

From awareness to satisfaction: An empirical study of consumer awareness and customer satisfaction towards FMCG products in Thanjavur District

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Abstract

The Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector is a cornerstone of the Indian economy, touching virtually every household through the daily purchase of food, personal care, and home-care products. As the marketplace grows more crowded with competing brands, consumer awareness and customer satisfaction have emerged as the twin pillars that determine which products win shelf space in a consumer's routine and, ultimately, loyalty in the mind. This study investigates how informed consumers are about the FMCG products they buy, where that information comes from, how frequently they purchase, and how satisfied they are with what they buy. Primary data were gathered from 140 respondents in Thanjavur District using a structured questionnaire administered through convenience sampling, and the data were examined using percentage analysis and Karl Pearson's correlation analysis. The results show that consumer awareness in the district is largely moderate-to-high, with television and social media serving as the dominant channels through which consumers learn about products. Food products emerged as the most preferred FMCG category, and weekly purchasing was the most common buying rhythm. Consumers reported reasonably high satisfaction with both product quality and pricing, and overall satisfaction levels were predominantly moderate to high. Most notably, the correlation analysis revealed a strong, statistically meaningful positive relationship ($r = 0.68$) between consumer awareness and customer satisfaction, confirming that better-informed consumers are also more satisfied consumers. The study concludes that awareness is not a peripheral marketing metric but a direct lever for satisfaction and loyalty, and it offers practical recommendations, spanning digital marketing, transparent labelling, competitive pricing, and rural outreach that FMCG firms operating in semi-urban and rural markets such as Thanjavur can use to strengthen both dimensions simultaneously.

Keywords: Consumer Awareness, Customer Satisfaction, FMCG Products, Consumer Behaviour, Brand Loyalty, Thanjavur District

JEL Classification: D12, M31, M39

1. Introduction

Few sectors touch daily life as directly as Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). From the toothpaste that begins a consumer's morning to the packaged snack that closes the day, FMCG products food items, beverages, personal care articles, toiletries, and household cleaning agents are defined by frequent purchase, low unit cost, and rapid turnover. Precisely because these purchases are so routine, they are also easy to take for granted; yet each one is the product of a decision shaped by information, past experience, and expectation. Understanding that decision is the starting point of this study. India's FMCG industry has expanded rapidly over the past decade, propelled by population growth, accelerating urbanisation, rising disposable incomes, evolving lifestyles, and the steady march of organised retail. Digital media and e-commerce have added a further accelerant: consumers today can compare prices, read reviews, and discover new brands with a few taps on a smartphone. The net effect is a consumer who is more informed, more selective, and considerably less loyal by default than a generation ago. In this environment, two constructs have become central to competitive strategy, consumer awareness and customer satisfaction. Consumer awareness refers to the extent to which buyers are informed about a product's features, quality, pricing, ingredients, brand reputation, and their own rights as consumers. It is what allows a shopper to compare alternatives critically rather than default to habit or advertising alone. Customer satisfaction, in turn, captures the degree to which a product or service meets or exceeds the expectations that awareness helped create. The two are conceptually distinct but practically intertwined: a consumer who understands what to expect from a product is better positioned to judge whether it delivered, and a positive experience reinforces the value of having been informed in the first place. Where awareness is low, satisfaction becomes a matter of chance; where it is high, satisfaction becomes a matter of consistent delivery. For FMCG companies, this relationship is commercially significant. Satisfied customers repurchase, recommend, and forgive occasional missteps; dissatisfied customers switch brands with little friction, since substitutes are abundant and switching costs are minimal. Product quality, price, packaging, availability, brand image, and promotional intensity all shape satisfaction, but awareness arguably sits upstream of all of them, an informed consumer evaluates each of these factors more accurately and is less susceptible to being misled or disappointed by unmet expectations.

