

“A Study on consumer buying behaviour of baby care products in Navi Mumbai area”

Author 1: Mrs. Deepa Kedar Rele, 9820808431, delta_dj2002@yahoo.co.in

PhD Scholar with Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam University, Indore, India

Author 2: Dr. Unmesh Mandloi

Guide, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam University, Indore, India

Abstract

This research delves into the intricate dynamics of consumer behaviour concerning baby care products within the Navi Mumbai area, emphasizing the pivotal roles of brand consciousness and perceived product quality. Through a quantitative approach, this study investigates parental preferences and decision-making processes when purchasing baby care items. Hypotheses centered on brand consciousness and perceived quality were scrutinized through Likert-based questionnaires distributed among 443 respondents. The findings reveal a substantial inclination toward established brands driven by trust, endorsements, and familiarity, underscoring the criticality of brand reputation in consumer decision-making. Moreover, the study illuminates the paramount influence of perceived product quality on buying behaviour, elucidating the significance of quality attributes, reliability, and satisfaction in consumer choices.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour, Baby Care Products, Brand Consciousness, Perceived Quality, Navi Mumbai.

Introduction

Understanding consumer behavior in the context of purchasing baby care products within a specific geographic area, such as Navi Mumbai, stands as a critical pursuit in contemporary marketing research. The city of Navi Mumbai, characterized by its diverse demographic composition and evolving socio-economic landscape, presents a unique market for the consumption of baby care products. This study aims to delve into the multifaceted aspects that influence consumer buying behavior in this niche market segment. The baby care products market in India stands as a dynamic and burgeoning segment within the broader consumer goods industry. Characterized by a growing emphasis on child health, hygiene, and comfort, this market has witnessed a significant transformation over recent years. Understanding the landscape, trends, challenges, and opportunities within this domain is crucial for stakeholders aiming to capitalize on its potential. The baby care products market in India encompasses a wide array of items catering to the holistic needs of infants and toddlers. This includes but is not limited to diapers, wipes, skincare products, feeding accessories, baby clothing, and nursery furniture. With a population exceeding 1.3 billion, India's large consumer base, particularly in the urban regions, has contributed significantly to the expansion and diversification of the baby care market. Several factors underpin the growth of the baby care products market in India. Rising disposable incomes among the middle-class population, urbanization, increasing awareness about child hygiene and health, and a growing trend of nuclear families seeking convenience-oriented solutions are primary drivers. Furthermore, a surge in dual-income households has amplified the demand for time-

saving and efficient baby care products. Consumer preferences within this market segment exhibit a shift towards natural and organic products, driven by heightened concerns about the use of chemicals and their potential impact on infant health. Additionally, there is a notable inclination towards premium and value-added products, where parents are willing to invest in high-quality items that ensure safety, comfort, and superior functionality for their babies. Despite its rapid expansion, the baby care products market in India faces certain challenges. Price sensitivity among a significant section of the population, especially in tier-II and tier-III cities, remains a key obstacle for premium product penetration. Additionally, concerns about counterfeit products, inadequate regulations, and misleading marketing claims pose challenges for both consumers and industry players. The baby care products market in India presents immense opportunities for innovation and market expansion. As the awareness regarding the importance of infant health and wellness continues to rise, there is a growing demand for specialized and technologically advanced products. Furthermore, the increasing penetration of e-commerce platforms and the digitalization of retail offer avenues for reaching a wider consumer base. In conclusion, the baby care products market in India reflects a vibrant and evolving landscape driven by changing consumer preferences, socio-economic factors, and technological advancements. While the market demonstrates substantial growth potential, it also encounters challenges that necessitate innovative approaches and regulatory measures to ensure consumer safety and satisfaction. As stakeholders navigate this dynamic environment, a deep understanding of consumer needs and market trends remains pivotal for sustained growth and success within the Indian baby care products industry. The decision-making process concerning baby care products is intricate and multifaceted, driven by a myriad of factors including socio-economic backgrounds, cultural influences, individual preferences, and marketing strategies. While broader studies exist on consumer behavior, there remains a noticeable dearth of comprehensive research specific to the nuances of purchasing behavior related to baby care products in Navi Mumbai. This study seeks to fill this gap by elucidating the underlying determinants that shape consumers' preferences, attitudes, and purchasing decisions within this market. By comprehensively analysing the unique amalgamation of factors influencing consumer behavior, this research endeavours to provide valuable insights beneficial for marketers, manufacturers, and retailers operating within the domain of baby care products in Navi Mumbai. In this pursuit, the study aims to explore the contextual framework, rationale, scope, and objectives underlying the investigation of consumer behavior towards baby care products in Navi Mumbai, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of this niche market and offering practical implications for industry stakeholders.

