

A Study on Consumer Behaviour Towards Sanitary Napkins Among College Students in Coimbatore

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Abstract

The study examines Consumer behaviour in regard to sanitary napkins is an important criterion for menstrual habits and general health among young women. This paper aims to discuss and find the kind of purchasing behaviour and awareness among college-going students in Coimbatore about using sanitary napkins. The main purpose of conducting this research is to see what factors are taken into consideration while making a final purchasing decision related to sanitary napkins, along with comfort and pricing, and also environmental aspects and brand reputation. The research methodology used is a descriptive study where primary data was obtained by a structured questionnaire among college-going girls in Coimbatore. The study also used secondary references for its research in books and publications related to academic journals and articles published along with references online for comprehensive relevance to its research queries and requirements. Results showed a major aspect in terms of environmental aspects and pricing sensitivity in making a final repayment decision related to sanitary napkins among girls and increasing awareness related to biodegradable and skin-soothing sanitary napkins in the market.

Keywords: Sanitary napkins, Awareness among college students, Women's preference about Sanitary pads, Eco-friendly pads, Menstrual hygiene.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour centres on gaining an understanding of how consumers are aware of their needs and how they choose to make decisions on selecting, purchasing, consuming, or assessing different kinds or products or services to satisfy their needs. Understanding consumers' behavior is critical to any business, as it helps them to improve their product or service offering or design an effective promotion strategy. In today's competitive market environment, consumers are presented with a range of different options, and their purchasing decision is affected or influenced by pricing, product, brand, product availability, or promotion.

Sanitary napkins are an elementary female hygiene item that women require during their menstrual cycles. The preservation of female menstrual hygiene is a practice of grave importance, as it helps in the preservation and protection of health and acts as an effective inhibitor against infections. The usage of safe and effective sanitary napkins makes a major contribution to female comfort and health, especially

among young and college-going girls. The practice of female menstrual hygiene awareness remains less Flamboyant despite increased awareness in recent years.

Students in college have been referred to as one of the key consumer groups because they are quite well-informed, socially active, and very susceptible to advertisements. The perceptions and decisions associated with sanitary napkins would be affected by factors such as convenience, price, preference, availability, and recommendations. Since habits of continuous consumption have been started in this stage, insight for marketers would be generated by their analysis of consumer behavior.

Coimbatore is identified as an educational and industrial hub with a significant number of colleges and students from varied socio-economic backgrounds. It is because of these factors that Coimbatore has been identified as a proper area for analyzing consumer behavior among college students. Today, for this research, consumer behavior related to sanitary napkins used by college students in Coimbatore has been analyzed based on awareness,

usage patterns, brands, and factors affecting purchasing decision. The results derived from this research will definitely help product, place, and promotion-oriented entities in understanding the needs of college students and further improvising related aspects.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Menstrual hygiene is important for women's health. Using sanitary napkins helps to avoid health problems. College students are an important group of users. They see many sanitary napkin brands through advertisements, social media, friends, and awareness programmes. Coimbatore is an educational city where students come from different economic backgrounds. Because of this, their buying decisions depend on factors like brand knowledge, price, quality, comfort, health needs, cultural beliefs, and availability of products. Very few studies have focused on the choices and satisfaction of college students in this area. So, this study looks at how college students in Coimbatore use sanitary napkins and the reasons behind their buying decisions, awareness, and satisfaction levels.

SCOPE OF STUDY

- Awareness levels among college students about menstrual hygiene and sanitary napkins are assessed.
- Purchasing behaviour and brand preferences of college students are analysed.
- The affordability, availability, and accessibility of sanitary napkins among students from different economic backgrounds are examined.
- Awareness is promoted and stigma related to menstruation among young people is reduced.
- Useful information is provided to colleges, health organisations, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to strengthen menstrual health education and support programmes.

OBJECTIVES

- To measure awareness among college students about menstrual hygiene and the correct use of sanitary napkins.

- To study knowledge of different sanitary napkin brands and their features among college students.
- To understand awareness of the health benefits related to the use of sanitary napkins.
- To identify sources of information such as advertisements, social media, friends, and educational programmes.
- To assess awareness related to safe and eco-friendly sanitary napkin options among college students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

i) Source of Data

The study uses both primary and secondary data sources to gain comprehensive insights into consumer behavior.

Primary Data

Data collected directly from college students through structured questionnaires.

