

RESEARCH PAPER

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS FITNESS PRODUCTS AND SERVICES IN THOOTHUKUDI

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ABSTRACT

The fitness industry in India has witnessed significant growth due to increasing health awareness and lifestyle changes. This study examines the consumer behaviour towards fitness products and services in Thoothukudi, a growing coastal city in Tamil Nadu. The research explores consumer awareness, preferences, purchasing patterns, and factors influencing their decisions regarding fitness products such as gym equipment, sportswear, supplements, and fitness services like gyms, yoga centres, and personal training. The study identifies price, quality, convenience, and social influence as major determinants of consumer choice. The findings reveal that youth and working professionals show higher involvement in fitness activities, while awareness gaps and cost barriers limit adoption among others. The study provides useful insights for fitness marketers and service providers in Thoothukudi.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, Fitness products, Fitness services, Health awareness.

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Introduction

The fitness revolution never seen before is currently taking place in India. In the most recent few years, the expansion of our country's fitness goods market has been phenomenal. The demand for fitness products can be attributed to several factors, including an increased awareness of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, higher levels of disposable money, and an expanding culture of physical activity. In this article, we will look into the causes of the spectacular rise of the fitness product market in India, the essential players in the industry, and the trends defining this rapidly expanding market.

A change in lifestyle and a heightened awareness of the need to maintain a healthy body and mind are among the principal factors contributing to the expansion of the fitness industry in India. The average disposable income that citizens have has been increasing with the expansion of the country's economy. People today invest more money in their health and wellness because they have more money to spend. In addition, the sedentary lifestyle common among people who work in offices and spend more time in front of screens has contributed to an increase in the prevalence of lifestyle-related

disorders such as obesity, diabetes, and heart ailments. As a consequence, people have grown more health conscious, and as a result, a growing number of them are turning to fitness items to either maintain or improve their physical well-being. Consumers have shown an extraordinary interest in fitness trackers, smartwatches, and fitness application software. These gadgets include a variety of capabilities, such as monitoring your health in real-time, keeping track of workouts, and creating individualised exercise routines. Much like their counterparts in other countries worldwide, consumers in India are increasingly turning to technology to improve their workout routines. Not only can incorporating technology into fitness equipment improve the experience of using those devices, but it also supplies consumers with crucial data that allows them to monitor their progress. Thus, the need for fitness equipment is one of the developing markets in India due to increased consumer awareness, the marketing strategies of companies, and also the measures taken by the government in this regard, all of which have fuelled the demand in the recent past and will continue to do so at a rapid rate in the foreseeable future. This research has been carried out to understand the fitness industry and the behaviour of consumers with fitness products and

services in the Thoothukudi.

Review of literature

Bhutani, S. & Cooper, J. A. (2020) the study shows the impact of fitness trackers on exercise motivation among adults. Their findings show that wearable devices help users monitor progress, set goals, and stay consistent with workouts. The study highlights that technology-based feedback increases self-motivation and engagement in fitness routines, influencing consumers to adopt fitness products that support performance tracking.

Chatterjee, A. & Bhattacharya, S. (2019) this study focused on consumer behaviour towards health and fitness products in urban India. The authors found that increasing health awareness, media exposure, and peer influence significantly affect the purchase of fitness goods and services. Urban consumers were more inclined toward gym memberships, sportswear, and supplements, with price and convenience acting as important decision factors.

Nauriyal, D. N. & Dar, S. A. (2021) the study examined consumer buying behaviour towards fitness and wellness products in India. Their research concluded that perceived health benefits, social influence, and brand trust positively impact consumer attitudes. However, the study also noted that middle-income consumers remain price sensitive, which limits the adoption of certain fitness products like home equipment and supplements.

Objectives of the study

The following research objectives were formed by the researcher

- To study the awareness level of consumers towards fitness products and services in Thoothukudi.
- To identify the factors influencing consumer purchase decisions.
- To analyze consumer preferences for fitness products and services

Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive research design to examine consumer behaviour towards fitness products and services in Thoothukudi. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data were collected from 100 respondents through a structured questionnaire using the convenience sampling method. Secondary data were gathered from books, journals, articles, and online sources related to consumer behaviour and the fitness industry. The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis and simple

interpretation to understand the awareness level, preferences, and factors influencing consumers' purchase decisions regarding fitness products and services.

Findings

- The study indicates a moderate to high level of awareness regarding gyms, fitness centres, and basic fitness products among respondents. A majority (26.3%) engage in fitness activities five or more times per week, demonstrating strong commitment to regular exercise routines.
- Price, quality, convenience, and social influence emerged as the primary factors influencing purchasing behaviour. Among these, price sensitivity is particularly noticeable among middle-income groups, while quality perception strongly affects brand preference and repeat purchase behaviour. Social influence, including peer groups and media exposure, significantly motivates consumers to adopt fitness products and services.
- The findings clearly indicate that gender plays a significant role in influencing the purchase of fitness products among consumers in Thoothukudi. A large proportion of males (69.8%) reported purchasing fitness products, compared to only 27.5% of females, showing a substantial gap in participation. The Chi-Square analysis ($p = 0.000$) confirms that this difference is highly significant, and the symmetric measures ($\Phi = 0.442$) further establish a moderately strong association between gender and purchasing behaviour.

Suggestions

- Increase the awareness programs about fitness products like supplements and home equipment, which show lower adoption.
- Create wellness programme among youth and middle age persons to stay I fit for the environment.
- Conduct fitness workshops, demo sessions, and camps in gyms, colleges, and community centers in Thoothukudi.
- Provide flexible workout timings to suit working professionals, especially the 35–54 age group with moderate engagement.
- Promote women-friendly and senior-friendly fitness services to widen participation.
- Since price, quality, convenience, and

social influence emerged as the primary factors influencing purchasing behaviour, fitness centres should provide affordable and flexible plans to reach all age groups.

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Conclusions

The study on consumer behaviour towards fitness products and services in Thoothukudi. It shows a clear shift toward health consciousness among the public, especially among youth and working professionals. Consumers are increasingly aware of gyms, fitness activities, and basic fitness products, and many engage in regular workouts each week. Factors such as price, quality, convenience, and social influence play a major role in their purchase decisions. overall, the study highlights that the fitness market in Thoothukudi has strong potential for expansion if providers focus on awareness, affordability, and customer-friendly services.

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