Review of Literature

Yasar (2022) highlighted the pivotal importance of understanding consumers' perceptions and behaviours towards baby care products, an aspect crucial for marketers and manufacturers in this field. Yasar's focus on the Swedish market emphasized the scarcity of information regarding consumer perceptions and determinants of buying behavior in the baby care products industry, aligning with the gap in research. Notably, the impact of Covid-19 on consumer behavior in this domain emerged as a novel aspect rarely explored in existing

literature globally. The study underlined the moderate influence of price and product quality on consumer behavior in Sweden, paralleling the expected trends. While organic, plant-based, and eco-friendly materials held minimal sway over buying decisions, the emphasis on 100% natural product elements exhibited a moderate influence, aligning with potential consumer preferences in the Navi Mumbai region. Yasar's observation regarding reduced demand during Covid-19 due to store closures resonates with the potential shifts observed during the pandemic. The study's recommendation for marketers to prioritize wellness, sustainability, and environmental concerns in launching safe, clean, and sensitive baby care products aligns with the potential strategies necessary to address consumer needs within the Navi Mumbai market.

Pakkala and Bhat's (2022) comprehensive review within the International Journal of Management, Technology and Social Sciences, the focus on understanding consumer purchasing habits in the realm of baby care products resonates strongly with the need for insightful analysis. The study emphasizes the scarcity of knowledge regarding consumer perceptions and the determinants influencing their purchasing decisions, aligning with the anticipated research gap in the Navi Mumbai region. Utilizing a variety of secondary sources such as studies, case studies, journal articles, and reviews, the study underscores the challenging nature of nurturing a baby, highlighting the criticality of understanding a baby's physiological and psychological needs for healthy growth—a critical consideration echoing the importance of comprehending consumer behavior in the domain of baby care products. Moreover, the observed trend in India, where parents exhibit increasing brand consciousness and a preference for high-quality goods, suggests a potential parallel in consumer behavior within the Navi Mumbai area. This study offers a foundational understanding of the complexities involved in parents' decision-making processes and their evolving preferences, thereby setting the stage for further exploration of these aspects within the local context of Navi Mumbai's consumer behavior regarding baby care products.

Pakkala and Bhat's (2022) study in the International Journal of Case Studies in Business, IT and Education delves into the factors impacting parental choices in purchasing baby care products. With a focus on customer preferences in hygiene, skin and hair care, and food and beverages for babies, the study highlights the significance of understanding consumer behavior in this domain. Utilizing secondary data from diverse sources like scholarly publications, newspapers, and research papers, the research underscores the preference for established brands such as Johnson & Johnson and Himalaya due to their strong brand recognition, affordability, and accessibility. Additionally, the study emphasizes the growing interest in environmentally friendly materials among consumers and the considerable influence of consumer behavior on purchasing decisions. Prioritizing product quality over pricing, driven by the sensitivity of a child's skin and parental concerns about family income, emerges as a prominent trend, indicating the factors influencing consumer choices in the baby care product market.

Broadbridge and Morgan (2001) conducted a study investigating consumer perceptions and purchasing behavior regarding retail versus manufacturer brand baby care toiletry products. Employing a pluralistic methodology, the research revealed that consumers had experimented with retail-brand baby care items, although specific products and labels were associated with

higher perceived risk. Overall, respondents considered manufacturer-branded baby care products to possess higher quality and lower risk compared to their retail-brand counterparts. The study's findings caution against the viability of introducing a retailer-brand baby care product range as a competitive strategy in Northern Ireland, citing inadequate consumer acceptance and trust in this category characterized by high perceived risk. This study's insights on consumer perceptions and preferences between retail and manufacturer brands in the baby care domain provide valuable considerations for understanding potential dynamics influencing consumer behavior in a particular market segment, aligning with the anticipated research scope within the specified context.

Lavuri and Sreeramulu's (2019) study delves into the nuanced buying behavior of female consumers concerning personal care products, an aspect intricately tied to the marketing strategies employed within the consumer goods industry. The research focused on comprehending the consumer mindset and viewpoints regarding personal care items, conducting a survey involving 172 respondents through structured questionnaires. These questionnaires encompassed both demographic inquiries and specific queries aiming to scrutinize the buying behavior of consumers of personal care products. Employing statistical analyses such as descriptive statistics, percentages, ANOVA, and Correlation using SPSS 23.0 Version, the study discerned noteworthy outcomes. ANOVA analysis underscored the significant mean differences in demographic factors impacting the purchase of personal care products, emphasizing the influence of product-related elements like Brand Name, quality, price, Brand Loyalty, Affordability, Sales People recommendations, and Previous Usage Experiences on consumer behavior. Moreover, factors such as Brand Ambassadors and references from Family & Friends showcased considerable influence on the buying modes of female respondents. Correlation analysis revealed strong associations between marital status, education, and the purchase of personal care products, with brand loyalty, brand name, and product quality significantly impacting respondents' buying behavior. Additionally, positive correlations were observed between Brand Ambassadors, Family & Friends references, and the purchasing of personal care products, offering valuable insights into the intricate web of factors influencing consumer behavior within this domain.

