and when it comes to Indian women, the craze is quite known. India lost the top position in consumption of gold jewellery in the first half of 2012. None of the researchers has done this study. In particular, the study mainly focuses on the behaviour and attitude of buyer towards Costume jewellery. Hence the study titled "Buyer Behaviour towards Costume Jewellery in Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu" has been undertaken for the purpose of current research.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as per following:

1. To find the awareness level of the buyers towards Costume jewellery.
2. To analyse the attitude of the buyer towards Costume jewellery.
3. To trace out the impact while buying and using Costume jewellery.
4. To offer suitable suggestions based on the findings of the study

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present work has been confined to study the availability of the designs in Costume jewellery and services offered by the seller. This study mainly focuses the preferences, attitude and behaviour of the Buyer towards Costume jewellery in Ramanathapuram district only.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Some of the concepts used in this study are,

BUYER

A Buyer is an individual who buys goods and services for his or her own use, for the use of the household, for just one member of the household, or as a gift for a friend. Consumer, customer and buyer is used interchangeably in this research study.

BUYER BEHAVIOR

The study of buyer behaviour is the study of how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (money, time, effort) on consumption related items. It included the study of what they buy, why they buy it, how they buy it, when they buy it, where they buy it, and how often they buy it. Buyer behaviour and consumer behaviour is used interchangeably in this research study.

JEWELLERY

It is an adornment made of precious metals and set with gems or Costume gems.

COSTUME JEWELLERY

Costume Jewellery is also called as fancy jewellery or trinkets or fashion jewellery or junk jewellery or fake jewellery or imitation jewellery. It is manufactured as ornamentation to complement a particular fashionable costume or garment.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Numerous studies have been undertaken in areas related to this topic. The following studies have been reviewed.

Aparna Ramalingam¹ in an article "Sale of fashion jewellery Soar" discusses the costume jewellery is all set to have a dazzling future of demand for imitation jewellery has gone up by over 85% due to drastic hike in gold and silver prices and an increased in germs and stomes.

Osjag,² (2009) concluded in his paper "Branding-success" that branding is "an irreversible trend". It gives clients a certain degree of confidence that they're buying a genuine product. Branded jewellery has arrived and earned its place on world jewellery retail shelves. Indeed the consumer must pay more attention, which brand they should buy, instead of thinking "branded or non branded".

According to S.L.Gupta and Sumitra Paul, although Tamil Nadu is a hot place people are very fond of rich silk sarees in deep colours. They are also fond of wearing Jewellery³.

Wells in his articles "Measuring Readiness to Buy" States that the desire to purchase new and moderately new products was greater among consumers in their desire to buy new and moderately new products then conventional products⁴.

But however none of the studies has made any attempt to probe into the Buyer behaviour towards Costume jewellery. Hence, the researchers have undertaken the present study titled "Buyer Behaviour towards Costume Jewellery in Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu" as a pioneering approach to find out the various influencing factors and level of attitude towards Costume jewellery.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF COVERAGE

The study has been conducted in Ramanathapuram district. Ramanathapuram District is an administrative district of Tamil Nadu state in southern India. Total Population of Ramanathapuram district in 2011 census was 1,337,560. The behaviour of buyer towards Costume jewellery will be analysed in Ramanathapuram district only.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is empirical research based on survey method. The researchers will administer a questionnaire for collecting primary data and Secondary data will be collected from relevant books on Marketing Management and consumer behaviour, magazines, newspapers, websites and journals.

PRE-TESTING

The questionnaire prepared for the respondents have been pre-tested by the researchers in person. Comments on the question were noted and after careful analysis necessary modification have been made in the questionnaire. Pre-testing was conducted on 20 respondents. In the course of the interview, the researchers had experienced some difficulties in getting answers to some of the questions raised and suitable changes have been incorporated before finalizing the questionnaire

SAMPLE DESIGN

A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or the procedure, the researchers will adopt in selecting items for the sample. The study area covers Ramanathapuram District, based on demographic, economic and other conditions as centre for the study in order to measure and evaluate the overall satisfaction and level of attitude towards Costume jewellery. The non-probability method of convenience sampling was followed to choose the sample respondents. As many as 200 sample respondents from Ramanathapuram District were chosen for this purpose. The researcher himself met the sample respondents to elicit the necessary data from them.

PERIOD OF THE STUDY

The survey for collection of primary data was conducted during the month of August and September 2014.

