



A Study on Consumer Preferences towards Hindustan Unilever Limited with References to Coimbatore City

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ABSTRACT

A concept of consumer preferences is important to understand for any business entities. Because a customer preference creates a product values in a market and product values decides a companies values. Hindustan Unilever, one of the major fmcg companies of India and many consumers consumes their products. This study helps to understand the consumer buying behaviour which includes consumer preferences, consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

Keywords: Hindustan unilever, consumer preferences.

1. Introduction

India providing a large market for consumer goods and the preferences of consumers are changing day to day. Consumer preference is defined as the subjective tastes of individual consumers, measured by their satisfaction with those items after they've purchased them. This satisfaction is often referred to as utility. Consumer value can be determined by how consumer utility compares between different items. consumer preference determines what products people will buy within their budget, understanding consumer preference will give you an indication of consumer demand. This information will help to ensure that you have enough product to meet demand and will help you determine the price for your product.

This research work is entitled "**A Consumer Preference OF Hindustan Unilever with Reference to Coimbatore city**". Fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) is one of the industries which play a vital role in the economic development of the country. Hindustan Unilever was the biggest company in FMCG industries in India. This study focus on how a product fulfils the consumer preference and how they prefer to purchase and what influences them to buy the product.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In this world of products has various similarities coming from different products such as price, packaging, quality, advertising tactics and more on. So the product producing companies and product promoting companies has important to understand the consumer preference, consumer satisfaction and to know their brand loyalty products.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the consumer ideas, and preferences on products under Hindustan Unilever.
- To study has related to personal care and food products under Hindustan Unilever.
- To determine the influencing factors towards the products Under Hindustan Unilever
- To analyse the attractive product factor under Hindustan Unilever.
- To understand the consumer preference through which factor of a product satisfies their expectations.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study helps to know about their products from a consumer point of view. HUL have a variety of products, so need to identify the consumer buying behaviour which includes consumer preferences, consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty of HUL. The scope of the study is limited to consumers in Coimbatore City only. Research gap has been identified on consumer preferences on various products of HUL.

1.5 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- Hindustan Unilever has more than 50+ brands.
- Hindustan Unilever has many brand loyalty of products in different category.
- This study covers only personal care and food products .
- This study was limited to 162 respondents.

2. Review of Literature

1. According to Patil Pramod (2018), FMCG product touches each factor of human existence. Those goods are often consumed by all sections of the society and a big portion of their earnings is spent on these items. Aside from this, the sector is one of the crucial contributors of the Indian economy. This zone has shown a splendid growth over past few years, in fact it has registered increase throughout recession period additionally. The destiny for FMCG quarter may be very promising due to its inherent capability and favorable changes inside the environment. This paper discusses on assessment of the arena, its essential analysis and future prospectus.

2. Prabhat Kumar and Amar Nath (2019) conducted a study titled "A Study of Consumer Preference and Satisfaction towards HUL Beauty Care Products". The study aimed to examine consumer preferences and satisfaction towards HUL beauty care products and found that consumers are highly satisfied with HUL beauty care products due to their quality, packaging, and price.

Bhatnagar & Chowdhary (2019) in their study examined the demographic, behavioral characteristics of the consumers as well as the main factors and the areas of improvement for the online websites which are selling FMCG products. The study revealed that convenience is the major factor why consumers buy FMCG products online and timely delivery of the products, counterfeit/fake products are the major areas of improvement that the e-commerce websites and companies should take care.

Trinankur Dey and L. S. Sharma (2019) The study found that for most of the selected categories of FMCG products, the main decision making was based on availability of the products followed by freshness for non-packaged products (expiry, latest products, etc. for packaged products). Demographic factors were also found to be playing a dominant role in the purchase decisions of FMCG products.

Reddy, N. et al. (2019) in their research article "A Study on Fast Moving Consumer Goods Sector – A Comparative Study on Dairy and Soft Drink Products" opined that the purpose behind sales promotion is to motivate and persuade the consumers to buy a certain product and to encourage repetitive purchase of that very product and enable repetitive purchase of that thing.

Shetty and Shetty (2019) titled "A Study on Customer Preference towards Hindustan Unilever Limited Products in Dakshina Kannada District" presents a study that aims to analyze the customer preference towards Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) products in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka, India. The literature review section of the article provides a comprehensive overview of previous research related to customer preferences in the context of marketing and consumer behaviour. The authors begin by discussing the importance of understanding customer preferences as a crucial factor in building brand loyalty and driving business growth.

Guna Sheela C (2020) in the research paper entitled "A Theoretical Study of Post Covid-19 scenario of FMCG Sector in India" Consumption in rural areas has risen, owing to a mix of rising income and higher aspiration levels. In rural India, there is a growing desire for branded goods.

Chakraborty and Mukherjee (2020) in their study revealed that demographic variables though very prominent in the customer decision-making process but except gender; other demographic variables have no effect on customer satisfaction. It is also disclosed from the study that variables like service quality, product quality and perceived value have high significations to customer satisfaction whereas financial benefit is found to be insignificant variable to customer satisfaction.

3. Research Methodology

Research methodology systematically solve research problem, why the research has been undertaken, how the research problem has been defined and what data defined, has been adopted why a particular technique of analysis for the study.

3.1. Data Collection

Primary Data: Primary data was the data that was collected for the First time by the researcher. The primary data were collected with specific set of objective to assess the Current status of any variable studied. The primary data were collected using structure questionnaire in Google Form.

3.2. Area of Study

The area of the study refers to Coimbatore city.

3.3. Method of Sampling

Simple Random Sampling method was taken in this study.

3.4. Sample size

The study covered a sample size of 162 respondents belong to the study area, who were Consuming fast-food.

3.4. Data Sources

Primary data was collected for the purpose of the study.

