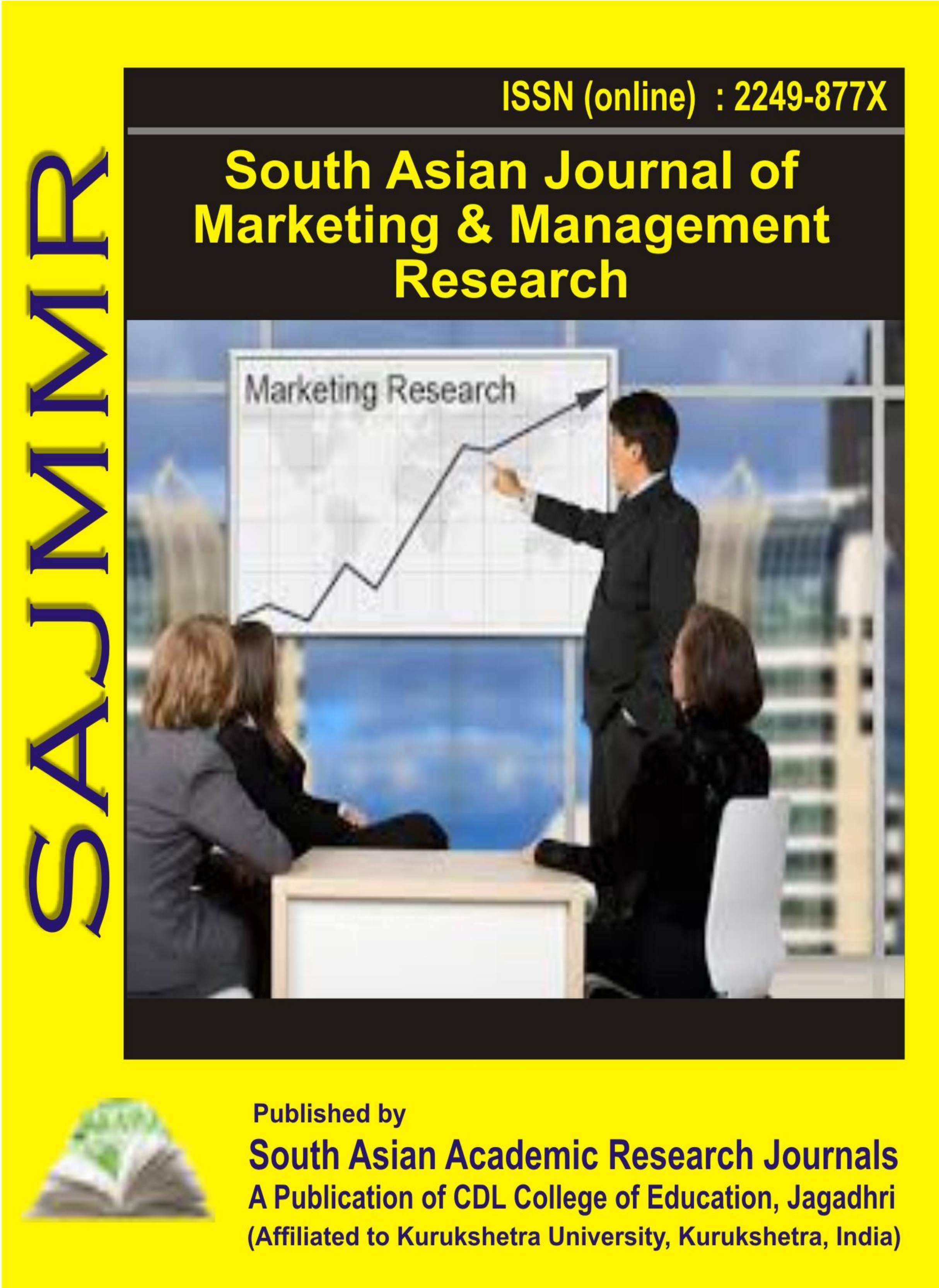
ISSN (online) : 2249-877X
South Asian Journal of Marketing & Management Research
SAJMMR
Marketing Research
Published by
South Asian Academic Research Journals
A Publication of CDL College of Education, Jagadhri
(Affiliated to Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, India)

SAJMMR ISSN (online) : 2249 –877X

Editor-in-Chief : Dr. Dalbir Singh

Impact Factor	:	SJIF 2020 = 7.11
Frequency	:	Monthly
Country	:	India
Language	:	English
Start Year	:	2011

Indexed/ Abstracted : Scientific Journal Impact Factor(SJIF 2020 - 7.11), Google Scholar, CNKI Scholar, EBSCO Discovery, Summon(ProQuest), ISC IRAN, Primo and Primo Central, I2OR, ESJI, IIJIF, DRJI, Indian Science and ISRA-JIF.

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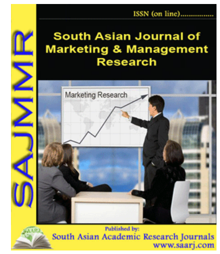

SAJMMR

ISSN: 2249-877X Vol. 10, Issue 9, Sept 2020, Impact Factor: SJIF 2020= 7.11

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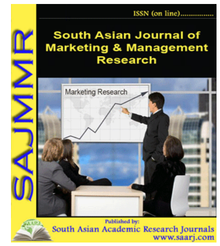

DOI: 10.5958/2249-877X.2020.00061.2

A STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF CONSUMER LIFESTYLE OVER THE BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS FMCG PRODUCTS: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DABUR

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ABSTRACT

Consumer Lifestyle has gone through changes in the most recent decades and considered as an individual variable known to impact the Buyer Decision Process. Life style has been considered to be the fundamental idea for understanding consumer behaviour and exhibiting the attributes that are more modernized than personality and more far reaching than individual values. The purpose of the study is to inspect the shopper way of life towards Fast-Moving Consumer Goods items specifically Dabur comprising of different sections, for example, Dabur Dental care, Dabur hair care, Dabur child care and Dabur Home care items. The sample size considered in the study was taken to be 200 who were the random visitors at Big Bazaar outlets across Delhi/NCR and the questionnaire was administered to collect the primary data to study the consumer lifestyle towards Fast-Moving Consumer Goods products only Dabur. Based on the study, the consumers have been classified as per Values Attitude and Lifestyle (VALS) Framework. VALS Model, one of the fundamental structures for categorizing customers in agreement to their lifestyle which has been utilized in this exploration for consumer segmentation essentially on three types of intangible aspects i.e. values, attitude and lifestyle

KEYWORDS: *Consumer, Consumer Lifestyle, FMCG, Lifestyle, VALS Framework.*

INTRODUCTION

Consumer Life style is being undergoing alterations since decades and is therefore regarded as a personal parameter which is known to be influencing to the buying decision making process of consumers when purchasing FMCG products. Fast moving consumer goods are utilized by consumers on a daily basis and the consumption of specific FMCG brands and products is deeply affected by the lifestyle the consumer follows. Life style is a basic concept which is used for understanding the behaviour of consumers towards FMCG products in particular. The parameter consumer lifestyle is now being studied by various market experts while strategizing for their FMCG products. This helps in building an effective strategy for the product as per the AIO measures of consumer lifestyle i.e. Attitude, interests and opinions. In this era of competition, understanding the consumer’s lifestyle is necessity for the marketers. Lifestyle is the way a person lives, which comprise of the person's individual attitude towards the world. Market is known for setting the trends and people follow it with full enthusiasm. Especially in India, Lifestyle depends on person's background, family, education, and nature of the work. These days a lot of researches are being carried out to improve the standard of living especially in the metros.

A Consumer can be described as someone who purchases products, goods or services for his/her consumption to satisfy their needs, wants and desires. Consumers are those individuals who at the end decide whether to purchase a certain product/service or not. There are various parameters which actually affects a consumer’s decision making process. These could be advertising& promotion, reviews, feedbacks, marketing strategies implemented etc. Similarly, a **consumer lifestyle** can be described as a way in which a specific individual lives. It is basically a reflection of one’s attitude, habits, values, interests as well as opinion. It has been observed that consumers tend to prefer those brand products for their consumption in their day to day lives which they can directly relate to as per their lifestyle i.e. in accordance with their attitude, their way of living, their interests etc. The term lifestyle denotes the interests, opinions, behaviours, and behavioural orientations of an individual, group or culture. Lifestyle was first defined by Laser (1963) as “a systematic concept representing the living characteristics of a certain society or group of people, which also differ from those of other societies and groups of people.”Consumer lifestyle is regarded as a prime tool used effectively for market segmentation. Any individual’s lifestyle basically depicts its various modes of living. A **consumer lifestyle** can be described as a way in which some specific individual lives. It is basically a reflection of one’s attitude, habits, values, interests as well as opinion. It has been observed that consumers tend to prefer those brand products for their consumption in their day to day lives which they can directly relate to as per their lifestyle i.e. in accordance with their attitude, their way of living, their interests etc.

FMCG SECTOR IN INDIA

Fast-moving consumer goods industry in India is ranked among the top 4 sectors in the Indian economy with home and personal care products accounting for about 50% of the total FMCG sales in India. Fast moving consumer goods are heavily consumed by all levels of society irrespective of their age, income group, social class etc. For this sector; changing consumer lifestyle, consumer awareness and easy accessibility have been regarded as the key growth drivers for FMCG sector of India.

The revenue of this sector has witnessed a rapid jump from US$31.6 billion in the year 2011 to US$52.75 billion in the year 2017-2018.The highly competitive nature of this sector has been observed due to the presence of multinational, domestic companies as well as unorganized sector in the Indian economy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

VALS is a proprietary word of SRI International. This term was developed by the social scientist Arnold Mitchell. This framework was developed by him in order to determine the different classes of people who have varying values, attitudes and lifestyle.

VALS Model, one of the essential frameworks for classifying consumers in accordance to their lifestyle has been used in this research for consumer segmentation primarily on three types of intangible aspects i.e. values, attitude and lifestyle. Knowing what your target i.e. the consumer is thinking before purchasing any FMCG product in their day to day life helps the market expert in strategizing their communication and promotional activities accordingly.

On the basis of VALS Framework, consumers are categorized into 8 different categories:

- **Innovators:** These are those groups of consumers who have the curiosity to try products in their day to day lives. They always act as the change leaders who are excited to try out new items.
- **Thinkers:** These are those kinds of consumers who are very informed in nature i.e. their main priority is the content of the ingredient. They are rational in nature.
- **Achievers:** This group of consumers are brand conscious in nature as well as conventional.
- **Experiencers:** This category belongs to those consumers who are always seeking variety and are impulsive in nature.
- **Survivors:** This class belongs to those consumers who have limited interests. They tend to be cautious in nature and generally rely on advertisements as they are frequent television watchers.
- **Believers:** This type of consumers is very loyal in nature.
- **Strivers:** This category belongs to those who are very trendy and style conscious. They are not concerned about health and nutrition.
- **Makers:** This type is very practical in nature. They just need a basic product to sustain their living. They are self-sufficient in nature.

In this research, VAL's framework has been used for classifying the consumers of Dabur products i.e Dabur Dental care, hair care, baby care and home care on the basis of their lifestyle and therefore analysing the impact it has on the marketing and promotional approaches being adopted by Dabur.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to develop a construct for this research, this chapter highlights the various researches that have been carried out in the past which are related to consumer lifestyle towards FMCG sector which acts as a primary tool while designing marketing and promotional strategies of any FMCG product.

Aggarwal (2014) proposed that the consumer lifestyle research is the scientific study of the practices that the consumers use to select, use, secure and dispose of products and services as per their attitude, interests and opinions. Firms can satisfy those needs only to the extent they understand their customers. The main objective of this paper is to study the consumer lifestyle towards FMCG products in particular Dabur. Another study conducted by **(Todd, Lawson and Faris, 1996)** viewed consumer lifestyle as a very essential parameter for market segmentation of products and for strategizing the marketing and promotional approach as consumer lifestyle offers comprehensive view of consumer behaviour and motives that are underlying principles which lead to the purchase of FMCG and other consumer driven products. In today's modest environment where the customer if flooded with multiple choices for the selection of brands, attracting new customers towards their products and retaining the old customers is a very challenging task for all marketers. To accomplish this objective, it is very important for the marketers to analyse the consumer traits beforehand like consumer lifestyle, consumer preference etc. so that the marketer can create an appropriate marketing framework in accordance to the consumer lifestyle which will therefore help in building a better brand image of the product.

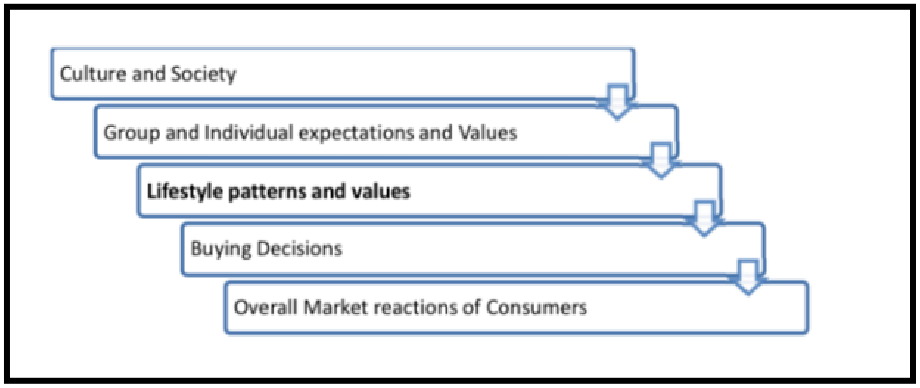

Figure 2.1: Lifestyle model by William

(Hawkins et al., 2004; Senauer et al., 1991) and (Kucukemiroglu, Harker and Spillan, 2007) in their study have expressed the fact that marketers make use of the concept and idea of consumer lifestyle in order to identify the existing as well as the potential customers and hence to understand their decision- making process because the idea is partly related to consumerism and helps in accounting as to how consumers express their identity. They have also elucidated that the success of the marketing model entirely depends and lies on the researcher's ability to identify the variables as well the parameters that distinguishes or separates one consumer from the other in the market. Market segmentation is a very essential strategy which helps in grouping the consumers on the basis of their psychographic and demographic factors. Once the consumers have been grouped as per their traits, specific strategies can be adopted for the marketing and promotion of the product in order to make a better impact. (**Wells and Tigert, 1977; Kaynak and Kara, 1996b)** stated that **s**egmenting the consumers in the market on the basis of their lifestyle and then strategizing the marketing and advertising plans of the products in accordance to consumer lifestyle leads to massive success of the product. Consumer lifestyle can be described as a way in which a specific individual life. It is basically a reflection of one's attitude, habits, values, interests as well as opinion. It has been observed that consumers tend to prefer those brand products for their consumption in their day to day lives which they can directly relate to as per their lifestyle i.e. in accordance with their attitude, their way of living, their interests etc. **(Anderson and Golden, 1984) and (Hawkins et al., 2004)** researched on the parameter of consumer lifestyle. They viewed lifestyle as an easy relation of the economic level at which people live, how spend their money, what attracts them etc. Lifestyle research measures people's activities in terms of their interests, attitude, motives, needs etc. According to their study, Consumer lifestyle playa a major role and impact on the consumption and purchase pattern of consumers towards product and services. Analysing the lifestyle of consumers will help the marketers in establishing the relationship between the consumer lifestyle and the products they sell. A consumer's lifestyle is a measurement of one's attitude, interest, opinions etc. These measures typically form a psychographic profile of the consumer based on which marketers strategize different approaches. According to **(Wells and Tigert, 1977),** the most extensively used approach for lifestyle measurement is Activities/attitudes, interests and opinions. The study conducted by **(Kahle, 1999)** on the lifestyle of various consumers helps us in knowing the consumer behaviour which in turn helps in drafting an effective marketing strategy. Lifestyle and values of consumers are derived from their social, culture, demographics etc. which therefore provides the marketing managers with clear vision for product positioning or repositioning, branding, value creation and promotional purposes.

