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# RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



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## CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS THE PURCHASE OF LAPTOPS

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### Abstract

Laptop industry in India is well established and is flourishing fastly. There are various leading brands. A consumer considers many aspects, before buying a laptop. An analysis of the factors influencing the consumer's purchase decision of laptops throws light on their preferences and requirements. This will help the laptop marketers to understand the consumer preferences and to increase their market share. Hence a detailed research study has been conducted on the factors influencing consumers purchase decision of laptops in Coimbatore during 2013. The objective is to find out the factors that influence the purchase of branded laptops and offer suggestions.

A sample of 300 laptop customers are selected in Coimbatore. The primary and secondary data were collected. The data was analysed with relevant statistical tools like factor analysis, chi-square test and ranking technique. This study presents practical suggestions to improve laptop features that will help laptop manufacturers to develop brand management strategies and to enhance their sales. The growing laptop industry contributes significantly

our economy by supporting. efficiently educational and industrial sectors.

### Introduction

Growing craze for the emergence of a new breed of technology-consciousness on laptop market is going to flourish in India. The need for anytime-anywhere access to information is pushing laptop demand in the market due to their convenience in terms of portability, flexibility and adaptability. In every field of life like, hospitality, railways, metro trains, corporate houses, academics and professionals there is use of laptop.

India is considered as the third fastest growing laptop market with a compound annual growth rate of 21.9 percent in the Asia-Pacific region for last few years. With increasingly low weights, longer battery life, and the addition of the integrated wireless, today's notebooks are taking mobile computing to a new level. But today, there are already more laptops than desktops in businesses, and laptops are becoming obligatory for student use and more popular for general use. The major players of laptops are Dell, HP, Compaq, Acer, Sony, Lenovo, Samsung and Apple.

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## Popular Laptop Brands in Indian Market

### Apple

Apple is one of the leading laptop brands in India well known for its opulence in terms of both software and costs involved. Its most preferred models are MacBook, MacBook Pro, and MacBook Air. However, its customer service is a problem area and this makes it, a brand that is hard to maintain.

### Acer

Acer laptops are fairly convenient to operate and have thus been termed among the most user friendly of their kind. The notebooks have also been pretty popular in India, especially among the students. Most models are there.

### Lenovo

Lenovo has always been known for its capability to withstand rough usage. Users also like it for its wide screen. Its most prominent ranges are ThinkPad, Essential, and Idea Pad. Various Lenovo laptops are available in the market.

### Dell

When it comes to graphics Dell leads the way. The Inspiron range has performed really well in India and the studio series has been doing commendably well. Many leading models are there.

### HP

HP laptops are well known for their efficiency along with light weight and bright screens. Its Pavilion range has been

extremely successful in India. Most prominent models are there.

### Sony

Sony has got immense popularity as a laptop brand. Sony Vaio enjoys a lot of fame among various notebooks and laptops available in India. The biggest advantage of its laptops is that they can be carried anywhere very easily. Many top models are there.

### Samsung

Samsung laptops are equipped with a wide range of features like 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Core i7 processors, 13.3 inch screens, and 8GB DDR3 RAMs. Many top models are there.

### Toshiba

The finest Toshiba laptops come with features like Intel 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation Core i7 processors, 18.4 inch screens, and 4GB DDR3 RAMs. Leading models are there.

### Asus

Asus laptops have feature Intel Core i7 processors along with other facilities like 17.3 inch screens and 8 GB DDR3 RAMs. Best models are there.

### Fujitsu

Fujitsu laptops provide facilities such as Intel Core i3 processors, 15.6 inch screens and 3 GB DDR3 RAMs.

### Advantages

- Productivity; \* Immediacy; \* Up-to-date information; \* Connectivity; \* Size; \* Low power consumption; \* Quiet; \* Battery; and

- All-in-One: designed to be portable, laptops have everything integrated into the chassis. This is divided into the desktop, keyboard, mouse, display, and optional peripherals such as speakers.

### Statement of the Problem

No longer does one vendor dominate the laptop market, enjoying their product being seen as exceedingly superior to its competitor. Every vendor offers the same microprocessors and other facilities.

Manufacturers continue to conduct market research studies on consumer behaviours on laptops. Little to no market segmentation exists publicly that states who the laptop buyer really is.

### Research Gap

As market research studies are traditionally private there is very limited public studies undertaken. Many private relevant studies of computer companies are available. To fulfil this research gap a research study can be carried out to study the consumer behaviour in purchase towards laptop.

### Research Questions

What makes a customer prefer a specific brand over another brand among similar laptops? If the factors are found out, the customers preferences can be satisfied and brands market share can be increased. What are the factors that influence brand preference? What combination of buying criteria aligned with demographic profile of certain customer segment contributes to

laptop purchase decision? Is it still within the computer box or outside of it that drives the laptop purchase decision?