Priya's (2021) study focused on Generation Y female consumer decision-making concerning baby care products in Chennai city during the post-pandemic period, shedding light on the shifting perceptions, preferences, and buying behavior amidst the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. With retail shop closures and the unavailability of preferred baby care brands, consumers resorted to embracing new brands, a trend that persisted even after the pandemic. The evolution of baby care products in India has been attributed to factors such as increased female employment, a growing birth rate, and enhanced family economic status due to dual incomes. Primarily prioritizing their child's health and hygiene, consumers place quality as the primary consideration and price as secondary. The study categorizes baby care products into Toiletries, Baby Skin Care, Baby Hair Care, and Baby Food & Beverages, aiming to identify the factors influencing Generation Y female consumers' decision-making processes. It seeks to ascertain customer preferences concerning Quality, Price, Mode of Shopping, and Brand Preference, while also assessing the level of satisfaction during the post-COVID-19 pandemic period in Chennai. This study offers valuable insights into the

dynamic consumer behavior patterns of Generation Y women, highlighting their evolving preferences and priorities amidst the challenges posed by the pandemic in the realm of baby care product selection.

Rajan and Ramya (2023) published in the Journal of Research Administration, the focus was on examining the factors shaping consumer buying attitudes towards baby care products through Facebook advertising. The study aimed to investigate how customers were influenced by social media, particularly Facebook, in their purchasing decisions related to baby care products. It delved into understanding the various factors that played a role in influencing consumer buying behavior specifically on the Facebook platform. The research explored the impact of social media advertising, engagement, and content on consumers' attitudes and behaviours concerning the purchase of baby care products. Through an analysis of these factors, the study aimed to unravel the intricate dynamics that sway consumer behavior in the realm of baby care product purchases within the context of Facebook advertising strategies.

In Saraswat, Parihar, and Patil's (2022) study presented in the proceedings of ICGER 2021, the focus was on understanding consumer behavior, particularly their preferences and satisfaction, towards Personal Care Products with a specific focus on Himalaya Personal Care Products. The study recognized the paramount importance of consumers in the market, particularly in the dynamically changing economic landscape. With heightened competition and the advent of digital transformation across various economic sectors, firms face significant challenges in ensuring their survival and sustainability. To navigate this terrain, firms employ various tools, techniques, and analytical mechanisms to comprehend consumer needs, especially their buying behavior, in order to meet and exceed consumer expectations by adapting or developing products accordingly. The study aimed to identify and analyse consumer preferences and satisfaction, investigating the influence of product dimensions on customer satisfaction and loyalty within the realm of Personal Care Products. Recognizing the rapid growth of the Personal Care Industry in India and its substantial potential for further expansion, the study emphasized the importance of meeting consumer expectations to pave the way for sustainable business development, especially amid heightened competition in the sector. By focusing on Himalaya Personal Care Products as a case study, the research aimed to delve into the intricacies of consumer buying behavior within the context of the Personal Care Products sector, offering insights crucial for sustainable growth and competitive advantage in the industry.

In Rajee and Kasinathan's (2019) study published in the ELK Asia Pacific Journal of Social Science, the focus was on investigating consumer preferences, usage patterns, and satisfaction levels regarding Himalaya Cosmetics in the baby care products segment, specifically within the Chennai region. The article contextualizes the substantial growth anticipated in India's cosmetics and cosmeceutical market, projected to reach a valuation of USD 20 billion by 2025 at an impressive annual growth rate of 25%. The Indian cosmeceutical and cosmetics industry, currently standing at USD 6.5 billion within a global market of USD 274 billion, is anticipated to witness substantial growth owing to heightened awareness of beauty products, an increased emphasis on personal grooming, shifting consumption patterns, evolving lifestyles, and improved purchasing power among consumers.

