



IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES ON BUYING ATTITUDE OF STORE BRANDS

¹Ipsita Padhi, ²Dr. B.B.Mishra

¹Research Scholar, ²Professor

¹Department of Business Administration, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

²Department of Business Administration, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

Abstract: The FMCG sector has been a significant contributor to India's accelerated growth in the retail industry. New formats and brands have emerged due to the new wave of consumerism. Store brands carry a retailer's name or are created by a retailer under a brand name exclusively for sale in its stores. The popularity of store brands has been attributed to their low-cost products that do not sacrifice quality. Over the years, store brands have progressively ploughed their way into the must-have shopping list of the price-conscious consumer. The principal purpose of this research is to explore the impact of specific customer demographic variables on the purchasing behaviour of store brands in India's FMCG industry. Quantitative research was done to collect 599 responses using the mall-intercept approach. The study's scale was established by referring to previous studies' essential features of buying attitude and consumer demographics. According to the research, customers' buying attitude towards store brands has been strongly influenced by the age and occupation of the consumer, leading to its exponential growth in the FMCG industry.

Keywords: FMCG industry, Store Brands, Consumer Buying Attitude, Demographic profile

I. INTRODUCTION

The ultimate step of any economic activity is retail (Kotler, Keller, Koshy, & Jha, 2007). Retailing as an industry has come a long way since it started making a mark of its own; evolving continuously and periodically, keeping in tandem with the socio-economic and external factors that attribute to its success. Retailing in India is gradually making its way towards becoming the next boom industry, with radical changes taking place in the Indian retail industry as a result of strong underlying economic growth, population expansion, individuals' increasing purchasing power, and the rapid construction of organised retail infrastructure, to name a few factors. One of the recent developments in the Indian retail business is the expansion of Store Brands in organised retail. As corporations compete for a more significant part of the retail pie, another struggle between national brands and retail chains' store brands, which are far from being inexpensive generics, is set to reshape the face of the sector. Store brands and national brands are the two critical components of the product assortment strategy of retailers worldwide. Store brands refer to the merchandise that carries the retailer's brand name or a brand name created exclusively for that particular retailer (Baltas, 1997). Thus, the store brand carries either the retailer's name or the retailer exclusively creates and markets such brands under its name. National brands are products designed, produced, controlled, and marketed by a manufacturer. Retailers have very little or no influence over product quality, advertising and brand image, packaging and wholesale cost as in the case of National brands. The national and regional/local brands fall into this category. Development of store brands is viewed as a strategy for improving store image and profitability for retail chains since it requires taking full responsibility for product introduction, product sourcing and warehousing, advertising and promotions by the retailer (Richardson et al., 1996). Store brands serve as a basis for store differentiation because the store brand cannot be bought elsewhere, and therefore it is not easily substitutable by switching to another store (Sayman, Hoch, & Raju, 2002). While the retailer shares the risk and returns for national brands, retailers play the sole role in their success (Hoch & Banerji, 1993). Since the store brands are priced much lower than their national counterparts, they record higher unit shares than value shares in the market. Most store brands are present in the food and grocery category, followed by apparel, laundry, and personal care products (Shah & Raval, 2021).

II. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

According to the IBEF report (2020), the Indian retail industry, with its vast market potential, fast growth, increased consumer spending and improved ease of doing business, is the most promising emerging market for investment across global markets.

When retail began to take off in India, customers were ecstatic to see brands they had only seen or heard about. However, some of these were expensive and out of most people's budgets. As a result, several supermarkets and retail stores launched their brands, known colloquially as store brands, catering to consumer tastes and budgets (Bedi et al., 2014). Over the years, not only have these store brands gained widespread acceptance, but they have also grown to become individual entities of their own. With evolving consumer demands and expectations, the customer is waking up to this world of new alternatives. Store brands in India make up almost 10 per cent of the retail business in India. In India, store brands contribute to an annual turnover of Rs 700 crores, accounting for 25 per cent of the turnover of key retailers in the country (Gangwani et al., 2020). Although store brands are gaining momentum,

