

Cleaning Up in Style

A Closer Look at Bangladesh's Thriving Washing Machine Market

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While washing machines were once considered a luxury, they have gradually evolved into a necessary home appliance for families, driven by expanding domestic market demand.

Three years ago, when the coronavirus pandemic swept across the country and the world, the demand and sales of washing machines also saw a significant increase in Bangladesh.

As a result, alongside the upper echelons of society, middle-class families are gradually adopting this labor-saving device, even though its penetration across the country is not as

widespread as that of a refrigerator.

Another crucial driving factor behind this trend has been the various offers provided by companies. These include cashbacks, equal monthly installment (EMI) facilities, free installation services, and the incorporation of inverter technology, which substantially reduces power consumption.

According to market insiders, the annual market size for washing machines in Bangladesh ranges from 2 to 2.5 lakh units. Among these, approximately 20 percent are supplied by domestic manufacturers.

"Bangladesh witnessed a record-breaking sale of washing machines

during the pandemic period," said Manzurul Karim, the general manager of Esquire Electronics, the distributor of Japanese brands General and Sharp in Bangladesh.

"Currently, the use of washing machines in Bangladesh has increased at least three times compared to the pre-pandemic period," said Karim.

This sector is still dependent on foreign companies, which account for more than 80 percent, despite domestic companies selling at comparatively lower prices, he said.

There are three types of washing machines that are popular in Bangladesh: front loading, top loading, and semi-automatic.

"Among them, the front-loading washing machine is more efficient for consumers," said Md Khairul Bashar, operative director and in charge of washing machine R & I at Walton Group.

Usually, the country's market is budget-oriented. The demand for top-loading washing machines in our market is high due to their low price and ease of use, said Bashar.

However, the front-loading washing machine is more energy-efficient. It can achieve better cleaning and rinsing performance as well. Due to its hot water washes, a more hygienic wash can be achieved.

"Washing machine technology has evolved over time. Most brands have inbuilt heaters in front load models," said Sanjeev Jha, country manager of Whirlpool Bangladesh Limited.

Whirlpool has been providing top-load heater models with attractive prices for Bangladeshi consumers, he said.

The price of a semi-automatic washing machine starts from Tk 11,850, while the price of a front-loading washing machine starts from Tk 30,000.

The maximum price of a front-loading washing machine is around Tk 1,20,000, said Bashar.

Bashar mentioned that Walton manufactures all kinds of washing machines in Bangladesh.

"In the future, we will move forward with Artificial Intelligence (AI) controlled and twin wash washing machines," he said. The company also provides home delivery services, free installation, and post-sales services.

"Only Walton has a wash performance lab in Bangladesh. Our vision is to create high-quality products that can satisfy our customers and export our 'Made in Bangladesh' products all over the world," he said.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Ritesh Ranjan, head of business at Transcom Digital, said the domestic market is growing by over 20 percent annually.

"We are seeing 50-60 percent of washing machine customers in metro areas who now prefer front loads," he said. With more manufacturing facilities coming up, prices are also decreasing, he added.

Ranjan mentioned that they offer a wide range of washing machines, including top-load models for entry-level customers who can purchase their first washing machine at Tk 25,000.

"We also offer advanced models of front-load machines with AI technology and energy-saving inverter technology from global brands," he said.

He continued by stating that they are also actively involved in initiating local production and value addition through washing machine assembly.

They are collaborating with global brands to effectively implement these strategies. The ultimate goal is to reduce costs and provide more convenient pricing for customers. He added that they also offer zero percent EMI facilities without requiring credit cards through

their Shohoj Kisti scheme.

Another local brand, Vision Electronics, a sister concern of Pran-RFL Group, sells washing machines with top-loading capacities ranging from 6kg to 13kg, priced between Tk 23,500 and Tk 46,000. For front-load machines, prices range from Tk 36,000 to Tk 52,000.

"We aim to incorporate the latest washing machine technology from around the world, providing affordable options for consumers in Bangladesh," said Kamruzzaman Kamal, director of marketing at Pran-RFL Group.

Presently, local manufacturers are producing standard products that not only have competitive prices but are also durable, said Salim Ullah Salim, Director of Marketing at Jamuna Electronics & Automobiles Ltd.

"A number of local companies are engaged in the manufacturing and assembly of washing machines. These companies used to import technical components and then begin local manufacturing to meet the demands of local consumers," he said.

He added that, considering the purchasing power of all consumers in the country, Jamuna Washing Machines are available in different models, capacities, and price ranges.

"We have introduced a free trial program in the market. Our customers have the opportunity to take our products home and experience them firsthand, free of charge, for an extended duration of 21 days," said Md Pinal Hasan, Senior Executive at Singer.

At present, our production focus is primarily on top-loading washing machines, which constitute a significant portion of both our portfolio and the overall market share, Pinal added.

"Looking ahead, we have plans to expand our manufacturing capabilities," he said.

Bangladesh's Washing Machine Market: Key Insights

MARKET SHARE

80 PERCENT
(approx.) of the total demand



20 PERCENT
(approx.) of the total demand



Market size (annual)
2-2.5 LAKH UNITS



20 PERCENT
annual growth of
domestic market

TYPES OF WASHING MACHINES



SEMI-AUTOMATIC
Starts from
Tk 12,000



TOP LOADING
Starts from
Tk 24,000



FRONT-LOADING
Starts from
Tk 30,000

*varies from brand to brand

360° BLOOMWASHTM
PRO

Whirlpool

EXPERIENCE NO.1 CLEANING PERFORMANCE



Removes up to
50 tough stains.**



Power Dry:
4 unique levels of drying



Eliminates up to
99.9%* of germs and allergens

**Results based on internal lab test conducted on select Whirlpool models with identified stains washed within 48 hours under specific test conditions and may vary basis testing conditions

*Results based on lab tests conducted on select Whirlpool model under NSF Protocol P172 and may vary depending on testing conditions

