

A Study of Customer Satisfaction on the Doms Stationery Products with Special Reference to Coimbatore District

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Abstract – The stationery industry in India has been growing steadily, supported by higher literacy levels, better educational facilities, and increasing demand from students, professionals, and corporate users. DOMS Industries Pvt. Ltd. has emerged as one of the leading players in this sector, offering a wide range of products such as pencils, pens, geometry tools, art materials, and other school supplies. This study focuses on understanding customer satisfaction with DOMS stationery products in the Coimbatore district. It looks at key factors like product quality, pricing, packaging, availability, variety, and after-sales service. Data for the study were collected from 120 respondents, including students, teachers, parents, and working professionals, using a structured questionnaire. Additional information was gathered from company reports, research articles, and industry publications. The data were analysed using simple percentage analysis, weighted average methods, and the chi-square test. The results show that most customers are highly satisfied with DOMS products, especially in terms of quality and value for money. However, there is room for improvement in areas such as product availability and the range of premium products. Overall, the study suggests that by addressing these gaps, DOMS can further strengthen its position in the Coimbatore market.

Keywords – Customer Satisfaction, DOMS Stationery, Product Quality, Stationery Industry, Consumer Behaviour, Coimbatore, Brand Loyalty

I. INTRODUCTION

The stationery and scholastic products industry occupies a vital position in India's consumer goods landscape, serving the daily academic, professional, and creative needs of millions of individuals across age groups and income levels. With India's gross enrolment ratio in education steadily rising and the government's continued investment in educational infrastructure through programmes such as the National Education Policy 2020, the demand for quality stationery products has experienced sustained growth. The stationery market in India, valued at approximately USD 6 billion, is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of over 10% in the coming years, driven by expanding school enrolments, rising disposable incomes, and growing consumer interest in premium art and craft supplies.

DOMS Industries Pvt. Ltd., established in 1975 and headquartered in Umbergaon, Gujarat, has emerged as one of India's most trusted and recognised stationery brands over five decades of consistent quality and innovation. The brand's extensive product range covers pencils, mechanical pencils, ball pens, gel pens, sketch pens, geometry boxes, erasers, sharpeners, crayons, oil pastels, water colours, and a wide array of art supplies marketed under the flagship DOMS brand. DOMS products are distributed across India through a robust network of distributors, retailers, and e-commerce platforms, making them accessible to consumers in both urban and rural markets.

Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu's second-largest city and a prominent educational and industrial hub, presents a particularly significant market for stationery products. Home to hundreds of schools, colleges, engineering institutions, and a thriving professional community,

Coimbatore supports a diverse and discerning stationery consumer base. The city's cosmopolitan character and the presence of both budget-conscious student buyers and quality-focused professional consumers make it an ideal location for studying consumer satisfaction patterns with stationery brands. This study systematically examines the level of customer satisfaction with DOMS stationery products among consumers in Coimbatore district, identifying both the brand's strengths and areas requiring strategic improvement.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The Indian stationery market is characterised by intense competition from both domestic brands such as Camlin, Classmate, and Reynolds and international players like Staedtler, Maped, and Faber-Castell. In this highly competitive environment, customer satisfaction serves as the fundamental driver of brand loyalty, repeat purchase behaviour, and positive word-of-mouth advocacy. While DOMS has established a strong national brand presence, the specific satisfaction levels and perception patterns of consumers in Coimbatore district, which is a key market in South India, have not been comprehensively studied.

Understanding the dimensions of customer satisfaction that are most critical to Coimbatore consumers, including product quality, pricing fairness, packaging design, retail availability, product variety, and after-purchase support, is essential for DOMS to tailor its marketing and distribution strategies effectively for this market. The absence of empirical research on DOMS customer satisfaction in Coimbatore limits the ability of the brand's regional distributors and marketing teams to make evidence-based decisions. This study addresses this gap by providing a

detailed, data-driven assessment of customer satisfaction levels and their determinants among DOMS users in Coimbatore district.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the demographic and usage profile of DOMS stationery product consumers in Coimbatore district and understand their purchasing patterns.
- To measure the level of customer satisfaction with DOMS stationery products across key dimensions including product quality, pricing, packaging, availability, variety, and brand image.
- To identify the most and least satisfying attributes of DOMS stationery products from the perspective of Coimbatore consumers.
- To analyse the relationship between demographic variables and customer satisfaction levels with DOMS stationery products.
- To provide strategic recommendations to DOMS Industries and its distributors for enhancing customer satisfaction and strengthening brand loyalty in the Coimbatore market.