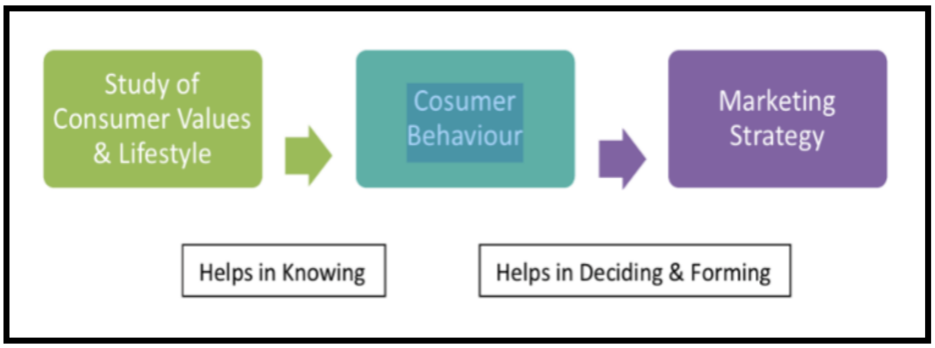

Figure 2.2: Kale's Consumer Lifestyle Model

Various studies have been conducted by researchers in order to analyse the importance of reading and analysing the consumer lifestyle before marketing or promoting any rand of a product or good to a consumer. **(Thompson and Kaminski, 1993) realized that** the antecedents of lifestyle and Psychographic segmentation are highlighted by various lifestyle factors like Innovativeness, loyalty; healthcare socialization etc. Consumer lifestyle specifically focuses on the psychographic factors of a consumer like values, interests, opinions etc. It does not take into consideration much of the demographic factors. **(Bone, 1991)** stated that the use of demographic factors such as age, income, employment status can be misleading factors in the process of segmentation of market. To make the process more precise and accurate, psychographic segmentation i.e. division of consumers on the basis of lifestyle should be applied.**(Tai and Tam, 1997) and (Wansink, 2000)** caressed that the research on consumer lifestyle is nothing else but a research procedure which is used to identify how people or consumers spend their time and money in terms of attitude, interests and opinions. Their study highlighted that the consumer lifestyle and other relevant actions indicates how a particular consumer thinks, behaves and further acts. The various parameters which are therefore used for the judgement are background, consumer motives, socio-economic characteristics, needs etc. Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) goods are prevalently known as the consumer packaged goods. The Items which are considered as FMCG products consists of all consumables that people intend to purchase at regular intervals. The most common items which can be included in this list are toilet soaps, detergents, shampoos, toothpaste, household accessories etc. and even extend to some of the electronic goods. These are those items which are meant for daily use consumption and have a high return. The FMCG sector in India has been playing a vital role in the growth and development of the country. The Indian FMCG industry, with an approximate market size of 2 trillion, accounts for the fourth largest sector in India. The study of **(Srivastava and Kumar, 2013)** examined that the FMCG sector in India is a major contributor to the Gross domestic product. It has continuously been contributing to the demands and needs of the middle and lower class income earning groups of India. In India, around 73% of FMCG products are sold to middle class households where 48% accounts for urban India and the remaining portion is acquired by rural India.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this research is to study and analyse the consumer lifestyle towards FMCG products in particular Dabur products which consists of various segments such as hair care products, dental care products, home care products and baby care products and thus on the basis of the study, classifying the consumers as per VALS consumer lifestyle model.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is difficult to find any individual in this world who is left out from the class of consumers. The consumer-hood continues till the end. A consumer buys varieties of goods and services as per their needs, wants or desires and their purchasing activities are always deviated by some parameters like their lifestyle i.e their attitude towards goods and services, their interests and various other psychological and demographic factors. In this research, we will study the consumer lifestyle i.e. the psychographic factors towards FMCG products (Only Dabur products) and therefore on the basis of the survey group the consumers as per VALS lifestyle model. The present study is entirely based on the primary data collected from the consumers through a survey questionnaire on all segments of Dabur product i.e Dabur dental care, Dabur hair care, and Dabur baby care. This survey was conducted among the big bazaar outlets of Delhi/Ncr region. In total 4 surveys were conducted separately for all 4 segments of Dabur products. In total there were 200respondents covering all categories of Dabur products. The survey approach has been used in this study in order to attain descriptive information from the consumers. A survey with direct questions was created on Google forms. The survey approach is used extensively to conduct various types of studies. In comparison to observational and experimental approach, it is a better option as it is very quick with more accuracy and is low cost. The study method used in this research is descriptive in nature. Descriptive method is used whenever there is a requirement to accurately describe the characteristics of an individual or a group. In this research, there was a need to study the consumer lifestyle towards Dabur products consisting of various segments. Consumer lifestyle is a study of consumer attitudes, interests and other psychological characteristics. Therefore, Descriptive study here is the best methodology to be used. This type of methodology is free from all biasness and is completely reliable.

A questionnaire has been prepared for all three segments of Dabur products to conduct the survey at Big Bazaar outlets of Delhi/NCR. The questionnaire is not divided into parts but comprises of two sections; The first question deals with the background of the respondents whereas the second section deals with psychographic questions relevant for studying consumer lifestyle towards those specific Dabur products. In all four surveys i.e Dental care, hair care, Home care and Baby care; the questionnaire in total consists of 10 questions**.** The schedule for respondants was collected in a way to ensure maximum data attainment regarding their attitude towards Dabur products, their interests and other characteristics depicting their lifestyle. The questionnaire was prepared as Google forms for the ease of the consumers. This method of data collection ensured reaching the respondents at a personal level leading to more accuracy and reliability in the data. Consumers who agreed to participate in the survey were provided with the Google forms through our own device in order to get the questionnaires successfully filled.

FINDINGS

Dabur Dental Care

It has been concluded that out of a sample of 50 respondents, 68% are consumers of Dabur toothpastes whereas the remaining 32% do not use Dabur toothpastes. Among all the variety of toothpastes offered by Dabur, the most preferred toothpastes among the consumers is Dabur Red toothpaste which account for about 55.6% of the total consumers. The prime reasons which urged the consumers to try Dabur toothpastes was Brand name, followed by curiosity to try new products and health consciousness, herbal content packaging, active ingredients of the toothpaste, variety offered and finally advertisements. It has been concluded that 17.1% of the consumers were delighted using Dabur toothpastes and 45.7%of the consumers were highly satisfied. On grouping the respondents as per VALS Framework, it has been concluded that the non-consumers of Dabur toothpastes are a combination of Believers and Makers as they are loyal in nature towards the brands they are using since long and responsible in nature as they are considering the better active ingredients of the toothpastes being offered. The consumers of Dabur toothpastes are a combination of believers (as the brand name persuades them in consuming the Dabur toothpastes) and innovators as they are curious of trying new products. Another set of major consumers are a combination of innovators (curious to try new products), believers as they are brand conscious and thinkers (as the herbal content of Dabur toothpastes persuades them to consume it.)The third set of major respondents are a combination of believers(as they are brand conscious), thinkers(as the herbal content parameter convinces them), experiencers as they seek for variety which is successfully offered by Dabur toothpastes)and survivors(as they are cautious and want to use healthy products for proper dental care.

Dabur Hair Care

It has been concluded that out of a sample of 50 respondants, 80% are consumers of Dabur hair oils whereas the remaining 20% do not use Dabur hair oils. Among all the variety of Oils offered by Dabur, the most preferred hair oil among the consumers is Dabur Vatika hair oil which accounts for about 58% of the total consumers. The prime reasons which urged consumers to use Dabur hair oils was Brand name, followed by healthy nature & active ingredients of the oil, quality& quantity, curiosity to try new product, influenced by recommendations and finally availability of variety. It has been concluded that 27.5% of the consumers were delighted using Dabur Hair oil and 60% of the consumers were highly satisfied using Dabur Hair Oils.On grouping the respondents as per VALS Framework, it has been concluded that the non-consumers of Dabur hair Oils are a combination of experiencers as they tend to look for more variety and therefore consumer other hair oils in comparison to Dabur and Believers and Makers (as per VALS Framework) as they are loyal in nature towards the brands they are using since long and practical in nature as they opt for more economical price offered by other brands. The consumers of Dabur Hair Oils are a combination of believers and thinkers (as the brand name persuades them in consuming the Dabur Hair oils) and (they are informed about the active ingredients of the product). Another set of major consumers are a combination of survivors and experiencers as they are health conscious in nature (they seek for varieties being offered) and are (curious to try new products).

Dabur Baby Care

It has been concluded that out of a sample of 40 respondents, 82.5% of them use Dabur Lal Tail for their infants whereas the remaining 17.5% do not use the product for their infants. The prime reasons which urged the consumers to buy Dabur Lal Tail for their infants were Ayurvedic in nature, Trust in Dabur and its claims, Faster Development guarantee, clinically proven product and safe for children. It has been concluded that 51.5% of the consumers rated Dabur Lal Tail as 4 out of 5 and 48.5%of the remaining consumers rated the product 5 on 5 for their infants. On grouping the respondents as per VALS Framework, it has been concluded that the non-consumers of Dabur Baby lal tail are are believers (as per VALS Framework) as they are loyal in nature towards the brands i.e Johnson& Johnson etc. which they are using since long. The consumers of Dabur Lal Tail are a combination of survivors (as they are cautious in nature as the look for clinically proven products for their baby), Achievers (as they are brand conscious and trust in Dabur as it has been in the industry since ages) and thinkers (as they are informed about the product's faster development guarantee and Ayurvedic nature. Majority of the Respondents are a combination of Achievers (as they are brand conscious and trust in Dabur as it has been in the industry since ages), thinkers (as they are informed about the Ayurvedic nature of the product) and Makers (as they are responsible and looking for chemical free baby care product.)

CONCLUSION

On the basis of this study, it has been concluded that consumer lifestyle plays a very important role in the consumer's decision while purchasing or consuming a certain product, good or service. **Consumer lifestyle** can be described as a way in which a specific individual life. It is basically a reflection of one's attitude, habits, values, interests as well as opinion. It has been observed that consumers tend to prefer those brand products for their consumption in their day to day lives which they can directly relate to as per their lifestyle i.e. in accordance with their attitude, their way of living, their interests etc. VALS framework is one of the essential models for grouping or classifying the consumers on the basis of their lifestyle traits into different clusters and therefore appropriate strategies have be adopted on each group of the consumers in accordance to their traits. It has been concluded that in today's modest environment where the customer is flooded with multiple choices for the selection of brands, attracting new customers towards their products and retaining the old customers is a very challenging task for all marketers.

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ISSN: 2249-877X Vol. 10, Issue 9, Sept 2020, Impact Factor: SJIF 2020= 7.11

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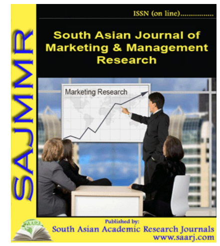

DOI: 10.5958/2249-877X.2020.00062.4

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS EFFECTIVE HEALTHCARE MARKETING TOOL IN HOSPITAL

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- *Social Media and Health care technology mini-track address the emerging and increasingly brand range of Social media use within Healthcare This project is to know awareness about Social media in Maax Super Specialty Hospital, Shivamogga* ***Research Method***- *This Project using Descriptive method, Primary data collected from structured questionnaire with 150 respondents of Maax Super Specialty Hospital, Shivamogga, have been considered as a Sample Unit. Questionnaire will be matching with the Objectives.* ***Findings***- *100% Respondents are believing Social media can be used a Medical Marketing tool in Healthcare, number of Respondents are interested in Health information and patient taking a more active role* ***Implications***- *Medical Community at large must embrace the role social media plays in healthcare. From increasing access to creating a creating consistent image, hospitals and other providers are opening up new accounts daily.* ***Results***- *Implementing Social Media shows the Positive Impact on Healthcare organization and enhancing the opportunities for Medical Knowledge.* ***Conclusion***- *Social media is changing the way Healthcare Organization, Consumers, and Practitioner interaction. Through Social media does provide the opportunity for healthcare organizations to build the brand image*

KEYWORDS: *Social Media, Marketing Tool, Hospital, Marketing Communication, Promotion, Healthcare*

1. INTRODUCTION

Web 2.0 is a concept that takes network as a platform for information sharing and inter-operability. A Web 2.0 site allows users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators and users of the generated content in a virtual community, in contrast to websites where users are limited to the passive viewing of content that was created for them the term ‘social media’ thus is used to describe an array of new Web 2.0 platforms. It is an umbrella term that defines online technology and practices used to share opinion, insights, experience and perspectives.

