

Consumer Purchase behaviour towards Washing Powder with Special Reference to Kochi City

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Abstract—Consumer purchase behavior is difficult to understand. Now a day's consumers look forward for products which satisfy their needs. Numerous advertisements are promising a lot which gives the consumer a list of options. A lot of products are entering the market with unknown credentials. Household care segment is one characterized by high degree of competition and high level of penetration. With increase in population, emergence of small packets and the demand for household care products are increasing. The demand for detergents has been growing but the regional and small unorganized players account for a major share of the total volume of the detergent market.

This study emphasizes to determine factors that influence the consumers to purchase detergents. The dependent variable of the study is the purchase behavior and the independent variables include price, promotion, peer group influence, product availability, product performance (quality), packaging and fragrance. The main objective is to understand what the influencing factors are and also to find out whether there is any kind of relationship existing between the dependent and the independent variable. The study is exploratory and the sample size is 100. The data collection is through primary data. Through this study, an overall idea of the purchase behavior of consumers towards washing powder can be understood.

Keywords: Consumer Purchase Behavior, Promotion, Demand, Detergents.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is an important discipline of marketing which deals with psychology of customers. With rapid increase in population and changing trends, the interests of consumers are also changing. The main reason for the changing interests of the consumers is due to their change in behavior. The behavior of consumers cannot be measured so easily. It is a very difficult task. But; we can measure the factors that make them behave in a particular manner. This study mainly deals with the factors that influence them to behave in a certain manner. Here; the study focuses on the one of the important sectors of the FMCG market.

Detergents or washing powder market is a growing market now a day. The detergent market in India is divided into three segments – premium, mid-range, and popular. The premium segment comprises Ariel and Surf; the mid-range segment comprises Tide, Henko, Rin and the popular segment

comprises of Mr White, Wheel and Nirma. The market share of the detergents in the premium segment is 15%, and that of the mid-range and popular are 40% and 45% respectively. These detergent brands are considered organized players in the industry and comprise 60% of the total market. The remaining 40% of the market is saturated with regional and small unorganized markets. Report shows that India's consumption of washing powder stands at 2.7kg – the lowest in the world. The detergent industry is worth Rs 13,000 crores and large markets are continuously improving their products to suit the changing needs of consumers.

Today, consumers have a number of products to select, the reason for which companies are continuously upgrading their products and coming up with better and innovative advertising campaigns to increase their market share. To cater to this increasing demand of quality washing powders, most of the detergent brands in India are continually introducing better packaged detergents that are offering a host of benefits in a single wash. In India, HUL holds a 38% market share in the washing powder segment clearly standing as the winner. The other important players of the market include Surf Excel, Nirma and sunlight

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer behavior as a field study focuses on consumer activities. As the study of consumer behavior focuses on buyer behavior or “why people buy”. More recently, researchers and practitioners have focused on consumption analysis, why and how people consume in addition to why and how they buy (Blackwell et al.) The detergent market in India is expected to have a growth rate of 7 % to 9 % per year in terms of volume. The major players in the detergent market are the Uni Lever and Nirma. The Uni Lever dominates the premium and mid priced segment, and the Nirma dominates the low priced segment⁴.

Thirumoorthy P and Karthikeyan, in their study, “A Study on retailer and customer attitude towards P&G detergent powder in Coimbatore city” found that the consumers are influenced by major factors such as brand name, price, quality, availability, packaging, advertisements, etc. during the

purchase decision. The study also suggests advertisement plays an important role for selection of a particular brand of detergent powder. As a result of rapid urbanization the demand for better quality household products is constantly on a rise. To cater to this increasing demand of quality washing powders most of the top detergent brands in India are continually introducing better packaged detergents that are offering a host of benefits in a single wash. The Indian washing powder markets in 2010 was 3,364 000 tones. The Indian rural demand for washing powder has increased by 83 percent in last ten years.

Price is the most important factor which effects the buying behavior of consumer, by which a consumer goes for the various segment of soap like premium, sub-popular and carbolic which are basically decided by the cost factor and the fat content in the soap. Ehrenberg et al (1990; cited in Hoek et al, 2003: 54) found that small brands attracted less loyalty simply because they were small. Thus, brands with a lower penetration are bought less frequently than brands with higher penetration. Similarly, brands with low penetration are viewed less positively by users than are brands with higher penetration (Ehrenberg, 1991; Barwise and Ehrenberg, 1985; Barwise, 1986; cited in Hoek et al, 2003: 5). Understanding the dynamics that go through a potential customer's thought process before a potential purchase to become a customer, will allow businesses to capture a share of any market. By actively taking cognizance and developing strategies that allow a 'capturing' of a potential customer, a new business venture can obtain a larger client base and brand loyalty, thus enjoying organic growth (Hawkins et ai, 2001: 504).

