

Advanced Market Research

Consumer Behaviour and Earphones/headphones

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Management Decision Problem

The present research is an effort to understand the critical demographic, psychological and socio-economic factors which influence the purchase behaviour for earphones/headphones across various segments. In the first part of the study, a detailed literature review was done, which was followed by two focused group discussions and two depth interviews. Based on these inputs, different variables of interest were recognised. To go a step further, the researchers have prepared a comprehensive questionnaire to get essential results related to various variables of interest. The answers to the survey would be used to do quantitative research.

Research Objectives:

- R.O. 1 - To determine the parameters for evaluating brand perceptions amongst consumers.
- R.O. 2 - To determine the patterns observed in buying behaviour for the same group of consumers while shopping through different channels.
- R.O. 3 - To determine factors that influence the customer's willingness to pay.
- R.O. 4 - To determine the reasons that make customers buy specific brands.
- R.O. 5 - To identify the most critical factors that influence a customer to replace their earphones/headphones.

Findings from FGDs

FGD1: It has been observed through this FGD that customer's willingness to pay is majorly dependent on the factors like quality of the earphone. The buyer is not brand loyal but high involvement customer. In many of the cases, they want to try out the new and upgraded technology available in the market. For all the customer's online reviews are critical while making the purchase decision after that buying from the online channel while some prefer to have hands-on experience before investing in earphones/headphones. The most critical factors that influence the customer to earphones/headphones are bass, beats, and noise cancellation. Some buyers are mostly inclined towards flagship brands and are ready to pay a premium price. The factors that

influence the customer to replace the earphones/headphones is wear and tear of the product also discounts play a significant role in purchasing pattern as a customer do not mind having an extra pair of headphone at a discounted price.

FGD2: It has been observed through this FGD that customer's had a varying range of uses for earphones/headphones ranging from common tasks like watching movies and listening to music to more specialized needs such as for gaming. While selecting earphones/headphones, some critical factors discussed include bass quality, noise cancellation capability, 3D sound capability and the durability of the earphones/headphones. The participants had a similar price range they were willing to pay for earphones/headphones not exceeding Rs.5000. Another important factor considered is the presence of a detachable cable. Most of the participants found that they had to replace their earphones/headphones due to cable getting damaged. The participants unanimously agreed that they would always prefer to buy earphones/headphones online because they can compare various models on specifications and price, see reviews and get better deals. Offline stores are only considered in the event of special edition releases or case emergencies such as travel emergencies. The main influencers amongst the group were found to be online blogs and forums which gave in-depth reviews of different headphone segments and also reviews of other customers on E-commerce websites. Other influencers also include friends, family and gaming Cafés. The ability to try out earphones/headphones physically before buying them does not affect the participant's willingness to pay for the product.

Approach for Conclusive Research

The research objectives that were set served as the core drivers behind the formation of the questionnaire. The questions were formulated in a way such that the respondent eventually starts getting accustomed to the topic. The research is designed to obtain a very gradual approach to understanding the behaviour of consumers, in contrast to bombarding the objectives in a very crude manner. This enables us to recognize the patterns that emerge from the data analysis without influencing the thought process of the respondents in any way whatsoever. SPSS is being used to compile and make sense of the raw and unorganized data. The initial questions that were formulated were repeatedly edited and modified to a higher degree of precision and convenience, to make the data easier to handle. This was done by

multiple sequences of dry runs that were conducted amongst the members of the group, and preliminary respondents chose in random from outside the research group as well. To understand the consumer, it was essential to follow the way he/she thinks. This resulted in the formulation of questions that were extremely easy to comprehend and understand at the same time making it easier for the research team to handle the responses.

Initial Questionnaire

1) What are the purposes you use earphones/headphones for?

1. Listening to music
2. Watching video
3. Style statement
4. Privacy concerns (I don't want anyone to bother me)
5. Playing games

2) When do you use your earphones/headphones the most?

1. Travelling
2. Exercising
3. Relaxing
4. Studying / Working

3) What kind of earphones/headphones do you like the most?

1. circumaural (have circular or ellipsoid earpads that encompass the ears,)
2. supra-aural (have pads that sit on top of the ears, rather than around them)
3. earbuds (or earphones/earphones/headphones, are placed directly outside of the ear canal)
4. in-ear (also known as canalphones, are inserted directly into the ear canal)

4) Which earphone/headphone brand you like the most?

