

The Influence Of Brand Reputation On Women's Buying Decisions For Baby Products

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ABSTRACT

When it comes to parenthood, selecting baby products mirrors a mother's commitment and concern for her child's well-being and health. This decision, far from being inconsequential, is influenced by profound sociological and emotional factors, rendering it a subject worthy of comprehensive scrutiny. This study examines the effect of brand reputation on women's purchasing decisions regarding baby care products within the rapidly evolving baby product market. Using data collected from a specific sample in Chennai, the research employs factor analysis and multiple linear regression to reveal that brand reputation significantly influences women's buying choices in this domain, with a focus on product quality, customer service, and customer reviews. However, it is essential to acknowledge the study's limitations, including its sample specificity, potential regional and cultural variations, limited factors explored, and geographic scope. Despite these constraints, the findings contribute valuable insights for businesses seeking to enhance brand reputation and cater to shifting consumer preferences in the baby care product industry.

KEYWORDS: Baby Care Products – Brand Reputation – Women's Buying Decisions.

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to being a parent, the choice of baby items reflects a mother's dedication and consideration for her kid's health and welfare. This decision, which is not at all insignificant, is filled with profound sociological and emotional influences, making it a topic deserving of thorough examination. The market for infant products is experiencing rapid growth, presenting a diverse array of offerings. It represents an amalgamation of consumer behavior, brand perception, and maternal instincts. Recent years have seen significant shifts in consumer behavior, particularly among women, driven by digital innovations and the widespread adoption of social media. These modifications have elevated the significance of brand reputation in purchasing decisions. Brand reputation, which encompasses consumer perceptions, previous experiences, and promoted brand values, significantly influences purchase behavior. Within the realm of baby items, this reputation beyond simple commercial measurements, indicating more profound considerations regarding safety, excellence, and reliability — elements of utmost importance in a mother's decision-making process. Women, especially while fulfilling their roles as mothers or caretakers, display unique purchasing behaviors that are influenced by a variety of factors. These encompass inherent maternal instincts that prioritize the safety and well-being of their children, as well as societal factors that define the standards and expectations of motherhood. The convergence of these aspects with brand reputation gives rise to an intricate decision-making environment that is both captivating and crucial to comprehend. This investigation aims to provide valuable knowledge on consumer behavior, enhance the field of marketing and brand management, and facilitate comprehension of the distinct issues and considerations encountered by women in the marketplace.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study done by Cuong et al. (2021) specifically investigated the correlation between customers' happiness with their prior purchases of baby items and their propensity to repurchase. The researchers constructed a study framework by drawing upon existing literature and subsequently conducted an empirical examination utilizing data from 249 patrons at fast-food establishments in Ho Chi Minh City. The study's results indicated a positive correlation between product quality and brand image, purchasing decisions, and the intention to repurchase. Furthermore, it was discovered that the brand image had a favorable correlation with both purchasing decisions and inclinations to repurchase. The research clearly established a strong and direct correlation between buying choices and the desire to buy baby care goods again.

Pakkala et al. (2022) examined the changing patterns of consumer behavior in the baby care product industry, with the objective of revealing the elements that impact parents' choices when buying these products. The research employed a thorough methodology to address a significant gap in the current understanding of consumer perceptions and choices around baby care goods. The study's results emphasize the growing consciousness and accountability of parents, specifically in India, in choosing superior, reliable, and protected products for their children. This change towards prioritizing brand awareness demonstrated a more profound comprehension of the requirements for a baby's physical and cognitive growth, indicating a noteworthy pattern in customer behavior within this particular market.

Nilashi et al. (2023) used text mining and surveys to study Amazon.com infant product consumer satisfaction. Their study examined how internet reviews and ratings, which reflect customers' past experiences, affect service and product satisfaction. Their investigation focused on how brand image moderates the link between consumer pleasure and product advocacy. The researchers used Amazon reviews and a large poll to answer their questions. They used text mining insights to create their study framework. They then distributed a questionnaire and used PLS-SEM to analyze the results. Their investigation illuminated how comfort, material integrity, user-friendliness, return policies, design, pricing, packaging, and size information affect infant product customer experiences. They also found that brand image moderated the relationship between customer satisfaction and their willingness to recommend products, providing valuable insights for baby product vendors to improve customer satisfaction and experience.