3.5. Tools and Techniques

1. SIMPLE PERCENTAGE METHOD:

Percentage method refers to the specific kind which is used in making comparison between two or more series of data collected. Percentage is based on descriptive relationship. It compares the relative items. Through the use of percentage, the data are reduced in the form with base equal to 100%, which facilitate relative comparison.

Formula:

$$\text{Simple Percentage} = (\text{No of respondents} / \text{Total no of respondents}) * 100$$

RANK ANALYSIS:

A ranking is a relationship between a set of items such that, for any two items, the first is either 'ranking higher than', 'ranked lower than' or 'ranked equal to' the second. In mathematics, this is known as a weak order or total pre order of objects. It is not necessarily a total order of objects because two different objects can have the same rating. Analysis of data obtained by ranking commonly requires non-parametric statistics.

WEIGHTED AVERAGE METHOD:

Weighted is the calculation that takes into account the varying degrees of importance of a numbers in a data set. In calculating a weighted average, each number in the data set is multiplied by a predetermined weight before the final calculation is made. A weighted average is more accurate than a simple average in which all number in a data set are assigned an identical weight.

Formula:

$$\text{Weighted average} = (\text{Number} * \text{weighing factor}) / \text{Total number of respondents.}$$

4. Analysis and Interpretation

SIMPLE PERCENTAGE METHOD:

Table no.4.2.1

Table showing age of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19 - 24 years	80	49.4
25 -29 years	37	22.8
30 - 34 years	27	16.7
Above 35 years	18	11.1
Total	162	100

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates 49.4% of the respondents are under the age group of 19-24 years, 22.8% of the respondents are under the age group of 25-29 years, 16.7% of the respondents are under the age group of 30-34 years and 11.1% of the respondents are above 35 years.

Chart no.4.2.1

Chart showing age of the respondents.

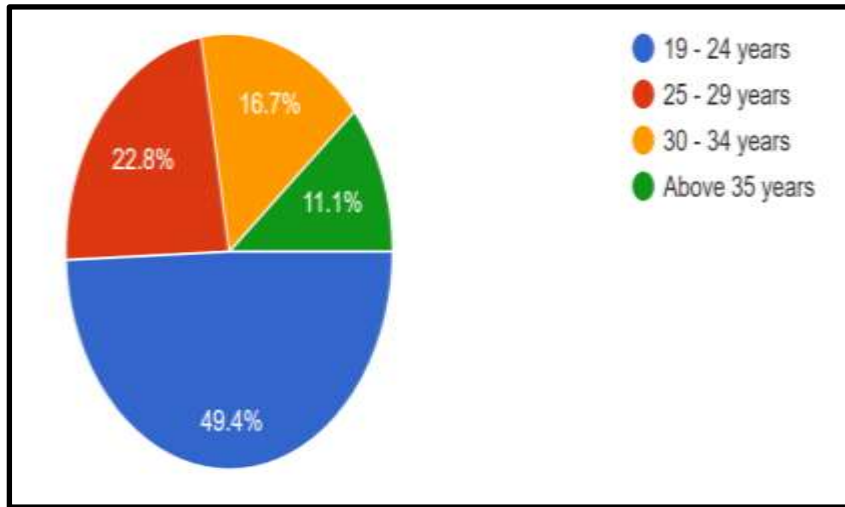


Table no.4.2.2

Table showing gender of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	108	66.7
Female	54	33.3
Total	162	100

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The above table showing 66.7% of the respondents are male and 33.3% of the respondents are female.

Chart no 4.2.2

Chart showing gender of respondents.

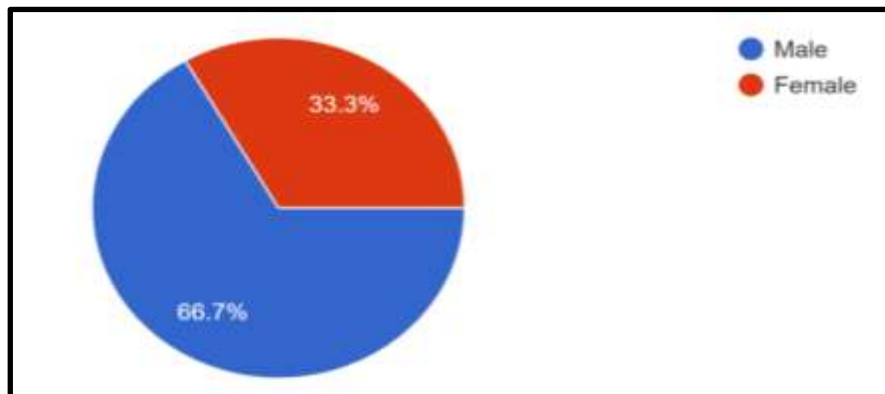


Table no 4.2.3

Table showing marital status of the respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	81	50
Married	48	29.6
Divorced	24	14.8
Separate	9	5.6
Total	162	100

Source: Primary data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates 50% of the respondents are single , 29.6% of the respondents are married , 14.8% of the respondents are divorced and 5.6% of the respondents are separate.

Chart No 4.2.3

Chart showing marital status of the respondents

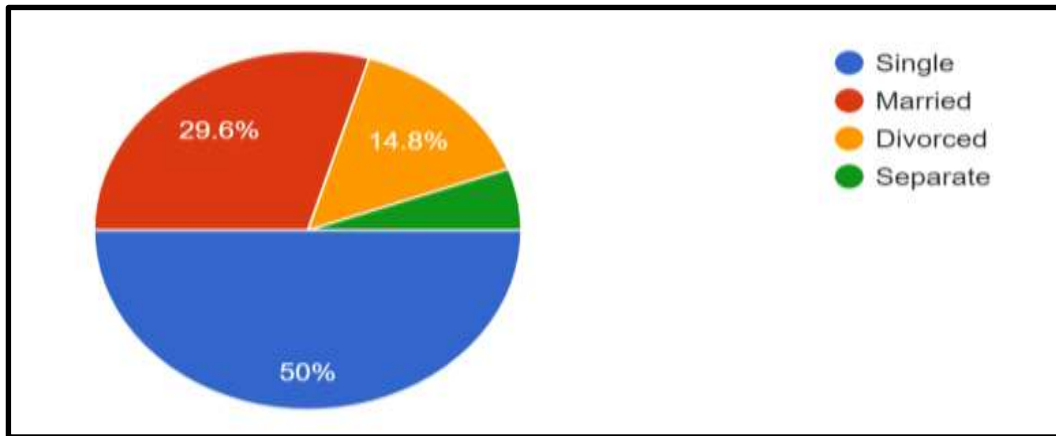


Table no.4.2.4

Table showing family type of the respondents

Family type	Frequency	Percentage
Joint Family	97	59.9
Nuclear Family	65	40.1
Total	162	100

