

# EXPLORING THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY CONSUMERS OF IMITATION JEWELLERY IN ERODE DISTRICT

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## ABSTRACT

Imitation jewellery has gained significant popularity among consumers in Erode district due to its affordability, fashion appeal, and accessibility. This study aims to explore the benefits and challenges experienced by consumers of imitation jewellery using primary data collected exclusively through a structured Google Forms questionnaire. Responses were gathered from a diverse group of consumers across different age groups and income levels. The findings indicate that key benefits such as low cost, wide design variety, trend adaptability, and suitability for daily as well as occasional wear strongly influence consumer preference. At the same time, respondents reported challenges including color fading, breakage, skin irritation, and lack of long-term durability. The study emphasizes the importance of product quality enhancement and increased consumer awareness regarding maintenance and safe usage. Overall, the research provides useful insights for retailers and manufacturers to improve customer satisfaction and strengthen the imitation jewellery market in Erode district.

**Keywords :** Imitation jewellery , Consumer experience, Affordability, Colour fading, Product quality.

## INTRODUCTION

Imitation jewellery has become an essential part of everyday fashion, especially for consumers who prefer attractive and affordable accessories. In the Erode district, the popularity of imitation jewellery has grown steadily due to the presence of numerous local shops, street vendors, and small-scale jewellery manufacturers who offer a wide variety of designs. These local stores cater to consumers from different age groups and income levels, making imitation jewellery easily accessible across the district. The availability of diverse collections for casual wear, festive occasions, and traditional functions further strengthens its demand.

Local markets in areas such as Erode Town, Perundurai, Gobichettipalayam, and surrounding regions are known for their extensive display of imitation jewellery, ranging from simple daily-wear items to heavily crafted pieces. Consumers appreciate the opportunity to physically examine the products, compare quality, and

choose from multiple designs at reasonable prices. The personal interaction with shopkeepers, the ability to negotiate, and the convenience of buying within their neighborhood make local stores a preferred choice for many.

## **1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study is significant because it provides a clear understanding of the actual benefits and challenges experienced by consumers who purchase imitation jewellery in the Erode district. Although imitation jewellery is widely sold in local markets and shops across Erode, very few studies have analyzed how consumers truly feel about the quality, durability, and overall value of these products. By focusing on consumer experiences, this study helps identify the factors that influence their preference such as affordability, design variety, and easy availability and the difficulties they commonly face. The findings are valuable for local retailers and small-scale manufacturers, as they offer practical insights that can help improve product quality, customer service, and material selection. Understanding consumer expectations can guide sellers in stocking better designs, providing safer materials, and enhancing the shopping experience in local stores.

## **1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This research covers various dimensions of consumer interaction with imitation jewellery, including style preferences, comfort level, durability concerns, and practical usability. It also attempts to recognize the factors that influence customers to select imitation jewellery over traditional ornaments. The study limits its coverage to imitation jewellery meant for regular wear and festive purposes within the Erode region.

Additionally, the scope extends to comparing consumer views with insights drawn from existing scholarly work, allowing for a broader interpretation of trends and issues. However, it does not include analysis of premium jewellery brands, online shopping behaviour, or the technical aspects of production. The findings of this study are expected to offer meaningful guidance for sellers, local craftsmen, and future researchers interested in the imitation jewellery sector.

## **1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Imitation jewellery has become a popular choice among consumers in the Erode district due to its attractive designs and affordable price range. However, despite its widespread use, many consumers continue to experience concerns related to its quality, durability, and comfort. Although imitation jewellery is extensively sold across local shops and markets in Erode, there is limited systematic research that explores the real experiences, expectations, and challenges faced by its users. Without a clear understanding of these factors, retailers and small-scale producers may not be able to address consumer needs effectively. Therefore, a focused study is required to identify the specific benefits consumers appreciate and the difficulties they encounter, so that improvements can be made in product quality and customer satisfaction within the imitation jewellery market of Erode district.