RESEARCH GAP

The existing body of research on consumer behavior in the baby product market reveals insightful findings, yet it also uncovers a substantial research gap. Current studies primarily focus on factors such as product quality, brand image, and the influence of online reviews on purchasing decisions. Nonetheless, there is a conspicuous absence of a comprehensive understanding of how these factors interact across various cultural, economic, and geographical contexts. Moreover, much of the existing research is centered on specific market segments or platforms, such as online retail, leaving a gap in knowledge regarding the impact of these factors in various offline and multi-channel retail environments. Additionally, while some studies explore the role of brand consciousness among parents, there is limited exploration into how this consciousness varies across different demographic segments, including variations based on socio-economic status, education levels, and regional differences. This lack of a holistic, cross-cultural approach to understanding consumer behavior in the baby product market represents a significant opportunity for further research, particularly in understanding the global dynamics of consumer choices and brand loyalty in this sector.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the contemporary marketplace, where consumer trust and competitive advantage are paramount, understanding the determinants of brand reputation has become essential for influencing buying decisions. Despite this understanding, many brands struggle to quantify and strategize around the multifaceted impact of product quality, customer service, and customer reviews on their overall reputation. This leads to a critical problem: businesses are often unable to effectively leverage these factors to enhance their reputation and, in turn, positively influence consumer buying behavior. Consequently, there is a pressing need for a nuanced investigation into how these variables interact to shape brand reputation and determine the buying decisions of consumers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To explore the factors of brand reputation of women's attitude towards baby care products.
- ❖ To find the influence of brand reputation on women's buying decisions for baby products.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- 🚩 H01 : Product quality, customer service and customer reviews are the key factors influencing brand reputation of women's attitude towards baby care products.
- 🚩 H02 : Brand reputation influences women's buying decisions for baby products

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE STUDY

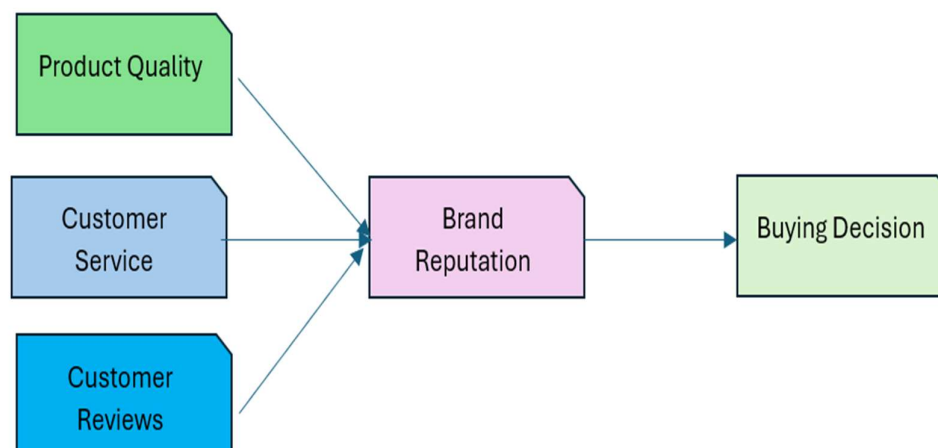


Figure 1: CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE STUDY

METHODOLOGY

Table 1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population of the Study	Young Mothers in Chennai
Method of Data Collection	Convenience Sampling
Tools for Data Collection	Structured Questionnaire
Sample Size	324
Types of Data	Primary Data Questionnaire through google forms
Scaling Techniques	5 point Likert Scale
Statistical Tools Used	Percentage Analysis, Descriptive Statistics, Factor Analysis, Regression Analysis

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

SAMPLE PROFILE:

A sample of 324 individuals from Chennai city was collected to investigate the factors that influence the brand reputation on women's buying decision of baby care products. The demographic characteristics of the respondents were analyzed.

