CONSUMER BEHAVIOURAL MOTIVES TOWARDS SOFT FURNISHING - SPECIAL REFERENCE WITH KERALA DISTRICT

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INTRODUCTION

Consumer buying behavior

Consumer behavior is the study of how individual customers, groups or organizations select, buy, use, and dispose ideas, goods, and services to satisfy their needs and wants. It refers to the actions of the consumers in the marketplace and the underlying motives for those actions. **Consumer buying behavior** is the sum total of a consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer's behavior in the marketplace when purchasing a product or service.

The study of Consumer behavior includes the study of **what they buy, why they buy, how they buy, when they buy, from where they buy, and how often they buy**. An open-minded consumer-oriented approach is imperative in today's diverse global marketplace so a firm can identify and serve its target market, minimize dissatisfaction, and stay ahead of competitors.

3 ROLE OF FABRICS IN INTERIOR FURNISHING

A fabric plays an important role for home textiles like:

- Fabric protects interior colour from fading and furnishing from deterioration from sunlight.
- It protects from sun glare and it lends protection from night blackness at evening and from too early sun in the morning.
- Fabrics lends privacy to any degree that is needed
- It shields people from draughts or heat and reduces heat loss in winter.
- It can make summer room cooler and reduce an air conditioning load in the summer.
- Fabric increases live ability and work ability of a small place, reduce noise, make music and even speech richer and more resonant of all acoustic materials, and sound engineers find no material that is equal.

TO CHOOSE FABRICS FOR SOFT FURNISHING

- The fabrics you choose for your home can convey a lot about your style; textured fabrics tend to feel contemporary and relaxed, while sleek, smooth fabrics are elegant and refined. The same way cool linen makes us think of summer, soft, cosy flannel reminds us of wintery nights curled up by the fire. Consider how you can use fabric and texture to set the tone of your room and create the look you want.
- Texture is a design element we refer back to a lot – what standout interiors all have in common is an almost effortless use of texture which adds depth and makes the space feel multi-dimensional.
- The use of texture in soft furnishings is about our sense of touch and how things feel. Texture is also about our perceived sense of touch, you don't need physical contact with a room to feel the power of texture and its impact on a design scheme. Think of interiors you have admired online or in design magazines – no matter what the style, the use of texture is one thing every space will have in common.
- In your own room designs, consider the textures of your soft furnishings and how you can create balance and contrast in your space. Try and use a combination of two or three distinct textures and think about how they will look when layered together, such as with cushions on a sofa or the blanket and linens on your bed.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE:

Upholstery should be protected from pests and pets. Dogs and cats may damage them by their claws and shredded hair. Perching on the arms may cause damage to arm covers. Cigarette smoke is absorbed by upholstery. Sunlight causes fading and discolouration while heat may cause warping of wood. Condensation may cause moisture absorption of fabrics. Remove stains by spotting as soon as they occur and protect chair backs and arm rests with loose covers. Observe for woodworms, which may also damage the fabric.

TYPE OF FURNISHING

Furnishing in living room
Furnishing in bed room
Furnishing in kitchen
Furnishing in dining room
Furnishing in bath room

Floor furnishing
Window treatments.

LIVING ROOM
In Western architecture, a **living room**, also called a **lounge room**, **lounge** or **sitting room**, is a room in a residential house or apartment for relaxing and socializing. Such a room is sometimes called a **front room** when it is near the main entrance at the front of the house.

Furnishing in living room
1.   Sofa cover - A fabric cover to protect the whole upholstered sofa.
2.   Sofa back on slip cover – A fabric layer used to cover the back rest of sofa
3.   Cushion – Varies design and sizes according to the seating.
4.   Cushion cover – Fabric cover used to cover the cushion.
5.   Tepoy mats – Small rugs used to place tepoy.
6.   Table linen – Fabric used to cover table
7.   TV covers - Three faced closed fabric cover except at the front face.
8.   Wall hanger – any type of fabric make wall hangers for decoration.