Source : Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table showing 59.9% of the respondents are from joint family and 40.1% of the respondents are from nuclear family.

Chart no 4.2.4

Chart showing family type of respondents

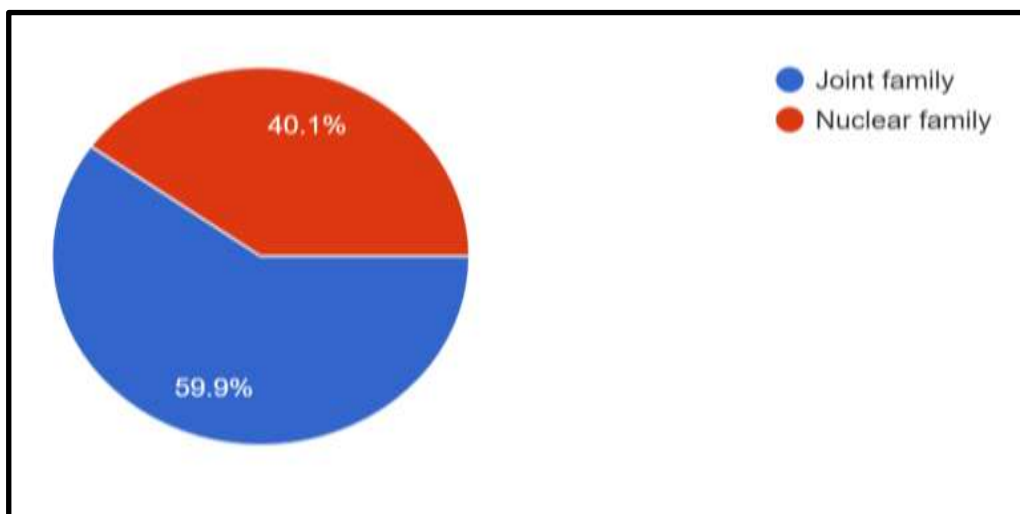


Table no.4.2.5

Table showing educational qualification of the respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage
High school	22	13.6
UG Degree	81	50
PG Degree	46	28.4
Professional Course	13	8
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates 50% of the respondents are under graduates, 28.4% of the respondents are post graduates, 13.6% of the respondents are in high school and 8% of the respondents are in a professional course.

Chart no 4.2.5

Chart showing educational qualification of the respondents

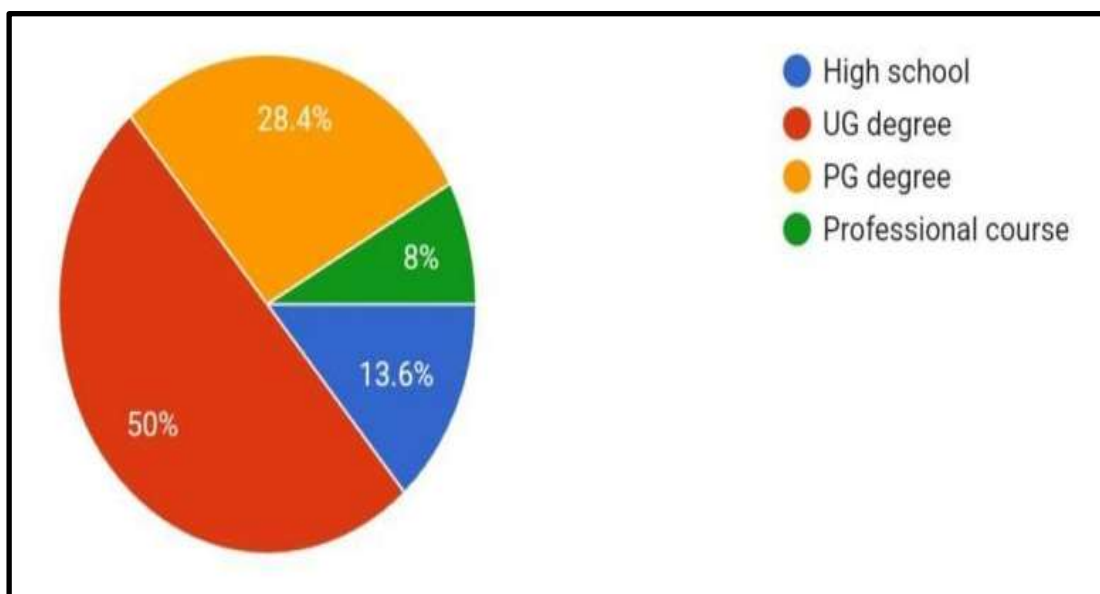


Table no.4.2.6

Table showing occupation of the respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Business	36	22.2
Professional	49	30.2
Employees	39	24.2
Students	38	23.5
Total	162	100

Source :Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates 30.2% of the respondents have a profession , 24.2% of the respondents are employees, 23.5% of the respondents are students and 22.2% of the respondents are doing business.

Chart no 4.2.6

Chart showing occupation of the respondents.