TABLE 2

Socio-economic profile variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
30 years	74	23
30-40 years	135	42
40-50 years	58	18
Above 50 years	57	18
Educational Qualification		
UG	17	5

Diploma	69	21
PG	103	32
Engineering	96	30
Others	39	12
Designation		
Middle	152	47
Operational	172	53
Income		
<20000	6	2
20001-30000	18	5
30001-40000	106	33
40001-50000	111	34
Above 50000	83	26
Type of Family		
Joint Family	254	78
Nuclear Family	70	22

Source : computed data

1.]The predominant age group among the respondents falls within the 30-40 bracket.
2. A significant portion of the participants (32%) holds postgraduate-level educational qualifications.
3. Many respondents (53%) occupy technical positions in terms of their designations.
4. The largest segment of respondents (34%) reported an income range of Rs 40,001 to Rs 50,000.
5. Most survey participants come from joint family households.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The present study assesses the descriptive statistics of assertions pertaining to the brand reputation towards women's buying decision of baby care products . The table displays eleven statements that measure the elements impacting the brand reputation along with their mean, standard deviation, and communalities.

TABLE 3

Sl.No	Statements	Mean	S.D	Communalities
1	The products from this brand consistently meet my expectations for quality.	4.39	.748	.393
2	I believe that the quality of this brand's products surpasses that of its competitors.	4.37	.721	.706
3	The materials used in this brand's products are always of the highest standard.	4.30	.818	.682
4	The brand's customer service is easily accessible through multiple channels (phone, email, chat).	4.25	.842	.305
5	The customer service team of this brand is prompt and helpful when I have concerns.	4.27	.897	.604
6	I feel valued as a customer by the service team of this brand.	4.16	.974	.550
7	The customer service representatives of this brand are knowledgeable and provide accurate information.	4.17	.926	.670
8	Positive customer reviews increase my likelihood of purchasing from this brand.	4.19	.925	.556
9	I feel that this brand manages and responds to customer reviews effectively.	4.21	.918	.598
10	The customer reviews for this brand's products make me confident in my buying decisions.	3.98	.962	.643
11	Customer reviews of this brand's products are trustworthy and reflect genuine experiences.	3.82	1.047	.676

Source: Computed data

FACTOR ANALYSIS:**TABLE 4 KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.894
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	168.204
Df	55
P-Value	0.000

Source: Computed data

KMO Bartlett's Test of Sphercity

Table 4 displays KMO value of 0.894 for variables related to respondents' preferences on the factors influencing brand reputation towards women's buying decision of baby care products. This value is considered acceptable at a significance level of five percent ($P < 0.005$). This demonstrates the adequacy of the sample size for EFA.

Factor analysis is a method helps in reducing data by combining the original 11 variables into factors that are influenced by the elements of brand reputation towards women's buying decision of baby care products. The variables have been categorized into three separate factors, which are coherent sets indicated by factor loadings obtained via factor analysis. The results of factor extraction, using the criterion of Eigenvalues greater than 1, are presented in Table 4. Based on this criterion, three factors were identified that, when taken into account together, account for a total variance of 58 percent.

TABLE 5 - TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED BY INFLUENCING FACTORS OF BRAND REPUTATION TOWARDS WOMEN'S BUYING DECISION OF BABY CARE PRODUCTS

Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Eigen Values	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.556	1.556	14.149
2	1.448	1.448	38.268
3	1.046	1.046	58.033

Source: Computed data

The table presents compelling evidence of the effective reduction of the original 11 variables into three prominent elements. It is important to mention that these 11 variables together explain 58.033 percent of the total variance, with Eigen values over the essential threshold of 1. In addition, it is highlighted that the three components individually account for variances of 14.149%, 38.268%, and 58.033%, respectively. This distribution of variations provides direct information on the loadings of variables for each factor, clarifying their impact on the factors that determine the brand reputation of women's buying decision of baby care products.