III. COMPANY PROFILE

DOMS Industries Pvt. Ltd. was founded in 1975 by the Raveshia family in Umbergaon, Gujarat, beginning its journey as a pencil manufacturer before expanding into a comprehensive stationery conglomerate. The company's name DOMS is derived from the initials of its founding family members, representing a legacy of quality craftsmanship and consumer trust. Over five decades, DOMS has evolved from a domestic pencil manufacturer into India's second-largest writing instruments company, with a strong export presence spanning over 45 countries across Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe.

DOMS operates state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities equipped with modern production technology and strict quality control systems conforming to international standards. The company's product portfolio is organised into four primary categories: writing instruments including pencils and pens, scholastic accessories including geometry sets and erasers, art materials including sketch pens, crayons, and pastels, and office stationery. DOMS products are particularly well-regarded for their superior graphite quality in pencils, smooth writing experience in gel pens, and vibrant colour reproduction in art supplies, making them a preferred choice across educational institutions in India.

In Coimbatore, DOMS maintains an active distribution network servicing retail stationery stores, supermarkets, educational institution canteens, and online retail platforms. The brand's competitive pricing strategy, which positions it as a premium quality yet affordably priced alternative to both domestic and international competitors, has earned it significant market share among Coimbatore's student population and professional community. DOMS's recent

listing on the Indian stock exchanges in 2023 and its strategic partnership with the global stationery giant FILA Group have further strengthened its brand credibility and expansion capabilities.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sivakumar, N., and Jayapriya, R. (2018) studied stationery brand preferences among school students in Tamil Nadu. They found that DOMS and Camlin are the most popular brands. DOMS is especially strong in pencils and geometry boxes. The study also showed that teachers, parents, and friends influence students' choices. This means word-of-mouth and guidance from others are very important in this market.

Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, in their book *Marketing Management* (2016), explain that customer satisfaction is very important for business success. According to them, satisfied customers stay loyal, recommend the brand, and are less sensitive to price. This is important in the stationery market because many brands are available and switching is easy. So, companies like DOMS must keep customers satisfied to grow.

Venkatesh, R., and Balaji, M.S. (2012) studied how people buy stationery products in India. They found that packaging, brand visibility, and shelf placement influence buying decisions. Attractive packaging helps in first-time purchases, especially among students. But for repeat purchases, product quality and reliability are more important.

Mital, A., and Ramaswamy, S. (2010) studied customer satisfaction with educational stationery in India. They found that quality and price are the most important factors affecting satisfaction. Once students are happy with a product, they usually continue using the same brand. So, the first experience with the product is very important.

Richard L. Oliver, in his work on customer satisfaction (1980), introduced the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory. He explained that satisfaction depends on whether the product meets expectations. If performance is equal to or better than expected, customers are satisfied; if not, they are dissatisfied. This idea is useful in understanding how customers feel about stationery products.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design to systematically document, measure, and analyse customer satisfaction levels with DOMS stationery products among consumers in Coimbatore district. The descriptive design is suitable for this study as it aims to present an accurate and comprehensive picture of consumer perceptions without imposing experimental conditions.

2. Data Collection

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 120 respondents comprising students at various educational levels, teachers, parents purchasing stationery for their children, and working professionals in Coimbatore district. The questionnaire included questions on respondent demographics, DOMS product usage patterns, satisfaction ratings across six key dimensions on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Highly Dissatisfied to 5 = Highly Satisfied), and overall satisfaction and loyalty intentions. Secondary data were gathered from DOMS company publications, the Ministry of Education reports on the stationery industry, research journals on consumer behaviour, and trade periodicals.