Within this competitive landscape, various industry players are vying aggressively to capture market shares. This study specifically aimed to explore consumer preferences concerning six selected product categories of Himalaya Cosmetics in the baby care segment, including Moisturizing Baby Soap, Gentle Baby Shampoo, Baby Lotion, Baby Powder, Baby Care Gift Pack, and Baby Care Gift Box Mini (Soap-Powder). The research methodology involved distributing and self-administering questionnaires to 500 respondents, employing descriptive analysis and Pearson Chi-Square for data analysis. The study's objective was to provide insights into consumer behaviors, preferences, and satisfaction levels, offering valuable implications for Himalaya Cosmetics and other industry players operating in the competitive Chennai market within the baby care products segment.

In Eger, Komárková, Egerová, and Mičík's (2021) study published in the *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, the research aimed to elucidate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on consumer shopping behavior from a generational cohort perspective, specifically within the context of the Czech Republic. The study sought to capture the evolving trends and impacts of the pandemic on consumer buying behavior, particularly at the onset of the pandemic's second wave. Employing a questionnaire survey conducted through an online panel in the Czech Republic, the research focused on understanding how consumers from Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y altered their shopping behavior and preferences during the pandemic crisis, aligning these changes with their fears, including concerns about health and economic uncertainties. Utilizing multiple regression analysis, the study established associations between fear appeals (pertaining to health and economic anxieties) and changes in customer behavior, shedding light on the influence of these fears on both traditional and online shopping behaviors in the context of COVID-19. The findings revealed significant differences and similarities in consumer behavior across different generations. Through empirical investigation, this research contributed to the augmentation of generation cohort theory, specifically in the context of Central Europe, by delineating the alterations in consumer behavior amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The study's outcomes offer valuable insights for researchers and practitioners, especially retailers and marketers, to devise and implement tailored strategies to navigate the shifting consumer landscape during and post-pandemic periods.

In Durgamani and Ganesan's (2018) study published in the *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, the research focused on examining women's perceptions towards baby care products. The study aimed to delve into the pricing aspects of baby products and to delineate the buying behavior of women consumers in selecting these items. It specifically aimed to identify the priority factors influencing customers' selection of baby care products, emphasizing their reasons for choosing particular brands. This investigation sought to uncover the intricate factors that contribute to women's perceptions, preferences, and decision-making processes concerning baby care products, shedding light on the elements that drive their preferences and choices within this domain.

The comprehensive review of literature surrounding consumer behavior and preferences towards baby care products offers a multifaceted understanding of this dynamic market. The studies explored various dimensions, from understanding consumer perceptions and behaviors to investigating the impact of factors like Covid-19, product quality, pricing, brand

preferences, and environmental considerations on consumer choices. Each study provided valuable insights into the intricacies of consumer decision-making processes, emphasizing the significance of understanding these factors in the realm of baby care products. However, amidst this wealth of information, a notable research gap emerges, especially concerning the specific local context of Navi Mumbai. While these studies contribute significantly to understanding consumer behavior in various regions and contexts, there's a lack of focused exploration within the Navi Mumbai market. This gap is evident in the absence of studies directly addressing the nuanced preferences, buying patterns, and perceptions of consumers in Navi Mumbai regarding baby care products. The existing literature primarily draws insights from diverse geographical locations, encompassing regions such as Sweden, Chennai, and the Czech Republic. Despite their valuable contributions, the absence of studies targeting the unique consumer landscape of Navi Mumbai leaves a void in comprehensively understanding the preferences, choices, and influencing factors specific to this locality.

Furthermore, while studies shed light on factors like product quality, price sensitivity, brand preferences, and environmental considerations, there's a need for more localized studies focusing on the specific nuances and intricacies of consumer behavior within Navi Mumbai. Understanding the interplay of these factors within the socio-cultural, economic, and demographic context of Navi Mumbai would significantly enrich the understanding of consumer behavior towards baby care products. In conclusion, while the existing literature provides substantial insights into consumer behavior in various regions, the dearth of studies targeting the unique market dynamics of Navi Mumbai presents a clear research gap. Focused studies tailored to the specific context of Navi Mumbai would not only enhance the existing body of knowledge but also provide invaluable insights for marketers, manufacturers, and stakeholders operating within this region in the realm of baby care products.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the consumer buying behaviour of baby care products in Navi Mumbai area.
2. To study the impact of perceived quality of the baby care products on the consumer buying behaviour.

Hypotheses

H1: Parents exhibit increasing brand consciousness while buying the baby care products.

H2: There is a significant impact of perceived quality of the baby care products on the consumer buying behaviour.