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To study whether price influences the purchase behavior of consumer towards washing powder
- To analyze whether promotion influences the purchase behavior of consumer towards washing powder
- To know whether peer group influences the purchase behavior of consumers towards washing powder
- To understand whether product availability influences the purchase behavior of consumers towards washing powder
- To know whether product performance influences the purchase behavior of consumers towards washing powder.
- To study whether packaging influences the purchase behavior of consumers towards washing powder.
- To study whether fragrance influences the purchase behavior of consumers towards washing powder

4. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Dependent variable

- Purchase behavior

Independent variable

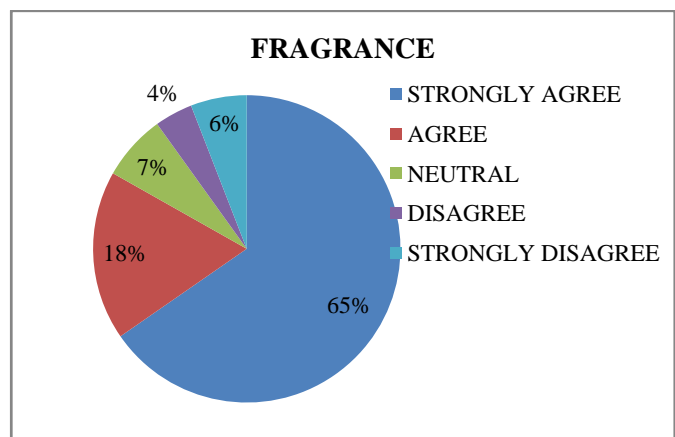
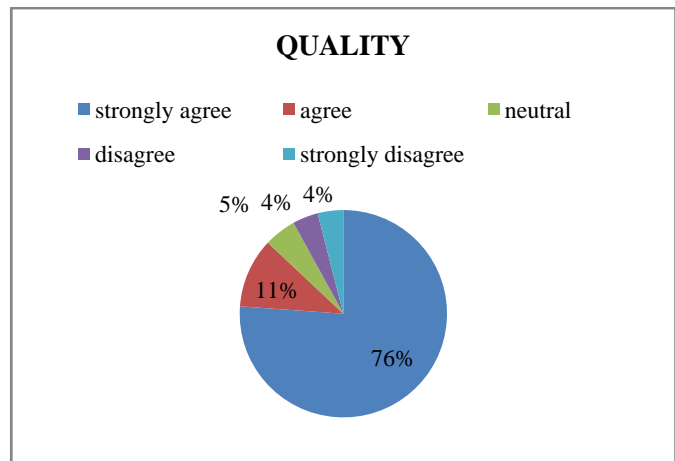
- Price
- Promotion
- Peer group influence
- Product availability
- Product performance
- Packaging
- Fragrance

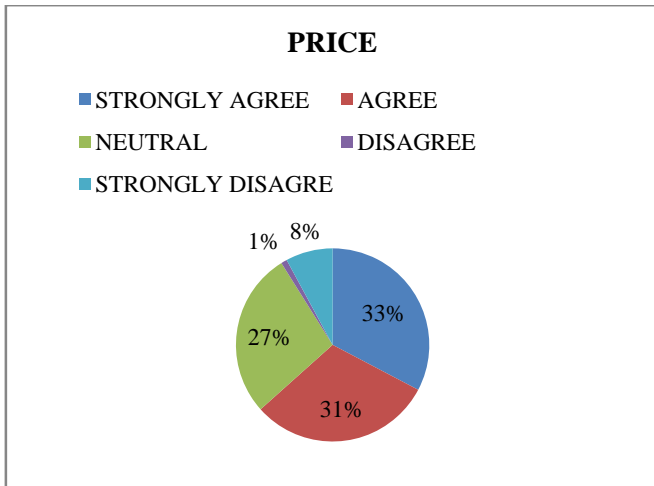
5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The research is exploratory in nature as the study aims to find out what are the factors that influence the consumers while making their purchase decision. The study is carried out with primary data which includes questionnaire.

Sampling Design: The study is conducted only with reference to Kochi city. The questionnaire was designed for a sample of 100. The sampling technique used was convenient sampling. Due to the time constraint the sample size was only limited to 100. The statistical tool used was correlation and percentage analysis.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

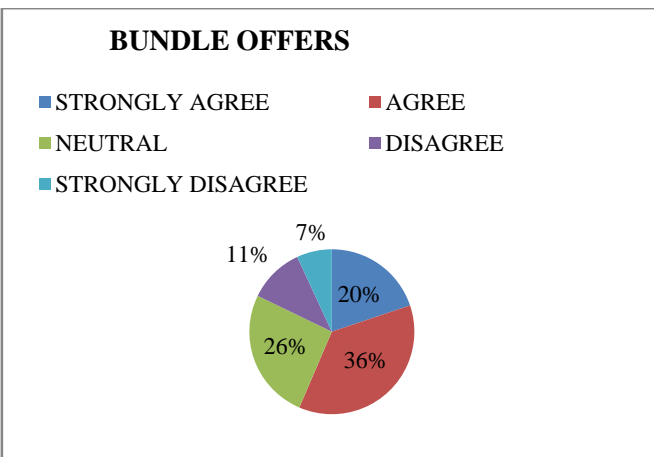




- 82.1% of people consider Fragrance of the washing powder while purchasing.
- 63.4% of people consider the price of washing powder while purchasing.

