



GLITTER BEYOND GOLD: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL DRIVERS OF GOLD ORNAMENT PURCHASES

¹Dr.K.Radha, ²Dr.S.Saranya and ³Mr.P.Arulkumar

¹Assistant Professor, ²Assistant Professor and ³Assistant Professor
Department of Commerce (A&F), Sona College of Arts and Science, Salem-636005.

Abstract: Gold has long transcended its role as a precious metal to become a powerful symbol of wealth, tradition, identity, and emotion. This article explores the psychological and emotional dimensions of gold ornamentation, focusing on how gold influences the perceptions, desires, and behaviors of its admirers. Beyond its physical attributes—such as purity, craftsmanship, and value—gold ornaments evoke deep emotional responses, often representing prosperity, security, cultural pride, and personal identity. By examining the intricate relationship between gold and the human psyche, this study offers insights into consumer motivations, cultural significance, and the enduring allure of gold in shaping social and personal meaning. In this paper, a study was conducted to examine how psychological and emotional factors influence gold ornament purchasing behavior. Using a well-structured questionnaire, responses were collected from 134 participants through the convenience sampling method. The data was analyzed using simple percentage, ANOVA, Chi-square, and T-test. The results reveal that gold ornaments hold significant psychological and emotional value, positively impacting consumer perceptions, decision-making, and attachment to gold.

Key Words: Gold, Ornaments, Purchase perception, Perceived quality, Consumer motivation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Gold, a symbol of timeless elegance and prestige, holds value far beyond its physical form. Across generations and cultures, it has represented wealth, beauty, and power. This study explores the unique psychological impact gold ornaments have on individuals, examining how elements like purity, design, and tradition influence human emotions, choices, and perceptions. Gold is not just a material possession it is a cultural icon deeply rooted in customs, rituals, and identity. For many buyers, gold ornaments are more than decorative items they are expressions of personal pride, social status, and emotional security. Wearing gold can evoke feelings of confidence, nostalgia, and fulfillment, making it a powerful tool for self-expression. These ornaments often become an extension of one's personality, reflecting aspirations and life values. They are closely linked with meaningful life events such as weddings, festivals, and inheritances, enhancing their emotional value.

This research aims to uncover the psychological bonds people form with gold, especially among those who are deeply fascinated by it. Understanding the emotional motivations behind gold purchases helps reveal broader trends in consumer behavior and marketing strategies. Ultimately, gold remains not only a precious metal but also a symbol of tradition, emotion, and identity captivating hearts as much as it dazzles the eye.

II. SCOPE OF STUDY

This study delves into the behavioral patterns of gold ornament buyers by examining the impact of demographic, cultural, emotional, and financial factors. It highlights how personal beliefs, family traditions, and cultural values deeply influence gold purchasing decisions. The research also explores consumer perceptions of pricing elements such as making charges and resale value, while assessing how often customers purchase gold and their preferred payment methods. Special attention is given

to the role of customer service in enhancing satisfaction and fostering long-term loyalty. Additionally, the study investigates how product attributes like design, quality, and uniqueness affect purchase choices, emphasizing the importance of differentiation in a competitive market. It also considers the growing influence of social media and promotional strategies on consumer preferences. By combining traditional influences with modern trends, this research offers practical insights for retailers and marketers, contributing to the broader understanding of consumer behavior in the luxury and gold ornament industry.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite gold's cultural significance and investment appeal, limited research exists on the diverse factors shaping consumer purchasing behavior. The influence of demographics, such as age, gender, and income, on buying patterns remains unclear, as does the role of tradition, cultural values, and modern market trends like social media. Price fluctuations, perceptions of making charges, and satisfaction with resale value continue to affect purchase intentions but are not well understood. This study addresses these gaps, aiming to provide a deeper understanding of consumer motivations, preferences, and challenges in the gold ornament market.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ The study aims to profile the socio-economic characteristics of respondents and explore their perceptions and experiences with gold ornaments.
- ❖ It seeks to evaluate the influence of consumer behavior, identify key purchase drivers, and assess challenges faced by frequent buyers.
- ❖ Additionally, it measures satisfaction levels, examines external factors shaping buying decisions, and highlights elements that significantly impact consumer choice in the gold ornament market.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is a systematic process used to solve a research problem, providing the overall structure and logic for selecting methods to collect and analyze data. It explains how the research is conducted, how information is gathered, and how results are presented, varying according to the nature of the study. This research follows a descriptive research design, outlining the most suitable methods and techniques to achieve its objectives. The study was carried out over a period of four months, from June to September, and is limited to the area of Salem City. The research employs statistical tools such as simple percentage analysis, Chi-square tests, One-Way ANOVA, and T-Tests to identify relationships and trends among socio economic variables.

VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cultural Significance Goswami (2012), In India, gold is integral to numerous ceremonies and festivals, where it symbolizes both prosperity and spiritual sanctity. Similarly, in China, gold is associated with good fortune and success, playing a key role in important cultural celebrations such as weddings and Lunar New Year. According to Goswami (2012), these ornaments are deeply ingrained in cultural practices, often representing familial heritage and social status. They serve as a medium through which cultural values and family legacies are expressed and preserved, highlighting their role as cherished symbols of identity and continuity across generations. This enduring significance underscores gold's role as more than just a material asset, but a vital element of cultural heritage and social structure.

Status Symbol Sinha (2018), In many cultures, wearing gold is a clear marker of affluence and social status, making it a powerful tool for reinforcing one's position within societal hierarchies. Research by Sinha (2018) highlights that the display of gold can elevate an individual's social standing by visually communicating economic success and social rank to others. This symbolic function is especially evident during high-profile events such as weddings, public ceremonies, and festive celebrations, where gold adornments are prominently showcased. The opulence associated with gold helps to establish a person's place in the social hierarchy, often translating to increased respect and admiration from peers.

Consumer Behaviour Singh (2020), Economic conditions and cultural trends play a pivotal role in shaping consumer behaviour toward gold ornaments. Singh (2020) observes that during economic downturns, there is often a noticeable increase in gold purchases. This trend underscores gold's appeal as a stable investment when financial markets are volatile or uncertain. Consumers turn to gold as a safe haven for preserving wealth, driven by its historical reputation as a reliable store of value. Additionally, cultural values and traditions can further influence purchasing patterns, as gold continues to be associated with long-term financial security and status. Thus, economic shifts and cultural norms collectively impact how consumers engage with the gold ornament market.

Cognitive Dissonance Singh (2020), Purchasing expensive gold ornaments can sometimes lead to cognitive dissonance, a psychological state where consumers experience discomfort or doubt about their financial decisions. Bhatia (2018) examines how this dissonance arises when buyers question whether their significant expenditure was justified, especially if it strains their budget or if the value of the ornament doesn't meet their expectations. To address this issue, effective marketing strategies are employed to mitigate post-purchase regret. These strategies include emphasizing the long-term value and emotional significance of gold ornaments, providing thorough product information, and offering robust customer support. By reinforcing the positive aspects of the purchase and reassuring consumers about their decision, marketers aim to alleviate feelings of regret and enhance overall satisfaction.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

7.1 DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC FACTORS IMPACT USERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD GOLD JEWELLERY

Table 7.1: Descriptive Statistics

S.No	Demographic Factors		Frequency	Percentage
				(%)
1	Gender	Female	71	53%
2	Area of Residing	Urban	95	70.90%
3	Age	Upto 20 years	49	36%
4	Educational qualification	Under Graduate	74	55.20%
5	Occupation	Student	52	38.80%
6	Marital Status	Married	68	50.70%
7	Family Members	4 Members	67	50%
8	Monthly Household Income	Above Rs. 40,000	36	26.90%
9	Gold ornaments for sentiments	Yes	87	65%
10	Gold Price Comparison	Yes	101	75.40%
11	Customer support and service	Yes	126	94%
12	Satisfaction of resale value	Yes	70	52%
13	Justification of Making Charges	No	70	52.20%
14	Safe Investment Compared to Other Investment	Yes	115	85.80%
15	Buying Gold ornaments if Price Increased	Yes	70	52.20%
16	Percentage of Total Investment in Gold	11% - 25%	69	51.50%
17	Purchasing Gold Ornaments	Once a Year	38	28.40%
18	Reason of Purchasing of Gold Ornaments	Future Purpose	45	33.60%
19	Methods of Purchasing	Cash	71	53%
20	Decision to Buy Gold Ornaments	Friends and Family	80	59.70%
21	Assessing Value of Gold	By weight and purity	71	53%
22	Preference of Jewellery Purchasing	Branded Jewellery Store	79	59%

The data reveals a consumer profile dominated by **educated, urban youth** who view gold as a sophisticated blend of tradition and financial security. With over **70% of respondents residing in urban areas** and nearly **40% being students**, the market is shifting toward a younger demographic that values both the **sentimental impact (65%)** and the **long-term safety (86%)** of gold compared to other investments. This group is highly research-oriented, with **75% actively comparing prices** and over half dedicating **11% to 25% of their total investment portfolio** to gold. Despite being price-conscious, these buyers show high resilience; more than half are willing to continue purchasing even when prices rise, primarily because they view gold as a necessary asset for their **future purpose**.

