

CONSUMER PREFERENCE AND BUYING PATTERN IN RURAL MARKETS (A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO FMCG IN VILLUPURAM DISTRICT)

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Abstract

Rural market is one of the growing concepts in current scenario. It is stimulating buying pattern of village people. Gandhi's saying village are back bone of our country so, villages are developed all are developed that's why FMCG to acting as bridge between rural people as well as a rural marketing. The rural people are preferred branded products based upon our economic situations. The banking and microfinance, and self-help groups also helping the rural people in their financial background so, the rural people prefer all type of branded products and their buying pattern also entirely different from literature and illiterate people. This paper explores consumer preference and buying pattern through rural market in Villupuram district.

Key words: Consumer preference, buying behaviour, rural marketing, preferable goods, factors affecting consumer preference, FMCG, etc.

1. Introduction

Rural marketing is a process of developing pricing, promotion and distribution between rural people. They are goods and services desired with exchange rural customers to satisfy their needs and wants. The hinterlands in India consist of about 650000 villages, these villages are inhabited by about 850 million consumers, these villages are inhabited making up for about 70 per cent of population, and it is contributing 1/4th of the country's gross domestic product. The FMCG sector in rural and semi-urban India is reached in USD 100 billion. Consumption pattern of rural areas are gradually changing to increasingly resemble the consumption pattern of urban areas. The Government of India has planned various initiatives to provide and improve the infrastructure in rural areas. It has introduced various reforms in the union budget 2018-19 to uplift the rural markets. The government has allocated Rs.187223 for rural areas and agriculture sectors.

2. Consumer buying behaviour and preference

Buying behaviour is one of the consumer observation details about consumer attitudes, needs, taste, and behavior about during the purchasing. Consumer buying behaviour is the result of the attitudes, preferences, intentions and decisions made by the consumers in a market place before buying a product. The study of consumer buying behaviour is an interdisciplinary subject area drawing widely from sociology, psychology, anthropology, etc. Consumer preference is defined as the subjective tastes as measured by utility of various bundles of goods. They permit the consumer to rank, these bundles of goods according to the levels of utility they give the consumers.

3. Rural marketing

Rural marketing is two-way marketing process there is inflow of product into rural markets for production and consumption, about 70 per cent of India's population lives in villages, more than 800 million people live in villages of India. "Go Rural" is marketer's slogan in current scenario. Indian marketers as well as multinationals have focused on rural markets. It can be said that the future is very promising for those who can understand the dynamics of rural markets and exploit them to their best advantage. In current scenario, rural people to developing stages equal to the metro people. They prefer all type of branded products. It is based upon the people's economic conditions and earning capacity. Fast moving consumer goods are the best instruments of rural markets because these are cover all these villages in very fast manner. The fast moving consumer goods is a short shelf life, either as a result of high consumer demand, and some fast moving consumer goods such as meat, fruits and vegetables, dairy products, and backed goods, pre-packed foods, soft drinks, chocolate, candies, toiletries, cleaning products are high turnover rates, and finally the logistics and distribution process by the FMCG.

4. Review of literature

Abbas, et.al (2012) identified the factors influencing the purchase of FMCG by rural consumers in South India. The data were collected from 1080 respondents living in villages who are both buyers and consumers of FMCG. The study concluded that factors such as promotion, lifestyle, trust, value and product are the most important factors influencing the purchase of fast moving consumer goods by rural consumers in South India.

Chandrasekhar (2012) examined the brand loyalty of various brands in rural markets and also found the role of brand in the purchase behaviour of rural customers. The data were collected from 60 respondents in the Satanapalli, Tadipatri and Mallapur villages. He concluded that rural consumers are subject to traditions, habits, preferences and socio-cultural pressures. Rural

consumers are very low brand loyalty. Rural consumer was more price-conscious and they prefer only simple and low priced goods.

Hitesh and Pratibha (2013) investigated the consumer attitudes towards purchase of toilet soaps and also determined that the factors influencing the purchase of toilet soaps. The data were collected from 10 villages in Uttarakhand through proportionate sampling. The researcher found that promotional strategy is an important factor that influences the consumers to purchase of toilet soaps.

Jha (2013) found out the factors responsible for different buying behaviour of the rural consumers and how these factors play an important role in the rural consumers buying decision making process. A survey of 300 persons which included both male and female was conducted in the rural areas of Bihar. The study analyzed the factors such as family size; product packaging, age, culture, and advertising have an effect on consumers' decision making process and whether price is associated to product. The study suggested that for rural consumers, the consumption pattern was very much influenced by family size and structure. However, the final choice was guided by the perceived risk associated with the product as well as by the key influencers like opinion leaders, family and friends. Perceived risk was high among rural consumers as they find it difficult to gather and process relevant information.