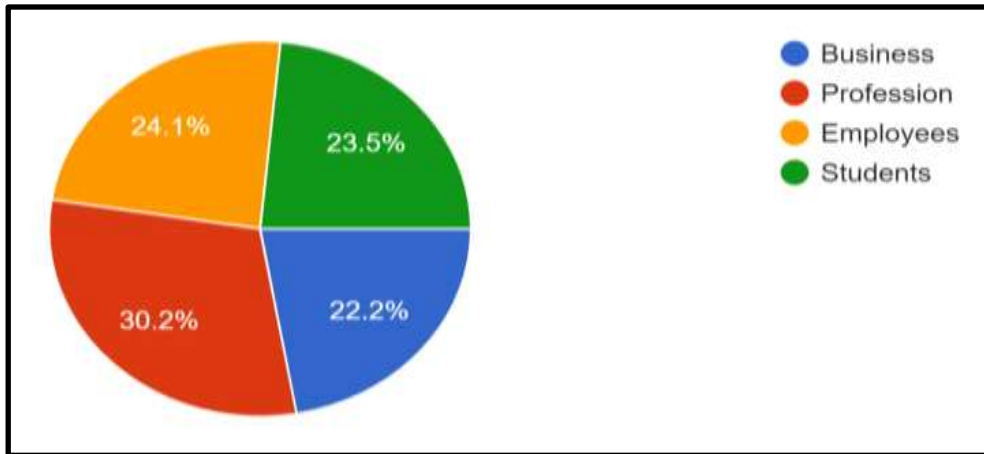


Table no 4.2.7

Table showing monthly income of the respondents

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 20000	29	17.9
20001 – 30000	48	29.6
30001 – 40000	48	29.6
More than 40000	37	22.8
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates 29.6% of the respondents are earning between 20001-30000, 29.6% of the respondents are earning between 30001-40000 , 22.8% of the respondents are earning more than 40000 and 17.9% of the respondents are earning less than 20000.

Chart no 4.2.7

Chart showing monthly income of respondents.

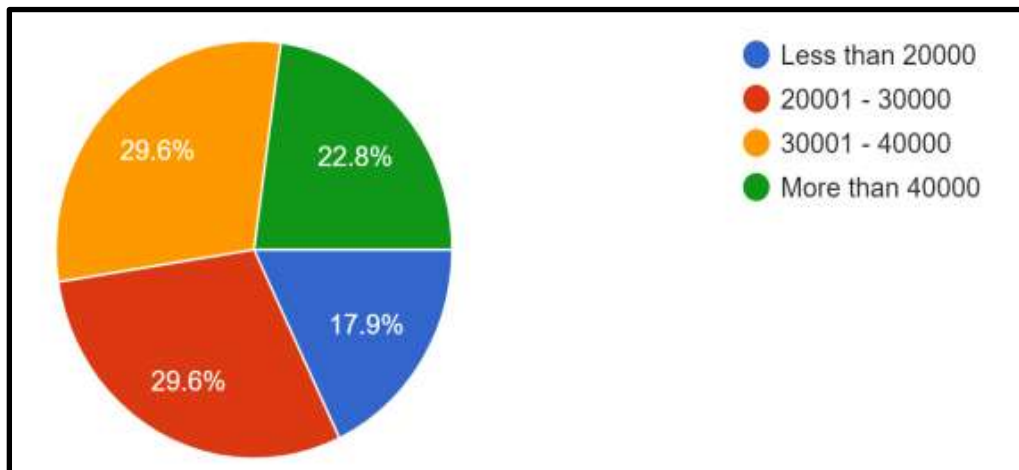


Table no 4.2.8

Table showing monthly expenditure of the respondents

Monthly expenditure	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10000	36	37.7
10001 – 15000	64	39.5
15001- 20000	25	15.4
More than 20000	12	7.4
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table showing 39.5% of the respondents were expenses between 10001-15000 , 37.7% of the respondents were expenses under less than 10000, 15.4% of the respondents were expenses between 15001-20000 and 7.4% of the respondents made expenses more than 20000.

Chart no 4.2.8

Chart showing monthly expenditure of the respondents.

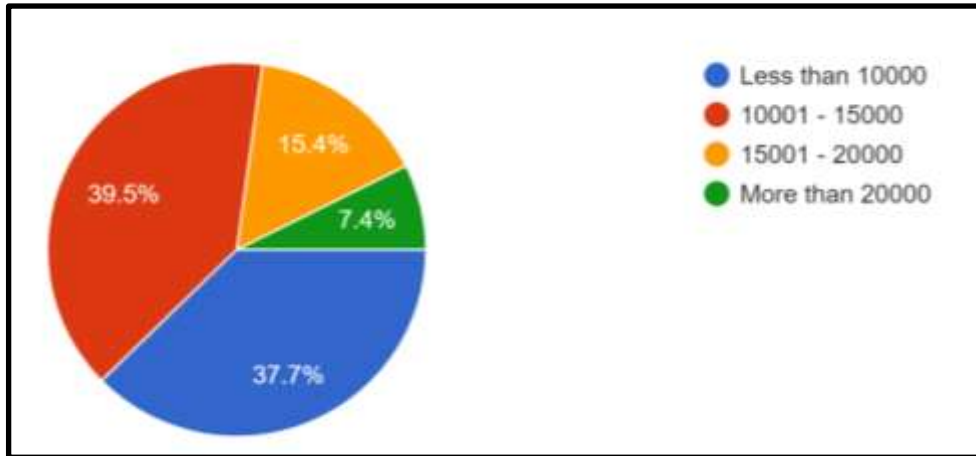


Table no 4.2.9

Table showing preferable brand of the respondents

Preferable brands	Frequency	Percentage
Dove	23	14.2
Pears	49	30.2
Kissan	56	34.6
Annapurna	34	21
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates that 34.6% of the respondents are preferring kissan ,30.2% of the respondents are preferring pears, 21% of the respondents are preferring Annapurna and 14.2% of the respondents are preferring dove.

Chart no 4.2.9

Chart showing preferred brands of the respondents.