1. Bose
2. Apple
3. Sony
4. Beats
5. Skullcandy
6. Sennheiser

7. Philips
8. Panasonic
9. Other

5) What kind of music you like?

1. Pop
2. Rock
3. Classical
4. Jazz
5. Soft Pop/Acoustic
6. Rap
7. EDM/Trance/House
8. Other

6) The genre of music I like plays an important factor while buying earphones/headphones

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

7) I prefer to buy earphones/headphones that are portable

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
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8) I prefer to buy earphones/headphones that are comfortable

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
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9) Bluetooth connectivity is an essential factor while buying earphones/headphones

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
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4. Disagree
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10) I prefer to buy earphones/headphones that have a good appearance

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

11) What is your age?

1. Less than 15
2. 16 to 25
3. 26 to 35
4. 36 to 45
5. More than 45

12) What is your Gender?

1. Male
2. Female
3. Choose not to declare

13) Where are you from?

1. Metropolitan/Cosmopolitan City
2. Tier 2 city
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14) How often do I have to change my earphones/headphones?

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15) How much is your average time spent on listening to music or any form of audio (including videos and news) per week?

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5. Strongly Disagree

37) I search for information about earphones/headphones on Tech blogs and review websites

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
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4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

38) I search for information about earphones/headphones on Youtube

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

39) I search for information about headphones/earphones/headphones at retail showrooms.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

40) I usually buy the earphones/headphones suggested by my friends

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2. Agree
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4. Disagree

5. Strongly Disagree

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2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

43) I need my earphones/headphones to be unique

1. I Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

44) I need my earphones/headphones to be wireless

1. I Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

45) I need my earphones/headphones to have tangle free cables

1. I Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

46) I need my earphones/headphones to have replacable audio cables

1. I Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree

5. Strongly Disagree

47) I need my earphones/headphones to be comfortable to wear over long durations

1. I Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

48) I need my earphones/headphones to have noise cancellation

1. I Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

49) I need my earphones/headphones to have a mike

1. I Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

50) I need my earphones/headphones to have a button controller

1. I Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

51) Rate the following brands on the corresponding attributes

	Build Quality	Sound Quality	Brand Value	Affordability	Comfort	Variety	Availability	Value for money	Design
Bose									
Apple									
Sony									
Beats									
Skullcandy									
Sennheiser									
Audio Technica									
Philips									
JBL									
Xiaomi									

52) I prefer to buy earphones/headphones of the same style (in-ear/aural etc) I use right now in the future

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

53) I refer to online reviews/youtube videos before buying an earphone.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

54) I like to use earphones/ headphones of the same brand as that of my mobile phone.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

55) What kind of earphones/headphones do you hate the most?

1. circumaural (have circular or ellipsoid earpads that encompass the ears,)
2. supra-aural (have pads that sit on top of the ears, rather than around them)
3. earbuds (or earphones/earphones/headphones, are placed directly outside of the ear canal)
4. in-ear (also known as canalphones, are inserted directly into the ear canal)

56) I always follow the latest trends and changes happening in the earphone industry.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

57) I feel vulnerable or unsafe while wearing earphones/headphones and listening to music because I am not as aware of my surroundings?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

58) I advocate my favorite earphone/headphone brands on social forums.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

59) How many pairs of earphones/headphones do you own?

1. 0
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. More than 3

60) What made you switch to your current pair of earphones/headphones?

1. Older earphones/earphones/headphones stopped working
2. Cords/wires of older earphones/earphones/headphones broke/snapped
3. I lost my older earphones/earphones/headphones
4. I did not like the sound quality of the older earphones/earphones/headphones
5. I did not like the build quality of the older earphones/earphones/headphones
6. Some other reason

61) I am ready to wait for my preferred earphones/headphones to go on discount before purchasing.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

62) I always use earphones/headphones while I am trying to sleep.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

63) I use earphones/headphones as a means of blocking out noise.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

64) I prefer to try earphones/headphones before buying.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

65) I believe that using earphones/headphones affects my hearing ability.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

66) I listen to music only if I use earphones/headphones.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

67) I use earphones/headphones to get more indulged in myself.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

68) I think I have a pretty good understanding of the kind of music I listen to.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Modifications done in questionnaire after pre-test

1. Mentioned “earphones/headphones” wherever only “earphones” or “headphones” was there in the questions. This removed ambiguity present in the questions.
2. Removed 4 of the questions which were not aligned with the R.O.s
3. Changed the number of options for some questions to five so as to make questionnaire more homogenous.