Secondary Data

Data collected from books, journals, articles, research papers, and online resources related to consumer behavior and sanitary napkin usage.

ii) Data Collection Method

Primary Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was designed to gather information on students' preferences, brand awareness, frequency of usage, factors influencing purchase decisions, and satisfaction levels. The questionnaire was distributed to students in various colleges across Coimbatore.

Secondary Data Collection

Relevant secondary data was obtained from published research, scholarly articles, websites, and journals on menstrual hygiene, consumer behavior, and sanitary products.

iii) Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Coimbatore City with an emphasis on female students enrolled in various local colleges. In terms of age, academic year, and socioeconomic background, the respondents were chosen to reflect a cross-section of the student body.

iv) Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, was applied. This approach was selected

because the study area was easily accessible to college students. 50 respondents were chosen as the study's sample size.

Sample Size: 50 respondents were selected for the study.

v) Period of the study

November 2025 to March 2026

vi) Statistical tools of the study

- Simple percentage analysis
- Chi – square analysis

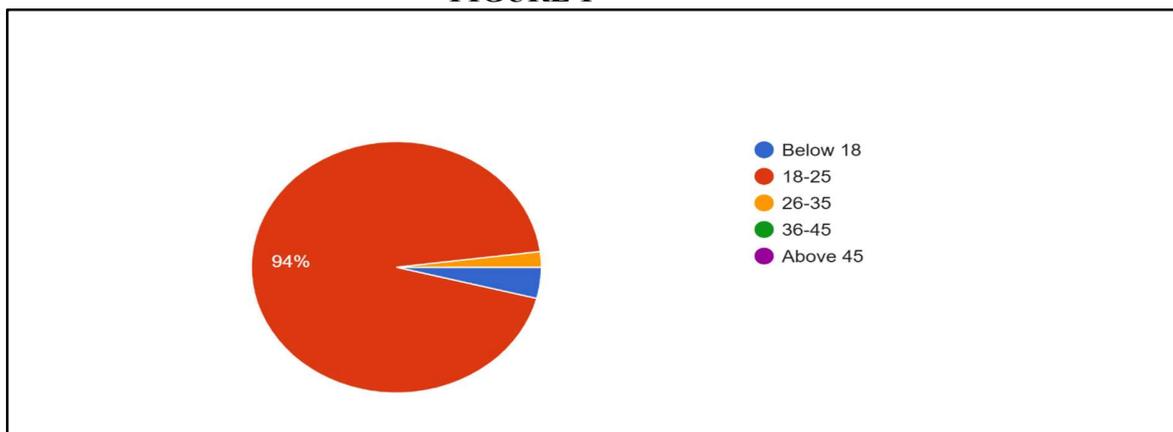
DATA ANALYTICS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1

AGE CATEGORY

Age	No of Responses	Percentage
Below 18	2	4
18-25	47	94
26-35	1	2
36-45	-	-
Above 45	-	-
Total	50	100

FIGURE 1



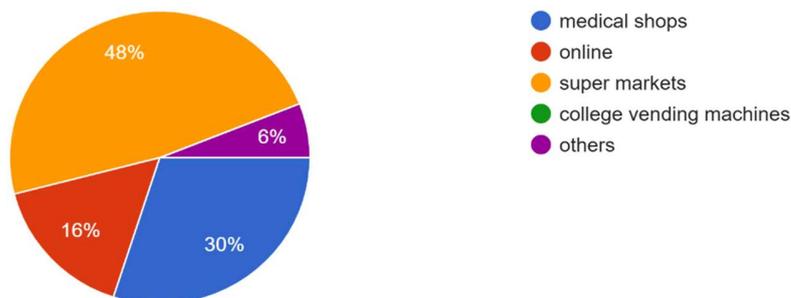
Interpretation

The table indicates that the majority of respondents (94%) belong to the 18–25 age group, with very few respondents below 18 (4%) and 26–35 (2%), showing that the study mainly represents young college students.

TABLE 2
PURCHASE OF SANITARY NAPKINS

Purchase of sanitary napkins	Responses	Percentage
Medical shops	15	30
Online	8	16
Supermarket	24	48
College vending machine	0	0
Others	3	6
Total	50	100

FIGURE 2



Interpretation

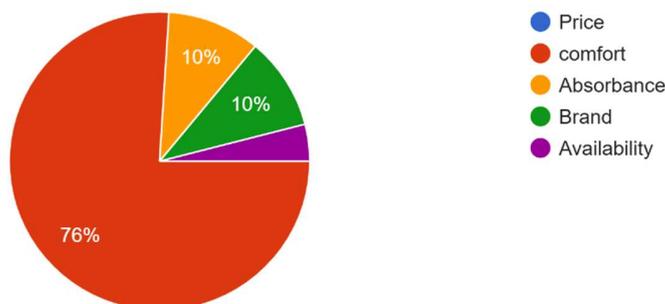
The chart shows that most students (48%) buy sanitary napkins from supermarkets. Medical shops are the next preferred place (30%), followed by online purchases (16%).