BEDROOM
A bedroom is a room of a house, mansion, hotel, dormitory, or apartment where people sleep. A typical western bedroom contains as bedroom furniture one or two beds (ranging from a crib for an infant, a small twin bed for a single person, twin beds for two people, to a king-size bed for a couple), a clothes closet, a nightstand, and a dresser (dressing table). Except in bungalows or one-storey motels, bedrooms are usually on one of the floors of a dwelling that is above ground level.Bedrooms typically have a door for privacy (in some cases lockable from inside) and a window for ventilation.

Furnishing in Bed room
1.   Bed Sheets   - Bed sheets are used to drape over the mattress.
2.   Pillow cover – A cover used to protect the pillow.
3.   Blanket – Used to give warmth during winter season.
4.   Bed spreads – Fabric used to cover the bed sheets.
5.   Lamp shades – Shades used to cover the lamp.

KITCHEN
A kitchen is a room or part of a room used for cooking and food preparation in a dwelling or in a commercial establishment. In the West, a modern residential kitchen is typically equipped with a stove, a sink with hot and cold running water, a refrigerator, counters and kitchen cabinets arranged according to a modular design. The main function of a kitchen is serving as a location for storing, cooking and preparing food (and doing related tasks such as dishwashing), but it may also be used for dining, entertaining and laundry.

Furnishing in kitchen
1.   Hand towel – Linen used to wipe wet hands.
2.   Dish towel – Linen used to wipe washed dished.
3.   Tray cloth – Linen to spread on the tray.
4.   Napkins and Apron – The cook used to wear this while cooking.
5.   Fridge cover – A cover out of textile to cover the top and sides of fridge.
6.   Grinder cover – A rectangle shaped closed cover to protect the grinder in the kitchen.
7.

1.1.5d DINING ROOM
A dining room is a room for consuming food. In modern times it is usually adjacent to the kitchen for convenience in serving, although in medieval times it was often on an entirely different floor level. Historically the dining room is furnished with a rather large dining table and a number of dining chairs; the most common shape is generally rectangular with two armed end chairs and an even number of un-armed side chairs along the long sides.

Furnishing in Dining room
1.   Dining table cover – It protect table from spills and scratches.
2.   Towels – Towels are used to wipe the hands
3.   Dining table mats – Mats to place the hot dishes.
4.   Slip cover – slip covers are used for dining chairs.
5.   Table runner – It is a long center piece fabric that extends to the full length of table

BATHROOM
A bathroom is a room in the home for personal hygiene activities, generally containing a sink (basin) and either a bathtub, a shower, or both. In some countries, the toilet is included in this room, for ease of plumbing, whereas other cultures consider this insanitary, and give that fixture a room of its own. A full bathroom is generally understood to contain a bath or shower (or both), a toilet, and a sink.

Items found in bathrooms: Bathrooms often have one or more towel bars or towel rings for hanging towels. Some bathrooms contain a medicine cabinet for personal hygiene products and medicines, and drawers or shelves for storing towels and other items.

FLOORING
Flooring is the general term for a permanent covering of a floor, or for the work of installing such a floor covering. Floor covering is a term to generically describe any finish material applied over a floor structure to provide a walking surface. Both terms are used interchangeably but floor covering refers more to loose-laid materials. Materials almost always classified as flooring include carpet, laminate, tile and vinyl.

Floor Furnishing
1.   Rubber tile – Made of rubber composition which is exceedingly resilient, resistant to wear.
2.   Carpets – It is used to cover wall to wall on the entire floor including all fitting around floor.
3.   Rugs – Used to cover small part of floor whose four sides are finished.

WINDOW TREATMENT
 A window treatment is an interior decorating element placed on, in, around or over a window. Often, a goal of professional window treatment is to install the elements which enhance the aesthetics of the window and the room.

Window treatments
1.   Venetian blinds – It facilitates for ventilation as well as light control.
2.   Roller shads – They can be rolled up almost out of sight or they can be left freely.
3.   Draperies – They have sufficient fullness so that they will hang in soft fold.
4.   Valances – Valance can make window look taller and wider.

IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CONSIDER FOR UPHOLSTERY SELECTION:

- Resistance to abrasion
- Resistance to fading and colour fastness
- Crease Resistance
- Resistant to pests
- Resilience
- Ease of cleaning
- Wear and tear resistance

LIST OF FABRIC SUITABLE FOR PARTICULAR FURNISHING

SL.NO	FURNISHING ITEMS	FABRICS
1	Carpet and rugs	Wool, chenille, velvet tapestry, Brussels, rag rugs
2	Sofa	Brocade, chents, geffone, damask, mohair, tapestry
3	Slip cover	Printed linen, novelty fabric, satin, cotton taffetas
4	Bed spreads	Satin, silk, brocade, cotton, lace, heavy corduroy
5	Mattress	Coarse cotton, latex, rayon
6	Table linen	Cotton, linen, satin, chintz
7	Curtain and draperies	Brocade, casement cloth, chintz, mohair, poplin, cotton, linen, muslin,

MAJOR TEXTILES IN ORDER OF THEIR PROPERTIES

STRENGTH	LENGTH	ELASTICITY
Silk	Silk	Wool
Linen	Rayon	Silk
Rayon	Linen	Cotton
Cotton	Wool	Linen
Wool	Cotton	Rayon

NEED OF THE STUDY

Our homes reflect our personalities and lifestyles. Home furnishings speak for themselves. Whether it's the old family rocking chair or the elegant draperies at the window, furnishings add a personal touch. Home furnishing is big business today. Through this study we can analyze the demand for soft furnishing in present the market. This study will help in forecasting the needs and wants of people and will help in further development in the field of the home textiles.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In the field of soft furnishing, there are various factors have to consider while choosing home textiles. The color of textile should match with the room, it should not look clustered. Faults in selection of fabric may cause discomfort, also it may affect the durability. The limitations in this study are , this study is applicable between certain age groups. The response from male categories can be comparatively lower than females, as women are more conscious in selecting home textiles. Some people may not be aware about the home textiles, so it will be difficult for them to give an appropriate answer to this survey questions. This survey is difficult to carry out in rural areas, as the people may not have an idea about soft furnishing.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the consumers   preference personally on soft furnishing.
- To identify consumers buying behavior towards soft furnishing.
- To forecast consumer needs and wants towards soft furnishing
- To assess the impact of online purchase on soft furnishing.
- To understand consumer perception towards purchasing home textiles.

RESEARCH

Research is a systematic investigation process employed to increase or revise current knowledge by discovering new facts. It is divided into two general categories.(1) Basic research is inquiry aimed at increasing scientific knowledge and (2) Applied research is effort aimed at using basic research for solving problems or developing new process, products or techniques.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is descriptive which includes surveys and fact finding enquiries of different kinds. Descriptive research studies are those which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individuals or a group. The major purpose of descriptive research is descriptive of the state of affair as pt is exists at present. The research has to use facts or information's already available and analyzes these to make a critical evaluation of material.

SAMPLING DETAILS

Sampling is the process used in statistical analysis in which a predetermined number of observations will be taken from a large population. The methodology used to sample from a larger population will depend on type of analysis being performed, but will include simple random sampling, systematic sampling and observational sampling.The non- probability convenience sampling was used to collect the data. It enabled the research to choose respondent of convenience.

PRECENTAGE ANALYSIS

Percentage analysis is the method to represent raw streams of data as a percentage (a part in100 – percent) for better understanding of collected data.

$$\text{Percentage analysis} = \frac{\text{No. of respondents}}{\text{Total respondents}} \times 100$$

ANOVA

Analysis of varience (ANOVA) is a collection of statistical models used in order to analyze the difference between group means and their associated procedures (such as "variation" among and between groups), developed by R.A.Fisher. ANOVA are useful in comparing(testing) three or more means(groups or variables) for statistical significance.

F = MST/MSE
WHERE,
F = Anova coefficient
MST = Mean sum of squares due to treatment
MSE = Mean sum of squares due to error.

WEIGHTED AVERAGE ANALYSIS

Rating Scale questions calculate a weighted average based on the weight assigned to each answer choice. If needed, you can change the weight of each answer choice in the Design section of the survey, even after the survey has collected responses.

The rating average is calculated as follows, where:
W = Weight of answer choice
X = response count for answer choice

$$X_1W_1 + X_2W_2 + X_3W_{3 +} \ldots\ldots X_nW_n$$
_____
Total

If you chose to include an N/A column on your Rating Scale question, any N/A responses will not factor into the rating average.