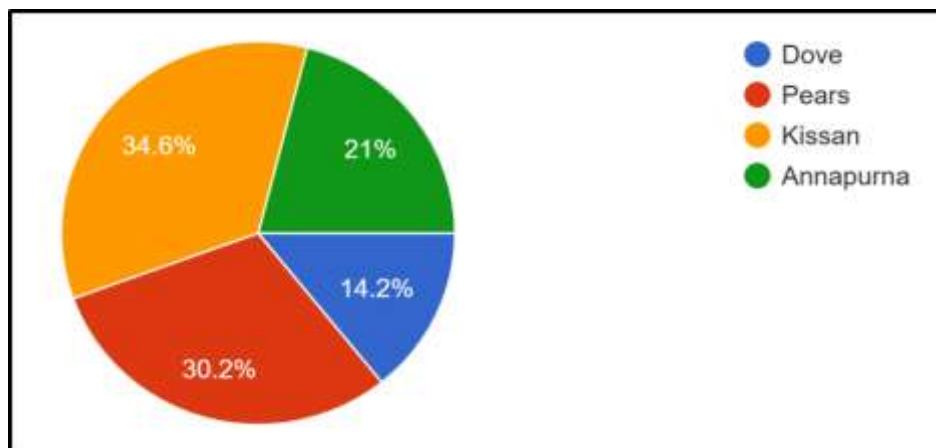


Table no 4.2.10

Table showing influencing factor of the respondents

Influencing Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Brand image	34	21
Product looks	58	35.8
Advertising	56	34.6
Packaging	14	8.6
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table showing 35.8% of the respondent were influenced by product looks, 34.6% of the respondent were influenced by advertising, 21% of the respondents were influenced by brand image , and 8.6% of the respondent were influenced by packaging.

Chart no 4.2.10

Chart showing influencing factor of the respondents.

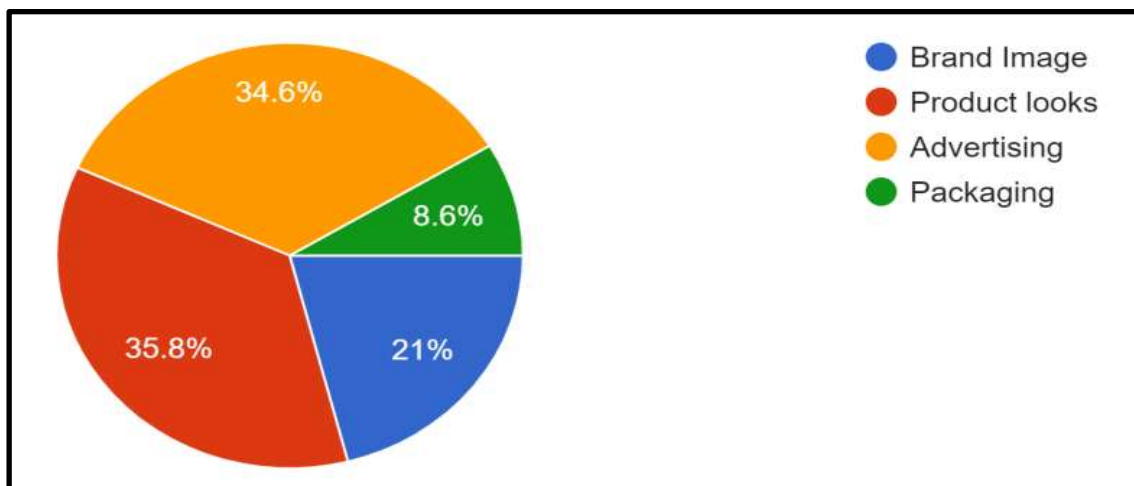


Table no 4.2.11

Table showing attracting factors of the respondents

Attracting Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Quality	48	29.6
Design	60	37
Flavour	43	26.5
Colour	11	6.8
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The table indicates that 37% of the respondents were attracted by design , 29.6% of the respondents were attracted by quality, 26.5% of the respondents were attracted by flavour and , 6.8% of the respondents were attracted by colour.

Chart no 4.2.11

Chart showing attractive factor of the respondents.

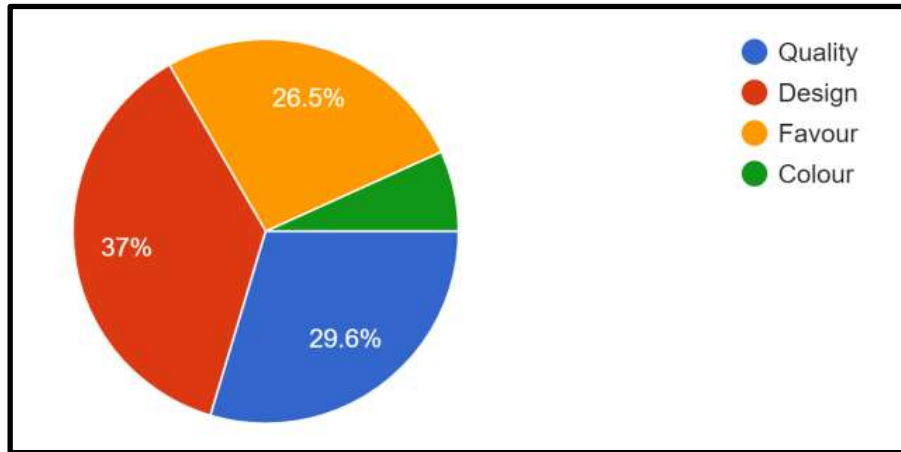


Table no 4.2.12

Table showing purchase of the respondents

Period of Purchase	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	14	8.6
Once a week	23	14.2
Once a month	71	43.8
Twice a month	54	33.3
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates that 43.8% of the respondents purchase once a month, 33.3% of the respondents purchase twice a month, 14.2% of the respondents purchase once a week and 8.6% of the respondents purchase daily.