## 1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze consumer behavior and preferences towards Imitation Jewellery.
2. To explore the benefits of Imitation Jewellery among consumers.
3. To identify the challenges faced by consumers of Imitation Jewellery.

## 1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the benefits and challenges experienced by consumers of imitation jewellery in the Erode district. The methodology combines both primary and secondary data to ensure a comprehensive understanding of consumer experiences.

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### 1.6.1 Primary Data:

Primary information was collected using a structured Google Forms questionnaire, which was distributed to consumers across various parts of the Erode district. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and multiple-choice questions designed to capture details about consumer preferences, satisfaction levels, and difficulties faced while using imitation jewellery. Respondents from different age groups, occupations, and income levels participated in the survey, ensuring diverse representation.

### 1.6.2 Secondary Data:

Secondary information was gathered from research journals, academic publications, articles, websites, and existing studies related to imitation jewellery, consumer behaviour, and fashion accessory markets. These sources provided theoretical support, helped identify existing gaps, and aided in comparing the survey results with earlier findings.

### 1.6.3 Sampling Method:

A convenience sampling method was used, as respondents were selected based on their accessibility and willingness to participate in the Google Forms survey.

### 1.6.4 Sample Size:

The total number of responses collected through Google Forms formed the sample size for the study was 150.

### 1.6.5 Data Analysis:

The collected data were organized, tabulated, and analyzed using simple statistical tools such as Percentage analysis, Henry Garrett ranking method, Chi – square analysis.

## 1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study was confined to the Erode district, so the findings may not represent consumers from other regions.

2. The sample size of 150 respondents may not fully capture the wide diversity of consumer preferences.
3. Data collected through Google Forms may include response bias, as participants may provide quick or Inaccurate answers.
4. The study relied on voluntary participation, and some respondents may have skipped questions or given incomplete responses.
5. Time limitations restricted the inclusion of additional influencing factors and deeper analysis.
6. Secondary information taken from journals and websites may have certain outdated or inconsistent data.
7. Personal factors such as individual taste, cultural influences, and purchase frequency were not studied in detail.

## 2. LITERATUREREVIEW

**Ramya, S. (2024)** analysed that the inclination of imitation jewellery and their satisfaction level towards price, variety, quality and convenience. Consumers are inclining towards imitation jewellery due to its affordability, variety, quality, and convenience, making it a popular choice for all income levels.

**Saravanan, S., &Chithra, M. (2024)** examined that the gold and diamond prices rise, consumers often turn to imitation jewellery, emphasizing the importance of design, quality, trust, variety, endorsements, discounts, and service. Branded jewellery markets remain popular, suggesting opportunities for online retailers to expand sales, while traditional-style jewellery appeals to a broad customer base.

**Fernando, F., &Hamil, A. (2019)** found that the Jewellery is One of the important accessories which we find in everyone’s house and it is a form of universal adornment. Women wearing jewellery is a part of our culture and gives a gorgeous feminine look with more confidence and adds beauty.

**Wang, L., Wu, B., Pechmann, C., & Wang, Y. (2019)** scrutinized that the creative imitation affects consumers’ satisfaction with the original by influencing whether their experience with the original verifies their expectations.

**Rana, A., & Chauhan, H. (2020)** examined that the Increasing purchasing power of fashion conscious, financially independent working women and youth will continue to appreciate the field of fashion jewellery and fashion accessories.