3. Sampling Method and Sample Size

Convenient sampling technique was used to identify and approach 120 respondents from schools, colleges, stationery retail outlets, and commercial establishments across various localities in Coimbatore district including R.S. Puram, Gandhipuram, Saibaba Colony, Peelamedu, and Singanallur. The sample was designed to include a proportional mix of student, teacher, parent, and professional consumer categories to capture the full spectrum of DOMS's target customer segments.

4. Tools for Analysis

Data were analysed using simple percentage analysis to describe the demographic and usage profile of respondents, weighted average method to rank satisfaction across product attributes, and the chi-square test of independence to examine associations between demographic variables and satisfaction levels. Mean satisfaction scores were computed for each of the six satisfaction dimensions to enable comparative dimensional analysis.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Demographic and Usage Profile of Respondents – DOMS Stationery Users, Coimbatore (n = 120)

| Profile Variable | Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 58 | 48.3 |
| | Female | 62 | 51.7 |
| Age Group | Below 15 years | 22 | 18.3 |
| | 15 – 25 years | 46 | 38.3 |
| | 26 – 40 years | 32 | 26.7 |
| | Above 40 years | 20 | 16.7 |
| Occupation | School Student | 34 | 28.3 |

| Profile Variable | Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| | College Student | 30 | 25.0 |
| | Teacher / Educator | 22 | 18.3 |
| | Working Professional | 20 | 16.7 |
| | Parent / Homemaker | 14 | 11.7 |
| Monthly Expenditure on Stationery (Rs.) | Below Rs. 200 | 30 | 25.0 |
| | Rs. 200 – Rs. 500 | 54 | 45.0 |
| | Rs. 501 – Rs. 1,000 | 24 | 20.0 |
| | Above Rs. 1,000 | 12 | 10.0 |
| DOMS Products Most Used | Pencils | 48 | 40.0 |
| | Pens (Gel / Ball) | 30 | 25.0 |
| | Art Supplies | 24 | 20.0 |
| | Geometry Sets | 18 | 15.0 |

Interpretation: The demographic profile shows a near-equal gender distribution with a slight female majority (51.7%), reflecting the broad appeal of DOMS products across genders. The 15-25 age group constitutes the largest consumer segment (38.3%), consistent with DOMS's strong positioning in the student market. School and college students together represent 53.3% of respondents, confirming the scholastic segment as DOMS's primary consumer base in Coimbatore. A majority of respondents (45%) spend between Rs. 200 and Rs. 500 per month on stationery, indicating a moderate expenditure level. Pencils are the most widely used DOMS product category (40%), reflecting the brand's heritage strength and market leadership in the writing instruments segment.

Table 2: Customer Satisfaction Scores Across DOMS Product Dimensions (n = 120)

| Satisfaction Dimension | Highly Satisfied (%) | Satisfied (%) | Neutral (%) | Dissatisfied (%) | Mean Score |
|------------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| Product Quality | 48.3 | 35.0 | 10.0 | 6.7 | 4.25 |

| Satisfaction Dimension | Highly Satisfied (%) | Satisfied (%) | Neutral (%) | Dissatisfied (%) | Mean Score |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| Price and Value for Money | 41.7 | 38.3 | 13.3 | 6.7 | 4.15 |
| Product Variety and Range | 30.0 | 36.7 | 21.7 | 11.6 | 3.85 |
| Packaging Design and Appeal | 35.0 | 38.3 | 18.3 | 8.4 | 4.00 |
| Retail Availability | 28.3 | 35.0 | 23.3 | 13.4 | 3.78 |
| Brand Image and Reputation | 43.3 | 36.7 | 13.3 | 6.7 | 4.16 |

Interpretation: Product quality emerges as the highest-rated satisfaction dimension (mean = 4.25), with 83.3% of respondents either satisfied or highly satisfied, underscoring DOMS's reputation for consistent product quality in the stationery market. Brand image and reputation (mean = 4.16) and price-value ratio (mean = 4.15) also receive high ratings, reflecting strong consumer confidence in the DOMS brand and its competitive pricing strategy. Packaging design (mean = 4.00) receives moderately positive ratings. Product variety (mean = 3.85) and retail availability (mean = 3.78) are the two dimensions with the lowest satisfaction scores, indicating that consumers in Coimbatore desire a wider premium product range and more consistent retail stock availability across the district.