Chart no 4.2.12

Chart showing purchase of the respondents.

Table no 4.2.13

Table showing place of purchase of the respondents

Place of purchase	Frequency	Percentage
Online store	16	9.9
Retail store	41	25.3
Departmental store	84	51.9
Shopping mall	21	13
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates that 51.9% of the respondents purchase from a departmental store, 25.3% of the respondents purchase from a retail store, 13% of the respondents purchase from a shopping mall and 9.9% of the respondents purchase in an online store.

Chart no 4.2.13

Chart showing place of a purchase of the respondents

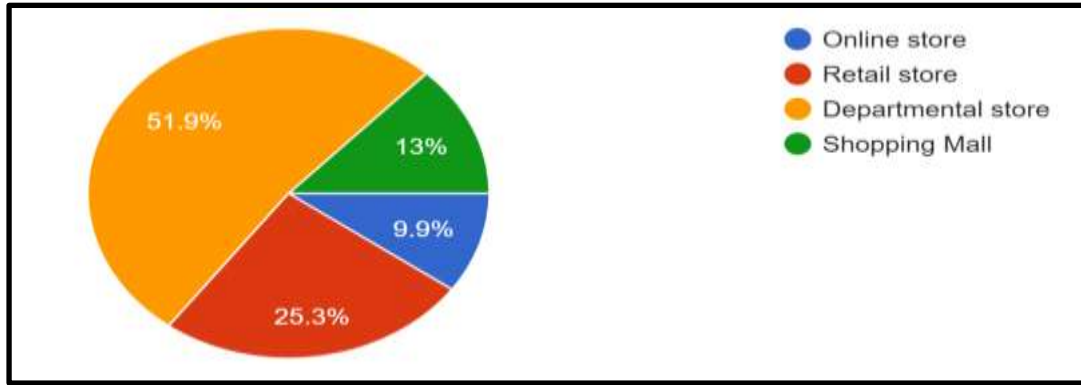


Table no 4.2.14

Table showing expenses for products under Hindustan Unilever.

Expenses	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2000	34	21
2001 – 3000	65	40.1
3000 – 4000	43	26.5
More than 4000	20	12.3
Total	162	100

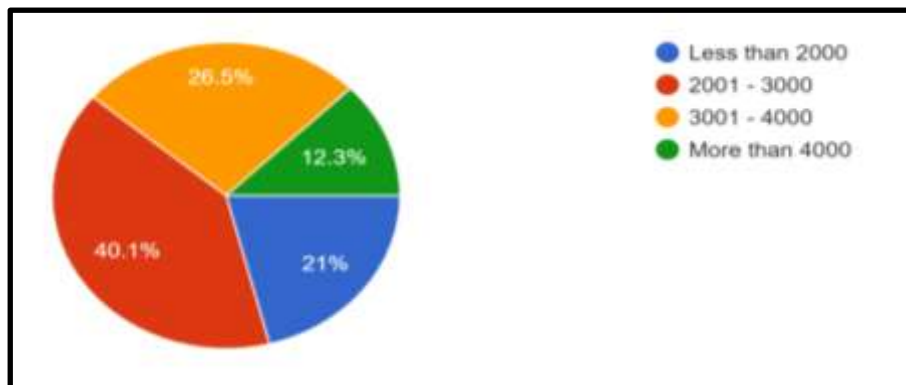
Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates that 40.1% of the respondents made expenses between 2001-3000, 21% of the respondents made expenses under less than 2000, 26.5% of the respondents made expenses between 3001-4000 and 12.3% of the respondents made expenses more than 4000.

Chart no 4.2.14

Chart showing expenses for products under Hindustan Unilever .



4.2.15

Table showing influencing media of the respondents.

Influencing media	Frequency	Percentage
Social media	21	13
Television	65	40.1
Website	32	19.8
Word of mouth	44	27.2
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table showing 40.1% of the respondent were influenced by television, 27.2% of the respondent were influenced by word of mouth, 19.8% of the respondent were influenced by websites and, 13% of the respondent were influenced by social media .

Chart no 4.2.15

Chart showing influence media of the respondents.

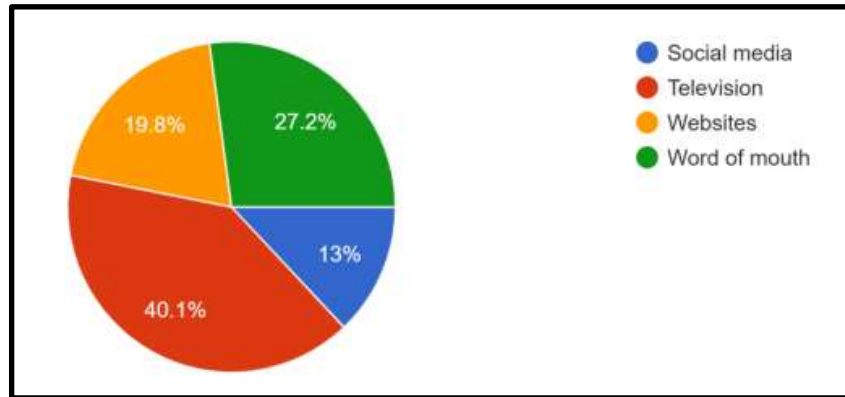


Table no 4.2.16

Table showing attention of advertisement of the respondents

Advertisement	Frequency	Percentage
New varieties	29	17.9
Discounting a price	62	38.3
Offering a gifts	30	18.5
Quantity increase at a same price	41	25.3
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates that 38.3% of the respondents get attention by discounting a price , 25.3% of the respondent get attention by quantity increase at a same price, 18.5% of the respondents get attention by offering a gifts and 17.9% of the respondents get attention by new varieties.

Chart no 4.2.16

Chart showing the attention on advertisements of the respondents.