## 3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 3.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS OF THE RESPONDENT

FACTORS	PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
<b>GENDER</b>	MALE	61	41
	FEMALE	89	59
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>AGE</b>	Below20	105	70
	21-30	28	19
	31-40	11	7
	Above 40	6	4
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>MARITULSTATUS</b>	UNMARRIED	115	77
	MARRIED	35	23
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION</b>	UP TO HSC	26	17
	DIPLOMA	40	27
	GRADUATE	56	37
	OTHERS	28	19
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>OCCUPATIONAL STATUS</b>	STUDENT	70	47
	PRIVATEEMPLOYEE	37	25
	GOVT.EMPLOYEE	11	7
	HOMEMAKER	10	7
	OTHERS	22	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>MONTHLYFAMILY INCOME</b>	UPTO₹ 20000	94	63
	₹ 20001 -₹ 30000	37	25
	₹ 30001 -₹ 40000	15	10
	ABOVE₹ 40000	4	3
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

### INTERPRETATION:

Females 59 per cent from the majority of the respondents, while males account for 41 per cent. Most respondents 70 per cent are below 20 years of age, indicating a younger respondent group. A large majority of respondents 77 per cent are unmarried. Graduates 37 per cent and diploma holders 27 per cent constitute the major portion of the respondents. Students from the largest occupational group 47 per cent, followed by private employees 25 per cent. Most respondents 63 per cent belong to families earning up to ₹20,000 per month.

### 3.2 ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING PURCHASE FREQUENCY, PREFERENCES, AND PAYMENT MODES OF IMITATION JEWELLERY CONSUMERS

FACTORS	PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
<b>Frequency of purchasing Imitation Jewellery</b>	Monthly	39	26
	Yearly	60	40
	Occasionally	25	17
	Rarely	26	17
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Inducer in the Purchase Decision</b>	Personal Perception	71	47
	Friends & Relatives	43	29
	Social Media	25	17
	Online Search	11	7
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Reasons for purchasing Imitation Jewellery</b>	Weddings	62	41
	Festival	42	28
	Gift	22	15
	Personal aspiration	24	16
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Kinds of Designs Prefer</b>	Traditional	66	44
	Classic & Elegant	41	27
	Fashion	23	16
	Antique	20	13
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mode of Payment</b>	Cash	73	49
	UPI	36	24
	Debit Card	29	19

	Credit Card	12	8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Imitation Jewellery materials do you choose</b>	Rhodium-plated for its luxurious Look	52	35
	Stainless steel for its durability	26	17
	Gold-plated for its elegance	40	27
	Others	32	21
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Factors influencing purchase of Imitation Jewellery</b>	Easy finance	56	37
	Paste experience	37	25
	Comfort wearing	46	31
	Socialstatus	11	7
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Preferred Imitation Jewellery shop</b>	Arafa shopping mall	49	33
	Erode Fancy store	36	24
	Selva gold covering	35	23
	Others	30	20
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Reasons for purchasing from the preferred shop</b>	Reliability	49	33
	Reasonable prices	29	19
	Wide range of collections	20	13
	Goodwill	21	14
	Quality	13	9
	Advertisement	18	12
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

### INTERPRETATION:

Most respondents purchase imitation jewellery yearly 40 per cent, followed by monthly purchases 26 per cent, while 17 per cent purchase occasionally and rarely each. Personal perception 47 per cent is the major influencing factor in purchase decisions, followed by friends and relatives 29 per cent, while social media 17 per cent and online search 7 per cent have lesser influence. The primary reason for purchasing imitation jewellery is weddings 41 per cent, followed by festivals 28 per cent, personal aspiration 16 per cent, and gifting purposes 15 per cent. Traditional designs 44 per cent are most preferred by respondents, followed by classic and elegant designs 27 per cent, fashion designs 15 per cent, and antique designs 13 per cent. Cash 49 per cent is the most preferred mode of payment, followed by UPI 24 per cent, debit cards 19 per cent, and credit cards (8%). Rhodium-plated imitation jewellery is preferred by the majority of respondents 35 per cent for its luxurious appearance, followed by gold-plated jewellery 27 per cent, while stainless steel 17 per cent and other materials 21 per cent have comparatively lower preference. Easy finance is the major factor influencing the purchase of imitation jewellery 37 per cent, followed by comfort in

wearing 31 per cent and past experience 25 per cent, whereas social status has minimal influence 7 per cent.