Thanjavur District, historically known as the "rice bowl" of Tamil Nadu, is also a vibrant commercial and residential hub where FMCG consumption spans both urban retail chains and traditional neighbourhood stores. Its consumer base, a mix of agrarian, salaried, and small-business households, offers a useful lens on how awareness and satisfaction operate outside India's metropolitan centres, where much of the existing FMCG literature is concentrated. Examining this district therefore fills a genuine gap: it tests whether patterns observed in large cities hold in a semi-urban and rural setting, and it generates region-specific insights that manufacturers, retailers, and policymakers can act on directly. The primary objective of this study, accordingly, is to

examine the level of consumer awareness and customer satisfaction towards FMCG products among consumers in Thanjavur District. In pursuit of this broad aim, the study is guided by a set of secondary objectives: to analyse the demographic profile of FMCG consumers in the district; to assess their level of awareness regarding FMCG products and identify the principal sources through which that awareness is formed; to study how frequently consumers purchase FMCG products and which product categories they prefer most; to evaluate consumer satisfaction with both product quality and pricing, as well as overall satisfaction; to statistically examine the relationship between consumer awareness and customer satisfaction; and, ultimately, to translate these findings into practical suggestions for strengthening both awareness and satisfaction in the FMCG sector.

Against this backdrop, the present study examines the level of consumer awareness among FMCG buyers in Thanjavur District, identifies the channels through which that awareness is built, profiles purchasing behaviour, evaluates satisfaction with quality and price, and statistically tests the relationship between awareness and satisfaction. The remainder of the paper is organised as follows: Section 2 reviews prior literature and situates the study's contribution; Section 3 details the research methodology; Section 4 presents the results with an integrated discussion; Section 5 summarises the key findings and offers managerial recommendations; and Section 6 concludes the paper.

2. Literature Review

A substantial body of marketing scholarship links consumer awareness and customer satisfaction, though most of this work is either conceptual or set in urban and metropolitan contexts. This section reviews the strand of literature most relevant to the present study and identifies the gap it addresses. On the foundations of consumer knowledge, Kotler (2017) argued that consumer awareness is a decisive influence on purchase decisions, showing that buyers with greater product knowledge make more informed choices and report higher satisfaction, with advertising and marketing communication identified as the principal drivers of that awareness. Building on this, Aaker (2018) demonstrated that brand awareness in the FMCG category leads consumers to gravitate toward familiar, trusted names, which in turn strengthens satisfaction and loyalty, while Keller (2019) found that strong brand knowledge and a positive brand image shape both attitudes and behaviour, with attribute-aware customers reporting greater post-purchase satisfaction.

A second cluster of studies examines how awareness is actually created. Gupta and Sharma (2020) traced the rising influence of social media as an information channel, showing that digital platforms now meaningfully shape both awareness and satisfaction outcomes. Nagaraja (2020), working within the Indian FMCG context, found television advertising to be the dominant awareness channel and linked higher awareness to stronger product preference and satisfaction, a finding that anticipates the television-led awareness pattern observed in the present study. A third group of studies turns to the drivers of satisfaction itself. Ramesh and Kumar (2021) identified

product quality, price, packaging, and availability as the core determinants of FMCG satisfaction, noting that satisfaction rises when products consistently meet expectations. Mehta (2021) reinforced this, showing that value for money and product performance are central to both retention and loyalty. Most directly relevant to this study, Singh and Kaur (2022) tested the awareness–satisfaction relationship empirically and reported a positive association, concluding that better-informed consumers tend to be more satisfied, a result this study revisits with a fresh sample and a semi-urban district context. Verma and Singh (2023) extended this line of work by showing that awareness, product quality, and brand trust jointly predict repeat-purchase intention. Taken together, this literature establishes a well-supported but geographically uneven picture: the awareness–satisfaction link is consistently observed, but almost entirely in national-level or urban samples. Few studies isolate a semi-urban, agrarian-commercial district such as Thanjavur, where retail infrastructure, media penetration, and consumer demographics differ meaningfully from metropolitan India. The present study addresses this gap by empirically testing the awareness–satisfaction relationship within Thanjavur District specifically, using primary data and correlation analysis, thereby extending the existing body of knowledge to an under-represented regional setting.

3. Methodology

Research methodology denotes the systematic procedure through which data are collected, analysed, and interpreted to meet a study's stated objectives. The methodological choices below were made specifically to capture a representative, actionable picture of consumer awareness and satisfaction within Thanjavur District. The study follows a descriptive research design, which is well suited to portraying consumer awareness levels, purchasing behaviour, and satisfaction patterns as they naturally occur, without manipulating any variable. The study was conducted in Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu, covering consumers who purchase a range of FMCG products across both urban retail outlets and neighbourhood stores. Primary data were collected directly from respondents using a structured questionnaire covering consumer awareness, sources of awareness, purchase frequency, product-category preference, and satisfaction levels. Secondary data supporting the literature review and contextual analysis were drawn from books, peer-reviewed journals, industry reports, and reputable websites relating to FMCG products and consumer behaviour.