Hemanth and Sheuthi (2013) analyzed the peculiar characteristics of rural consumers and magnitude of rural markets and also throws light on determinants of rural consumer buying behaviour. The researcher concluded that market structure in India was dichotomous having rural and urban markets. There are certain unique features which call for separating marketing strategies to be distinctly developed to suit to rural and urban marketers. This was especially because; rural consumers differ in terms of its consumption pattern, purchase decisions, purchase behaviour, attitudes and perceptions towards products. The dominant economic peculiarities of rural India may be recognized in terms of the source of income, the frequency of receipts of income and the seasonal nature of income and consumption. These differences also affect the consumption pattern of rural consumers.

5. Statement of the problem

In this study, preference about the consumer preference and buying pattern in the rural markets are studied. It does not cover all brands, and it does not cover all areas, because urban and semi-urban consumers are not covered all this things. In Villupuram district, there are 100 villages. All villages are having different types of consumers and all consumers prefer different types of product. So, this study can't expose all the consumers.

6. Objectives of the study

1. To study the band preference among the rural consumers.
2. To analyse the factors that influence the consumer preference and buying pattern in rural markets.

7. Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature, using both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the sample respondents, and secondary data were collected from various books, journals, magazines, articles, reports, published and unpublished sources.

8. Analysis and interpretations

TABLE 1
Occupation of the Respondents

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	62	41
Private employees	34	22
Government employees	25	17
Professionals	14	9
Businessmen	12	8
Others	04	03
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows the occupation of the respondents. Out of 150 respondents, 41 per cent of the respondents are agriculturists, 22 per cent of the respondents are private employees, 17 per cent of the respondents are government employees, 9 per cent of the respondents are professionals, 8 per cent of the respondents are business men and 3 per cent of the respondents are engaged in other occupation.

TABLE 2
Monthly Income of the Respondents

Monthly Income (Rs.)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 15,000	28	19
15001 – 25000	58	39
25001 – 35000	43	28
Above – 35000	21	14
Total	150	100

Source: Primary Data

Out of 150 respondents, 19 per cent of the respondents earn below Rs.15000 as monthly income. 39 per cent of the respondents earn monthly income in the range of Rs.15001-25000. 28 per cent of the respondents earn monthly income in the range of Rs.25001-35000. 14 per cent of the respondents earn monthly income above Rs.35000.

TABLE 3
Consumer Preference of Fast Moving Consumer Goods

Personal Care	Bathing Soap	Dove	Lux	Medimix	Cinthol	Santoor	Margo	Lifeboy	Liril 2000
		Pears	Mysore Sandal	Hamam	Fiama Diwills	Dettol	Himalaya		
	Tooth Paste	Colgate	Close-up	Dabur Meswak	Oral –B	Sensodyne	Pepsodent	Himalaya Dental	Dabur Bobool
		Amway Glister	Vicco	Dant Kanti (Patanjali)					
Shampoo	Himalaya herbal	Clinic plus	Head and shoulder	Sunsilk	pantene	Dove			
Household care	Washing Soap/	Nirma	Surf Excel	Wheel	Ariel	Tide	Rin	Sunlight	Henko
	Toilet Liquid	Harpic	Demox	Lyro	Vaxh	Clear man	Lorence		
	Floor Cleaner	Lizol	Easy Magic	Warexo	Lyro	Euro			
Food and Beverages	Biscuit	Britannia	Sun feast	Parle g	Unibic	True			
	Soft Drinks	Pepsi	CoCa Cola	Sprite	Thumps Up	Limca	Fanta	Maaza	Mirinda
		7 Up	Slice	Mountain Dew	Tropicana				
Health Drinks	Horlicks	Boost	Bournvita	Maltova	Viva	Complan	Amul		

It is inferred from the above table that in regards bathing soaps Dove, Lux, Medimix, Cinthol, Santoor, Margo, Lifeboy, Liril2000, Pears, Mysore Sandal, Hamam, Fiama, diwills, Dettol and Himalaya are the preferred brands. In tooth paste Colgate, Close up, Dabur Meswak, Oral-B, Sensodyne, Pepsodent, Himalaya Dental, Dabur BaBool, Amway Glister, Vicco, and Dant Kanti (Patanjali) are the preferred brands. In regards Shampoo, Himalaya Herbal, Clinic Plus, Head and Shoulder, Sunsilk, Panteen, and Dove are the preferred brands. In regards washing soap/powder, Nirma, Surf excel, Wheel, Airtel, Tide, Rin, Sunlight, and Henko are the preferred brands. In regards toilet liquid, Harpic, Domex, Lyro, Vaxh, Clearman, and Laurence are the preferred brands. With respect to floor creaner, Lizol, Easy magic, Warexo, Lyro, and are the preferred brands. In regards biscuit brands, Britannia, Sunfeast, Parlee-G, Unibic, True, and Good Day are the preferred brands. In regards food and beverages, Horlicks Boost, Bournvita, Maltova, Viva, Complan, Amul are the preferred brands.