Trust and service are the ultimate deciders in the modern purchasing journey. An overwhelming **94% of consumers prioritize customer support**, and nearly **60% prefer branded stores** where weight and purity are guaranteed. While digital trends are rising, the "human element" remains king, as roughly **60% of purchase decisions** are still driven by recommendations from **friends and family**, and over half of transactions are completed in **cash**. However, a significant challenge for retailers lies in transparency: **52% of buyers do not feel making charges are justified**, and a similar number are only moderately satisfied with resale values. To succeed, brands must bridge this gap by combining the security of a branded name with clear education on craftsmanship and better resale incentives.

7.2 CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

Table 7.2 Association Between Gender and Impact of Gold Ornaments Among Fascinate Users

Ho: There is no association between the Gender and impact of gold ornaments among fascinate users.

PERCEPTION	CHI-SQUARE VALUE	DF	ASYMPTOTIC SIGNIFINANT (2 SIDED)	REMARKS
Design	2.342	3	0.505	Not Significant
Quality	6.396	4	0.171	Not Significant
Price/Making charges/Wastage	2.625	4	0.622	Not Significant
Unique Designs	2.378	3	0.496	Not Significant
Purity	3.108	4	0.504	Not Significant
Style	3.042	4	0.551	Not Significant
Customer	2.451	4	0.653	Not Significant
Luxury Feel	2.678	4	0.613	Not Significant
Resale Value	5.231	4	0.264	Not Significant
Durability	4.124	4	0.390	Not Significant

The statistical analysis reveals a critical insight for your business strategy: **gender does not influence how consumers perceive the value of gold ornaments**. Because the Chi-square test resulted in P-values higher than 0.05 across all categories—including Design, Quality, Price, and Purity—the research proves there is no significant difference between the preferences of male and female buyers. This means that both men and women are equally motivated by the "luxury feel," the artistic "uniqueness" of a piece, and the practical "resale value" of the metal. Since the null hypothesis was accepted for every factor, from customer service to durability, it confirms that the fundamental desires for transparency and high-quality craftsmanship are **universal across all genders**.

For your marketing strategy, this suggests that you do not need to create vastly different sales pitches for men and women. Instead of focusing on gender-specific tastes, you can lean into **unified campaigns** that emphasize high-purity, fair making charges, and strong investment potential, knowing these points resonate equally with everyone. This "gender-neutral" appeal simplifies your branding, allowing you to focus more on **urban-centric and age-based targeting** rather than worrying about gender-based divides. Ultimately, whether a customer is male or female, they are looking for the same thing: a beautiful, durable piece of jewelry that serves as a smart financial security net.

7.3 ANOVA

Table 7.3 association between the Age and key influence reasons to be considered purchasing gold ornaments.

Ho : There is no association between the Age and key influence reasons to be considered purchasing gold ornaments.

Particulars	Comparision	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Traditional and culture	Between groups	.773	3	.258	.757	.520
	Within Groups	44.250	130	.340		
	Total	45.022	133			
Discount or Promotion	Between Group	5.549	3	1.850	2.820	.042
	Within Groups	85.265	130	.656		
	Total	90.813	133			
Heritage	Between Group	1.259	3	.420	.713	.546
	Within Groups	76.480	130	.588		
	Total	77.739				
Family	Between Group	0.811	3	.270	.505	.679
	Within Groups	69.547	130	.535		
	Total	70.358	133			
Social media/Positive market trends	Between Group	3.446	3	1.149	1.505	.216
	Within Groups	99.189	130	.763		
	Total	133				
Uniqueness/Style	Between Group	3.294	3	1.098	2.525	.060
	Within Groups	56.534	130	.435		
	Total	133				
Personality/Fascinate	Between Group	1.198	3	.399	.781	.507
	Within Groups	66.504	130	.512		
	Total	67.701	133			

Sentiment/Believe	Between Group	.584	3	.195	.267	.849
	Within Groups	94.938	130	.730		
	Total	95.522				
Investment	Between Group	1.639	3	.546	1.135	.337
	Within Groups	62.570	130	.481		
	Total	64.209	133			
Status	Between Group	5.633	3	1.878	3.007	.033
	Within Groups	81.180	130	.624		
	Total	86.813	133			

The analysis shows no significant link between respondents’ age and most reasons for buying gold ornaments- like tradition, heritage, family, social trends, uniqueness, personality, sentiment or investment (all p-value > 0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted: age does not influence these factors. However age does significantly influence two reasons: discounts/promotions (F= 2.820, p=0.042) and status (F=3.007, p=0.033). here, the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning these factors vary by age group. Hence, discounts and status matter more to certain ages when purchasing gold.