Very few students use other sources (6%), and none purchase from college vending machines. Overall, supermarkets and medical shops are the main places for buying sanitary napkins.

**TABLE 3
 CHOICE OF SANITARY NAPKINS**

Choice of sanitary napkins	Responses	Percentage
Price	0	0
Comfort	38	76
Absorbance	5	10
Brand	5	10
Availability	2	4
Total	50	100

FIGURE 3



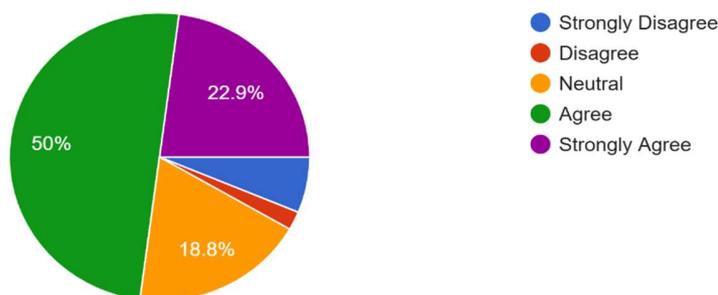
Interpretation

The chart shows that comfort is the most important factor influencing the choice of sanitary napkins, preferred by 76% of respondents. Absorbance and brand each account for 10%, while availability has minimal influence. Overall, comfort clearly dominates consumer preference

**TABLE 4
 PREFERENCE OF SANITARY NAPINS**

Preference	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	3	6.3
Disagree	1	2.1
Neutral	9	18.8
Agree	24	50
Strongly agree	11	22.9
Total	50	100

FIGURE 4



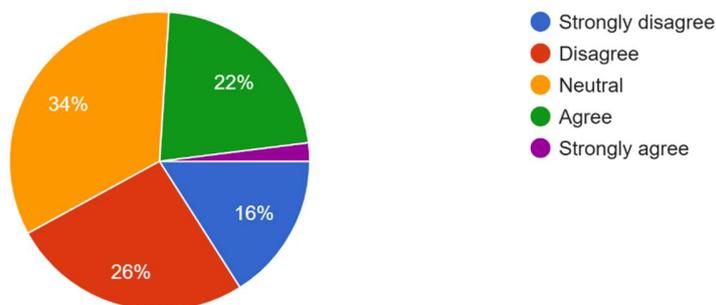
Interpretation

The chart indicates that skin-friendly and rash-free products greatly influence consumer preference. Most respondents agree or strongly agree, showing strong importance given to product safety, while a smaller option remains neutral and very few disagree.

**TABLE 5
 DISCOUNTS OF SANITARY NAPKINS**

Discounts and offers	Responses	Percentage
Strongly disagree	8	16
Disagree	13	26
Neutral	17	34
Agree	11	22
Strongly agree	1	2
Total	50	100

FIGURE 5



Interpretation

The chart shows that discounts and offers influence many consumers to try new brands. About 38% of respondents agree or strongly agree, indicating a positive impact of promotions on brand trial. However, 34% are neutral, suggesting discounts do not strongly affect their decision. Meanwhile, 28% disagree, showing that a considerable group is not motivated by offers. Overall, discounts are effective for a significant portion of consumers but are not the sole factor influencing brand choice.

CHI SQUARE TEST

Relationship between Preference and Discount offers

Preference	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Preference	3	1	9	24	11	50
Discounts & Offers	8	13	17	11	1	50
Calculate Value	Table value	Degree of Freedom	Level of Significant	Null Hypothesis	Result	-
20.48	9.49	4	0.05	Rejected	Significant	-

Interpretation

The chi-square test is used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between consumer preference and discounts and offers. The calculated chi-square value (20.48) is greater than the table value (9.49) at the 5% level of significance with 4 degrees of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between preference and discounts and offers, showing that discounts and promotional offers play an important role in influencing consumer preference.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Menstrual hygiene awareness, Jeganathan et al., (2025), studied women living in rural areas of Tamil Nadu. The study showed that many women did not know much about menstrual health. Many women were not aware of the menstrual cycle. Due to this reason, they continued to use cloth instead of sanitary napkins. The main reason was lack of awareness and poor access to products. The study explained that proper education can help women follow safe menstrual practices.
2. Consumer buying behaviour of sanitary napkins, Lather and Singh, (2023), studied women consumers in Haryana. The study found that women look at price, comfort, and quality before buying sanitary napkins. Brand name and offers also affect their choice. Most women preferred products that were affordable and safe. The study showed that simple marketing and fair pricing help consumers choose better products.
3. Problems faced while using sanitary napkins, Kara, (2021), studied the difficulties experienced by women. The study found that women expected good absorbency and protection from leakage. Many women faced problems like leakage and bad smell. Frequent changing was also a common issue. The study suggested that better quality products are needed to reduce these problems.