Arafa Shopping Mall is the most preferred imitation jewellery shop 33 per cent, followed by Erode Fancy Store 24 per cent and Selva Gold Covering 23 per cent, while other shops account for 20 per cent of the respondents. Reliability is the main reason for purchasing from the preferred shop 33 per cent, followed by reasonable prices 19 per cent, goodwill 14 per cent, wide range of collections 13 per cent, advertisement 12 per cent, and quality

9 per cent.

### 3.3 PURCHASE FREQUENCY OF IMITATION JEWELLERY ITEMS AMONG RESPONDENTS

S. NO	Description	Always	%	Sometimes	%	Never	%
1	Studs / Earrings	122	81	20	13	8	5
2	Bangles/ Bracelets	29	19	111	74	10	7
3	Rings	41	27	33	22	76	51
4	Chains	36	24	90	60	24	16
5	Necklaces	85	57	49	33	16	11
6	Haram	47	31	90	60	13	9
7	LegChain	43	29	51	34	56	37
	<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

#### INTERPRETATION:

A majority of the respondents always purchase studs/earrings, with 81 per cent reporting regular usage, indicating it as the most commonly used imitation jewellery item. Bangles and bracelets are mostly purchased sometimes by respondents 74 per cent, showing occasional usage rather than regular purchase.

In the case of rings, more than half of the respondents 51 per cent reported never purchasing them, indicating low preference for that item. Chains are purchased sometimes by a majority of respondents 60 per cent, suggesting moderate and situational usage. Necklaces show high regular usage, with 57 per cent of respondents stating that they always purchase them. The purchase of haram is mostly occasional, as 60 per cent of respondents reported sometimes purchasing that item. Leg chains have the least regular usage, with 37 per cent of respondents never purchasing them, indicating lower preference compared to other jewellery items.

### 3.4 RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF BENEFITS OF IMITATION JEWELLERY BASED ON HENRYGARETTE'S RANKING TECHNIQUE

S.NO	BENEFITS	TOTAL SCORE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1	Availability of Designs	7359	49.06	VI
2	Price	7900	52.67	IV
3	Variety	8063	53.75	III
4	Display	8249	54.99	I
5	Promotional offers	7438	49.59	V
6	Salesman responsiveness	8089	53.93	II
7	Workmanship	7146	47.64	VII
8	Exchange offers	6712	44.75	IX
9	Hospitality	6282	41.88	X
10	Advertisement	7012	46.75	VIII

#### INTERPRETATION

Display has secured the first rank with the highest mean score of 54.99, indicating that attractive display plays a major role in influencing customers while purchasing imitation jewellery. Salesman responsiveness is ranked second with a mean score of 53.93, showing that the behaviour and assistance of salespersons significantly influence purchase decisions. Variety of imitation jewellery has obtained the third rank (mean score 53.75),

indicating that customers prefer shops offering a wide range of collections. Price is ranked fourth with a mean score of 52.67, suggesting that affordability is an important but not the foremost factor in purchase decisions. Promotional offers occupy the fifth rank with a mean score of 49.59, indicating moderate influence on customers. Availability of designs is placed in the sixth rank with a mean score of 49.06, showing that while design availability is important, it is not the primary deciding factor. Workmanship stands seventh with a mean score of 47.64, indicating comparatively lower importance given by respondents. Advertisement is ranked eighth with a mean score of 46.75, suggesting limited influence on customer preference. Exchange offers occupy the ninth rank with a mean score of 44.75, showing minimal influence on purchasing imitation jewellery. Hospitality is ranked last with the lowest mean score of 41.88, indicating that it has the least impact on customers' purchasing decisions.