### Rationale of the study

It is very essential to conduct a research study on the consumer behaviour towards the purchase of laptops in Coimbatore, to answer these research questions. The customers preferences change from place to place as demographic, socio economic, personal profile of customers also change. Hence this research study on consumer behaviour towards purchase of laptops was conducted in 2013 in Coimbatore.

### Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the research study are to

- find out the factors that influence the purchase of branded laptops and
- trace out the problems.

### Limitations of the study

- Due to time constraint the study is restricted to Coimbatore only.

### Methodology

The research design adopted in this study is both descriptive and analytical in nature.

Commercially vibrant, industrially advanced Coimbatore is an educational hub enriched with humpty number of educational institutions and computer learning centres –Universities, colleges and schools. It offers great scope for the conduct

of this research study. This research study area is suitable to find out the factors influencing laptop purchase. Hence Coimbatore is selected as the area of research study.

A sample of 300 respondents were selected and they have fully answered the questionnaires.

A purposive sampling technique is used for this study.

This research study covered a period of six months from January 2013-June 2013. Primary and secondary data were used for collection of data.

- **Primary Data**

Primary data was collected from the consumers of Dell, Hp/Compaq, Sony, Samsung and Lenovo laptops.

- **Secondary Data**

The secondary data was collected from library books, Journals, Newspapers, Magazines and Websites.

The selected samples were administered with a structured questionnaire

The collected data was analysed and the following tools were used to analyze the data - Percentage Analysis; Ranking Technique; and Factor Analysis

### **Factor Analysis**

Factor analysis attempts to identify underlying variables, or factors, that explain

the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables.

Factor analysis, analyses the factors influencing purchase of laptop brands. Customer brand loyalty represent the greatest chances for acquiring higher revenue.

The rotated component matrix table explains the variable loadings in each predominant factor of Brand loyalty. X2- Reliable and valid (.807). X6- Popularity (.801), X4- Easily available (.743), X10- Compatible to many operating systems and software (.706) X8- Quality of performance (.636). The first factor consists of above mentioned five variables. Hence, it is related to product and suitably named as "**Indented decisions**". The second factor consists of the following five variables.

X3- Comfortable to use (.701), X5- Efficiency of battery (.695), X1- Affordable value for price (.688), X9- Entertainment (.587), X7- Good appearance and light in weight (.572). The second factor is concerned with some specific aspects of a product, Hence it is called as "**Trendy attractions**".

Based on the results of factor analysis ten variable factors influencing purchase of laptops were considered in the questionnaire for this research study.

### **Results and Discussion**

Personal and socio economic profile of the respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Personal Profile of the Respondents

Criteria	Total (300)	(%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	153	51
Female	147	49
<b>Age (yrs)</b>		
Below 25	120	40
25-35	92	31
35-45	55	18
45-60	33	11
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	129	43
Single	171	57
<b>Educational qualification</b>		
Less than 12 <sup>th</sup>	31	10.3
12 <sup>th</sup>	58	19.3
UG	105	35
PG	64	21
<b>Professionals</b>		
Engineering	32	11
Medicine	10	3.3
<b>Area</b>		
Rural	63	21
Urban	143	48
Semi-urban	94	31
	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table1, it can be seen that 51 percent of the respondents were males and 49 percent were females. It is a healthy trend that women are equally interested in purchasing and using laptops. With regard to age 40 percent of the sample belonged to

less than 25 years and 31 percent belonged to 25-35 years and 71 percent of youth were using the new computer applications such as social networking, video games and browsing websites (you tube). This shows that young people spend more time with laptops. The study revealed that 29 percent in the age group of 35-60 are mostly using laptops compare to computers, whereas 57 percent of the respondents who are single used laptops at their work spot. The rest 43 percent were married and they also used laptops both in family and at work.

The current trend among under graduates (35%) was mostly e-learning. It is evident that 21 percent are post graduates, 19 percent were in 12<sup>th</sup> and the rest 10 percent were studying less than 12<sup>th</sup> standard. Almost all the students used laptops. The professionals both engineers (11%) and medical doctors (3%) spent time in computers and laptops. It is understood that whatever be the educational qualification almost all used computers. The brand awareness was noticed among 48 percent of the sample who hail from urban area and 31 percent from semi urban area. Brand influenced one fifth (21%) of the sample who belonged to rural area. Laptop companies can target the potential consumers in rural area.