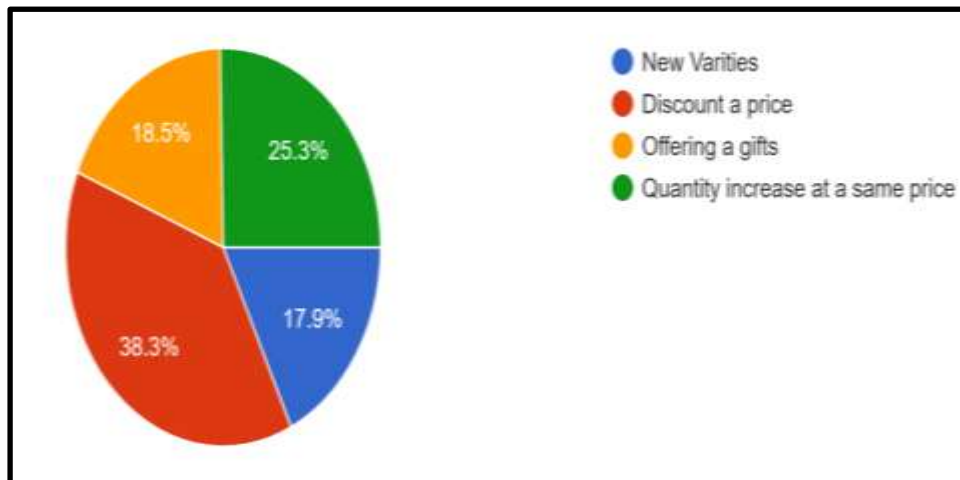


Table no 4.2.17

Table showing types of problem of the respondents

Types of problems	Frequency	Percentage
Faulty or unsafe products	24	14.8
Damaged products	44	27.2
Over charging	30	18.5
Poor quality	29	17.9
None	35	21.6
Total	162	100

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates that 27.2% of the respondents faced problems with damaged products, 21.6% of the respondent not any problems with a product, 18.5% of the respondents faced problems with over charging, 17.9% of the respondents faced problems with poor quality and 14.8% of the respondents faced problems with faulty or unsafe products.

Chart no 4.2.17

Chart showing types of problems of the respondents.

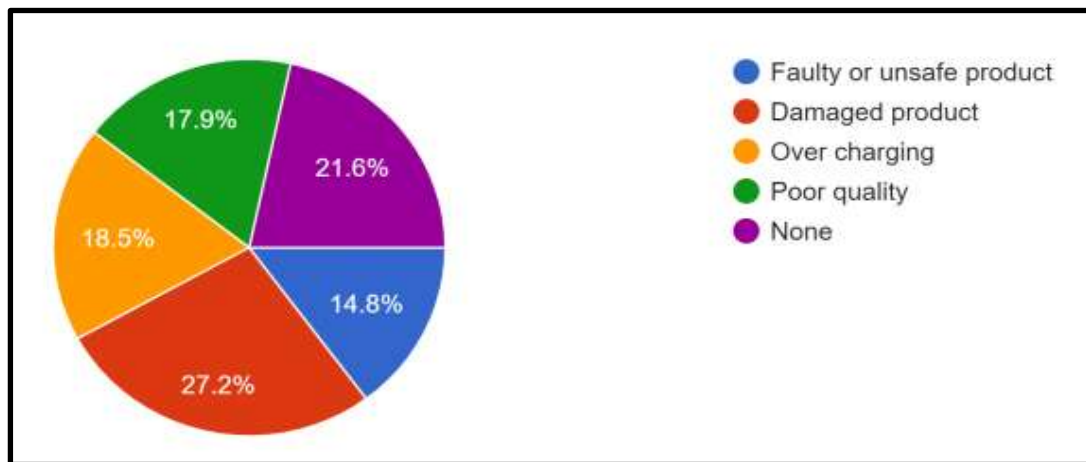


Table no 4.2.18

Table showing expected factors of the respondents

Expected factors	Frequency	Percentage
Quality	31	19.1
Quantity	41	25.3
Brand reputation	74	45.7
Packaging	16	9.9
Total	162	100

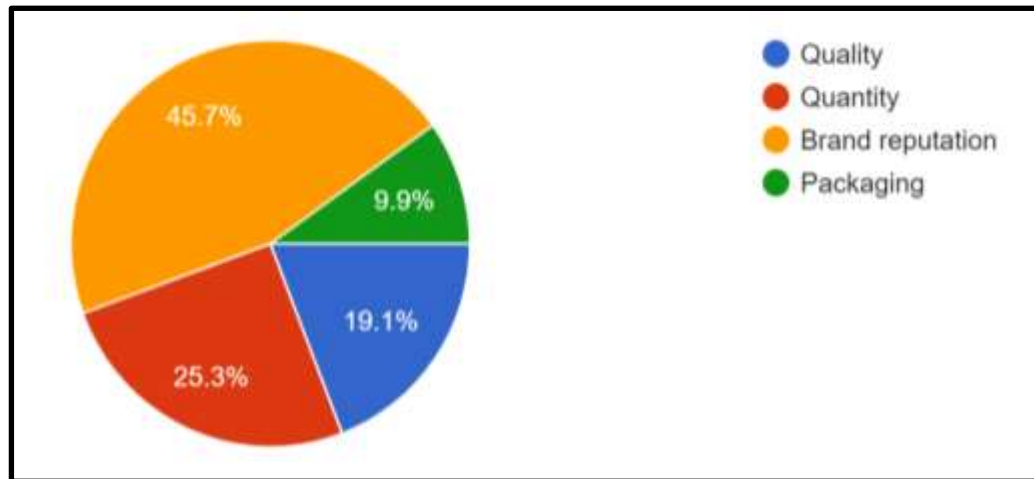
Source : Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

The above table indicates that 45.7% of the respondents were expecting brand reputation, 25.3% of the respondents were expecting quantity, 19.1% of the respondents were expecting quality, and 9.9% of the respondents were expecting packaging.