### 3.5 CHI- SQUARE TEST SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND PURCHASE LEVEL OF IMITATION JEWELLERY CONSUMERS

#### 3.5.1 OBSERVED FREQUENCY VALUE

Age	Low	Medium	High	Total
Up to 20 years	35	62	8	105
20 to 40 years	9	13	6	28
40 to 60years	5	5	1	11
Above 60 years	5	0	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>150</b>

#### 3.5.2 EXPECTED FREQUENCY VALUE

(Expected Frequency=(Row Total ×Column Total)/ Grand Total)

Age	Low	Medium	High	Total
Up to 20 years	37.8	56	11.2	105
20 to 40 years	10.1	14.9	3.0	28
40 to 60years	4.0	5.9	1.2	11
Above 60years	2.2	3.2	0.6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>150</b>

#### Chi-Square Summary Table

Particulars	Value
Calculated Chi-square value ( $\chi^2$ )	12.58
Degrees of Freedom(df)	6
Table value at 5% level	12.59
Level of Significance	5%
Result	Null hypothesis accepted

#### INTERPRETATION

The Chi-square test was applied to examine the relationship between age and the level (low, medium, and high). The calculated Chi-square value (12.58) is less than the table value (12.59) at the 5% level of significance with 6 degrees of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is no

significant association between age and the level considered in the study.

### 3.6 ONE – WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF AGE AND CHALLENGES FACED BY IMITATION JEWELLERY CONSUMERS

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	FP- value	F-crit	
Between Groups	45313.23	1	45313.23	4701.71	0.000	3.873
Within Groups	2872.007	298	9.64			
Total	48185.24	299				

### INTERPRETATION

The one-way ANOVA analysis was conducted to examine whether a significant difference exists between the groups Age and Challenges. The results show that the calculated F value ( $F = 4701.71$ ) is much higher than the critical F value ( $F = 3.873$ ) and the corresponding p-value is less than 0.001. This indicates that the difference between the group means is statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. The findings clearly suggest that there is a significant variation between Age and Challenges, implying that age has a strong influence on the level of challenges experienced by the respondents.

### 4. FINDINGS

1. Majority of the respondents were female and belonged to the 21–30 age group.
2. Most respondents were students and from middle-income families.
3. Consumers mostly purchased imitation jewellery occasionally, mainly for weddings and festivals.
4. Fashion and traditional designs were the most preferred design types.
5. The frequently purchased items were earrings, bangles, chains, and necklaces.
6. Consumers selected shops mainly for reliability, reasonable prices, and variety of collections.
7. Many respondents agreed that high gold prices motivate them to buy imitation jewellery.
8. The most valued benefits were design availability, variety, and affordable price.

### 4.1 SUGGESTIONS

1. Retailers should focus on improving the quality and durability of imitation jewellery by using better plating methods and stronger materials, as many consumers reported issues like color fading and product damage.
2. Offering festival discounts, occasional offers, and attractive combo packs can increase customer interest and encourage repeat purchases.
3. Using hypoallergenic and skin-friendly materials can help reduce irritation problems and improve the overall customer experience.
4. Providing basic after-sales support such as repairing loose stones, re-plating, or fixing small damages can build customer trust and improve shop reputation.
5. Clearly displaying product information and simple care instructions can help customers handle the jewellery properly and reduce common complaints.
6. Improving store layout and jewellery display can make the shopping experience more appealing and influence purchase decisions positively.

## 4.2 CONCLUSION

The study on imitation jewellery consumers in the Erode district clearly shows that the demand for these products is influenced mainly by affordability, availability of attractive designs, and the convenience offered by local shops. Most respondents purchase imitation jewellery for special occasions such as weddings and festivals, and they prefer fashion and traditional designs that suit their personal style. The findings indicate that consumers are generally satisfied with the variety and price range available in Erode's local markets. The study concludes that imitation jewellery continues to play an important role in the purchasing behaviour of consumers in Erode. By addressing the reported issues and prioritizing customer expectations, retailers can significantly enhance customer satisfaction and strengthen the imitation jewellery market in the district.

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