**Table 2. Socio-Economic Profile**

Criteria	Total (300)	(%)
Occupation		
Student	89	30
Professional	42	14
Business	85	28
Housewife	15	5
Employee		
Private	39	13
Public	30	10
	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>
Business		
Manufacturing	40	13
Trade	42	14
Service	3	1
	<b>85</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Annual income (Rupees in lakhs)</b>		
Below 3	7	2
3-6	17	6
6-10	15	5
10-15	49	16
15-24	49	16
Above 24	75	25
	<b>211</b>	<b>70</b>

From the table 2, it can be inferred that 30 percent of the respondents were students. Laptops are very helpful to students as it is portable and helps in their learning. So 85 percent of the students and 85 percent of businessmen used laptops. Laptops help to gather and organize information about

problems or procedures. It is noted that 14 percent of the professionals used it for advanced applications. The branded laptops were used by 13 percent of private and 10 percent of public employees and five percent of housewives. Nowadays trade can be done through online. So 14 percent each were involved in trading and manufacturing business and three percent in services. They feel free to contact their customers, dealers, suppliers by online.

Twenty five percent of the subjects earning rupees 24 lakhs and above offered to purchase branded laptops for their status. Sixteen percent each were laptop users from both the income group of 10-15 and 15 - 24 lakhs. Even among low income group customers 13 percent got laptops from various source of supply namely government, schools, NGO's and educational trusts. Almost all customers from all income groups are using the branded laptops.

**Table 3. Brands of Laptops Purchased**

Particulars (Brands)	Number of respondents	Percent
Dell	57	19
Hp/Compaq	58	19
Sony	45	15
Samsung	50	17
Lenovo	90	30
	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

### Brands of Laptops Purchased

From the table 3, it is clear that 30 percent of the sample respondents preferred popular Lenovo brand. Among many market brands Lenovo has good popularity, brand loyalty and brand image.

Lenovo has reasonable accidental, damage warranties and they have well informed technical support. The brands Dell and Hp / Compaq were preferred by 19 percent of the subjects whereas Samsung was chosen by 15 percent and the rest 15 percent had preferred Sony brand.

**Table 4. Factors Influencing the Purchase of Laptop**

Factors	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Not so important	Not all important	Rank
Reliable and valid	112	96	78	14	-	VII
Popularity	94	76	120	10	-	IX
Easily available	98	128	74	-	-	II
Compatible to many operating systems and software	119	99	82	-	-	IV
Quality of performance	110	98	92	-	-	VII
Comfortable to use	109	102	89	-	-	VI
Efficiency of battery	128	102	70	-	-	I
Affordable value for price	102	104	94	-	-	VIII
Entertainment	117	105	78	-	-	III
Good appearance and light in weight	118	96	86	-	-	V
	<b>1107(3.69)</b>	<b>1006(3.35)</b>	<b>863(2.87)</b>	<b>24(0.08)</b>	-	

### Factors Influencing the Purchase of Laptop

The table 4 shows the importance of factors influencing the purchase of laptop. Rank analysis was carried out on the basis of importance given by the customers to the factors influencing the purchase of laptop. Based on the customers opinion very important and important factors were ranked in order. It is found that efficiency of battery was the very important factor that

influenced the purchase of preferred brand (Rank I). It supports the computer to work for more than 6 hours a day. Next important factors were easy in the order of availability, entertainment enabling feature, compatibility to many operating systems and soft wares, good appearance and light weight.

Comfortable to use, performance quality, reliable and valid, affordable value

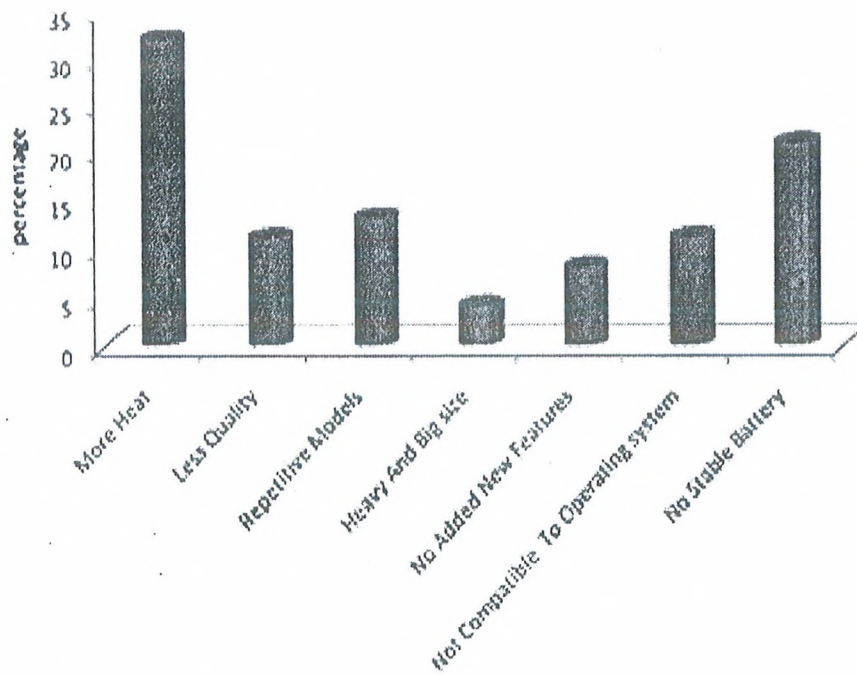
for price, popularity are the other factors influencing the brand purchase (Ranked in order)