Research Methodology

The study employed a quantitative research methodology to investigate the consumer buying behavior concerning baby care products in the Navi Mumbai area. A structured questionnaire was designed based on established scales and prior literature to gather data from a targeted sample of 443 consumers within the specified region. The questionnaire comprised sections addressing demographic details and consumer preferences related to baby care products. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select participants who were parents or

guardians actively involved in purchasing baby care items. The survey was administered through face-to-face interviews conducted at various locations frequented by parents or guardians, ensuring a diverse representation of respondents across different socioeconomic backgrounds. The questionnaire aimed to gauge respondents' perceptions, brand preferences, factors influencing their buying decisions, and the significance they attributed to perceived product quality. This approach allowed for the collection of robust quantitative data reflecting the consumer behavior patterns prevalent in the Navi Mumbai area regarding baby care products. Moreover, to assess the impact of perceived product quality on consumer buying behavior, a quantitative analysis using statistical tools was conducted. The collected data underwent rigorous statistical scrutiny using techniques.

Data Analysis

Table 1. Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-30 years	15	3.4	3.4	3.4
	30-40 years	380	85.8	85.8	89.2
	40-50 years	39	8.8	8.8	98.0
	50-60 years	8	1.8	1.8	99.8
	Above 60 years	1	.2	.2	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of respondents by age groups. The majority of participants fell within the 30-40 years category, accounting for 85.8% of the surveyed population. There were smaller proportions within the 18-30 years (3.4%), 40-50 years (8.8%), and 50-60 years (1.8%) brackets. Only one respondent was above 60 years old, representing a minimal percentage of the total surveyed population.

Table 2. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	162	36.6	36.6	36.6
	Female	281	63.4	63.4	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 2, the distribution of respondents is presented based on gender. The survey comprised 36.6% male participants and 63.4% female participants, totalling 443 respondents.

Table 3. When purchasing baby care products, the brand name plays a crucial role in my decision-making process.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	1.6	1.6	1.6
	Disagree	4	.9	.9	2.5
	Neutral	8	1.8	1.8	4.3

	Agree	46	10.4	10.4	14.7
	Strongly Agree	378	85.3	85.3	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 depicts respondents' perspectives on the significance of brand names in their decision-making process when purchasing baby care products. The majority, constituting 85.3%, strongly agreed that brand names hold a crucial role in their decision-making. Additionally, 10.4% agreed that brand names are influential, while the remaining percentages were lower, with 1.6% strongly disagreeing, 0.9% disagreeing, and 1.8% expressing a neutral stance. Overall, a substantial proportion of respondents highly value the influence of brand names in their choices regarding baby care products.

Table 4. I tend to trust and prefer well-known brands over lesser-known ones for baby care items.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	2.3	2.3	2.3
	Disagree	8	1.8	1.8	4.1
	Neutral	1	.2	.2	4.3
	Agree	56	12.6	12.6	16.9
	Strongly Agree	368	83.1	83.1	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 4, it's evident that a significant majority, comprising 83.1% of respondents, strongly agree with the preference for trusting and favouring well-known brands over lesser-known ones for baby care items. Additionally, 12.6% of respondents agreed with this sentiment. The remaining percentages were notably lower, with 2.3% strongly disagreeing, 1.8% disagreeing, and 0.2% expressing a neutral stance. This highlights a strong inclination among the respondents towards trusting and favouring established brands when it comes to their choices regarding baby care products.

Table 5. Brand reputation significantly influences my choice of baby care products.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	2.3	2.3	2.3
	Disagree	9	2.0	2.0	4.3
	Neutral	1	.2	.2	4.5
	Agree	23	5.2	5.2	9.7
	Strongly Agree	400	90.3	90.3	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 illustrates that a vast majority of respondents, accounting for 90.3%, strongly agree that brand reputation significantly influences their choice of baby care products. Additionally, 5.2% agree with this sentiment. The percentage of respondents expressing disagreement or strong disagreement is notably lower, with 2% disagreeing, 2.3% strongly disagreeing, and

0.2% holding a neutral stance. This strong inclination towards considering brand reputation as a significant factor in selecting baby care products indicates the considerable weight placed on brands when making purchasing decisions in this domain.

Table 6. I am inclined to purchase baby care products from brands that are highly recommended or endorsed.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	19	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Disagree	3	.7	.7	5.0
	Neutral	2	.5	.5	5.4
	Agree	43	9.7	9.7	15.1
	Strongly Agree	376	84.9	84.9	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 6, the data reveals that a significant majority, accounting for 84.9%, strongly agree that they are inclined to purchase baby care products from brands that are highly recommended or endorsed. Additionally, 9.7% agree with this sentiment. The percentages of respondents expressing disagreement or strong disagreement are notably lower, with 0.7% disagreeing, 4.3% strongly disagreeing, and 0.5% remaining neutral. This overwhelming inclination towards favouring brands highly recommended or endorsed indicates the considerable influence of recommendations or endorsements in shaping consumer decisions when selecting baby care products.