FINDINGS

This study looks at how college students in Coimbatore use and choose sanitary napkins. It mainly focuses on their awareness, usage habits, preferences, and the reasons behind their buying decisions. Menstrual hygiene is very important for women's health, and college students are an important group because they are often exposed to advertisements, different brands, and awareness programmes. Students consider many things while choosing sanitary napkins, such as comfort, price, absorbency, brand name, availability, skin safety, and eco-friendly features.

A descriptive research method was followed for this study. Information was collected directly from college students using a questionnaire. Additional information was taken from books, journals, and online sources. The collected data were analysed using percentage analysis and chi-square tests. The results show that comfort and quality are the main reasons for choosing a product. Brand name and concern for the environment also play a role, while price matters to some students. Overall, the study helps in understanding student needs and can be useful for improving product quality and spreading awareness about menstrual hygiene.

CONCLUSION

This study focuses on the buying behaviour of college students in Coimbatore towards sanitary napkins. The study shows that most students are aware of different sanitary napkin brands and use them regularly during menstruation. Comfort is the main reason for choosing a particular product. Many students prefer sanitary napkins that are soft, skin-friendly, and safe to use. Quality is given more importance than price, though cost still matters to some students. The study also shows that students are slowly becoming aware of eco-friendly and biodegradable sanitary napkins. However, these products are not widely used because they are costly and not easily available. Discounts and offers help some students try new brands, but they are not the only reason for purchase. Overall, the study shows that college students are careful while choosing sanitary napkins and focus more on comfort and safety. The findings of the study can help companies and awareness programs improve product quality, pricing, and availability to support better menstrual hygiene among college students.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Are you aware of different brands of Sanitary Napkins available in the market?
 - Yes
 - No
2. Are you satisfied with the disposal options available?
 - Yes
 - No
3. How frequently do you purchase sanitary napkins?
 - Monthly
 - Once in 2 months
 - Occasionally
4. Where do you usually purchase sanitary napkins from?
 - medical shops
 - online
 - super markets
 - college vending machines
 - others
5. What is the most important factor influencing your choice of sanitary napkins?
 - Price
 - comfort
 - Absorbance
 - Brand
 - Availability
6. Price of sanitary napkins affects your buying decision.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
7. Brand image plays an important role in your purchase.
 - Yes
 - No
8. Advertisements influence your choice of sanitary napkins.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
9. Recommendations from friends influence your purchase decision.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
10. Discounts and offers encourage you to try new brands.

- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
11. Skin-friendly and rash-free products influence your preference.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
12. Eco-friendly or biodegradable sanitary napkins attract you.
- Yes
 - No
 - Maybe
13. If yes, what kind of problem affects you?
- Rashes
 - Leakage
 - High cost
 - Discomfort
14. Would you switch to another brand if a better product is available at a reasonable price?
- Yes
 - No
 - Maybe
15. Source of information about sanitary napkins
- friends/family
 - Advertisements
 - social media
 - school / college programs
16. Are you aware of organic or biodegradable sanitary napkins?
- Yes
 - No
 - Maybe
17. Do you read product information before purchasing sanitary napkins?
- Always
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - never
18. How many sanitary napkins do you use per day during menstruation?
- 1-2
 - 3-4
 - more than 4
19. How often do you change sanitary napkins?
- Every 3–4 hours
 - Every 5–6 hours
 - Only when required

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20. Do you think your college provides adequate menstrual hygiene support (napkin dispensers, awareness)?
 - Yes
 - No
 21. Would you prefer if sanitary napkins were provided for free in colleges?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Maybe
 22. Do you use different napkins for day and night?
 - Yes
 - No
 23. Do you frequently switch brands?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Maybe
 24. What improvement do you expect in sanitary napkins?
 - Better comfort
 - Lower price
 - Eco-friendly
 - Better availability
 25. Would you be willing to pay more for better quality?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Maybe