4.1.8 RESPONDENTS OPINION TOWARDS THEIR MODE OF PURCHASE

SL. NO	MODE OF PURCHASE	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Exclusive showroom	31	20.7
2	Retail	72	48
3	Online	7	4.7
4	Customized	26	17.3
5	Wholesale	14	9.3

INFERENCE

48% of the respondents prefer to go for retail mode of purchasing. **21%** prefer exclusive showroom, **17%** prefer customized, **9%** prefer wholesale, only **3%** of respondents are like to buy through online

RESPONDENTS OPINION TOWARDS THEIR MODE OF PURCHASE
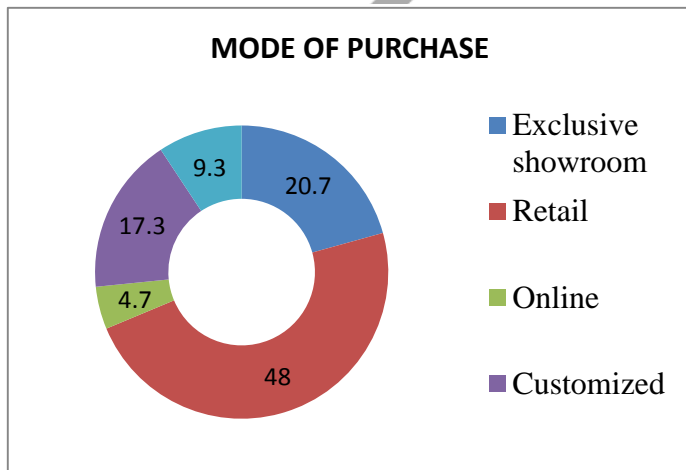
GENDER VS SOURCES USED TO KNOW ABOUT HOME TEXTILES

ANOVA

SOURCES USED	SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F	SIG.
Between Groups	157.306	1	157.306	202.327	.000
Within Groups	115.067	148	.777		
Total	272.373	149			

Significant at 5% level of significance

INFERENCE

It is observed from the ANOVA table that the calculated value is less than the assumed value($.000 < 0.05$), hence the null hypothesis is rejected, therefore the alternative hypothesis is accepted, hence there is a relationship between gender and sources used.

HYPOTHESIS

H0   : There is no significant difference between gender and sources used.

WEIGHTED AVERAGE

4.3.1 MEASURING SATISFACTION TOWARDS VARIOUS FACTORS WHILE PURCHASING HOME TEXTILES.

FACTORS	SATISFIED WEIGHT-3	DISSATISFIED WEIGHT-2	NEUTRAL WEIGHT-1	AVERAGE	RANK
APPEARANCE	108	9	33	2.5	1
COMFORT	96	7	46	2.32	2
DURABILITY	84	6	60	2.16	3
PRICE	67	14	68	1.98	4
MAINTENANCE	45	31	74	1.80	5

INFERENCE
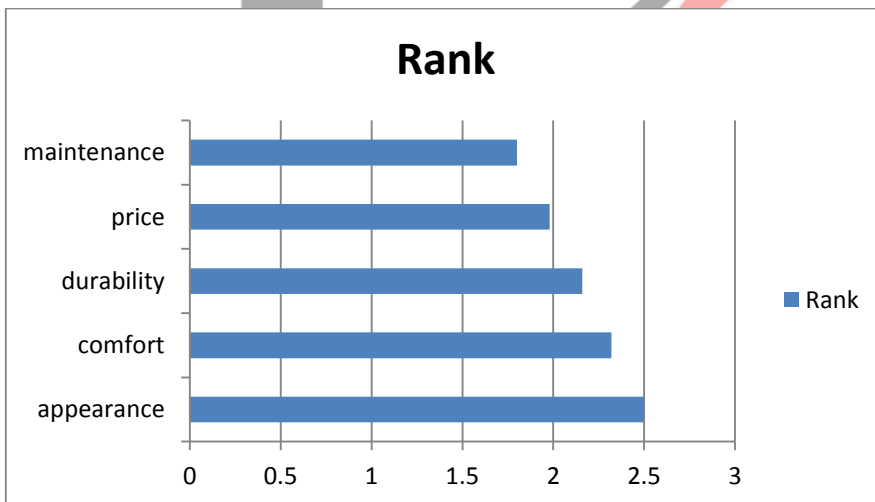
The rating average is calculated as follows, where:

W = Weight of answer choice

X = response count for answer choice

$$\frac{X_1W_1 + X_2W_2 + X_3W_3 + \ldots . X_nW_n}{Total}$$

Among the various factors that influence buying behavior of consumers, 'appearance 'is the factor that satisfy the consumer most. So the weighted average is 2.5 and it is marked as rank 1.

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 FINDINGS

- From the analysis based on the age of respondent, majority are belongs to the age group of **20 – 30** as there are **82** respondents. The least respondents are belong to the age group of **above 60.**
- Majority of respondents are female, **62%** are female respondents and the remaining **38 %** are male respondents.
- From the above analysis **50 %** are married and remaining **50%** are unmarried.

- From the above analysis, **22 %** respondent are salaried, **20 %** are self employed, **22 %** are professionals, **14 %** are home maker and the **22%** are student.
- From the above analysis majority of respondent are having monthly income **10,000 – 25,000**, they are **36.55%**. **20.6%** are belongs to **26000 – 40,000** income, **15.9%** are belongs to
- **41,000 – 60,000**, **20.6%** are belongs to monthly income of **above 60** and the rest are **6.3%.**
- From the above analysis majority of respondents are not brand conscious. Only **36.7%** are conscious in brands the remaining **58.7%** are not brand conscious and **4.7%** of respondents are not always conscious in brands.
- From the above analysis regarding the buying behavior of consumers, **28.7%** will buy often, **60.7%** will buy rarely, **2%** are very often and **8.7%** are very rarely purchase home textiles.
- From the above collected data, majority of respondents like to buy bed sheets, cushion cove, table cloth and curtains between the price ranges of **1000 – 2000**.
- Majority of the respondents prefer to go for retail mode of purchasing. Only few respondents are like to buy through online
- Majority of the customers preferred to purchase home textiles from **Ernakulam**.
- As Ernakulam is considered as a fashion city in Kerala, also due to the availability of unique and quality products. Shops are closely located so that they can compare and buy products easily.
- From the above table majority of the respondents prefer **neutral colours.**

SUGGESTIONS
- In this present world everyone is conscious with their interior furnishings, that they want it to be unique.
- In order to satisfy their needs and wants, it is better to promote more number of seasonal trends, variety of styles, embellishments and customized stuffs for home textiles.
- Majority of customers are not satisfied with the availability of home textiles.
- They want the soft furnishing products to be customized and unique with easy availability and within the reach of common people.
- It will be better to promote the home textile products customized and with different style.
- People are very conscious even with the price they spend for purchasing home textiles.
- They are expecting the products at affordable price with respect to its quality.
- The consciousness towards the factors like comfort and maintenance are also vital to consider.
- They are expecting light weight product that are easy to handle and maintain.
- Most of the people are not willing to buy the stuffs through online, as the product does not shows the appropriate quality when it reaches to the customers hand.

SUGGESTIONS COLLECTED FROM CONSUMERS
- Wide variety of products are not available at reasonable rates nearby, if I have to purchase something good, I should have to take a leave and roam everywhere to find what I really need.
- It will be convenient to purchase, if there are more shops for home textiles.
- More quality and unique customized products should be promoted.

CONCLUSION
- This study on consumer buying behavior towards home textiles is worked in Kerala.
- The result obtained at the end of study reveals that, the consumers are very choosy and customized while doing their purchase.
- The consumers are aware with the price and durability of the products which they procure.
- They use to purchase soft furnishing once or twice a year, so the products must be in latest trend as well as embellished.
- Even though the consumers are having enough sources to know about the home textiles, they are struggling to get the desired product from the nearby areas.
- The less number of shops will consume their time while shopping and the consumers need more number of retail shops with wide variety of stuffs.
- The retailers need to identify the segment, target and position themselves to address consumer's needs.

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