Table 3: Overall Customer Satisfaction Level with DOMS Stationery Products (n = 120)

| Overall Satisfaction Level | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Highly Satisfied | 50 | 41.7 |
| Satisfied | 44 | 36.7 |
| Neutral | 16 | 13.3 |
| Dissatisfied | 8 | 6.7 |
| Highly Dissatisfied | 2 | 1.6 |
| Total | 120 | 100.0 |

Interpretation: An overwhelming 78.4% of respondents reported being either satisfied or highly satisfied with DOMS stationery products overall, affirming the brand's strong performance in the Coimbatore market. Only 8.3% expressed dissatisfaction, while 13.3% remained neutral. These figures represent a healthy satisfaction index for a consumer goods brand in a competitive market segment.

The 41.7% proportion of highly satisfied customers is particularly significant, as this segment is most likely to exhibit brand loyalty behaviour, recommend DOMS products to peers and family, and exhibit resistance to competitive brand switching.

Table 4: Weighted Average Ranking of DOMS Product Satisfaction Attributes (n = 120)

| Product Satisfaction Attribute | Weighted Average Score | Rank |
|---|------------------------|------|
| Smooth and consistent writing quality of pencils | 4.42 | 1 |
| Durability and break resistance of pencil lead | 4.35 | 2 |
| Value for money across all product categories | 4.28 | 3 |
| Vibrant colour quality of sketch pens and crayons | 4.22 | 4 |
| Accuracy and quality of geometry instruments | 4.18 | 5 |
| Attractive and child-friendly packaging design | 4.10 | 6 |
| Brand trust and reliability of DOMS products | 4.08 | 7 |
| Smooth ink flow of gel pens and ball pens | 3.98 | 8 |
| Variety of colours in art supply product range | 3.85 | 9 |
| Availability in nearby stationery shops | 3.82 | 10 |
| Premium product range for professional use | 3.72 | 11 |
| Online availability and e-commerce delivery speed | 3.65 | 12 |

Interpretation: The weighted average ranking highlights that DOMS's core pencil product attributes, including smooth writing quality (4.42) and lead durability (4.35), are the highest-rated satisfaction drivers among Coimbatore consumers, consistent with the brand's heritage positioning as India's premier pencil manufacturer. Value for money (4.28) and colour quality in art supplies (4.22) also rank highly. At the lower end, online availability and e-commerce delivery speed (3.65), the premium professional product range (3.72), and retail availability in nearby stores (3.82) indicate areas where DOMS's distribution and product development strategies need strengthening to meet evolving consumer expectations in Coimbatore.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test – Association Between Demographic Variables and Overall Customer Satisfaction

| Variable | Chi-Square Value | Degrees of Freedom | p-Value | Significance |
|--|------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Age Group vs. Overall Satisfaction | 13.421 | 12 | 0.009 | Significant |
| Occupation vs. Product Quality Satisfaction | 16.234 | 12 | 0.003 | Significant |
| Monthly Expenditure vs. Variety Satisfaction | 11.872 | 9 | 0.018 | Significant |
| Gender vs. Overall Satisfaction | 3.215 | 4 | 0.522 | Not Significant |

Interpretation: The chi-square results reveal significant associations between key demographic variables and satisfaction dimensions. Age group significantly influences overall satisfaction ($p = 0.009$), with school-age consumers (below 15) reporting the highest satisfaction levels due to their frequent use of DOMS pencils and basic stationery. Occupation significantly affects product quality satisfaction ($p = 0.003$), with teachers and educators expressing higher quality expectations and more nuanced evaluations of writing instrument performance. Monthly stationery expenditure is significantly associated with satisfaction in product variety ($p = 0.018$), with higher-spending consumers expressing greater desire for premium and specialised DOMS product variants. Gender, however, does not significantly influence overall satisfaction ($p = 0.522$), confirming that DOMS products deliver consistent satisfaction across male and female consumer segments in Coimbatore.