Table 7. The familiarity of a brand greatly impacts my purchase decisions for baby care essentials.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	1.6	1.6	1.6
	Disagree	8	1.8	1.8	3.4
	Neutral	3	.7	.7	4.1
	Agree	25	5.6	5.6	9.7
	Strongly Agree	400	90.3	90.3	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 7, a substantial majority, comprising 90.3% of respondents, strongly agree that the familiarity of a brand significantly impacts their purchase decisions for baby care essentials. Additionally, 5.6% agree with this sentiment. Disagreement with the statement is relatively low, with 1.8% expressing disagreement and 1.6% strongly disagreeing. A minimal percentage, 0.7%, remains neutral on this aspect. This data strongly suggests that a brand's familiarity holds substantial weight in shaping consumer choices when it comes to purchasing baby care essentials, indicating a pronounced influence on their decision-making process.

Table 8. The perceived quality of baby care products influences my buying behavior.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Disagree	2	.5	.5	1.8
	Neutral	20	4.5	4.5	6.3
	Agree	70	15.8	15.8	22.1
	Strongly Agree	345	77.9	77.9	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 8, a significant majority of respondents, comprising 77.9%, strongly agree that the perceived quality of baby care products strongly influences their buying behaviour. Additionally, 15.8% agree with this sentiment. On the contrary, a mere 0.5% disagree and 1.4% strongly disagree with the statement. A relatively moderate percentage, 4.5%, remains neutral. This overwhelming agreement toward the impact of perceived quality on buying behaviour underscores the substantial influence that the perceived quality of baby care products holds over consumers, indicating its pivotal role in shaping their purchasing decisions in this domain.

Table 9. I am willing to pay more for baby care products that are perceived to be of higher quality.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	1.1	1.1	1.1
	Disagree	7	1.6	1.6	2.7
	Neutral	7	1.6	1.6	4.3
	Agree	29	6.5	6.5	10.8
	Strongly Agree	395	89.2	89.2	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 9, an overwhelming majority of respondents, constituting 89.2%, strongly agree that they are willing to pay more for baby care products perceived to be of higher quality. Additionally, 6.5% agree with this perspective. A combined 3.3% are divided between neutral (1.6%) and disagreement (1.6%), while only 1.1% strongly disagree with the statement. This data strongly emphasizes the inclination of respondents to invest more in baby care products perceived to offer higher quality, highlighting the significant role that perceived quality plays in influencing their willingness to spend more on these items.

Table 10. The quality of ingredients/materials used in baby care items affects my purchasing choices.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	18	4.1	4.1	6.1
	Neutral	4	.9	.9	7.0
	Agree	115	26.0	26.0	33.0

	Strongly Agree	297	67.0	67.0	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 10, a substantial majority of respondents (67.0%) strongly agree that the quality of ingredients/materials used in baby care items significantly affects their purchasing choices. Additionally, 26.0% agree with this perspective. Only 5% are divided between neutral (0.9%), disagreement (4.1%), and a small fraction (2.0%) who strongly disagree. This data strongly highlights the considerable impact of ingredient and material quality on respondents' purchasing decisions regarding baby care items, indicating a prevalent consciousness about the components used in these products and their influence on consumer choices.

Table 11. My satisfaction with a baby care product largely depends on its perceived quality.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	4	.9	.9	1.6
	Neutral	3	.7	.7	2.3
	Agree	58	13.1	13.1	15.3
	Strongly Agree	375	84.7	84.7	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 11, an overwhelming majority (84.7%) strongly agrees that their satisfaction with a baby care product is highly dependent on its perceived quality. Additionally, 13.1% agree with this perspective. Only a minimal proportion is divided among neutral (0.7%), disagreement (0.9%), and a very small fraction (0.7%) that strongly disagrees. This data underscores the significant influence of perceived quality on respondents' satisfaction levels with baby care products, emphasizing a strong correlation between quality perception and overall satisfaction with these items.

Table 12. I prioritize baby care products that are perceived to be reliable and of superior quality.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	7	1.6	1.6	3.6
	Neutral	3	.7	.7	4.3
	Agree	28	6.3	6.3	10.6
	Strongly Agree	396	89.4	89.4	100.0
	Total	443	100.0	100.0	

In Table 12, a vast majority (89.4%) strongly agrees that they prioritize baby care products perceived to be reliable and of superior quality. Additionally, 6.3% agree with this sentiment. A small fraction is divided among those who disagree (1.6%), strongly disagree (2.0%), and a negligible proportion in the neutral category (0.7%). This data strongly emphasizes the dominant preference for reliability and superior quality in the selection of baby care products

among respondents, highlighting the paramount importance of these aspects in their decision-making process.