Applying data cutback techniques is found to be a beneficial strategy for revealing the hidden underlying constructs within the eleven variables related to factors that influence brand reputation of women's buying decision of baby care products. This process of reduction enables the conversion of a bigger set of variables into a smaller number of independent components, making it easier to handle.

TABLE 6

Factors	Influencing Factors of brand reputation of women's buying decision of baby care products	Factor Loading
Product Quality 14.149%	The products from this brand consistently meet my expectations for quality.	0.878
	I believe that the quality of this brand's products surpasses that of its competitors.	0.723

	The materials used in this brand's products are always of the highest standard.	0.849
Customer Service 24.119%	The brand's customer service is easily accessible through multiple channels (phone, email, chat).	0.741
	The customer service team of this brand is prompt and helpful when I have concerns.	0.633
	I feel valued as a customer by the service team of this brand.	0.759
	The customer service representatives of this brand are knowledgeable and provide accurate information.	0.748
Customer Review 19.765%	Positive customer reviews increase my likelihood of purchasing from this brand.	0.737
	I feel that this brand manages and responds to customer reviews effectively.	0.729
	The customer reviews for this brand's products make me confident in my buying decisions.	0.717

Therefore, the initial set of eleven variables related to the elements that influence the brand reputation of women's buying decision of baby care products has been effectively reduced to three factors that can be easily managed and controlled. The following factors are: Product Quality account for 14.149% of the variance, Customer Service contribute to 24.119% of the variance, and Customer Review affect 19.765% of the variance.

Table 7 presents the multiple regression model summary and overall fit statistics. The adjusted R-squared of the model is 0.305, with the R-squared being 0.319. The Durbin-Watson statistic (d) is calculated to be 2.027, falling between the critical values of 1.5 and 2.5. Therefore, it is assumed that there is no first-order autocorrelation present in the multiple linear regression data.

Table 7 Multiple Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.565	.319	.305	9.56748	2.027

Predictors: (Constant), Brand Reputation Dependent Variable: Women's Buying Decision

Table 8 displays the ANOVA results. The F-test values are significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that the model is a good fit for the data. The F-test evaluates the null hypothesis that there is no linear relationship between the variables. With a p-value of 0.000, it is confirmed that there indeed exists a linear relationship between the variables in this model.

Table 8 ANOVA results

ANOVA^b

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2051.389	1	2051.389	69.400	.000 ^a
	Residual	11291.537	382	29.5589		
	Total	14342.926	383			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Reputation						
b. Dependent Variable: Women's Buying Decision						

Table 9 shows the coefficients and significance test values. It is explicit that brand reputation plays a significant role in women's buying decision with regard to women's buying decision.

Table 9 Coefficients and t-test values

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	67.667	.558		121.269	.000
	Brand Reputation	3.191	.559	.278	5.709	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Women's Buying Behaviour						

Predicted linear regression model:

$Y = 67.677 + 3.191X_1$ Where Y = Women's Buying Decision X_1 – Brand Reputation

It is obvious that women's buying decision is positively influenced by brand reputation of baby care products.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

1. Repurchase Intent in Baby Care Products (Cuong et al., 2021):

- Cuong et al.'s study focused on repurchase intention in the perspective of baby products. They found that product quality plays a crucial role in influencing brand image, purchasing decisions, and repurchase intentions.
- Brand image also had a positive correlation with purchasing decisions and repurchase intentions, highlighting the importance of a favorable brand perception.
- A direct and strong connection between purchasing decisions and repurchase intentions was identified, indicating that a positive buying experience significantly impacts the likelihood of repeat purchases.

2. Changing Patterns in Consumer Behavior (Pakkala et al., 2022):

- Pakkala et al.'s research examined changing consumer behavior patterns in the baby care product industry, specifically in India. Parents are increasingly prioritizing brand awareness and reliability when choosing products for their children.
- The study highlighted a shift towards selecting superior, reliable, and safe products for baby care, reflecting a deeper understanding of the needs for a child's physical and cognitive growth.
- This shift in consumer behavior emphasizes the importance of brand reputation and product quality in the baby care product market.