CORRELATION

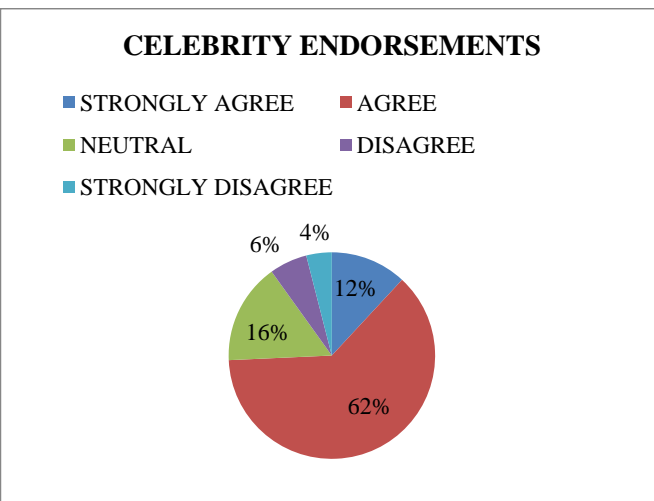
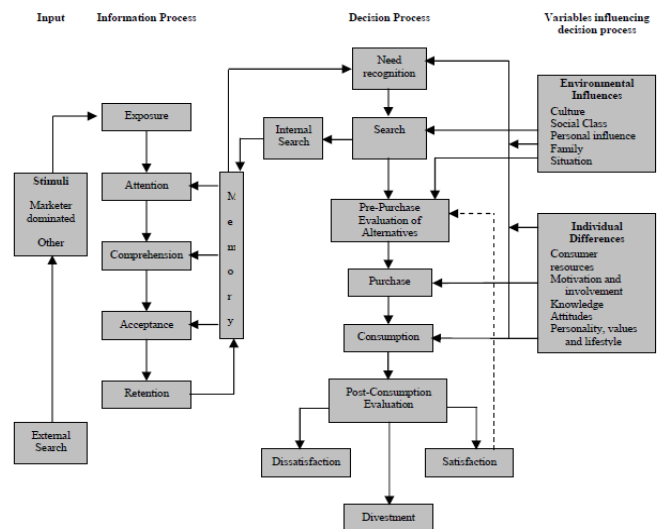
price	0.298102464
peer group	-0.271173212
product availability	-0.039765881
quality	0.101906121
packaging	-0.000375887
fragrance	0.47266811
celebrity endorsements	0.068248124
discounts	0.086289978
bundle offers	0.174721602



INTERPRETATION

- From, percentage analysis, it is clear that 60% or above people will consider quality, price, promotion and fragrance while purchasing washing powder.
- Also, from correlation it can be said that these variables have a positive correlation with purchase behavior.

7. THE BLACKWELL'S MODEL OF CONSUMER DECISION MAKING



8. INTERPRETATION OF THE MODEL

This model was created to describe the increasing, fast-growing body of knowledge concerning consumer behavior. This model, like in other models, has gone through many revisions to improve its descriptive ability of the basic relationships between components and sub-components, this model consists also of four stages; i.e., Input, Information processing, decision variables and variables influence decision process. The inputs include marketing stimuli and other

INTERPRETATION

- 87% of the people consider quality as a factor while purchasing washing powder
- 74.3% and 56.4% of people consider promotion factors while purchasing washing powder

stimuli which include promotion, price, and quality. The second stage is the information processing stage which includes attention, exposure, comprehension, acceptance and retention. The information that they get through these stimuli gets stored in their memory and they use it for the decision making process which includes steps like problem recognition, search of alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, purchase, consumption and post consumption evaluation which leads to satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The next stage is the variables influencing the decision process which are classified as Environmental influences and individual differences. In this case, the environmental influences can be social class and family influences and individual differences can be the motivation factor, knowledge, attitude and beliefs.

9. CONCLUSION

Therefore, it can be concluded that the main factors that lead to the purchase decision for washing powder are price, quality, fragrance and promotion. These are the main factors that influence the purchase behavior of consumer's towards washing powder. ie; they focus on these factors while selecting a particular product.

10. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is only targeted to Cochin City. Through this study a total understanding of the purchase behavior for consumers towards washing powder can be understood. This can be also helpful to the manufacturers in order to have an idea on what factors they have to concentrate more to have more sales. This study also can be conducted in whole Kerala so that the overall idea of consumer behavior can be understood.

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