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

With reference to the objectives of the study, various factors are taken into consideration such as age of the respondents, educational qualification of the respondents, Occupation of the respondents, marital status of the respondents, monthly income of the respondents and region of survival of the respondents. The data which were collected from the respondents were analysed by using percentage analysis, five point scales that are Likert's scale analysis, Garattee Ranking Technique, Weighted Average Ranking Technique and chi-square test are used.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**FACTORS INFLUENCING BUYING OF COSTUME JEWELLERY**

The factors influenced the buyer to purchase the Costume jewellery are analysed by adopting Garattee Ranking Technique. The respondents are asked to rank their influencing factors in the purchase of Costume jewellery and the results are shown in table no-1.

¹ <http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com>

² Osjag, S. (2009), Gold Ornaments world, *Bangkok Gems & Jewellery Magazine*, Vol 22/1, 14-15.

³ S.L.Gupta and Sumitra Paul, consumer Behaviour An Indian Perspective Text and Cases, sultan Chand and sons, New Delhi 2005,P-406

⁴ W.D.Wells, "Measuring Readiness to Buy". Harvard Business Review, Vol.39, No.4.1961.PP.61-69.

TABLE NO. 1: FACTORS INFLUENCING BUYING OF COSTUME JEWELLERY

Products	Total Score	Garattee Score	Rank
Quality of the product	130	4.3	V
Attractive and Colourful	75	2.5	VII
Product used at all times	126	4.2	VI
Design of the product	75	2.5	VII
Prestige of the product	149	5.0	III
Price of the product	141	4.7	IV
Availability of the product	180	6.0	II
Particular shop	204	6.8	I

Source: primary data

From the above table no- 1, it is inferred that the buyers are loyal to a particular Costume jewellery shop in which they buy all their requirements, is the main factor influencing the respondents to buy the product regularly which ranks first among all the factors followed by Availability of the product, Prestige of the product, Price of the product, Quality of the product, Product used at all times, Attractive and Colourful, Design of the product respectively.

ATTITUDE OF BUYER TOWARDS COSTUME JEWELLERY

In this study the respondents are asked to give their opinion on the basis of five levels to agreeing the statements namely strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. The response observed for each of the statement in the schedule have been scored and tabulated on a master sheet. The scoring of factor is based on Likert's method. To secure the total score five points are given. Five for strongly agree, four for agree, three for neutral, two for disagree and one for strongly disagree. Thus the total score were obtained.

The levels of attitude has been classified into three categories namely, high level, medium level and low level for analytical purpose, while the score value $\geq \bar{X} + \sigma$ and score value $\geq \bar{X} - \sigma$ have been classified as high level and low level of attitude respectively, the score value between $\bar{X} - \sigma$ and $\bar{X} + \sigma$

are classified as medium level of attitude. \bar{X} and σ are the arithmetic mean and standard deviation calculated from the score value of 200 respondents. The mean value obtained was 26.5 and the value of standard deviation is 13.938 based on the mean and standard deviation the levels were classified as below.

$\bar{X} + \sigma$ - Above 40 - high level, $\bar{X} - \sigma$ - Below 12 - Low level, ($\bar{X} - \sigma$) to ($\bar{X} + \sigma$) - 13 to 39 - Medium level The researchers have made an attempt to study the level of attitude of the customers. This factor is classified as high level, medium level and low level. This factor has been cross tabulated with Demographic factors like age, occupation, marital status and region of survival. Following are the factors to find out the level of attitude of customers towards Costume jewellery like product, price, packaging, varieties of the products, promotion, physical distribution, service, and quality respectively.

TABLE NO. 2: LEVEL OF ATTITUDE AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Demographic Factors		Level of Attitude			
		High	Medium	Low	Total
Age	Less than 25 years	5(6%)	56(58%)	35(36%)	96(100%)
	25-50 years	7(10%)	42(60%)	21(30%)	70(100%)
	Above 50 years	2(6%)	17(50%)	15(44%)	34(100%)
	Total	14	115	71	200
Marital Status	Married	1(1%)	41(57%)	30(42%)	72(100%)
	Unmarried	13(10%)	74(58%)	41(32%)	128(100%)
	Total	14	115	71	200
Occupation	Students	3(6%)	1(2%)	46(92%)	50(100%)
	Home makers	-	11(92%)	1(8%)	12(100%)
	Employees	10(9%)	87(74%)	20(17%)	117(100%)
	Professionals	-	6(100%)	-	6(100%)
	Business	1(7%)	10(66%)	4(27%)	15(100%)
	Total	14	115	71	200
Region of survival	Urban	14(10%)	61(43%)	67(47%)	142(100%)
	Rural	-	54(93%)	4(7%)	58(100%)
	Total	14	115	71	200

Source: Primary Data

The above table no- 2 shows a clear picture of an analysis of the level of attitude with the help of various factors like age, marital status, occupation, income and region of survival of the respondents. Out of the total 200 respondents, the majority of the respondents opined in the category of medium level of attitude. Of all the determinant factors, Age is considered to be one of the powerful determinant factors to buy Costume jewellery among the women. In the age group less than 25 years of age and 25-50 years of age have opined medium level of attitude towards costume jewellery. Of the marital status both of unmarried and married respondents, most of them also opined medium level of attitude towards Costume jewellery. Occupation is one of the determinant factors regarding buying and using of costume jewellery. From the above table 117 respondents are private and public sector employees out of which majority 87 (74%) of the respondents has medium level of attitude towards Costume jewellery. In this study the urban respondents are comparatively more than the rural respondents. Most of them opined medium level of attitude in the both sectors of urban and rural.

CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS- ATTITUDE TOWARDS COSTUME JEWELLERY

Following are the results for chi-square test between demographic factors of the respondents and level of attitude towards Costume jewellery.

To find out whether there is a significant relationship between these two factors, the following null hypothesis is framed. The frequency of cell value is less than 5. Hence Yates Correction is applied in chi- square test.

Ho: there is no significant relationship between the Demographic factors of the respondents and their level of attitude towards Costume jewellery.

The table value of χ^2 for degree of freedom 4 at 5% level of significance is 9.488. The calculated value of χ^2 is less than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant relationship exist between the **age and the level of attitude regarding Costume jewellery.**

The table value of χ^2 for degree of freedom 2 at 5% level of significance is 5.991. The calculated value of χ^2 is more than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected that there is a significant relationship exist between the **marital status and the level of attitude regarding Costume jewellery.**

The table value of χ^2 for degree of freedom 8 at 5% level of significance is 15.507. The calculated value of χ^2 is more than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected that there is a significant relationship exist between the **occupation and the level of attitude regarding Costume jewellery.**

The table value of χ^2 for degree of freedom 2 at 5% level of significance is 5.991. The calculated value of χ^2 is more than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected that there is a significant relationship exist between the **region of survival and the level of attitude regarding Costume jewellery.**

PROBLEMS IN BUYING AND USING COSTUME JEWELLERY

The problems faced by the buyer in buying and wearing of Costume jewellery are analysed by adopting Weighted Mean Score ranking technique. The respondents are asked to rank their problems in the purchase of Costume jewellery and the results are shown in table no-3.

TABLE NO-3: PROBLEMS IN BUYING AND USING COSTUME JEWELLERY

Products	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
Less durability	102	3.4	VIII
Non-availability of spares	150	5	IV
Breakage	110	3.7	VII
Inconvenient location of the store	124	4.1	V
Cumbersome formalities	164	5.5	I
Poor quality of service	154	5.1	III
Poor resale value	158	5.3	II
Colour fade	118	3.9	VI

Source: primary data

It is evident from the above table no- 3 that the ranks assigned by the respondents with regard to the problems faced/encountered by the respondents from one to six ranks are given with the weights 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively. Most of the respondents have opined Cumbersome formalities are ranked first followed by Poor resale value, Poor quality of service, Non-availability of spares, Inconvenient location of the store, Colour fade, Breakage, Less durability.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Majority of the respondents are students and employees under the age group of 25 years preferred Costume jewellery rather than gold jewellery due to the price of the product which is comparatively low, free from theft and availability of designs in Costume jewellery.
2. In Ramanathapuram district, rural area respondents have low level of awareness than the urban area respondents. So, the marketers have to advertise the Costume jewellery products effectively in print media, audio-visual media and internet based communication in order to increase the awareness thereby increase their turnover with greater profit. Probably this will be an effective tool to increase the level of awareness among all the consumers towards Costume jewellery.
3. Of the marital status of the respondents, 64% of them are unmarried and most of them have opined medium level of attitude towards costume jewellery. In the income category, 71% of the respondents are less than Rs.25,000 and majority of the respondents have opined medium level of attitude towards costume jewellery.
4. Majority of the respondents are highly dissatisfied with the varieties of the Costume jewellery due to no resale value in Costume jewellery, poor quality, fade in colour, lifetime of the Costume jewellery is too short.
5. Most of the buyers are loyal to a particular Costume jewellery shop which ranks first among all the factors such as like Availability of the product, Prestige of the product, Price of the product, Quality of the product, Product used at all times, Attractive and Colourful, Design of the product respectively.

CONCLUSION

Although gold, silver and diamond remain to be the most expensive and beautiful jewellery, many of women and girls are opting to try different less expensive materials like costume, imitation or fashion jewellery. The beauty remains the same as more expensive jewellery making it easy to find many pieces of jewellery in different price range. Costume jewellery is used at time of parties, functions, festivals respectively. In the study area, majority of the respondents have medium level of attitude towards costume jewellery and few of the sample respondent have high level of attitude towards costume jewellery because this district is rural based. They prefer traditional jewellery to wear frequently because of prestige, image, and so on.

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