1.1 Meaning

Social Media are computer mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. The variety of stand-alone and built-in social media services currently available introduces challenges of definition;

The definition of "social media" is broad and constantly evolving. The term generally refers to Internet based tools that allow individuals and communities together and communicat; to share information, ideas, personal messages, images and other content. in some cases, to collaborate with other users in real time. Social media are also referred to as "Web 2.0" or "social networking."

2. HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL MEDIA - GROWING USE IN HEALTHCARE

Can you really shop for by-pass surgery the way you shop for a tie? Will the successful pharma practice of direct to consumer marketing work in other forms of healthcare? How can healthcare delivery practitioners prepare for consumer-driven selection? Marketers, advertisers, and PR professionals across the spectrum of healthcare will be impacted by these questions as social media threat and opportunities come to healthcare. Social media have revolutionized the healthcare industry and is quickly becoming the preferred resource for individuals seeking healthcare information. Hospitals all over the world are using social media as a marketing and communications tool to educate, publicize, entertain and otherwise trying to establish themselves as the go-to place for customers in need. With a Face book fan page, patients are regularly updated on the day to day developments, while a YouTube account are used to upload educational videos, similarly Twitter account is used to link to the latest press releases or the use of educational blogs about specific ailments. It's even further used for scheduling appointments, appointment reminders, practice updates, or public health notifications. With the increasing cost of healthcare and a growing number of available hospitals as options, more than ever, it's essential for hospitals and health providers to rethink their healthcare marketing mix to include social media. Given the statistics on healthcare consumers growing reliance on the internet, it should come as no surprise that physicians are beginning to adopt social media.

2.1 About Maax Hospital

Subbiah institute of medical Science is a unit of Maricela Subbiah Trust(R), Shiva mega, (Karnataka), and India. The trust formed in the year 2003 by Script. Subramanian, an agriculturist by calling, and a visionary, imbued with a zeal for taking education and research to regions that would remain seamless in their sweep and sway. As the head of his family, Sri Subramanian believed that even the longest journey beings with the first step. What then could be surer of foot than beings it from one's own family, thus began the saga of the Maricela Subbiah Trust, formed under the Indian Trust Act, 1882 as a public, educational trust.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. **Akin Nurturant, Dugi Oedemerids era Yutkuran, Erdal Emil (2017),** Introduced a quality management framework by combining cause and effective logical framework. An intensive care unit was identified for the study. There are 540 respondents in healthcare and they adopt both

the descriptive and exploratory research method. They found that patients improved infrastructure, state-of-the-art equipment, well maintained facilities, IT-based communication, motivated doctors, nurses and support staff, improved patient care and improved drug availability were considered the main project outputs for improving performance.

2. Mohamed Elfil1 and Ahmed Negida (2017), Clinical research usually involves patients with a certain disease or a condition. The generalizability of clinical research findings is based on multiple factors related to the internal and external validity of the research methods. The main methodological issue that influences the generalizability of clinical research findings is the sampling method. In this educational article, we are explaining the different sampling methods in clinical research.

3. Nima Kordzadeh,Diana K Young(2015), Healthcare organizations such as hospitals and clinics are increasingly embracing social media to communicate with their public audience. In line with this trend, we conducted an exploratory study to understand the major genres of posts that hospitals make on social media

4. Edin Smailhodzic,Wyanda Hooijsma,Albert Boonstra,David J. Langley(2016), Background Since the emergence of social media in 2004, a growing percentage of patients use this technology for health related reasons. To reflect on the alleged beneficial and potentially harmful effects of social media use by patients, the aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the extant literature on the effects of social media use for health related reasons on patients and their relationship with healthcare professionals. Methods We conducted a systematic literature review on empirical research regarding the effects of social media use by patients for health related reasons.

3. Akhila. R. Udupa, G. Kershaw (2010): International marketing strategies combining changes in marketing mix elements, the tool for marketing healthcare services and attracting medical tourism from the Market segmentation, Targeting and Positioning as essential to Bangalore global healthcare This study is quantitative analysis and with the help of questionnaire primary data will collected sample size is 350. They have used random sampling techniques. Quality of treatment, low cost offers, value added services will play a major role in delivering customer delight and different media can attract foreign medical tourism. Objective of this research is maintaining the quality of treatment, offering low cost, value added services will play a major role in delivering customer delight.

5. Edward. Conley. David R. Owens (2008): Performance improvement and outcomes monitoring are become required elements in health service delivery. Healthcare at home information system described here 'near real time' risk analysis for disease early detection and prevention, implement family of prototype web service, mobile communication

6. Dey, P.K., Hariharan, S. and Ho, W. (2007), Healthcare services available these days deploy high technology to satisfy both internal and external customers by continuously improving various quality parameters. Quality improvement in healthcare services is a complex and multidimensional task. Although various quality management tools are routinely deployed for identifying quality issues in healthcare delivery, there is absence of an integrated approach, which can identify and analyse issues, provide solutions to resolve those issues and develop a project management framework to implement and evaluate those solutions

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Gap

Social media is an important to consumer in healthcare, Information obtained in the consumer Domain, such as Social media sites, is there forever and has the potential to be indexed endlessly in many different types of data warehouses, it helps to improve the potential awareness level of patients/consumers and doctors. The rise of Social media in our society has been nothing short of phenomenal. It's hard to believe that face book has been with us for over a decade now and boasts more than a billion and half users, of all generations, worldwide. Social media focused in providing a high level of services to patients in Maxx super specialty hospital, Shivamogga,

It Presence the leveraged Digital marketing space too, Delivering new clinical research insights, create a sense of community, Complementing traditional approaches to measure patient satisfaction providing assistance with treatment physician or hospital selection while building awareness of causes through social media can rapidly spread information and mobilize large number of consumer in hospital and hence I have taken the topic "Use Of Social Media As Marketing Tool - A Study On Maax Super Specialty Hospital, Shivamogga.

4.2 Objective of the Study

1. To study the consumer awareness levels of Social media an emerging Medical marketing tool.
2. To understand the relationship between Social media and consumer perception in Maxam super specialty hospital.
3. To study and Analyze Risks and strategies for implementing Social Media at Maxam Hospital.
4. To suggest and recommend any measure for improving consumer interaction through Social media.

4.3 Research Methodology

Source of data:

- **Primary Data-**Primary data are original and firsthand information based on primary source. These kinds of data are collected directly from the respondents or target population through the questionnaire. Through the well - structured questionnaire the researcher can collect the data.

- **Secondary Data-** Researcher use internet, Journals, Magazines, and Newspaper etc. to collected secondary data.

***Research design*:** it is a research design implied in case of exploratory research. In this type of researchers, researchers try to uncover the hidden and unknown facts and phenomena.

4.4 Sampling design-

1. **Sample Unit**: Patients, Employees, Nurses and Doctors of Maxx super specialty hospital, Shivamogga.
2. **Sample Size**: 150 Respondents (Patients-25, Doctors-25(50), Employees-50(150), Nurses-50(150))
3. **Sample Instrument**: Structured questionnaire
4. **Sample Technique**: Probability sampling

5. **Sample Method:** Stratified Sampling

4.5 Limitation of study

1. Time constraint: Difficult to collect information.
2. Biased: Information given by consumer may be inaccurate.
3. Results are purely based on Primary information.
4. The sample size of consumers taken for survey was only 150.
5. The duration of this project was very short to study the topic which is so wide in scope.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Are you aware of Social media?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	150	100
2	No	0	0
	TOTAL	**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

If you yes, how do you know about Social media?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage(%)
1	Friends	40	27
2	Doctors reference	37	25
3	Media	41	27.3
4	Relatives	10	7
5	Self-exploration	22	14.6
TOTAL		**100**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

27.3% (41) of highest respondents are know from friends, respondents are more influencing by friends 14.6% (22) of lowest respondents are less know from self-exploration about the social media, they don’t know much about the particular social websites and social media.

5.2 Which of following Social networking sites do you know? (1=Highest, 12=Lowest)

SL. No	Variables	Mean	Rank
1	Face book	2.1	2
2	Pinterest	6.6	7
3	Snap chat	8.4	8
4	You tube	1.4	1
5	Instagram	2.6	3
6	Google+	4.4	5
7	LinkedIn	4.3	4
8	WhatsApp	6.3	6
9	Twitter	8.5	9
10	Flickr	10.3	10
11	Tumblr	11.55	12
12	Periscope	11.04	11

(Source: Primary data)

From the above analysis it clear that, highest rank is You tube, because Respondents watch more videos than Ever Before-Especially on their Phones, 2016 statistic represents a ranking of countries with the largest You Tube audiences are worldwide. Lowest rank belongs to Tumblr respondents don't know more about this because it is new application in social networking sites.

5.3 How long do you spend on Social Networking sites during a typical day?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage(%)
1	30min- 1hr	18	12
2	1-2 hr.	42	28
3	3-5 hr.	33	22
4	Above 5 hr.	57	38
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

38% (57) of highest respondents are spend more time as above 5 hr., respondents spend on Social media is constantly increasing 65% respondents hangs majority of that time spent on social media. 18(12%) respondents are spending only 30min- 1hr on social networking sites while 33(22%) of respondents are spend 3-5hours online is now allocated to social media interaction in during a typical day.

5.4 What do you more interest in social media?

SL No	Variables	Mean	Rank
1	Instant messaging	2.7	3
2	Health information	2	1
3	Keep touch with friends	3.1	4
4	Playing games	5.9	6
5	Local events information	2.1	2
6	Making new friends	6.2	7
7	Browsing topic of interest	5.7	5

(Source: Primary data)

From the above analysis, Health information (mean 2) respondents are highly interested in social media stands top ranking, Social media opens the world to getting more health information the of respondents say the information found via Social media affects the way they deal with their Health and respondents more focus on health-related social networks. Mean 6.2 respondents are less interested in making a new friend and connecting with world.

5.5 How much do you believe in social media affects you as a professional?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage(%)
1	Very much affect me	45	30
2	Affect me partly	79	53
3	Doesn't affect too much	9	6
4	Not at all affects me	17	11
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: *Primary data)*

53% (79) of highest respondents believe Social media affects partly, respondents are influenced by social media every day and 6% (9) of lowest respondents believe Social media doesn't affect too much as a professional but how easy social media makes it to reach respondents are much difficult

5.6 State which types of media you use, as well as social media?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Mobile	89	59
2	Desktop	61	41
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

***(Source:** Primary data)*

59% (89) of respondents are majority of use the Mobile, the future of Social media fully depends on Mobile.41% (61) of lowest respondents use desktop they spend internet time on Social media it creates native communication and promote discovery also.

5.7. How social media can change consumer healthcare?

SL. No	Variables	Mean	Rank
1	Support brand recognition	2.8	2
2	More transparent regarding outcomes	3.6	4
3	Improve quality of healthcare	5.0	5
4	Active role in health decision	2.7	1
5	Patient-doctors' confidentiality	3.1	3
6	Responsiveness to people need	5.3	6
7	Barriers to reliable online health resources	6.2	7

***(Source:** Primary data)*

From above the analysis, social media can change consumer healthcare from taking Active role in health decision as stands in rank one and respondents are interest about their personnel health and Barriers to reliable online health resources as stands in rank 7 most of the respondents less believe in online health resource because lack of consciousness about online health services.

5.8 Do you believe social media can be used a medical marketing tool in health care?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage(%)
1	Yes	150	100
2	No	0	0

	TOTAL	150	100

(Source: Primary data)

If yes, what level of Social media usage is most applicable to healthcare?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Basic level	32	21
2	Professional level	44	29
3	Advanced level	33	22
4	Expert level	41	27
	TOTAL	**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

From above the analysis 29% (44) of highest respondents are using Professional level as highest level because it is more extensively receive a wider response from Social media and 21% (32) of lowest respondents are using basic level as lowest level of social media is usage is giving a less reviews about healthcare units it's not most applicable to healthcare.

5.9 Do you think hospital need social media?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	132	88
2	No	18	18
	TOTAL	150	100

(Source: Primary data)

If yes, why hospitals need effective Social media?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Benefits for clinicians	06	5
2	Regular monitoring	12	8
3	Sharing Medical information	09	6

4	Learning Medical technology	22	15
5	Keep communicating with Doctors	12	8
6	Privacy concern	08	5
7	Engage a target audience and grow Relationship	11	7
8	Meet the new service	20	13
9	Patient empowerment	12	8
10	Mechanism for cost control	5	3
11	Instantaneous feedback	33	22
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

From above the analysis 22% (33) of respondent's Highest need of the Social media for Instantaneous feedback to fulfill and enhance patient's satisfaction and 3% (5) of respondents are Lowest need of Social media for Mechanism for cost control is not more effective its only focusing on limited flow of funds in health insurance plans modify the outflow of payment in healthcare.

5.10. Which of these factors are most affected to healthcare as gone through Social Media?

SL. No	**Variables**	**No of Respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
1	Advertisement for doctor and hospital	18	12
2	Success stories of patients	25	17
3	Friends suggestion about personal health	18	12
4	Patients contact when have health issues	21	14
5	Utilize social media in future at all	41	27
6	Peer/Social/Emotional support	12	8

7	Potential to influence health Policy	15	10
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

From above the analysis, Highest of factors affect the **S**ocial media is 27% (41) of respondents Utilize social media in future at all for their personnel growth and knowing advanced technology information and Lowest factors affects the Social media is 8% (12) of respondents Peer/Social/Emotional support patient can experience less benefits from the healthcare through a Social media.

5.11. What feature do you currently accept from social media in hospital?

SL No	Variables	Mean	Rank
1	Promote Brand Image to ‘Digitize’	2.18	2
2	Leverage and extend online Presence for greater involvement for Better service	1.44	1
3	Speak to individual with comm. on healthcare interest and issues	2.99	3
4	Showcase community activity and professional achievements	5.2	6
5	Attract, recruit, retain and train professional Colleagues	4.5	5
6	Focus a dominant and most familiar social media platforms	4.2	4

(Source: Primary data)

From above the analysis Leverage and extend online Presence for greater involvement for Better service (Mean 1.44) it stands on rank 1 because it helps individual and businesses to stay connected, communicate and even better services, treatments in online also Showcase community activity and professional achievements (Mean 5.2) it stands on rank 6. More number of respondents interested to spends time in Social media.