Respondents were selected using the convenience sampling technique, drawing on consumers who were readily accessible and willing to participate. While this approach is efficient for exploratory, region-specific research of this kind, it does not guarantee statistical representativeness of the wider population. A total of 140 respondents from Thanjavur District were surveyed for this study. A structured questionnaire combining demographic and opinion-based items served as the primary data collection instrument. Two variables anchor the analysis: consumer awareness, treated as the

independent variable, and customer satisfaction, treated as the dependent variable. Percentage analysis was used to profile respondents by gender, awareness level, purchase frequency, product preference, and satisfaction level, while correlation analysis (Karl Pearson's coefficient) was applied to test the strength and direction of the relationship between consumer awareness and customer satisfaction.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the survey findings alongside an interpretive discussion that connects each result to the objectives of the study and to relevant prior research.

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1. Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	78	55.7
Female	62	44.3
Total	140	100.0

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

Of the 140 respondents surveyed, 78 (55.7%) were male and 62 (44.3%) were female. While male respondents form a modest majority, the sample retains meaningful representation from both genders, supporting a reasonably balanced reading of awareness and satisfaction patterns across the district's consumer base.

4.2 Consumer Awareness towards FMCG Products

Table 2. Level of Consumer Awareness

Awareness Level	Respondents	Percentage
High	52	37.1
Medium	61	43.6
Low	27	19.3
Total	140	100.0

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

Awareness was concentrated at the medium level, reported by 61 respondents (43.6%), followed by high awareness among 52 respondents (37.1%) and low awareness among 27 respondents (19.3%). In other words, roughly four in five consumers in Thanjavur District possess at least a moderate understanding of the FMCG products they buy. This aligns with Kotler's (2017) observation that consumer awareness has become an increasingly standard feature of contemporary markets, and it suggests that FMCG marketing efforts in the district — while effective — still have room to convert “medium” awareness into “high” awareness through more targeted communication.

4.3 Sources of Consumer Awareness

Table 3. Sources of Consumer Awareness

Source	Respondents	Percentage
Television	45	32.1
Social Media	38	27.1
Friends/Relatives	30	21.4
Newspapers	17	12.1
Others	10	7.1
Total	140	100.0

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

Television was cited by 45 respondents (32.1%) as the leading source of awareness, followed closely by social media at 38 respondents (27.1%), friends and relatives at 30 respondents (21.4%), newspapers at 17 respondents (12.1%), and other sources at 10 respondents (7.1%). The dominance of television echoes Nagaraja's (2020) finding that television remains the primary FMCG awareness channel in India, while the strong second-place showing of social media corroborates Gupta and Sharma's (2020) observation that digital platforms have become an increasingly important information source. Together, these two channels account for well over half of all awareness generated, underscoring that electronic and digital media — rather than print or word-of-mouth alone — now drive consumer knowledge of FMCG products in Thanjavur District.

4.4 Purchase Frequency of FMCG Products

Weekly purchasing was the most common pattern, reported by 58 respondents (41.4%), followed by daily purchases among 40 respondents (28.6%), monthly purchases among 32 respondents

(22.9%), and occasional purchases among 10 respondents (7.1%). This purchasing rhythm reflects the essential, replenishment-driven nature of FMCG products: nearly seven in ten respondents buy such products at least weekly, reinforcing their status as staples of everyday household consumption rather than discretionary purchases.

Table 4. Purchase Frequency of FMCG Products

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	40	28.6
Weekly	58	41.4
Monthly	32	22.9
Occasionally	10	7.1
Total	140	100.0

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

4.5 Preferred FMCG Product Category

Food products emerged as the clear favourite, chosen by 50 respondents (35.7%), followed by personal care products (38 respondents, 27.1%), household products (30 respondents, 21.4%), and beverages (22 respondents, 15.8%). The dominance of food products is consistent with their necessity-driven, high-frequency consumption pattern and suggests that food-category FMCG brands enjoy the largest addressable base of engaged, repeat consumers in the district.