TABLE 4
Factors Influenceing Consumers Preference and Buying in Rural Markets

Brand Name	HA	A	N	DA	HAD	Frequency	Percentage
FMCG	52	23	18	29	28	150	100
Reflecting personality	50	33	22	17	28	150	100
Enhances our image	58	21	25	23	23	150	100
Brand flawless	60	15	14	30	26	150	100
Provide energy	45	42	25	22	15	150	100
Trust worthiness						150	100
FMCG	14	38	27	41	30	150	100
Feel happy	56	17	26	27	24	150	100
Long lasting nature	58	18	29	27	18	150	100
Guarantee	80	55	15	-	-	150	100
Comparison with other brands	40	23	54	17	20	150	100
Quality factor						150	100
Functional quality	71	12	19	27	21	150	100
Component and ingredients	40	42	24	21	23	150	100
Healthy and convenient	55	45	14	26	10	150	100
Appearance and anatomy	82	26	24	10	8	150	100
packing and wrapping	73	51	10	16	-	150	100
Loyalty orientation						150	100
Through knowledge	83	31	12	14	10	150	100
Close attachment	52	57	21	20	-	150	100
Physical significance	30	47	41	32	-	150	100
Standardisation	43	-	55	38	24	150	100
Aware about brand	66	-	29	23	32	150	100
Price influence						150	100
FMCG	73	15	26	19	17	150	100
Price of other brands	66	24	26	29	05	150	100
Price offers	38	21	34	27	30	150	100
Favourite brands	71	39	-	40	-	150	100
MRP	54	24	24	18	20	150	100
Promotional factors						150	100
Advertisements and others	95	14	19	15	27	150	100
Ethical and sociological aspects	50	21	28	14	37	150	100
Discount offers	38	34	35	12	31	150	100
Brand superior and attractive	39	20	28	29	34	150	100
Door delivery	43	26	27	34	20	150	100
Sociological influence						150	100

Family members	62	21	18	19	30	150	100
Friends and relatives	72	10	24	26	18	150	100
Occupational status	43	21	20	39	27	150	100
Monthly income	70	12	19	32	17	150	100
Eco-friendly	45	26	23	22	24	150	100
Convenience measures						150	100
FMCG easy accessibility	35	25	24	29	27	150	100
Super market	62	51	10	13	14	150	100
Brand availability	50	44	12	16	18	150	100
Priority for favourable products	61	13	16	28	32	150	100
Comfortable	43	43	34	15	15	150	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table exhibit factors influencing consumer preference and buying pattern in rural markets. There are eight factors such as brand name, trust worthiness, quality factor, loyalty orientation, price influence, promotional factor, sociological factor, and convenience factor that influence the respondents' preference and buying pattern in rural market.

9. Findings

1. Out of 150 respondents, 41 per cent of the respondents are agriculturists, 22 per cent of the respondents are private employees, 17 per cent of the respondents are government employees, 9 per cent of the respondents are professionals, 8 per cent of the respondents are business men and 3 per of the respondents are engaged in other occupation.
2. In regards bathing soaps Dove, Lux, Medimix, Cinthol, Santoor, Margo, Lifeboy, Liril2000, Pears, Mysore Sandal, Hamam, Fiana, diwills, Dettol and Himalaya are the preferred brands. In tooth paste Colgate, Close up, Dabur Meswak, Oral-B, Sensodyne, Pepsodent, Himalaya Dental, Dabur BaBool, Amway Glistar, Vicco, and Dant Kanti (Patanjali) are the preferred brands. In regards Shampoo, Himalaya Herbal, Clinic Plus, Head and Shoulder, Sunsilk, Panteen, and Dove are the preferred brands. In regards washing soap/powder, Nirma, Surf excel, Wheel, Airtel, Tide, Rin, Sunlight, and Henko are the preferred brands. In regards toilet liquid, Harpic, Domex, Lyro, Vaxh, Clearman, and Laurence are the preferred brands. With respect to floor creaner, Lizol, Easy magic, Warexo, Lyro, and are the preferred brands. In regards biscuit brands, Britannia, Sunfeast, Parlee-G, Unibic, True, and Good Day are the preferred brands. In regards food and beverages, Horlicks Boost, Bournvita, Maltova, Viva, Complan, Amul are the preferred brands.
3. There are eight factors such as brand name, trust worthiness, quality factor, loyalty orientation, price influence, promotional factor, sociological factor, and convenience factor that influence the respondents' preference and buying pattern in rural market.

10. Suggestions

1. Infrastructure of markets and warehouses should be regulated so as to ensure fair prices. For storage facilities, the government should not depend on private agencies to store grains.
2. The existing marketing staff must be increased and adequate training must be given. The packing technology must be improved.

11. Conclusion

Rural marketing is one of the innovative concepts for recent days; it is fully based upon the rural consumers. In India the rural marketing is now-a-days growing and spread all over states, particularly Tamil Nadu. In Villupuram district, the rural marketing is one of the benefitable one for village consumers.

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