5.12 Give an Opportunity to share your concern on enhancing Maxx hospital brand image will you spend time on Social media?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	92	61
2	No	58	39
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

If yes tick the followings

TIME SPENDING -	**30min-1hr/day**		**1-2hr/week**		**2-5hr/month**	
	Option	Percentage	Option	Percentage	Option	Percentage
Doctors	18	12	34	23	98	65
Nurses	22	15	58	39	70	47
Employees	34	23	72	48	44	29
TOTAL	**150**	**100**	**150**	**100**	**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

From above the analysis, 23%(34) Employees are highest spending time,12%(18) doctors spending a less time as 30min-1hr/day in social media, because employees always connected their Smartphone's and online profiles.48%(72) of Employees spending more time, 23%(34) of doctors spending less time as 1-2hr /week in a social media Because they powerfully addict habit of internet.65%(98) of doctors spending more time, 29%(44) of employees spending less time as 2-5hr/month in social media. Because it can actively use by doctors were face book to update latest services or technology related to health.

5.13 Do you worry about privacy problem, when using Social Media in healthcare?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Always	21	14
2	Rarely	72	48
3	Sometimes	51	34
4	Not at all	6	4
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

From above the analysis clears 48% (72) of more respondents are Rarely worry about much privacy problem it means there is so much information provided other things can be deduced and disclosure of sensitive health information about patient care is important in healthcare 4% (6) of less respondents are not at all worry about privacy problem because it is directly support patient-centered care in using social media

5.14 What are those risks in Social media in healthcare?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Personal and Professional Social Media Posting	12	8
2	Lack of Social media usage plan	44	29
3	Lack of Social media policy and workforce training.	13	9
4	Leaking patient information	09	6
5	Shows Personal Profiles	38	25
6	Personal and Professional Social Media Posting	34	23
TOTAL		150	100

(Source: Primary data)

From above the analysis 29% (44) of Highest respondents were having more risk under Lack of Social media usage plan, lack of planning a result as significant cost to patients and organizations and 6% (9) of lowest respondents were having less risk under Leaking patient information because list of patient information that must remain confidential.

5.15 Mention few effective strategies in healthcare as Social Media?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Handles patient Queries	39	26
2	Starts trends in hospital	37	25
3	Brand building and Reputation	51	34
4	Reach report, bloggers, journalists	23	15
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

34%(51) of highest respondents are opinion towards few affective strategies for the Brand building and Reputation maintaining a hospital Reputation and brand building is just as important as make a stable brand and help to develop the healthcare and 15 %(23) of lowest respondents are opinion towards few affective strategies for the Reach report, bloggers, journalist it has become news consumption today is not the same as pre-news when people waited for them in healthcare as Social media.

5.16 What are different challenges can healthcare facing in social media?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Maintaining brand reputation	14	9
2	Resolving issues	22	15
3	Ensuring consistency and conversation	11	7
4	Choosing between a global and local strategy	18	12
5	Data security	12	8
6	Managing Patient volume	51	34
7	Technological advancement opportunity	22	15
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

34% (51) of highest respondents Managing Patient volume, because it establishes or enhance patient presence on Social Media and give a positive review goes in long way only 7% (11) of lowest respondents are facing Ensuring consistency and conversation problem these practice variations are dangerous, failing to provide patients with treatment the evidence suggest is best.

5.17 Do you think effective implementation on social media in Maxx Hospital will bring more transparency and build good brand among publics?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
44	67	32	7	0	3.9

(Source: Primary data)

67% of highest respondents are Agree and 0% of respondents are Strongly Disagree, it shown positive and effective sign for implementation on social m media in Maxx Hospital will bring more transparency and build god brand among publics.

5.18. Give any suggestion for improve quality service through social media in healthcare?

SL. No	Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Engage with patient's Real time	56	37
2	Facilitate physician collaboration	19	13
3	Encourage customer Feedback	21	14
4	Health insurance portability and accountability	15	10
5	Enhance hospital policies	39	26
TOTAL		**150**	**100**

(Source: Primary data)

From above analysis it's clear that, 37% (56) of highest respondents thought Engage with patient's Real time are major suggestion for improve quality service through social media in healthcare, it means patients have positive suggestion about the doctors and hospital. 10% (15) of lowest respondents are thought Health insurance portability and accountability are less effective suggestion for the healthcare.

6. CONCLUSION

Technology is here to stay and social media has sprung up as a game changer. The digitization of human interactions and intimacy has brought the world closer at the click of a button. In this fast-paced world, social media is a communication boon for the public health community and has the potential to promote and change many health-related behaviors and issues particularly in times of crisis. As it is characterized by interactivity, user generated content and multi directional communication flow, it makes for best choice for faster spread of public health messages and improves functional health literacy of general population. Social media unlike other media campaigns provides novel opportunities to integrate public health messages with daily online conversations and activities.

Future work

Since this research work was undertaken as academic purpose only, any researcher can get a view of how social media at hospital will add value with this paper only, future research is expected to have holistic view

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SAJMMR

ISSN: 2249-877X Vol. 10, Issue 9, Sept 2020, Impact Factor: SJIF 2020= 7.11

South Asian Journal of Marketing & Management Research (SAJMMR)

(Double Blind Refereed & Reviewed International Journal)

DOI: 10.5958/2249-877X.2020.00063.6

A STUDY ON THE CUSTOMERS' PERCEPTION OF DIFFERENT CHILDREN'S HEALTH DRINKS

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the customers' preferences / perceptions of the health drink market in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, India. A sample survey, employing questionnaire method has been done. The questionnaire carried several questions related to different factors like customers' preferences, brand image, nutrition value, color, price, packaging, flavor etc. of seven popular brands of health drinks. Further, questions concerned with factors like the income level of the customers, occupation, child's age and the tagline of the brands were also incorporated in the questionnaire. The responses obtained from the customers were subjected to a few simple statistical analyses which resulted in some very interesting revelations.

KEYWORDS: *Perception, Health Drink, Market Share, Consumers, Nutrition.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays health drinks are immensely popular in India. Around 22 per cent of the world's retail volume sales of health drinks is accounted for India itself. The concept of health drinks started as a substitute of milk. They were marketed as drinks having high nutrition value and suitable for the consumption for the young, old, and the sick.

In modern busy world health is considered to be the first priority. Accordingly, individuals are becoming increasingly interested in health drinks, developing perceptions of the health drinks market and consistently trying to consume good healthy products. Many researchers such as Zeithaml (1988),Vigneron and Johnson (1999) etc. have studied the buying behaviour of consumers of health drinks.

Yanes et. Al. (2002) discussed the properties of commercial chocolate milk beverages. Duffey and Popkin (2006) focused on healthier beverage patterns for adults. Kumar (2010) studied the brand preferences and customer satisfaction towards health drinks. Same kind of study on consumer preference to health drinks was initiated in south India by Prakash (2011) and Tamilselvi and Kirubaharan (2011).

Buxton and Hagan (2012) surveyed on energy drinks consumption practices among student-athletes in Ghana. In the same year, Motwani and Agarwal studied customers' behavior in health food drink product category.

Badaam and Masroor (2013) studied the energy drinks consumption practices among football players. Bedi and Paul (2013) analyzed the Indian consumers' attitude towards health drinks and an analysis of nutritional information disclosure on labels of milk based malted health drinks in India was done by Srivastava and Ghufran (2013).

Next, consumer satisfaction towards health drinks was again studied by Thangaraj et. Al., (2014) and Ali and Mohamed (2015). Sekar and Thangavel (2016) discussed the consumer's perception and buying pattern towards health drinks with special reference to rural areas. Later, Lee et. al., (2018) were involved in a cross-cultural study of consumer perceptions using importance-performance analysis (IPA). In this work, we have studied the customers' perception of different brands of health drinks in the North 24 Parganas district (comprising of areas like Barasat, Madhyamgram, Basirhat, Bangaon etc) of West Bengal, India.

2. OBJECTIVES

This research paper has the following objectives:

(i) To compare different health drinks brands on the basis of Customers' preferences and brand image.
(ii) To compare different health drinks brands in terms of different factors like nourishment, colour, price, packaging, promotion, flavor etc.
(iii) To study whether the customers' rating of health drink is dependent on factors like income level of the customers, occupation of customers (working mother/ home maker) and customer's child age.
(iv) To do a comparative study on the popularity of taglines of different health drink brands.

3. METHODOLOGY

A sample of 500 health drink using customers (who have health drink consuming children in their family) from the North 24 Parganas district (comprising of areas like Barasat, Madhyamgram, Basirhat, Bangaonetc) of West Bengal, India has been considered. Sampling technique employed is basically convenient sampling, although it has been ensured that randomness is incorporated as far as possible. Each of these 500 customers/respondents was served with a questionnaire seeking responses related to i) their demographic characteristics, ii) the brands of health drink they are currently using, iii) their rating of different brands of health drinks in terms of different factors in a scale of 10.

Data/responses thus obtained from the respondents have been subjected to different simple statistical analyses using descriptive statistics, bar charts, t-test etc.

3. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Customers' preferences for different health drinks

Health drinks	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Customer rating out of 10	6.625	7.45	7.2	4.05	1.3	4	7.475

TABLE -1

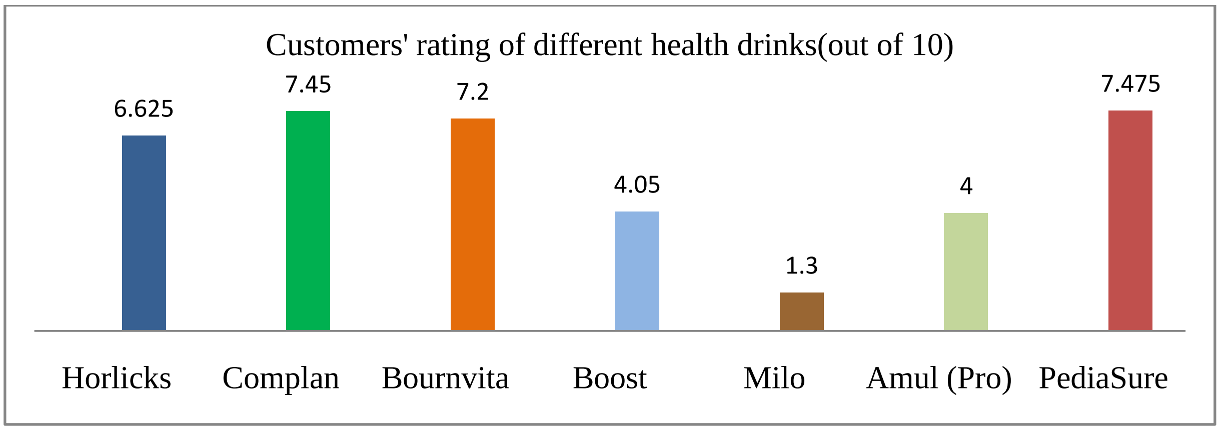

Fig. 1

For each health drink, average of different customers' rating (out of 10) has been calculated (Table -1) and presented in Fig. 1. The chart reveals that Pediasure is the most highly rated health drink, followed by Complan and Brounvita. Horlicks, despite being a very old health drink, occupies the 4th position according to customers' rating.

Customers' ratings of different health drinks in terms of Brand Image (out of 10)

Health drink	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Brand Image	8	8.075	7.025	4.125	1.675	4.55	7.4

TABLE - 2

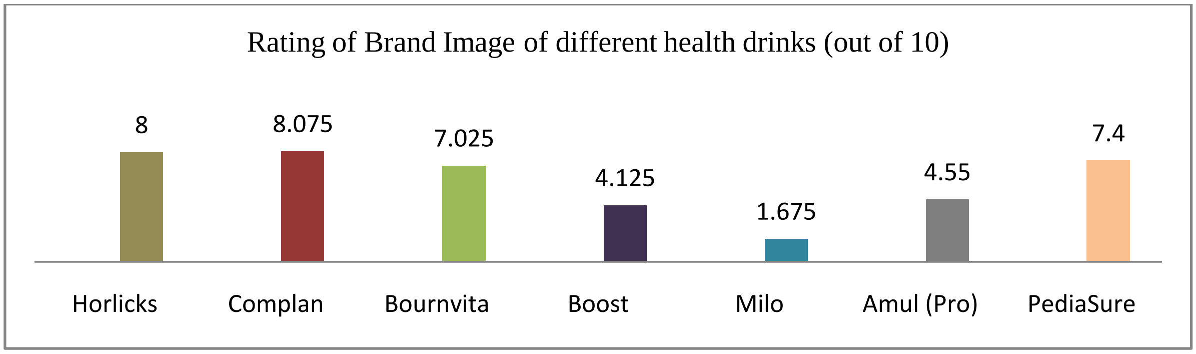

Fig. 2

For each health drink, average of different customers' rating (out of 10) of Brand Image has been provided in Table-2 and the corresponding bar chart is shown in Fig. 2. The chart reveals that complan is the most highly rated health drink in terms of Brand image, followed by Horlicks and PediaSure. Bournvita occupies 4th position.

Customers' ratings of different health drinks in terms of Nourishment (out of 10)

Brand Names	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Nourishment	7.025	7.05	6.7	4.725	1.55	3.975	6.75

TABLE -3

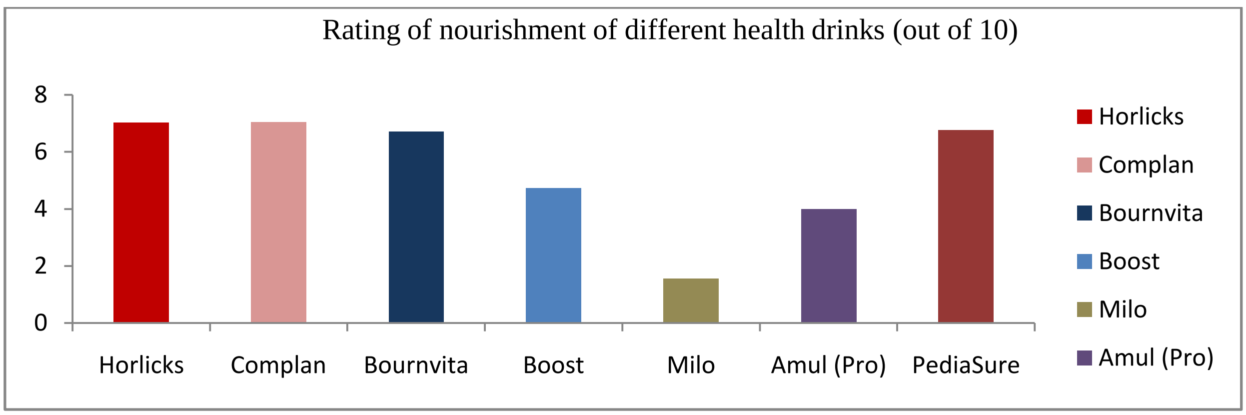

Fig. 3

For each health drink, average of different customers' rating (out of 10) of nourishment has been calculated (as presented in Table-3) and the corresponding bar chart is shown in Fig. 3. The chart reveals that Horlicks is the most highly rated health drink in terms of Nourishment, followed by Complan and Pediasure. Bournvita occupies 4th position.