Table 5. Preferred FMCG Product Category

Category	Respondents	Percentage
Food Products	50	35.7
Personal Care	38	27.1
Household Products	30	21.4
Beverages	22	15.8
Total	140	100.0

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

4.6 Satisfaction with Product Quality

A combined 106 respondents (75.7%) reported being either satisfied (44.3%) or highly satisfied (31.4%) with FMCG product quality, while only 14 respondents (10.0%) expressed dissatisfaction. This result supports Ramesh and Kumar's (2021) conclusion that consistent product quality is a primary determinant of FMCG satisfaction, and it indicates that quality — rather than being a point of consumer friction — is currently a relative strength for FMCG brands operating in Thanjavur District.

Table 6. Satisfaction with Product Quality

Level	Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	44	31.4
Satisfied	62	44.3
Neutral	20	14.3
Dissatisfied	14	10.0
Total	140	100.0

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

4.7 Satisfaction with Product Pricing

Satisfaction with pricing followed a similar pattern: 65 respondents (46.4%) reported being satisfied and 35 respondents (25.0%) highly satisfied, together accounting for 71.4% of the sample, while only 15 respondents (10.7%) were dissatisfied. This suggests that, notwithstanding periodic inflationary pressure on essential goods, consumers in the district largely perceive current FMCG pricing as fair and commensurate with the value received — consistent with Mehta's (2021) finding that perceived value for money is a key driver of satisfaction.

Table 7. Satisfaction with Product Pricing

Level	Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	35	25.0
Satisfied	65	46.4
Neutral	25	17.9

Dissatisfied	15	10.7
Total	140	100.0

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

4.8 Overall Customer Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction was moderate for 67 respondents (47.9%) and high for 48 respondents (34.3%), with only 25 respondents (17.8%) reporting low satisfaction. Taken together, over four in five respondents (82.2%) report at least moderate satisfaction, indicating a generally favourable consumer experience with FMCG products across the district, even though a meaningful share of consumers has not yet crossed the threshold into high satisfaction — representing a tangible opportunity for brands to deepen loyalty.

Table 8. Overall Customer Satisfaction

Level	Respondents	Percentage
High	48	34.3
Moderate	67	47.9
Low	25	17.8
Total	140	100.0

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

4.9 Relationship between Consumer Awareness and Customer Satisfaction

The Pearson correlation coefficient between consumer awareness and customer satisfaction was found to be $r = 0.68$, indicating a strong, positive relationship between the two variables.

Table 9. Correlation between Consumer Awareness and Customer Satisfaction

Variables	Correlation (r)	Result
Consumer Awareness & Customer Satisfaction	0.68	Positive, Strong Relationship

Source: Authors' computation based on primary data (N = 140).

This finding directly corroborates Singh and Kaur's (2022) empirical result that better-informed consumers report higher satisfaction, and it lends further weight to Keller's (2019) theoretical

argument that attribute-aware consumers evaluate their purchases more favourably. Substantively, the result implies that awareness is not merely a precursor to a sale but an active ingredient in the post-purchase experience: consumers who understand what they are buying — its quality markers, its price relative to alternatives, its intended use — are structurally more likely to feel that the product met their expectations. For FMCG marketers, this reframes awareness campaigns as a satisfaction and retention strategy, not solely a demand-generation one.

4.10 Discussion

Drawing together the results presented in Section 4, the study's central findings can be summarised as follows. The sample of 140 consumers was reasonably balanced by gender, with male respondents (55.7%) slightly outnumbering female respondents (44.3%). Consumer awareness of FMCG products proved to be predominantly medium-to-high, with 43.6% of respondents reporting medium awareness and a further 37.1% reporting high awareness, while television (32.1%) and social media (27.1%) together accounted for the majority of that awareness, confirming the primacy of electronic and digital media over print and interpersonal sources. In terms of buying behaviour, weekly purchasing (41.4%) emerged as the dominant pattern, reflecting the routine, replenishment-driven nature of FMCG consumption, and food products (35.7%) stood out as the most preferred category, ahead of personal care, household products, and beverages. On the satisfaction side, consumers were found to be largely satisfied with product quality (75.7% satisfied or highly satisfied) and pricing (71.4% satisfied or highly satisfied), and overall customer satisfaction was favourable, with 82.2% of respondents reporting moderate-to-high satisfaction. Most importantly, consumer awareness and customer satisfaction were found to be strongly and positively correlated ($r = 0.68$), confirming that awareness is a meaningful driver of satisfaction rather than a merely coincidental association.