7.4 IMPACT OF GOLD ORNAMENTS AMONG FASCINATE USERS

Table 7.4: Impact of Gold Ornaments Among Fascinate Users

Ho: There is no significant difference between observed mean and expected mean of impact of gold ornaments among fascinate users.

	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Design	-2.589	133	.000	-1.44776	-1.5692	-1.3264
Quality	-17.854	133	.000	-1.21642	-1.3512	-1.0817
Price/Making Charge/ Wastage	-6.672	133	.000	-.63433	-.8224	-.4463
Unique Designs	-12.998	133	.000	-1.02985	-1.1866	-.8731
Purity	-12.180	133	.000	-1.10448	-1.2838	-.9251
Style	-13.199	133	.000	-1.02239	-1.1756	-.8692
Customer	-12.212	133	.000	-.98507	-1.1446	-.255
Luxury Feel	-11.676	133	.000	-11.676	-1.1432	-.8120
Resale Value	-10.552	133	.000	-.94030	-1.1166	-.7640
Durability	-12.731	133	.000	-1.02239	-1.1812	-.8635

To capture the 2026 jewelry market, the core strategy shifts from traditional selling to a modern blend of **lifestyle and financial security**. This means moving beyond just selling to women; brands should now market gold to **men as a status symbol** and a smart career milestone. By focusing on **urban centers**, businesses can reach busy city dwellers who need jewelry that is both stylish and versatile. To win over the **younger generation**, retailers should offer trendy, lower-cost collections and student-friendly deals to build trust early on. For more **educated buyers**, the focus should shift to "intellectual marketing," where gold is presented not just as an ornament, but as a high-quality, long-term investment backed by data and facts.

Building deep consumer trust requires **radical transparency** and emotional connection. Instead of only focusing on weddings, brands should celebrate **modern life events** like graduations or new jobs, making gold a meaningful gift for any occasion. This emotional appeal must be supported by practical tools, like **online price comparisons** and flexible **monthly payment plans**, which help buyers feel confident even when gold prices are high. It is also essential to justify costs by highlighting the **skill of the craftsman** and the high **resale value** of the metal. By using **social media influencers** for credibility and providing **clear education on purity**, branded stores can prove they offer a safer, more rewarding experience than generic local shops.

SUGGESTIONS

To effectively capture the 2026 jewelry market, brands must pivot toward a dual strategy of **financial security and lifestyle integration**. Modern marketing should position gold as a premier symbol of status for **male consumers** through bold, architectural designs while establishing a strong presence in **urban centers** to cater to the fast-paced, versatile needs of city residents. Attracting the next generation requires launching **trendy, affordable collections** paired with targeted **student promotions** that foster early brand loyalty. For the intellectually driven buyer, campaigns should **highlight educational**

qualifications by framing gold as a sophisticated, high-quality asset with proven investment potential. By **promoting sentimentality**, retailers can move beyond traditional weddings to mark modern life milestones, supported by **transparent price comparison tools** and **exceptional customer service** that builds deep consumer trust.

Furthermore, the long-term value of gold must be a central theme, specifically by **emphasizing resale value** and **justifying making charges** through a focus on artisanal craftsmanship. In volatile markets, **positioning gold as a safe investment** combined with **flexible pricing options**, such as installment plans, ensures the brand remains accessible even during price spikes. To drive modern engagement, leveraging **referral and influencer programs** provides the social proof necessary to sway buying decisions in a crowded digital landscape. Finally, retailers must **educate on quality and purity** and **highlight the security of branded stores**, ensuring that every purchase is backed by a guarantee of authenticity and a superior service experience.

CONCLUSION

In essence, the survey reveals that gold continues to shine not only as a symbol of beauty but also as a beacon of emotional and financial security. The majority of respondents young, urban, and predominantly students view gold ornaments as more than just adornments; they see them as timeless treasures and wise investments. Their choices are shaped by sentiment, trust, and practicality, with purity, price comparison, and customer service standing as key deciding factors. Branded stores remain the preferred destinations, reflecting the growing emphasis on authenticity and reliability. While satisfaction with resale value and making charges remains high, price sensitivity still influences buying behavior. Cash payments and the persuasive voices of friends and family play a vital role in the final decision. Ultimately, gold continues to hold a special place in people's hearts glittering not only as an ornament of elegance but also as a symbol of enduring value, emotional connection, and financial confidence.

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