Customers' ratings of different health drinks in terms of Colour (out of 10)

Health drinks	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Colour	6.45	6.875	5.825	4.075	1.125	3.50	5.625

TABLE -4

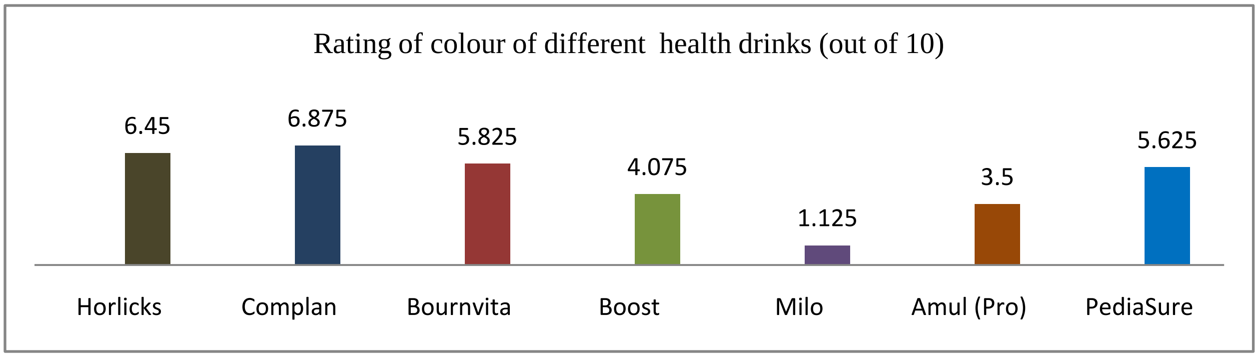

Fig. 4

For each health drink, average of different customers' rating (out of 10) of colour (of health drinks) has been provided in Table-4 and shown with bar charts in Fig. 4. The chart reveals that Complan is the most highly rated health drink in terms of colour, followed by Horlicks and Bournvita. PediaSure occupies the 4th position.

Customers' ratings of different health drinks in terms of suitability of price (out of 10)

Health drinks	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Price	6.175	6.825	6.625	3.9	2.075	3.4	4.2

TABLE -5

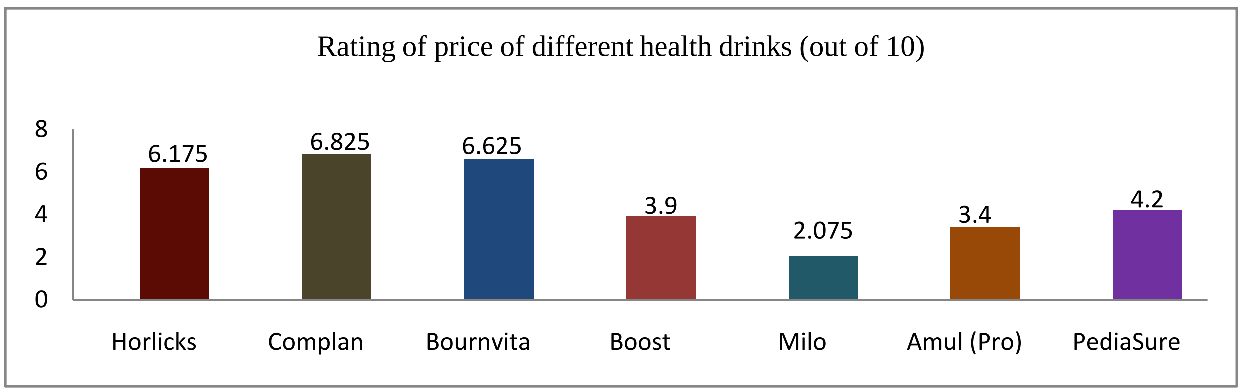

Fig. 5

For each health drink, the average of the customers' rating of the suitability of price has been provided in Table-5 and shown with bar chart in Fig. 5. The chart reveals that Complan is the most highly rated health drink in terms of price, followed by Bournvita and Horlicks. PediaSure occupies 4th position. It may be noted here that out of the health drinks mentioned in the above chart, PediaSure is the most expensive health drink.

Customers' ratings of different health drinks in terms of Packaging (out of 10)

Health drinks	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Packaging	6.875	6.45	6.175	4.45	1.775	3.45	5.575

TABLE 6

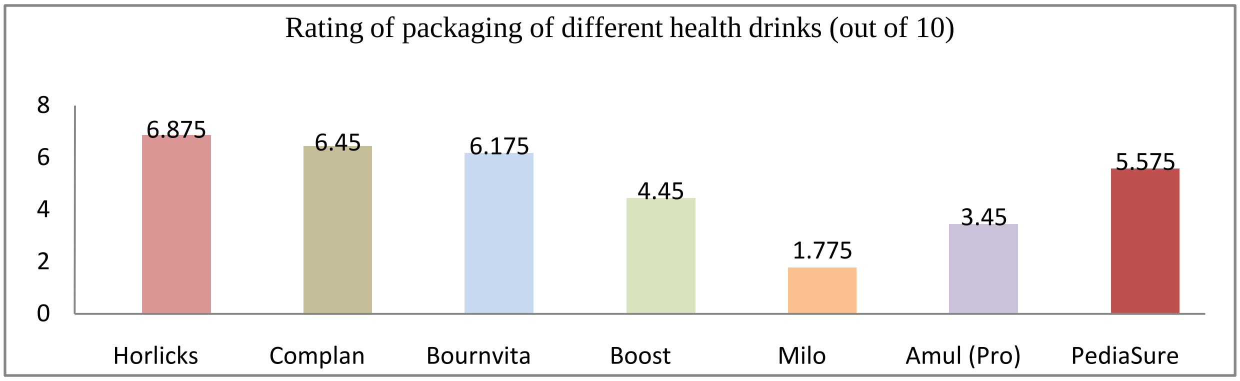

Fig. 6

For each health drink, average of different customers' rating (out of 10) of packaging has been calculated (as presented in Table-6) and shown in Fig.6. The chart reveals that Horlicks is the most highly rated health drink in terms of packaging, followed by Complan and Bournvita and PediaSure.

Customers' ratings of different health drinks in terms of promotions (out of 10)

Health drinks	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Promotions	6.375	6.5	5.975	4.075	1.5	3.575	4.2

TABLE -7

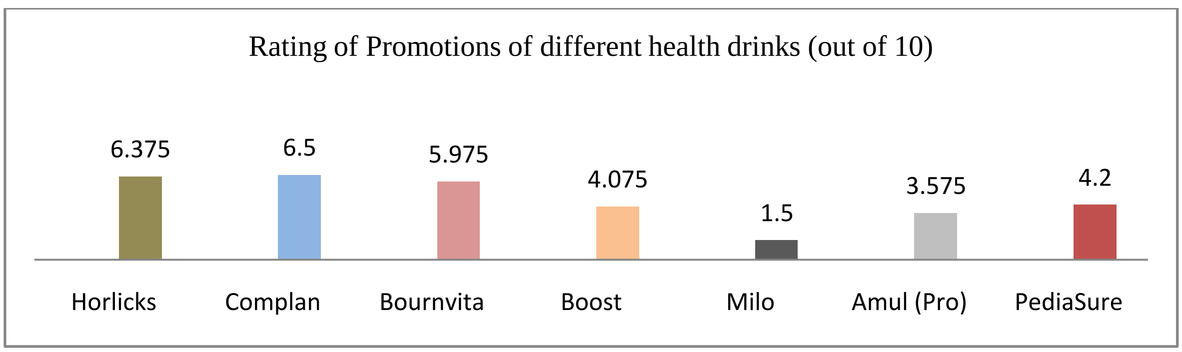

Fig. 7

For each health drink, average of different customers' rating (out of 10) of promotions has been calculated (as presented in Table-7) and shown in Fig. 7. The chart reveals that Complan is the most highly rated health drink in terms of Brand image, followed by Horlicks, Bournvita and PediaSure.

Customers' ratings of different health drinks in terms of Flavour (out of 10)

Health drinks	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Flavour	7.1	6.725	6.175	4.35	1.425	3.9	5.325

TABLE -8

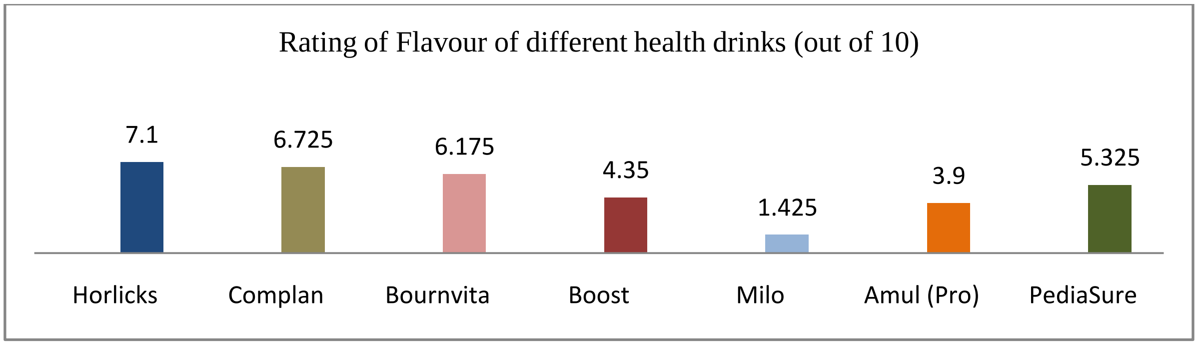

Fig. 8

For each health drink, average of different customers' rating (out of 10) of flavour has been calculated and presented in Table-8. The same has been shown with bar charts in Fig. 8. The chart reveals that Horlicks is the most highly rated health drink in terms of flavour, followed by Complan, Bournvita and PediaSure.

Relationship between customers' income level and customers' rating of health drinks

In order to study whether the income level of the customers is having any effect on their ratings of health drinks, the respondents have been initially classified into two groups (say A and B) on the basis of their monthly income. Customers of group A have their monthly income below Rs. 50000/- and customers of group B have their monthly income above or equal to Rs. 50000/-. Now for each of the brands the average of the scores (out of 10) given by the members of group A is calculated. The same is done for each brand by the taking the scores given by the members of group B. These average scores of both the groups are presented in Table-9. Then by applying matched paired t-test, a comparison has been done between these average scores (out of 10) given by the members of group A and by the members of group B.

H_0: There is no significant difference between the rating of health drinks by customers of lower income group & the rating of health drinks by customers of higher income group.

H_1: There is a significant difference between the rating of health drinks by customer of lower income group & the rating of health drinks by customer of higher income group.

Health Drinks	(A)Income < 50000	(B)Income ≥ 50000
Horlicks	6.89	6.1
Complan	7.63	7.1
Bournvita	7.15	7.31
Boost	3.59	5
Milo	1.15	1.62
Amul(pro)	3.85	4.31
PediaSure	7.81	6.77

TABLE – 9

Here, calculated t =0.06165. Degree of freedom=7-1=6. Tabulated t at 5% level of significance = 2.447

Therefore, the cal-t < tab-t. So there is no reason to reject H_0. And H_1 is rejected.

Therefore, irrespective of the level of customers' income, the ratings of health drink are more or less the same. Customers of two income groups rate the different health drinks in a similar manner.

Comparison between the working mother and home maker in terms of their ratings of different health drink brands

One may be interested to know as to whether a working mother's preference of health drinks is same (or different) as that of a mother who is a home maker. With this objective the respondents have been classified into two groups, namely 'Home maker' and 'Working mother'. Now for each of the brands the average of the scores (out of 10) is calculated for each of the two groups of respondents. These average scores of both the groups are presented in Table-10. Then a matched paired t-test has been done to compare the views of the two above mentioned groups of mothers.

H_0: There is no difference between the viewpoints of working mother and home maker.

H_1: There is significant difference between the viewpoints of working mother and home maker.

	Health drinks						
Occupation	Horlicks	Complan	Bournvita	Boost	Milo	Amul (Pro)	PediaSure
Home maker	7.06	7	7.17	3.61	1.39	3.83	6.17
Working mother	8.38	7.85	7.31	5.08	1.46	2.69	7.77

TABLE - 10

Here, calculated t =1.648911. Degree of freedom=7-1=6. Tabulated t at 5% level of significance = 2.447

Therefore, the cal-t < tab-t.

So there is no reason to reject H_0. And H_1 is rejected.

Therefore, there is no difference between the viewpoints of working mother and home maker regarding the preference of health drinks.

Relationship between customers' child age and customers' rating of health drinks

One may be interested to know whether the rating of health drinks is dependent on the respondent's child age. With this objective, the respondents have been initially classified into two groups (say A and B) on the basis of their child's age. Customers of group A have children above 3 years of age and customers of group B have children below or equal to 3 years old. Now for each of the brands the average of the scores (out of 10) given by the members of group A is calculated. The same is done for each brand by the taking the scores given by the members of group B. These average scores of both the groups are presented in Table-11.

H_0: There is no significant difference between the preferences of the health drinks for children below 3 years of age and preferences of the health drinks for children in the age group above 3 years.

H_1: There is a significant difference between the preferences of the health drinks for children below 3 years of age and preferences of the health drinks for children in the age group above 3 years.

Health Drinks	(A)Child age above 3years	(B)Child age<=3years
Horlicks	6.82	7.57
Complan	7.73	8.07
Bournvita	7.36	6.50
Boost	3.09	4.36
Milo	1.27	1.29
Amul(pro)	6.55	2.21
Pedia Sure	6.36	6.71

TABLE -11

Here, calculated t =0.49. Degree of freedom=7-1=6. Tabulated t at 5% level of significance = 2.447

Therefore, the cal-t < tab-t.