H1: Parents exhibit increasing brand consciousness while buying the baby care products.

Table 13. One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
When purchasing baby care products, the brand name plays a crucial role in my decision-making process.	55.030	442	.000	1.76975	1.7065	1.8330
I tend to trust and prefer well-known brands over lesser-known ones for baby care items.	47.474	442	.000	1.72460	1.6532	1.7960
Brand reputation significantly influences my choice of baby care products.	50.272	442	.000	1.79233	1.7223	1.8624
I am inclined to purchase baby care products from brands that are highly recommended or endorsed.	40.686	442	.000	1.70203	1.6198	1.7842
The familiarity of a brand greatly impacts my purchase decisions for baby care essentials.	55.959	442	.000	1.81264	1.7490	1.8763

The conducted One-Sample Test sought to evaluate the extent of brand consciousness exhibited by parents while purchasing baby care products, aligning with Hypothesis 1. The analysis involved multiple Likert-scale statements regarding respondents' perspectives on brand importance in their decision-making process. Across all measured aspects related to brand perception, the results significantly favoured a high inclination towards brand consciousness among parents when selecting baby care items. For instance, the statement "When purchasing baby care products, the brand name plays a crucial role in my decision-making process" showcased a substantial mean difference of 1.76975 (t=55.030, p<0.001, df=442), indicating an overwhelming consensus among respondents that the brand name is a critical factor in their decision-making process. Similarly, sentiments expressed in other statements, such as the preference for well-known brands over lesser-known ones, the significant influence of brand reputation, the inclination towards highly recommended brands, and the impact of brand familiarity on purchase decisions, all strongly reinforced the hypothesis. The obtained mean differences, consistently higher than the test value of 3 (indicating a marked agreement towards brand-centric decision-making), substantiate the assertion that parents indeed exhibit heightened brand consciousness while purchasing baby

care products. These findings underscore the pervasive influence and significance of brand considerations in shaping consumer behaviour within this specific domain, validating the hypothesis that parents display increasing brand consciousness in their baby care product purchases.

H2: There is a significant impact of perceived quality of the baby care products on the consumer buying behaviour.

Table 14. One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
The perceived quality of baby care products influences my buying behaviour.	50.266	442	.000	1.68397	1.6181	1.7498
I am willing to pay more for baby care products that are perceived to be of higher quality.	59.046	442	.000	1.81038	1.7501	1.8706
The quality of ingredients/materials used in baby care items affects my purchasing choices.	36.751	442	.000	1.51919	1.4379	1.6004
My satisfaction with a baby care product largely depends on its perceived quality.	68.221	442	.000	1.80135	1.7495	1.8532
I prioritize baby care products that are perceived to be reliable and of superior quality.	52.555	442	.000	1.79458	1.7275	1.8617

The One-Sample Test aimed to assess the impact of perceived quality on consumer buying behaviour concerning baby care products, corroborating Hypothesis 2. The examination encompassed various Likert-scale statements relating to respondents' perceptions of quality and its influence on their purchasing decisions. Across all statements evaluating perceived quality, the results consistently indicated a significant impact on consumer behaviour. The statement "The perceived quality of baby care products influences my buying behaviour" revealed a substantial mean difference of 1.68397 ($t=50.266$, $p<0.001$, $df=442$), emphasizing the strong consensus among respondents that perceived quality significantly influences their purchasing behaviour. Moreover, sentiments expressed in other statements, such as willingness to pay more for higher-quality products, the influence of ingredient quality on purchasing choices, the dependence of satisfaction on perceived quality, and the prioritization of reliable and superior quality baby care items, all exhibited substantial mean differences well above the test value of 3. These findings collectively demonstrate a robust agreement

among respondents regarding the profound impact of perceived quality on their consumer behaviour when selecting baby care products. The consistently high mean differences, indicative of a strong inclination towards prioritizing and being influenced by perceived quality, strongly validate Hypothesis 2, emphasizing the significant role that perceived quality plays in shaping consumer buying behaviour within this domain.