Final Questionnaire

1) What are the purposes you use earphones/headphones for?

1. Listening to music
2. Watching video
3. Style statement
4. Privacy concerns (I don't want anyone to bother me)
5. Playing games

2) When do you use your earphones/headphones the most?

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1. Pop
2. Rock
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4. Disagree

5. Strongly Disagree

49) I need my earphones/headphones to have a mike

1. I Strongly Agree

2. Agree

3. Neither Agree nor Disagree

4. Disagree

5. Strongly Disagree

50) I need my earphones/headphones to have a button controller

1. I Strongly Agree

2. Agree

3. Neither Agree nor Disagree

4. Disagree

5. Strongly Disagree

51) Rate the following brands on the corresponding attributes

Build Quality	Sound Quality	Brand Value	Affordability	Comfort
Variety	Availability	Value for money	Design	

Bose

Apple

Sony

Beats

Skullcandy

Sennheiser

Audio Technica

Philips

JBL

Xiaomi

51) I prefer to buy earphones/headphones of the same style (in-ear/aural etc) I use right now in the future

1. Strongly Agree

2. Agree

3. Neither Agree nor Disagree

4. Disagree

5. Strongly Disagree

52) I refer to online reviews/youtube videos before buying an earphone.

1. Strongly Agree

2. Agree

3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

53) I always follow the latest trends and changes happening in the earphone industry.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

54) I feel vulnerable or unsafe while wearing earphones/headphones and listening to music because I am not as aware of my surroundings?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

55) I advocate my favorite earphone/headphone brands on social forums.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

56) How many pairs of earphones/headphones do you own?

1. 0
2. 1
3. 2
4. 3
5. More than 3

57) What made you switch to your current pair of earphones/headphones?

1. Older earphones/earphones/headphones stopped working
2. Cords/wires of older earphones/earphones/headphones broke/snapped
3. I lost my older earphones/earphones/headphones
4. I did not like the sound quality of the older earphones/earphones/headphones
5. I did not like the build quality of the older earphones/earphones/headphones
6. Some other reason

58) I am ready to wait for my preferred earphones/headphones to go on discount before purchasing.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

59) I use earphones/headphones as a means of blocking out noise.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

60) I prefer to try earphones/headphones before buying.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

61) I believe that using earphones/headphones affects my hearing ability.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

62) I listen to music only if I use earphones/headphones.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree

4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

63) I think I have a pretty good understanding of the kind of music I listen to.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Conclusion

In the pre-test of the questionnaire, it was realized that to get the respondents involved with the questionnaire, it is better making them answer questions in the first person. It was also realized that a few ice-breaking questions are necessary to gain the trust of the respondent so that he/she is more open towards a long questionnaire. The more personalized questions needed to be kept towards the end of the questionnaire by which time the respondent may feel amply comfortable with the questionnaire. Some questions needed to be repeated in different forms and some questions needed to be rephrased to find if the respondent is losing interest in the questionnaire and therefore giving contradictory answers. Different scales were used so as to give the respondent variety and keep him/her interested.

Roles and Responsibilities

Task	Persons Responsible	Needed Resources/ Methodology Followed	Evaluation
1. Introduction and compilation	Prachee Sharma, Abhishek Gautam	Online Resources, IIM Sambalpur's eLibrary Resources	-
2. Questions 1-10	Prachee Sharma	Findings from the exploratory research	Preparation of Questionnaire
3. Questions 11-30	P Hari Ram Vignesh	Findings from the exploratory research	Preparation of Questionnaire
4. Questions 31-54	Soham Deshmukh, Pallavi Suryawanshi	Findings from the exploratory research	Preparation of Questionnaire
5. Questions 55-64	Abhishek Kudaravalli	Findings from the exploratory research	Preparation of Questionnaire
6. Editing the Questionnaire	Soham Deshmukh, Pallavi Suryawanshi	-	-
7. Pre-Test, Conclusion	Soham Deshmukh, Pallavi Suryawanshi, Abhishek Gautam	FGDs and DIs, Literature Review	Linking of Ideas with ROs