So there is no reason to reject H_0. And H_1 is rejected.

Rating of health drinks is independent of child age. i.e., the health drink purchasing decision by the customer is not affected by variations of child age.

Ranking of the different health drink brands in terms of how easily their taglines are identified by the customers

Taglines play a crucial role in making a brand popular. With the objective of finding out how much popular the taglines of the different brands of health drinks are, each of the respondents was asked to identify the taglines of the seven brands of health drinks. The result is displayed in Table-12.

Tag line	Percentage of customer who identified the brand by its tagline	Rank
"Taller Stronger sharper" (Horlicks)	57	1
"The taste of India" (Amul)	51	2
"Secret of my energy" (Boost)	39	3
"Tayyarijeetki" "Tann Ki Shakti Mann Ki Shakti" (Bournvita)	14	4
"A promise for life" "complete nutrition, complete peace of mind" (PediaSure)	12	6
"TaakatKanaya plan" (Complan)	11	7
"Health with benefits" (Milo)	2	8

TABLE -12

It is found that most popular tagline is that of Horlicks, the tagline being "Taller Stronger sharper", next popular is that of Amul's tagline i.e. "The taste of India". Relatively the tagline of Boost is also popular but the tag lines of Complan and Pediasure are not much popular.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper an effort has been made to study the health drinks market of the North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, India on the basis of the customers' perception/ preferences. Seven popular health drinks brand have been selected and the data obtained from a survey has been subjected to a few simple statistical analyses which resulted in some very interesting revelations. According to the customer rating, Pediasure is the most highly rated health drink, followed by Complan, Brounvita and Horlicks. However, when the customers rated the health drinks in terms of brand image then interestingly complain replaces PediaSure to occupy the first position followed by Horlicks and PediaSure. Strikingly, the customers feel that health drink which provides maximum nourishment is neither Pediasure nor Complan but Horlicks. Customer rating shows that Complan is the most highly rated health drink in terms of colour, followed by Horlicks and Bournvita. Complan is the most highly rated health drink in terms of suitability of price (value for money), followed by Bournvita and Horlicks. PediaSure, despite being the most expensive health drink occupies 4th position. Horlicks is the most highly rated health drink in terms of packaging and flavour, followed by Complan and Bournvita. Irrespective of the level of customers' income the ratings of health drinks are more or less the same. Customer of different income groups rate the different health drinks in a similar manner. This study shows that the working mother and homemakers give same type of rating to the health drinks. Rating of health drinks is independent of child age also. The study further reveals that most popular tagline is that of Horlicks, the tagline being "Taller Stronger Sharper", next popular is that of Amul's tagline i.e. "The taste of India". Relatively the tagline of Boost is also popular but the tag lines of Complan and Pediasure are not much popular. This implies that both Complan and Pediasure have a scope of improving their sales and popularity by concentrating more on modifying their taglines.

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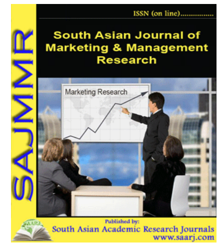
SAJMMR

ISSN: 2249-877X Vol. 10, Issue 9, Sept 2020, Impact Factor: SJIF 2020= 7.11

South Asian Journal of Marketing & Management Research (SAJMMR)

(Double Blind Refereed & Reviewed International Journal)



DOI: 10.5958/2249-877X.2020.00064.8

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENGT OF FRUITS: A CASE STUDY ON MARKETING CHANNELS OF MANGO IN BIDAR DISTRICT, KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

In the Era of stimulating growth, economic development and ever growing purchasing power of Indian consumer and induction of National horticulture mission by government of India as horticulture is significantly contributing to the Indian GDP and is planned to double the production of horticulture crops. What is required is the review, explore and channelize and have a good market structure essential for the success of the programs implemented by the government which are designed for uplift of population in whole. Indian market is dominated by unorganized retailing due to which there is heavy loss and escalation in the prices of commodities. This study is focused on determining the existence of different supply chains in the Bidar district of Karnataka involved in marketing of mangoes. The study is conducted by the structured questionaries for the different intermediaries. It involve knowing the existing marketing chains in the district, Problem faced by the intermediaries involved in the marketing of mangoes and fruits in general and the value addition to the products, post-harvest facilities present in the district involvement of the APMC for fruit marketing and its reach and profit to the famers. There is no post-harvest facilities and separate APMC regulated fruit market, co-operative marketing facility is not there and involvement of intermediaries is escalating he price of the produce and producers share in consumer price is very less.

KEYWORDS: *Bidar, Fruit chain, Marketing, Supply chain management.*

1 INTRODUCTION

The horticulture sector has in past few years, proved to be the engine of growth in agriculture for improving the productivity per unit area, source of generating employment, improving the economic well being of the farming community and the entrepreneurs involved in agriculture and horticulture and thereby enhancing exports and capable of earning considerable foreign exchange. India ranks first among world's mango producing countries accounting for about 46% of the global area and 40% of the global production. Special care is needed in development of horticultural sector due to inherent constraints like perishability. The markets of horticultural products in the country lack a systematic approach of supply management. Mostly growers realize a fraction of the price paid by the consumer. A sizeable fraction of the price is cornered by the functionaries/traders or lost in the long marketing chain. This is due to lack of availability of infrastructure. Moreover, all stake holders beginning from growers to consumers are not well integrated. The post harvest losses in case of horticultural crops range between 30-40 per cent. These are primarily due to inefficient handling, transportation and lack of storage. Thus, efficient cold storage and cold chain are essential which is grossly inadequate to meet the growing demand in future. The horticulture sector in India is characterized by small, segregated farms with low per-hectare yields and huge post-harvest losses, owing to outdated practices **(Usha and Subhash 2012)**.

The important mango producing states in India are Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Kerala and Orissa **(NHB)**.

TABLE 1.1 PRODUCTION STATISTICS OF MANGO IN INDIA

	2013 – 14		
STATE	**AREA** 000' HA	**PRODUCTION** 000' MT	**PDY** MT/HA
UTTAR PRADESH	262.18	4300.98	16.4
ANDRA PRADESH	304.11	2737.01	9.0
KARNATAKA	180.53	1755.58	9.7
TELANGANA	190.88	1717.88	9.0
BIHAR	149.00	1367.57	9.2
MAHARASHTRA	485.00	1212.50	2.5
GUJRAT	142.69	1125.50	7.9
TAMIL NADU	161.58	785.50	4.9
ODISHA	197.52	751.02	3.8
JHARKHAND	51.33	517.92	10.1
KERALA	74.44	441.03	5.9
WEST BENGAL	93.50	430.71	4.6
OTHERS	223.23	1288.04	5.8

Sources: All India 2013-14 (Final Estimated), Department of Agriculture and Co-operation

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The objective of SCM is to maximize competitiveness and profitability for whole supply chain, including the end-customer at the same time. The market structure can also be defined as characteristics of the organization of a market, which seem to strategically influence the nature of competition and pricing behavior within the market **Bain (1968)**. The marketing of fruits and vegetables is associated with a unique set of conditions which makes the task difficult and highly risky. Firstly, the nature of the produce handled itself, because of high perishability it is difficult to create time and space utilities. The second factor in marketing of fruits and vegetables is the prevailing imperfect competition i.e. there are only few traders in the business. These two factors have a lot of influence on the current marketing system of other agriculture commodities **Subrahmanyam and Mruthyunjaya (1978)**. Product characteristics have their effect on the facilities necessary to market farm products. Bulkiness requires large storage capacities. Perishable products require speedy handling and perhaps special refrigeration also stated that functional approach to study marketing is to break up the whole marketing process into specialized activities performed in accomplishing the marketing process. The approach helps to evaluate marketing costs for similar marketing middlemen and/or different commodities and costs and benefits of marketing functions **Kohls and Uhl (1985)**. The small holders though make a sizeable contribution to high value food production (fruits and vegetables), their access to market is constrained by scale. Their marketable surplus is small while local markets for high value commodities are thin and sale in distant urban markets raises transportation and marketing costs. Existing supply chains are long and are dominated by a number of intermediaries like assemblers, wholesalers, sub-wholesalers, commission agents and retailers. The farm gate prices for vegetables and fruits range between 20-30 per cent of the eventual retail prices in India. In developed countries such as U.S.A., U.K. and Japan, the farm gate prices for such products range between 40-55 per cent of retail prices **Jain (2004)**. Inadequate market systems cause high food losses in developing countries. To minimize losses, the commodities produced by farmers need to reach the consumers in an efficient way the wholesale, supermarket and retail facilities providing suitable storage and sales conditions for food products. To prevent the above said losses the marketing cooperatives should be able to reduce food losses by increasing the efficiency of these activities. Although the development of wholesale and retail markets should preferably be done by the private sector, local governments and marketing cooperatives can be instrumental in establishing and improving market facilities **Kader (2005).**

3 SIGNIFICANCE

At present the unorganized retailers are linked with farmers through wholesalers or commission agents. Sometimes there would be more than one commission agent and wholesaler for the same produce to reach the retailer. The commission agents and wholesalers redundant supply chain practices make unorganized further inefficient. In horticulture produce studies shows wastages close to 25% in unorganized retailing. The wastage is far less almost 16-19% with organized retailers compared to unorganized retailers. This proves the importance and necessity of Supply chain. Bidar district consists of five taluk and in each taluk different types of horticultural crops are under cultivation. Crops like Mango, Papaya, Banana, Fig, grapes, Pomegranate, Cashew lime etc., are being cultivated extensively and large quantities of these are being sent directly to Hyderabad and Mumbai markets. There is an imperative need to create marketing infrastructure for overall development of horticulture, small, segregated farmers for fair share in consumer’s price for the producer in the district.

4 OBJECTIVES

The objective of the study is to know the existing the system, structure, marketing channels, intermediaries involved in the marketing of fruits, constraints in the marketing of fruits in Bidar district.

5 RESEARCH METHEDOLOGY:

The supply chain study of mangoes in Bidar district was aimed to make appraisal about the existing supply chain and problem faced by various intermediaries.

The study covers the marketing of mangoes from supply chain perspective and the study is based on, primary and secondary data collection. The primary data has been collected from the different intermediates involved in the supply chain of mangoes: producers, PHC, commission agents, wholesalers and retailers.

The secondary data has been collected from horticulture dept officials and marketing officials, national horticulture website, articles and journals.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

6.1 THE SYSTEM, STRUCTURE AND MARKETING CHANNELS OF MANGO

At the farm level the government under national horticulture mission is providing the samplings, information, technical assistance and subsidies on drip irrigation to the farmers. Bidar has witness a good progress in horticulture cropping and the net sown area has increased. There are many APMC regulated fruit markets in Karnataka but the one is absent in Bidar, The body has initiated to provide the market space for fruit and vegetables on Secundrabad road where the market has been constructed but the area is not that enough to be suitable for fruit market, the shops have been constructed suitable for the vegetable market. Upon interaction with the commission agents and wholesalers the problem with these is the shop allotted is less and the area is not suitable for the fruits as they require large areas for storage. There are no cold storage facilities by government in Bidar, although one is proposed in Humnabad taluk but not at implemented. Private market establishment will help the farmer as well as consumer, only when proper post harvest facilities are available and transparency in pricing and quality (proper grading) are introduced and the private market takes responsibility of helping the farmer in areas like productivity improvement, orchard management, and provides post harvest facilities and transportation system. This will only happen if private or farmer association owned farmers markets are established near producing areas.

As mentioned the problem of the whole of the India for horticulture is the un-organized marketing and aggregating the problem with absence of post harvest facilities. In Bidar there is no organized retailing of the fruits, there is involvement of commission agents, wholesalers sometimes more than once.

Whole marketing channels and supply chain structure has been studied and been analyzed the complexity of the chain has been shown in the figure-1.

6.2 INTERMEDIARIES INVOLVED:

6.2.1 FARMERS:

A **farmer** (also called an **agriculturer**) is a person engaged in agriculture, raising living organisms for food or raw materials. The term usually applies to people who do some combination of raising field crops, orchards, vineyards, poultry, or other livestock. A farmer might own the farmed land or might work as a labourer on land owned by others, but in advanced economies, a farmer is usually a farm owner, while employees of the farm are known as farm workers, or farmhands. However, in the not so distant past a farmer was a person who promotes or improves the growth of (a plant, crop, etc.) by labor and attention, land or crops or raises animals (as livestock or fish).

6.2.2 POST-HARVEST CONTRACTOR:

Evaluates the orchard during the initial stage of fruiting and payment is done to the farmer on per kg basis. Cost of activities such as harvesting, packing and transportation at the farm gate are borne by the contractor. Some small and marginal farmers sell their produce to contractors who visit them when the orchard is ready for the first harvest and contract with the farmers for the duration of the season. Here again farmers bear the weather risk

6.2.3 SMALL RETAIL BUSINESSMEN:

Including small retailers and roadside vendors also purchase their requirements directly from the growers, once the regular contractor harvests the quantity contracted to him. In this case the price is fixed by the grower depending upon the quantity purchased and the market price or contractor's price as the basis and the growers get about 10-15% higher price for their produce.

6.2.4 COMMISSION AGENT:

Facilitates trade between the contractor and the wholesaler for which they charge 6- 10% commission from the contractor. The commission agents also do sorting, grading sell the produce directly to the retailers in the local market.

6.2.5 WHOLESALER:

He is responsible for distribution of produce to various retailers. Second level of sorting/grading has also been observed at the secondary/terminal markets. Accordingly, the produce is sold to retailers based on specific grades.

6.2.6 Retailer:

Retail is the process of selling consumer goods and/or services to customers through multiple channels of distribution to earn a profit. Demand is created through diverse target markets and promotional tactics, satisfying consumers' wants and needs through a lean supply chain. Retailing includes subordinated services, such as delivery. The term "retailer" is also applied where a service provider services the needs of a large number of individuals, such as for the public. Shops may be on residential streets, streets with few or no houses, or in a shopping mall. Shopping streets may be for pedestrians only. Sometimes a shopping street has a partial or full roof to protect customers from precipitation.