5. Conclusion, Recommendations, and Limitations of the Study

This study set out to examine how aware consumers in Thanjavur District are of the FMCG products they purchase, and how that awareness relates to their satisfaction with those products. The evidence gathered from 140 respondents paints a coherent picture: awareness in the district is solidly moderate-to-high, built primarily through television and social media; purchasing is frequent and food-led, reflecting the routine nature of FMCG consumption; and satisfaction with both quality and price is generally favourable. Most importantly, the strong positive correlation ($r = 0.68$) between awareness and satisfaction demonstrates that these two constructs are not independent metrics tracked in parallel by marketers, but genuinely interdependent outcomes — improving one measurably improves the other. For FMCG companies, the practical implication is clear: campaigns designed to inform consumers should be viewed as investments in satisfaction and retention, not merely in reach or recall. For policymakers and consumer-protection bodies, the findings underscore the value of continued efforts to standardise labelling and product information, since a better-informed consumer base is, by this study's evidence, also a more satisfied one. For

future researchers, the district-level focus adopted here suggests a broader agenda: replicating this analysis across other semi-urban and rural districts, incorporating additional determinants of satisfaction such as packaging and after-sales service, and tracking these relationships longitudinally as digital media penetration deepens further. In a market as competitive and fast-moving as FMCG, sustained attention to consumer awareness may well be one of the most reliable paths to durable customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

5.2 Managerial Recommendations

Based on these findings, several recommendations emerge for FMCG manufacturers, retailers, and policymakers operating in Thanjavur District and comparable semi-urban markets. Given the strong link between awareness and satisfaction, companies should invest in structured awareness campaigns that go beyond brand recall to actively educate consumers on product features, quality benchmarks, and correct usage, primarily through television and social media, the two channels already shown to carry the greatest influence. This should be paired with stronger label transparency — clear, accurate information on ingredients, nutritional content, manufacturing and expiry dates, and pricing — since such details build the informational foundation on which awareness, and consequently satisfaction, depends. On the product side, companies should protect and continuously improve product quality, since quality already scores well with consumers and maintaining this consistency, rather than allowing it to erode, is essential to sustaining current satisfaction levels. Pricing strategies should remain competitive and transparent, with visible promotional value such as discounts or combo offers helping to convert price-satisfied consumers into loyal repeat buyers. Given that social media is already the second-largest awareness channel, deeper investment in digital marketing — including targeted advertising and influencer partnerships — can accelerate the shift from medium to high consumer awareness, while institutionalised feedback mechanisms, such as customer care lines, mobile apps, and in-store feedback, would allow companies to detect emerging dissatisfaction before it results in brand switching. Particular attention should also be paid to consumers in the less urbanised pockets of the district, who are more likely to fall into the low-awareness segment (19.3% of the sample) and would benefit disproportionately from targeted rural campaigns and product demonstrations. This should be complemented by stronger distribution and availability across retail formats — from organised supermarkets to neighbourhood stores — to remove a common source of consumer frustration, and by experiential promotions such as free sampling, in-store demonstrations, and loyalty programmes that give consumers first-hand exposure and build awareness and confidence simultaneously. Finally, sustained, ethical, and consistent marketing communication over time will help build the kind of long-term brand trust that the literature (Aaker, 2018) identifies as a key driver of lasting consumer loyalty.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

As with any single-district survey, the findings of this study should be read alongside certain methodological constraints. Geographically, the study is confined to Thanjavur District, and its conclusions may not extend to consumers in other regions with different retail infrastructure or media exposure. The sample of 140 respondents, while adequate for exploratory, descriptive analysis, remains modest relative to the district's total consumer population, and the use of convenience sampling — chosen for its feasibility within the study's time and cost constraints — may introduce an element of selection bias that limits strict statistical representativeness. The findings also rest on respondents' self-reported opinions and perceptions, which are inherently subjective and susceptible to recall or social-desirability effects. Finally, consumer awareness and satisfaction are not static constructs; they are likely to shift as market conditions, media habits, and product offerings evolve, so the patterns reported here should be understood as a snapshot of the 2025–26 academic year rather than a permanent description of the district's consumers.

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