3.

4. Customer Satisfaction and Baby Products on Amazon (Nilashi et al., 2023):

Nilashi et al. conducted an extensive study on customer satisfaction with baby products on Amazon.com. Their research employed both text mining and survey-based methods to delve into the impact of online reviews and ratings on customer satisfaction and recommendations.

The study identified several key factors that significantly influenced customer experiences with baby products. These factors included comfort, quality of materials, ease of use, return policies, design, price, packaging, and availability of size information.

One notable finding of the study was the moderating role of brand image in the relationship between customer satisfaction and recommendations. The research suggested that a positive brand image enhances customer advocacy, indicating that consumers are more likely to recommend products if they perceive the brand positively.

Sample Profile:

- The sample consisted of 324 individuals from Chennai city, providing insights into the factors influencing brand reputation towards women's buying decision of baby care products.
- Demographic characteristics revealed that the majority of respondents were aged 30-40 years, held postgraduate qualifications, occupied technical positions, had an income range of Rs 40,001 to Rs 50,000, and came from joint family households.

Descriptive Statistics:

- The study assessed brand reputation related to women's buying decisions for baby care products using 11 statements.
- These statements received generally high mean scores, indicating positive perceptions of brand reputation factors.
- Three factors emerged from factor analysis: Product Quality, Customer Service, and Customer Review, collectively explaining 58.033% of the variance.

Multiple Linear Regression:

- A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Brand Reputation and Women's Buying Decision for baby care products.
- The model demonstrated that Brand Reputation had a significant positive influence on Women's Buying Decision, with an adjusted R-squared value of 0.305.

Discussion:

The findings from the various studies and the analysis of brand reputation in women's buying decisions for baby care products highlight several key points:

• **Product Quality Matters:** Product quality consistently emerges as a significant factor influencing brand reputation and purchasing decisions in the baby care product market. Parents prioritize high-quality products for their children's well-being.

• **Brand Image and Trust:** A positive brand image and reputation are crucial in building trust among consumers. A robust brand image is indeed positively associated with both purchasing decisions and repurchase intentions. Consumers tend to gravitate towards trusted brands when making decisions about their baby care needs. This inclination towards established and reputable brands reflects consumers' confidence in the quality, reliability, and overall satisfaction associated with those brands. As a result, a strong brand image plays a pivotal role in influencing consumers' choices and fostering repeat purchases in the baby care market.

• **Customer Reviews and Recommendations:** Online customer reviews and ratings play a substantial role in shaping customer satisfaction and recommendations. A brand's ability to manage and respond to customer reviews effectively can impact consumer confidence and advocacy.

• **Changing Consumer Behavior:** Consumer behavior in the baby care product industry is evolving, with parents increasingly seeking reliable and safe products. This shift highlights the importance of brands prioritizing quality and safety in their offerings.

• **Demographic Insights:** The demographic profile of the sample from Chennai city provides valuable insights into the characteristics of consumers interested in baby care products. Understanding these demographics can aid marketers in targeting their products effectively.

These findings underscore the significance of brand reputation, product quality, and customer satisfaction in the baby care product market. Businesses in this industry should focus on maintaining an optimistic brand impression actively engaging with customer reviews to enhance customer loyalty and drive repurchase intentions. Recognizing changing consumer behavior patterns and tailoring products to meet evolving preferences is crucial for success in this market.

CONCLUSION & LIMITATIONS

This study has illuminated the crucial role of brand reputation, product quality, and customer satisfaction in shaping women's purchasing decisions for baby care products. The findings underscore the importance of delivering high-quality products and fostering a positive brand image to instill trust and foster repeat purchases among consumers. Moreover, the moderating influence of brand image on customer satisfaction and recommendations underscores the importance of effectively managing online reviews.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The research is based on a specific sample from Chennai city, which may not fully represent the diversity of consumer preferences in the broader market. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings to other regions or populations may be constrained. Further research involving broader sampling is necessary to validate these findings across a more diverse demographic.

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