6.3 MARKETING CHANNELS:

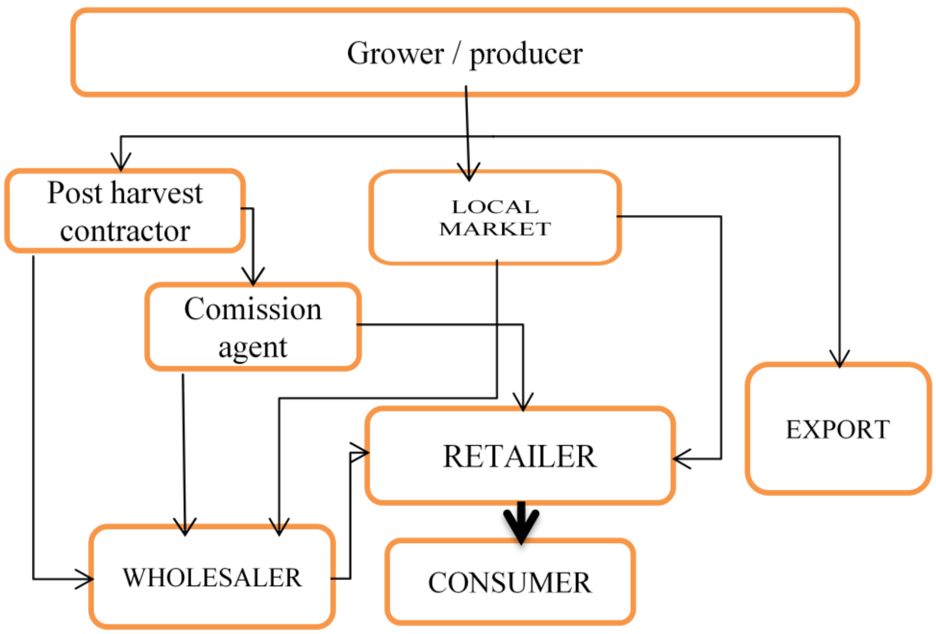
Marketing channels are routes through which agricultural products move from producers to consumers. The length of the channel varies from commodity to commodity, depending on the quantity to be moved, the form of consumer demand and degree of regional specialization in production

The common marketing channels engaged in the marketing of mangoes in the Bidar district are

1. **SC-1:** Producer – Retailer - Consumer.
2. **SC–2:** Producer – PHC – Retailer – Consumer.
3. **SC-3:** Producer – Wholesaler – Retailer – Consumer.
4. **SC-4:** Producer – PHC – CA – Retailer – Consumer.

5. **SC-5:** Producer – PHC – Wholesaler – Retailer – Consumer.

FIG-1: Existing supply chain of mango in Bidar.



Sources: Authors own representation of the existing supply chains in Bidar, Karnataka, India

As described earlier there are various intermediaries involved in the marketing chain of mangoes in Bidar district. They are, Producers, pre-harvest contractors, post-harvest contractors, small retail businessmen, commission agents, wholesalers and retailers. The volume harvested each time is less than a ton or depend on the size of the farm. Farmers find it difficult to transport mango to collection centers of corporate buyers since the quantity is less and are thus forced to sell at general market, where price is fixed by agents/wholesalers and farmers may not get remunerative price. Most of the farmers lease orchards to the contractors at the time of flowering or fruit setting. The price received by the farmer largely depends on the stage of the orchard at which the contract takes place.

6.4 DISCUSSIONS

The government is providing many kind of institutional support for the farmers but still a lot is need to be done for transfer of technical knowhow for increasing the productivity and quality of the produce. Cold chain facility is required in the district so that producers can preserve the produce at reasonable cost. The volume harvested each time is less than a ton or depend on the size of the farm. Farmers find it difficult to transport mango to collection centers of corporate buyers since the quantity harvested is less and are thus forced to sell at general market, where price is fixed by agents/wholesalers and farmers may not get remunerative price. Most of the farmers lease orchards to the contractors at the time of flowering or fruit setting. The price received by the farmer largely depends on the stage of the orchard at which the contract takes place, here whether risk is shared by the producer, the contractors also disrespect the contact at the time of harvesting if there are problems due to whether and the producers are left with the produce which is sold at the low prices in the market. Due to involvement of intermediaries there is price escalation because of the losses in transport, margins on intermediaries and producers bear the low share in consumer price. To solve the problem of the involvement of the intermediaries and price escalation, Co-operatives should be formed in the district by aggregating the small farmers and transaction cost can be reduced and farmers can realize better prices for their produce, if the produce is aggregated at one place corporate retail chains can be involved in the buying and farmers can realize the better price. Organizing the retail market like Raitha Santhe started in Karnataka help to reduce the cost of intermediaries by directly selling the produce to the retailer.

7 CONCLUSION

The most important issue of mango/ fruit marketing in Bidar is the presence of unorganized retailing and involvement of large number of intermediaries, these leads to the escalation of prices due to increase in the margins with increase in various intermediaries augmented with the physical losses and transport and less producers share in consumer price.

At the production side the farmers should be provided with the assistance in samplings, irrigation, most important is the storage with cold chain facilities.

To increase the producers share in consumes price there is a requirement of direct selling of produce in the market organized by APMC like Raitha Santhe, The problem of involvement of the intermediaries and escalation in prices of commodities and physical losses can be sorted if the farmers co-operatives are formed which is absent in the district, there is a urgent need to establish the co-operatives for both fruits and vegetables in the district and cold chain facilities.

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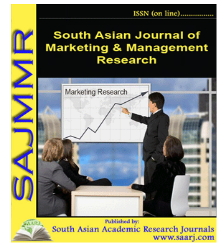
SAJMMR

ISSN: 2249-877X Vol. 10, Issue 9, Sept 2020, Impact Factor: SJIF 2020= 7.11

South Asian Journal of Marketing & Management Research (SAJMMR)

(Double Blind Refereed & Reviewed International Journal)



DOI: 10.5958/2249-877X.2020.00065.X

CONSOLIDATION OF SMALL GROCERY STORES: PROVIDING COMPETITIVE EDGE OVER MULTI-BRAND RETAIL GROCERY STORES

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ABSTRACT

The paper looks to focus on how the emergence of multi-brand retail grocery stores like Walmart and others have impacted the smaller local grocery stores. This article will look to provide a working solution that will allow smaller local grocery stores to compete against the multi-brand retail grocery stores in terms of sales promotion techniques like offers and discounts. The primary challenge in this will be to increase the quantity demanded of various products by the small grocery stores. By consolidation of the quantity demanded by various local grocery stores, the total quantity to be procured increases.With the principles of higher demand leading to higher negotiation power, the small grocery stores will gain the same competitive edge that the larger players in the market enjoy. Direct procurement from factories and bulk purchases from wholesalers will help decrease supply chain cost for local grocery stores as well.

KEYWORDS: *Consolidation, Discounting, Multi Brand Retail Grocery Stores, Negotiation PowerSales Promotion Techniques.*

INTRODUCTION

With the incoming of multi-brand retail grocery stores like Walmart, Metro Cash and Carry, Big bazar and various others, there is increased convenience for the customers in terms of discounts and availability of goods under one roof but it is not such a happy store for all. The worst hit group due to the emergence of these stores are the small local grocery shops present in different localities. With over 92% of the grocery sector being unorganised there is high potential in consolidation of the same.

With growing popularity of the multi-brand retail grocery stores, the small local shops lose out in terms of marketing. Due to low budget and purchasing power, they lack the resources to provide customers with attractive offers in terms of discounts. This has been observed as one of the primary reasons for the majority of the population in the urban areas heading to multi-brand retail grocery stores.

The secret behind the fancy offers lies in the quantity purchased by these stores in the wholesale market. Larger the quantity, larger the negotiation power of the multi-brand retail grocery stores with thewholesalers. Often, these stores approach the factories directly to procure a bulk quantity of the produce. Direct procurement of these items; reduce supply chain cost added to the product thereby reducing per piece cost.

As a result of the reducing per piece cost, these multi-brand retail stores enjoy the freedom to give offers that attract customers and sway them away from the local grocery stores.

With very small quantity to be bought, local grocery stores miss out on the perks of dealing in bulk quantities. These small grocery stores have low negotiation power with the wholesalers and have almost no contact with the factories for direct procurement of the various products. This results to additional supply chain cost resulting into higher per unit cost.

With higher per unit cost of procurement, the margins shrink and therefore, it is mathematically not possible for them to provide offers without incurring losses.

This paper will primary focus on a method by which the quantity of products demanded by grocery stores will increase and thereby their power of negotiation. This will in-return facilitate them with broader margins and thus allow them to compete against multi-brand retail grocery stores in terms of selling promotion techniques like discounts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Artz and Stone (2016) in their study titled “Analyzing the impact of Wal-Mart Supercentres on Local food store sales” claimed that the entry of discount mass supermarket into the grocery business is part of a fast consolidation happening in the grocery industry in recent years. In metropolitan countries, Supercentres are expected to capture about 4% of existing grocery stores sales one year after entry. It is analyzed that when one or more Wal-Mart supercentres opens in the market of Mississippi, there is a change in the food stores sales in the local market. Primary, as well as secondary sources of data were used for analysis of the study and it was reported from previous studies that restaurant sales in the host town might increase with a decrease in the grocery sales when a Wal-Mart supercentre comes into action. Difference-in-differences estimation strategy was used to examine the impact of the study comparing outcomes in host countries before and after the addition of a Supercentre as well as comparing these changes with a control group of countries without a Wal-Mart Supercentre. It was found that Wal-Mart’s entry nonmetropolitan markets reduce the growth of grocery store sales by nearly 17 percentage points within two years of entry.

Chandler and Susan (1998) in their article titled “Chains hope consolidation keeps discount giants at bay” argued that the discounter's aggressive push into the grocery business is the major driving force behind the latest round of industry consolidation. The merger of Albertson's and American Stores, the parent of Melrose Park-based Jewel Food Stores, has been redefining big in the grocery business. On a regional basis, the grocery business is considered to be highly fragmented.In the discount industry, players like Wal-Mart, Kmart Corp and Target control 80% of the business already and it’s been said that there’s plenty more consolidation in the grocery business is yet to come. Many grocery stores have pushed up their produce sections and increased prepared meal offerings, hoping to seize time-pressed consumers. Nevertheless, grocery sales have been flat for years as more and more people dine outside the home or carry in meals from alternative channels. The convenience-driven customer is the new strategy for such stores including Wal-Mart.

Gentry (2000) in his study titled “Small supermarkets struggle to survive” explain how small supermarket chains have become an endangered species and consolidation among competitors is the trend. According to studies, small family-owned chain manages to survive the effects of consolidation in the industry by ordering direct and keeping the prices down. Such stores pay strong attention to the quality of the products along with its own distribution center. It has been found that smaller companies had been the first to be affected by consolidation in the industry but it has worked its way up the ladder by including medium-sized chains.

Gupta and Nair (2000) in their article titled “Small grocery chains feel the pinch of consolidation” described how the increasing competition faced by smaller, regional grocery chains leads them to follow a nationwide trend of grocery industry consolidation. Either smaller chains are taken over by the larger players in the market or they go out of business. Studies revealed that after the consolidation of Stop & Shop Supermarket Co. and Shaw’s Supermarkets Inc. moved from 25% to 40% market share in a time period of five years. European grocery conglomerates are seemed to be “going after the money” for much of a change in the industry.

McGarry (2016) in his study titled “The mortality of independent grocery stores in Buffalo and Pittsburgh” explained that the entrance for grocery trade is quite easy but it’s over expanded facilities and low profitability made failure almost inevitable. The insistent demand for a wider and wider choice of varieties and brands of merchandise, the increasing tendencies to concentratepurchasing of groceries in a single storeand to buy in large quantity on a singleshopping trip have brought about thedevelopment of the one-stop shopping center and the super-market. Primary and secondary sources of data collection are used for the study. The study finds that there has been a fairly consistent downward trend in the entrance rate and the mortality rate of grocery stores in Buffalo and also both the rates are fairly closely associated throughout the whole period. Few changes have taken place in the grocery trade by a comparison of the “life expectancy”. The mortality of grocery stores had decreased from the previous years to the later years and the chances of survival for the new stores had materially increased. A high correlation between entrance rates and mortality rates had been observed.

Demont and Philip (1999) in their study titled “Grocery chains brace for Wal-Mart: Consolidation is occurring in anticipation of Wal-Mart’s entry into the food business” explains how the number of grocery stores remaining is decreasing unlike the past years, where competition was minimal between large-scale chains and one food selling organization dominated a city or province. Consolidation of smaller grocery markets is considered as a good defensive move to become a national chain. Chains consolidate their locations as a way of boosting operating efficiencies and minimizing costs. Analysts revealed that there has been a large amount of consolidation largely in anticipation of Wal-Mart getting into the food business.

It was also found out that chains had been offering more services as well as outside the traditional lines of operations of food stores.

ANALYSIS

With the establishment of the big multi-brand retail grocery stores, it is evident that the smaller local players are facing stiff competition in terms of pricing and offers. The advantage that multi-brand retail grocery stores enjoy is the volume of sales that take place. As a result of large volumes, the negotiation power of these players with the wholesaler is much higher and this results in competitive pricing of the product thereby, providing customers with fancy offers.

The place where small grocery stores lose out is the limited quantity they sell. Due to limited demand, their procurement of the various goods from a wholesaler is also much lower when compared to that of the multi-brand retail grocery stores. As a result of which, they do not enjoy the negotiation leverage with the wholesalers.

With the point of difference being just the volume of various goods procured from the wholesaler, it is safe to say that if the small grocery stores match up to the quantity of multi-brand retail grocery stores they will be able to negotiate prices better with the wholesaler and thereby compete their counterpart in terms of pricing and offers.

Ordering at the Economic Order Quantity (EOQ) will help them dissipate the logistics and supply chain cost over more number of individual products thereby reducing per unit cost of the item. Today this happens to be a challenge for small grocery stores because of limited quantity demanded by them.

By increasing the quantity demanded the small grocery store enjoys the dual benefit. Primarily they can look at options of bulk purchasing from the wholesalers or the factory directly with a better negotiating leverage. The ancillary benefit will be to achieve a better EOQ which reduces your logistics and supply chain cost in a significant manner.

SOLUTION

With limited purchasing power as individuals, the small grocery stores will lose out on benefits received by ordering in bulk, thus the effort should be to pool in various small grocery stores and formation of a consortium.