Chart no 4.2.18

Chart showing the expected factors of the respondents.



4.3 RANK ANALYSIS:

Table no 4.3.1

Table showing reason for preferring a product under Hindustan Unilever.

Reasons	R5	R4	R3	R2	R1	TOTAL	RANK
Quality	84	51	23	1	3	698	1
Quantity	62	76	17	5	2	677	2
Brand	60	55	37	8	2	649	3
Price	42	67	44	6	3	625	4
Availability	45	59	44	11	3	618	5
Gifts	21	31	57	35	18	488	6

INTERPRETATION

The above table depicts the reason for preferring a product under hindustan unilever. A major reason was quality and followed by quantity, brand, price, availability and gifts.

Table no 4.3.2

Table showing influencing factor of purchasing a product under Hindustan Unilever.

Influencing factor	R5	R4	R3	R2	R1	TOTAL	RANK
Brand Image	87	53	20	1	1	710	1
Product Look	66	62	32	1	1	677	2
Advertising	53	57	45	5	2	640	3
Packaging	44	64	45	7	2	627	4
Discounts	34	56	52	14	6	584	5
Varieties	29	64	47	15	7	579	6

INTERPRETATION

The above table depicts the influencing factor of purchasing a product under hindustan unilever. A major influencing factor was a brand image and followed by product look, advertising, packaging, discounts and varieties.

Table no 4.2.3

Table showing consumer satisfaction by a product factor under hindustan unilever

PRODUCT FACTOR	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	TOTAL	RANK
Quality	106	44	10	1	1	739	1
Quantity	79	66	14	1	2	705	2
Brand	63	54	38	5	2	657	3

Price	49	69	33	8	3	639	4
Availability	53	56	41	8	4	632	5
Gifts	26	32	60	30	14	512	6

INTERPRETATION

The table depicts the consumer satisfaction by a product factor under hindustan unilever. A major factor was quality and followed by quantity, brand, price, availability and gifts.

4.4 WEIGHTED AVERAGE METHOD:

Table no 4.4.1

Table showing respondent's preference on a brand or a product.

PREFERENCE	R5	R4	R3	R2	R1	TOTAL	WEIGHT	RANK
Based on quality	82	52	25	2	1	698	4.30	1
Brand loyalty	56	73	27	4	2	663	4.09	3
Affordable price	64	55	36	5	2	696	4.29	2
Promotion	43	54	51	11	3	609	3.75	4

INTERPRETATION

The above table showing respondent's preference on a brand or a product. A preference has been based on quality, affordable price, brand loyalty and promotion.

5. Findings, suggestions and Conclusion of the study

5.1 FINDINGS

The objective of the study is to know the consumer ideas, and preferences on products under Hindustan Unilever relating to personal care and food products and this study helps to know the influencing factors towards buying products Under Hindustan Unilever. The study has been analysed using techniques of percentage analysis, ranking analysis and weighted average. The final chapter is an attempt to summarise the findings of the study based on which few suggestions have been made.

5.1.1 PERCENTAGE METHOD

- 49.4% of the respondents fall under the age group of 19 - 24 years.
- 66.7% of the respondents are male.
- 50% of the respondents are single.
- 59.9% of the respondents are from joint family.
- 28.4% of the respondents are post graduates.
- 30.2% of the respondents are professionals.
- 29.6% of the respondents are earning between 20001-30000 and 30001-40000.
- 39.5% of the respondents are expenses under 10001-15000
- 34.6% of the respondents preferring the Kissan
- 35.8% of the respondents were influenced by product look.
- 37% of the respondents were attracted by a design.
- 43.8% of the respondents were purchased once a month.
- 51.9% of the respondents made purchases in departmental stores.
- 40.1% of the respondents were spend 2001-3000 for a product under Hindustan Unilever.
- 40.1% of the respondent's influencing media was television.

- 25.3% of the respondents have get attention for quantity increase at the same price.
- 27.2% of the respondents faced problems under damaged products.
- 45.7% of the respondents are expecting the brand reputation.

5.1.2 RANK ANALYSIS

- The table depicts the reason for preferring a product under hindustan unilever. A major reason was quality and followed by quantity, brand, price, availability and gifts.
- The table depicts the influencing factor of purchasing a product under hindustan unilever. A major influencing factor was a brand image and followed by product look, advertising, packaging, discounts and varieties.
- The table depicts the consumer satisfaction by a product factor under hindustan unilever. A major factor was quality and followed by quantity, brand, price, availability and gifts.

5.1.3 WEIGHTED AVERAGE METHOD

- The table showing the respondent's preference on a brand or a product. A preference has been based on quality, brand loyalty, affordable price and promotion.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS

- The consumer are preferring a high quality product even though the price is high. So the company produces good quality products according to consumer preference .
- The Company needs to reduce the product damages during the production and shipping as for as the consumer's most faced problem is damaged products.
- The most influenced media for purchase of products is television. But social media is going to be the most influencing media in future. So the company have to improve the advertisement content in social media to influence the consumers.
- A consumer gets attracted by the quality of the product and designs. while, the company increases the favours and Varieties. It attracts more customers.
- Even the product has goods in quality and affordable price to purchase, the availability is low , the consumer switches the product . So the company has been aware about the availability of products in the market.

5.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study conducted on consumer preferences towards Hindustan Unilever Limited in Coimbatore city showed that the majority of consumers preferred the company's products due to their quality, brand reputation, and availability. The study also revealed that factors such as price and promotions did play a role in consumer decision-making, but were not the primary factors influencing their preference for Hindustan Unilever Limited products. To summarize, the study on consumer preference towards Hindustan Unilever Limited in Coimbatore city indicates that the company has a strong market presence and brand loyalty. The results emphasize the need for Hindustan Unilever Limited to continue to focus on maintaining product quality and brand image while also considering competitive pricing strategies and effective promotional campaigns to further enhance its market position.

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