Table 6: Reasons for Brand Preference – DOMS vs. Competing Stationery Brands (n = 120)

| Reason for Preferring DOMS | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Superior product quality | 42 | 35.0 |
| Affordable and competitive pricing | 30 | 25.0 |
| Wide range of products | 18 | 15.0 |

| Reason for Preferring DOMS | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Brand trust and reliability | 15 | 12.5 |
| Teacher / Parent recommendation | 9 | 7.5 |
| Attractive packaging and design | 6 | 5.0 |
| Total | 120 | 100.0 |

Interpretation: Product quality is the primary driver of brand preference for DOMS among Coimbatore consumers (35%), followed by competitive pricing (25%) and wide product range (15%). Brand trust accounts for 12.5% of brand preference citations, while teacher and parent recommendations contribute 7.5%, highlighting the importance of institutional advocacy and word-of-mouth in driving DOMS brand selection. Packaging design, while aesthetically appreciated, is a relatively minor driver of brand preference (5%), suggesting that DOMS's brand equity is firmly grounded in functional product performance rather than purely aesthetic attributes.

Findings

The study on customer satisfaction with DOMS stationery products in Coimbatore district has yielded comprehensive and actionable findings. The consumer base for DOMS products in Coimbatore is demographically diverse, with a slight female majority and a concentration in the student segment, particularly the 15-25 age group. Pencils remain the most widely used DOMS product category, while art supplies represent a growing usage segment, particularly among college-age consumers and creative professionals.

Product quality consistently emerges as the standout satisfaction driver across all analysis methods, with a mean satisfaction score of 4.25 and a weighted average of 4.42 for pencil writing quality. These findings confirm that DOMS's heritage-driven quality positioning resonates strongly with Coimbatore consumers. Brand image and price-value ratio are similarly strong performers, collectively reinforcing DOMS's competitive value proposition in the Coimbatore stationery market. An outstanding 78.4% of respondents reported overall satisfaction, with 41.7% in the highly satisfied category, reflecting a brand performance well above category norms. Retail availability and online purchase experience are identified as the two weakest satisfaction dimensions, with Coimbatore consumers expressing frustration with inconsistent stock availability at nearby retail outlets and slower-than-expected e-commerce delivery speeds. Product variety, particularly in the premium and professional stationery segment, also presents a gap between consumer expectations and actual product experience. Chi-square analysis confirms that age, occupation, and expenditure level are significant moderators of satisfaction across

specific product dimensions, providing important segmentation insights for DOMS's Coimbatore marketing strategy. Gender does not significantly influence overall satisfaction, affirming DOMS's broad cross-gender appeal.

Suggestions

- DOMS should improve product availability in all local stationery shops in Coimbatore. They can do this by maintaining proper stock levels and improving their distribution system.
- The company should introduce more premium products like high-quality pens, mechanical pencils, and art supplies to attract professionals, teachers, and artists.
- DOMS should focus more on online sales by improving delivery speed and product listings on platforms like Amazon and Flipkart. Digital marketing can also help attract more students and young customers.
- Since teachers and parents influence buying decisions, DOMS should conduct school programs, competitions, and events to promote their products.
- The company can introduce loyalty programs, art clubs, and brand ambassador initiatives to keep customers engaged and increase brand loyalty.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study clearly shows that customers in Coimbatore are highly satisfied with DOMS stationery products. The main reasons for this satisfaction are good product quality, affordable pricing, and strong brand trust. DOMS has successfully built a positive image among students, teachers, and other users.

At the same time, the study also highlights a few areas where improvement is needed. Issues such as limited product availability in some local shops, a less smooth online shopping experience, and fewer options in premium product categories were identified. By focusing on these areas, DOMS can further improve customer satisfaction.

The study also indicates that all types of customers, regardless of age or gender, are generally happy with DOMS products. However, there is a good opportunity to attract higher-end customers like professionals and artists by introducing more advanced and premium stationery products.

Overall, DOMS is in a strong position in the Coimbatore market. If the company continues to maintain its quality, improves distribution, expands its product range, and strengthens customer relationships, it can achieve even greater growth. In the future, DOMS can become an even more preferred brand by adapting to changing customer needs and increasing its presence in both offline and online markets.

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