With the addition of small grocery stores under a consortium, the individual demand of each member adds on to become a large cumulative amount demanded. With the increase in demand, the negotiation power of the consortium increases thereby allowing them to sign better deals with wholesalers.

With the help of consortium, every individual member can order the required amount of the product. As multiple individual grocery stores place their order together the combined quantity demanded increases thereby giving the consortium a leverage to negotiate.

One of the primary challenges to this will be the availability of space that small grocery stores have. With increased demand but limited space, the grocery stores will find it difficult to accommodate the increased order quantity.

To overcome this problem, the consortium can look at setting up a cooperative society or a self-help group, under which it can look at options of warehousing. A central warehouse can be setup for the consortium, from where the member grocery stores can stock their products and invoice as and when required. This allows them to procure various products in large quantity and store it at the warehouse.

The semi-urban and rural population which is dependent on local money lenders have been exploited over the years and this has led them to become part of a vicious cycle of poverty. Eventually becoming an established self-help group or a cooperative society will help them secure credit lines from banks and other financial institutions. This will be the first step towards their formal inclusion to the financial sector.

This will also mean that they will be able to free themselves from the local money lenders who charge exorbitantly high interest rates and set obnoxious conditions.

Small grocery stores have a competitive edge when it comes to man power. With very limited man power, the human resources cost is minimal in the case of small grocery stores whereas multi-brand retail grocery stores pay a huge chunk as their human resource expenses.

CONCLUSION

We can conclude by saying that, forming consortium provides small-scale grocery shops a chance to compete against the multi-brand retail grocery stores. With increased demand, the individual grocery stores get a better offer from the wholesalers which can be passed on to the consumers.

With very limited operations cost and human resources cost, small scale grocery stores have a competitive edge over the multi brand retail grocery stores. With efficient use of resources, the consortium can look at increasing the EOQ efficiency thereby reducing logistics as well as supply chain cost for its members.

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ISSN: 2249-877X Vol. 10, Issue 9, Sept 2020, Impact Factor: SJIF 2020= 7.11

South Asian Journal of Marketing & Management Research (SAJMMR)

(Double Blind Refereed & Reviewed International Journal)

DOI: 10.5958/2249-877X.2020.00102.2

ROLE OF MARKETING RESEARCH IN BETTER CONSUMER UNDERSTANDING: A THEORITICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Why is market research so significant? Because it discloses numerous things such as, who are your consumers? Do they have a necessity for your products? Tactlessly the difficulty is in market investigation is either overlooked or not properly because of numerous motives. What are the reasons? Constrictions, constraints related to funds, manpower, time, determination to launch the manufactured goods in the market. Unfortunately, this leads to imperfect sympathetic of the market because of very transitional experience with possible consumers, who may possibly use your product, hence it is very crucial to do market investigation. Though there are two serious issues that needs to be addressed here, what should entrepreneurs look to achieve through market research? And what are the market research techniques that are really suitable for such an endeavor? Some key market research questions for entrepreneurs could be any of the following. Is the business model or concept really feasible or appropriate? What are some of the risks that are involved in the venture and how can an individual better understand and minimize the risk?

KEYWORDS: *Market, Consumers, Entrepreneurs, Constrictions, Constraints.*

INTRODUCTION

What precisely is market study? And how significant is it the business accomplishment? Market study is studying and gathering more data about your consumer's requirements and likings. Think of it like receiving to know your consumer vile matter. Market study will contain of discovering diverse subjects that will be helpful to your industry in the long run. It is also a pronounced way to form a connection with your consumer base. If you recognize what they like and what they do not like, there are advanced chances that you getting an auction or final a deal. Virtual market study is comparatively earlier and calmer procedure than traditional marker study. Here you can collect all the evidence you need with just a limited click of the mouse. With this study you can mark wise and knowledgeable corporate choices. Leading market study on the internet can also be a computerized procedure, you can set up warnings for new inward data and mechanically add that to your preceding data (Argyriou, & Melewar, 2011). This is cooperative because the biosphere nowadays changes at a debauched step and belongings alteration continually. This information will make you more capable with the needs and preferences of consumers. It is very significant to recognize and comprehend your consumer, and then there is internet. Which will deliver you numerous data of the consumer so you can appreciate and act after what the consumer wants. Moreover, through the use of webs and social media, trades are now able to get access to their buyer base effortlessly. Folks on social media and in internet are often pleased to share their own study and perceptions online. This is an enormous help for market investigators as there is already showed their study ready. Through market study you will be able to know convinced data which comprise what do your consumer want in a trademark. This will help establish the standard on what do you deliver to your consumer (Thompson, C. J. (1997). For example, they might want a brand with a good price. It is recovering to recognize this thing right off the earlier you start your business. What do you want from your product and what do they anticipate? Consumers have certain prospects from a product, this will support you give what your consumers need from your brand and prospects even healthier. After all, consumers need to be pleased. What they do and do not like about a product? Every corporate has its own errors, and that is ok. This is why market study is significant. This will aid you recognize if you devour ended errors in business performs and make these steps to modifying these mistakes. What are the explanations for purchasing your goods and services? Consumers have their individual motives because they purchase goods from one company as imaginary to their compatibility. This might be any purpose that will only make sense to the consumer. But concluded market study, you will be capable to recognize why consumer pick your brand over another (Belk, Fischer, & Kozinets, 2012).

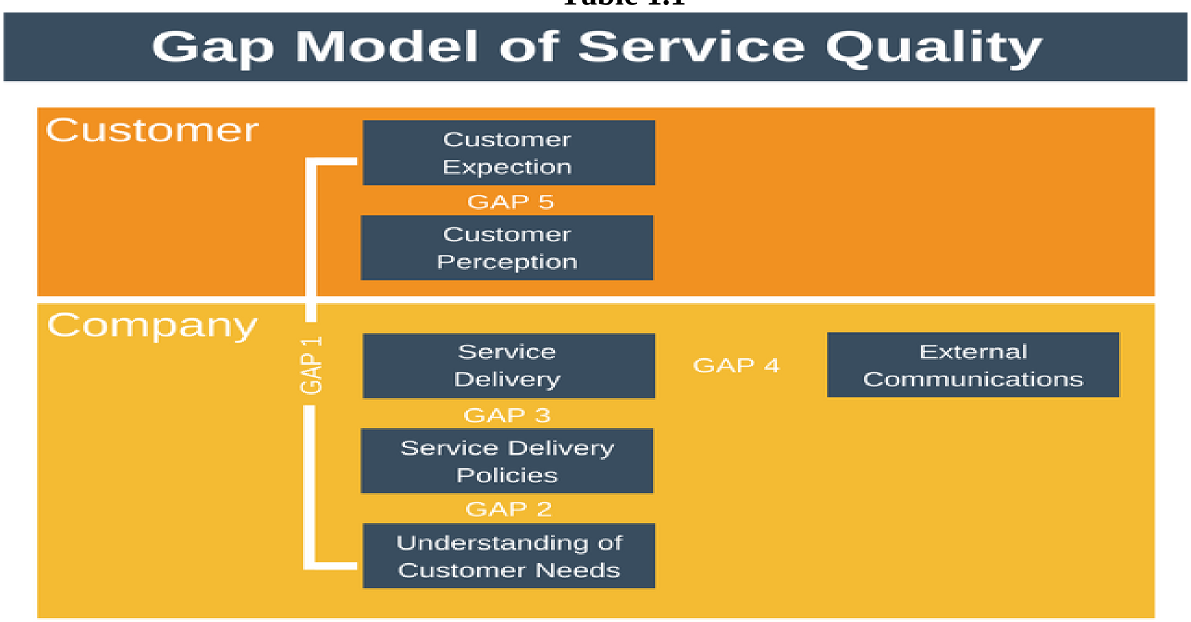
UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER EXPECTATION THROUGH MARKET RESEARCH

The consumer's decision of complete superiority of the service providing in relative to the excellence that remained expected. So, when you go to buyer service so you expect so many things treatment and on what basis the judgment is going to happen. The process and outcome quality are both important. The aptitude to achieve the assured service consistently and precisely tends the customer to rely on you. So, when the customers you bring the service to the customer, it should be reliable to the customer. The customer should rely on you. Information and politeness of teams and their ability to carry trust and sureness give assurance to the customer. So, their knowledge and the courtesy they have and the way of convincing and building their trust is very important and give assurance to the customers. Coming to the tangibles, bodily facilities, equipment and attendance of a workers (Handelman, & Arnold, 1999). This plays an important role on service marketing as to build an impression to the customers. Coming to understanding, kind, adapted consideration the firm delivers its consumers. Readiness to aid the customs and deliver rapid facility to consumers is really very important. Every service sometimes faces the problems, so they should have the ability and dependability that customer's problems will be solved. Employees who have the information to answer consumers, this develops the assurance (Webster Jr, 1992).

INFORMATION GAP

The information gap is the variance between the consumer's prospects of the provision and the company's provisions of that service. This gap arises because there is an understanding of the customer knowledge, what the customer exactly require. Fundamentally this hole rises because administration does not recognize accurately what consumers assume. There are a number of motives why this happens, including: lack of management and customer interaction. Lack of message between servicer staffs and management. Insufficient market study. Insufficient relationship focusses. Disappointment to attend to consumer grievances. If we see the key factors related to the knowledge gap, the first one is inadequate marketing research orientation. So always company should go through the market research orientation. From the customer expectation's side, insufficient market research and research not focused on service quality. If these things happen, it is obvious that we would not know what the customers need. The next factor is absence of rising communication. Absence of communication between management and consumers and inadequate communication between interaction employees and management tips to an information gap. The next factors which come in is inadequate relationship emphasis. Absence of market division, emphasis on business rather than relationships and focus on new consumers relatively than relationship consumers (Moschis, & Churchill Jr, 1978). The last factor which plays it role in information gap is insufficient service recover. Absence of inspiration to attend to consumer grievances, disappointment to make amends when things go wrong and no appropriate recover mechanism in place for service failures. That has to be designed, if this happens, how it is going to be dealt or the personnel who are there and how they are going to handle their particular situations. The knowledge gap is further explained in table 1.1

Table 1.1



If you are going to understand the customers, certain objectives need to be designed. To classify disgruntled consumers, to determine consumer necessities, to observe and track presentation, to assess complete company presentation associated to rivalry, to measure holes among consumer expectation and perceptions, to gauge effectiveness of changes in service, to appraise service presentation of persons and squads for rewards, to control prospects for a new facility, to monitor altering prospects in a manufacturing and to prediction upcoming prospects. Moving to the type of research, certain type of research needs to be done. First comes customer complaints solicitation, identify dissatisfied customers to attempt recovery: recognize most common classes of service disappointments or corrective action. Relation studies plays an important role which assesses company's service performance compared to competitors; identify servicer improvement priorities; track service is still fresh; act on feedback. In market research, it is very difficult to build customer relationship, how can customer relationship be built? Relationship advertising is a viewpoint of doing trade that attentions on possession and enlightening existing consumers. Relationship marketing highlight obtaining new consumers. It is usually inexpensive (for the firm) – to keep a present consumer charges less than to entice a new one. The aim should be to construct and uphold a base of dedicated clienteles who are lucrative for the group. Thus, the attention is on lure, holding, improvement of customer relationships (Cater, & Zabkar, 2009). Now who is the loyal customers for us? Shows behavioral commitment, and exhibits psychological commitment. In social promise buys from only one dealer, even however other options exist and we also see ourselves, we are loyal to some particular service, we only go there. Progressively buys more and more from a specific dealer. And provides productive response proposals. Some would not terminate the relationships-psychological promise. Has a positive assertiveness about the dealer and says good things about the supplier? How the evolution occurs of customers relationships. There are certain stages to it. Firstly, we see customers as strangers, then as acquaintances, then friends and then as partners (Yoo, & Bai, 2013).

BENEFITS TO THE ORGANIZATION OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Loyal consumers be likely to devote more with the association over time. Here the financial status increases of the organization. Even the cost reduces because on regular costs of relationships maintenance are lower than new customers costs, we already saw that acquiring new customers comes with a greater price in comparison with the old customers. Employee retention is more likely with a stable customer base (Kozlenkova, Samaha, & Palmatier, 2014). Because of this satisfaction increases, retention increases, profit increases, salaries increases so employee become loyal. Lifetime value of a customer can be very high. With the customer loyalty program, they will get a huge value because customers stay with the organizations. Now we will see the benefits to the customer. The inherent benefits in getting good value, so always being loyal we always get a good value. Economic social and continuity benefits from the organization. Contribution to sense of a wellbeing and quality of life and other psychological benefits. Being with the organization. Avoidance of change, why to try something else when you already have a good service provider. Simplified decision making, because no need to go for information such so we can directly go to the particular service provider no need to go with huge process of information. Social support and friendships, because of being with same organization. Special deals and offers comes because customers are loyal to the organization. These are some of the benefits of the customers (Soroa-Koury, & Yang, 2010).

SELECTING MARKETING SEGMENTS

Once the sections have been assessed the market to be beleaguered can be designated on the foundation of – undistinguishable marketing: the undistinguishable marketing policy importance on a whole mark market rather than a section of it. This plan employments a sole marketing mix – one produce, one value, one spare and a single advertising afford to reach the supreme number of buyers in that target bazaar. Distinguished advertising: this is modified method and contents consumers rendering to their needs. A differentiated marketing policy targets diverse market sections with exact marketing mixes intended particularly to encounter those section needs. Focused marketing: the focused plan provides a third way answer that permits dealers to board a single market section with a single advertising mix. Modified or micro advertising; micro advertising is a marketing policy in which advertising labors are absorbed on a small group of highly embattled buyers. Micro marketing involves a business to barely define a specific spectator by a specific feature, such as ZIP code or job title, and tailor movements for that precise segment. It can be a more luxurious method due to customization and lack of cheap of scale (Mohr, & Nevin, 1990).

CONCLUSION

As the biosphere is altering at a very high step, ingesting is deeply developing. New profile of consumers seems every day creating new performances and new values. To save up with this procedure of customer evolution, brands need to be reactive, develop strong emotions, and have emotional relationships with buyers and occupational choice creators to involve them. This is where marketing study comes to the save of brands to perform the litmus test and determine whether a particular product, service, concept will satisfy the needs of the customers. With effective market research your company can gain valuable insights about the customer relationships, demographic of your target markets, the present market tendencies and the spending traits of your customers (Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug, 2001).

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