Findings

The findings of the study underscore two critical aspects shaping consumer behaviour concerning baby care products in the Navi Mumbai area. Firstly, the research corroborates the hypothesis that parents exhibit increasing brand consciousness while purchasing baby care items. Analysis of responses from multiple Likert-scale statements revealed a substantial consensus among participants that the brand name significantly influences their decision-making process. Factors such as trust in well-known brands over lesser-known ones, brand reputation, recommendations, and familiarity distinctly sway consumer choices. This suggests a prevailing inclination among parents to prioritize established and reputable brands when selecting baby care products, emphasizing a pronounced brand consciousness within this consumer segment. Secondly, the study strongly supports the hypothesis indicating a substantial impact of perceived quality on consumer buying behaviour. Across various statements probing perceived quality, respondents consistently expressed a significant influence of quality factors on their purchasing decisions. Factors encompassing perceived product quality, willingness to pay more for higher quality, the influence of ingredient/material quality, satisfaction dependency on perceived quality, and the preference for reliable, superior-quality items all showcased considerable influence on consumer behaviour. These findings collectively highlight the dominant role played by both brand consciousness and perceived quality in shaping the preferences and decisions of consumers in the Navi Mumbai area when it comes to purchasing baby care products. The study reinforces the significance of these factors and their profound impact on consumer behaviour within this market segment.

Conclusion

The study's findings underscore crucial implications for marketers and manufacturers operating in the baby care products domain within the Navi Mumbai area. Firstly, the evident brand consciousness among parents necessitates a strategic focus on brand building and reputation management. Established brands enjoy a distinct advantage in consumer trust and preference, highlighting the importance of investing in brand recognition, credibility, and associations. Additionally, understanding the specific elements contributing to brand appeal, such as endorsements, recommendations, and familiarity, can guide targeted marketing strategies to capitalize on these aspects. This calls for tailored branding efforts emphasizing trust, reliability, and endorsement to resonate with the discerning preferences of parents in Navi Mumbai.

Secondly, the pronounced influence of perceived quality on consumer behaviour underscores the imperative for manufacturers to prioritize and communicate product quality attributes effectively. Emphasizing quality aspects through product formulation, ingredient sourcing, and communication strategies becomes pivotal. Educating consumers about quality

determinants, such as ingredients, manufacturing processes, and quality standards, can enhance perceived value and drive purchasing decisions. This necessitates a focus on transparency, highlighting quality attributes through labelling, certifications, and informative marketing to align with consumer expectations for reliability and superior quality.

The study also opens avenues for future research. Exploring the nuances of brand perceptions, the impact of marketing communications, and comparative studies on specific brand attributes could deepen the understanding of brand consciousness. Additionally, investigating evolving quality perceptions, the influence of evolving trends (e.g., sustainability, natural ingredients), and comparative analyses of various quality determinants can offer insights into evolving consumer preferences. Explorations into the interplay between brand consciousness and perceived quality in influencing consumer behaviour could also yield valuable insights for marketers seeking a comprehensive understanding of purchase determinants in the baby care product market.

References

- Broadbridge, A., & Morgan, H. P. (2001). Retail-brand baby-products: What do consumers think? *Journal of Brand Management*, 8, 196-210.
- Durgamani, M. K., & Ganesan, M. (2018). A study on women's perception towards baby care products. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 8(8), 345-351.
- Eger, L., Komárková, L., Egerová, D., & Mičík, M. (2021). The effect of COVID-19 on consumer shopping behaviour: Generational cohort perspective. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 61, 102542.
- Lavuri, R., & Sreeramulu, D. (2019). Personal care products: A study on women consumer buying behaviour. *International Journal of Research & Review*, 6(6), 271-279.
- Pakkala, K., & Bhat, K. S. (2022). Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behaviour on Baby Care Products. *International Journal of Case Studies in Business, IT and Education (IJCSBE)*, 6(2), 459-468.
- Pakkala, K., & Bhat, K. S. (2022). Literature Review on Consumer Perception and Buying Behaviour on Baby Care Products. *International Journal of Management, Technology and Social Sciences (IJMTS)*, 7(2), 710-735.
- Priya, B. S. (2021). Generation Y female consumer decision making on baby care products during post pandemic in Chennai city. *Annals of the Romanian Society for Cell Biology*, 8201-8210.
- Rajan, K. S., & Ramya, S. (2023). A STUDY ON FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BUYING ATTITUDES TOWARDS BABY CARE PRODUCTS ON FACEBOOK. *Journal of Research Administration*, 5(2), 2793-2808.
- Rajee, M., & Kasinathan, S. (2019). Consumer preferences, usage pattern and satisfaction towards Himalaya cosmetics in baby care products segment—An analytical study. *ELK Asia Pacific Journal of Social Science*, 5(2), 1-13.
- Saraswat, S., Parihar, M., & Patil, S. (2022). Analysing Buying Behaviour of Consumers Towards Personal Care Products for Sustainable Growth of an Organization: A Case of Himalaya Personal Care Product. In *Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Finance and*

Sustainable Technology: Proceedings of ICGER 2021 1 (pp. 313-326). Springer International Publishing.