These are stated and rated as very important factors by customers (Rank I-VI). These very important factors can be given

some importance by laptop companies as they influence purchase decision of consumers. While framing market strategies, these Very important factors must be highlighted to target potential customers. This will definitely increase the sales and market share.

**Table 5. Problems**

Problems	Number of Respondents	Percent
<b>Problems</b>		
More heat	95	32
Less quality	33	11
Repetitive models	40	13
Heavy and big size	13	4
No added new features	25	8
Not compatible to different operating systems and software	32	11
Not stable battery	62	21
	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>



**Chart 3. Problems**

**Table 6. Suggestions**

Suggestions	Total (300)	(%)
More stable battery	29	10
Inexpensive	13	4.3
Less weight and small size	-	-
Heat resistance	28	9.3
Comfortable usage	22	7.3
Addition of new features	29	9.6
Compatible to many operating systems and softwares	4	1.3
More powerful	9	3
OS Package	12	4
Colour	50	16.6
Gifts and offers	67	22.3
Others	-	-
	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

### Problems

Table 5 shows the problems faced by the customers from their preferred laptop brand. 32 percent of more heat was the problems for laptop users. But servicing the laptops atleast once, reduced heat problems. Unstable battery (21%), repetitive models (13%), incompatibility to different operating systems and soft wares (11%) were some other problems. Heavy, big size and lack of innovative features were general problems. These problems can be solved if companies properly manage them.

### Suggestions

From the Table 6 it is obvious that 22 percent of the respondents were expecting offers and gifts. The company need to provide few schemes to attract the customers to increase sales and it is clear that 17 percent were expecting favourite colours, 10 percent more stable battery, addition of new features, 12 percent expected good quality and performance. Others expect less weight and small size, comfortable usage and operating software package.

If the suggestions given to various brands are considered and actions are taken sales can be enhanced.

## Findings

### Suggestions

- Around 22 percent of the respondents are expecting offers and gifts. The companies have to provide these schemes to attract the customers to increase sales. If the suggestion given to various brands are considered and actions are taken sales can be enhanced.

### Personal and socio economic profile of the respondents

- Rise in the women laptop consumers show a healthy trend. In general laptop usage in rural area is less. Laptop companies can target the potential consumers in rural area. They can focus the women laptop consumers segment. Business and student market segment has great potential. Income does not affect much the purchase of laptop. Public from all income groups purchase some laptop.

### Factors influencing laptop purchase

- Branded laptop price should be more affordable
- Many people will hesitate to purchase laptop if it is highly priced. Reliable and valid, compatibility to many operating systems and soft wares, quality of performance light weight and efficiency of a battery are major factors influencing laptop purchase.
- If the consumer is a stayer the company can offer price discounts when the consumer decides to upgrade their laptop. Likewise the company can give special promotions to stayers when they

bring their former laptop and exchange it with a recent model of the companies laptop.

- If the suggestions given to various brands are considered and actions taken, sales can be enhanced.
- This study recommends companies to invest in technology through research and development and create differentiation at utmost level.
- Manufacturers have to invest new security measures to protect the consumers from the theft and other threats.

## Conclusion

In this study, it has been found that there are seven factors which influence consumers' laptop purchase decisions. These factors can be stated as follows: core technical features, reliability and validity, popularity, easy availability, compatibility to many operating systems and software, quality of performance, comfortable in use, efficiency of battery, affordable value for price, entertainment, good appearance and light in weight.

From the managerial perspective, the findings of this study imply that when a consumer of a company decides to buy a new laptop or in technical terms to upgrade his laptop, the company should consider which customer base he belongs to. For instance, if the consumer is a stayer, the company can offer price discounts when he decides to upgrade his laptop. Likewise, the company can give special promotions to stayers when they bring their former laptop

and exchange it with a recent model of the company's laptops. However, since all consumer groups find core technical features and post purchase services extremely important, these features should be emphasized in advertisements. It has to be also noted that post purchase services factor is tremendously important since it is directly related with customers' brand loyalty.

This study recommends companies to invest in technology through research and development and create differentiation at utmost level. This research has the factors influencing consumers' purchase decisions in this market.

This study helps to increase the contribution of laptops to Indian industries. Computer industry contributes significantly to the economic development of India.

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