it is uncertain to determine whether they can achieve unprecedented growth and very high market shares (Clegget,2015). This is because, unlike in the other developed countries, retail in our country is fragmented and not a consolidated market (Kakkar & Mathur,2020). Moreover, it is difficult to ascertain the overall store brand percentage of a consumer's shopping basket. This is because retailers are yet to ascertain consumer attitude towards store brands from a more holistic approach, taking into consideration all the factors-demographics, psychographics, consumer perceptions etc. that might influence the buying attitude (Kumar & Steenkamp,2007; Richardson et al.,1996; Sarkar et al.,2016).This study attempts to analyse the inter-relationship between the various demographics' attributes influencing consumer attitude towards store brands, which leads to repeat purchase intention and positive store brand performance.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The first attempt to understand the characteristics of store brand prone and non-store brand prone consumers was made by Frank and Boyd (1965), and the study brought the attention of the academia towards store brand buying behaviour, and several research studies followed subsequently. The literature available on store brand research indicates the existence of three broad categories of research interest amongst store brand researchers. First, some researchers have tried to investigate the differences in objective and perceived product attributes and shopping behaviour between manufacturer's brands and store brands (Bellizzi, Hamilton, Krueckeberg, & Martin, 1981; Cunningham, Hardy, & Imperia, 1982; Dick, Jain, & Richardson, 1997). The second category of literature on store brand research includes several studies that have examined the characteristics of store brand buyers and have attempted to discover if the propensity to buy store brands is associated with those consumer characteristics (Baltas, 1997; Baltas & Argouslidis, 2007; Bettman, 1974; Burger & Schott, 1972; Burton, Lichtenstein, & Garretson, 1998; Dick, Jain, & Richardson, 1995; Frank & Boyd, 1965; Garretson, Fisher, & Burton, 2002; Harcar, Kara, & Kucukemiroglu, 2006; Omar, 1996; Richardson, Dick, & Jain, 1994; Shannon & Lockshin, 2001). The majority of these researches are done in the context of frequently purchased household consumption food and non-food consumer packaged goods. The third stream of store brand research literature includes researches that have tried to measure store brand proneness and attempted for the joint determination of explanatory power of correlates of store-brand shopping behaviour (Ailawadi, Scott, & Gedenk, 2001; Baltas, 2003; Baltas, Doyle, & Dyson, 1997; Batra & Sinha, 2000; Chiranth & Kavita, 2019; Richardson, Jain, & Dick, 1996).As revealed by the extant literature on store brand buying attitude, the correlations of store brand shopping behaviours include a wide range of demographic characteristics like age, gender, occupation, preferred retail store, family size, frequency of store visit for grocery shopping, and monthly household expenses etc. However, empirical findings on many of these correlations vary widely across studies regarding the direction of the relationship between individual relationships and relative importance of factors in jointly explaining store brand shopping behaviour. There have been very few attempts in the past towards creating a unified and cohesive framework of understanding store brand proneness by integrating various factors identified in studies on store brand buying behaviour (Ailawadi et al., 2001; Baltas, 1997, 2003; Baltas & Argouslidis, 2007; Baltas et al., 1997; Batra & Sinha, 2000; Bettman, 1974; Collins-Doss & Lindley,2003; Richardson et al., 1996).

The key focus of the literature search process was to collect and synthesise the relevant literature on theoretical underpinnings of consumer buying attitude and empirical research on demographics of store-brand shopping behaviour.

IV. RESEARCH GAPS

As revealed by the extant literature, store brand buying attitude correlations include a wide range of consumer-related characteristics like demographics, behavioural patterns, psychographics, private brand attitude, consumer product knowledge, etc. However, empirical findings on many of these correlations vary widely across studies regarding the relationship between individual behaviors between store brand buying attitude and relative importance of factors in jointly explaining store-brand shopping behaviour. Most of the literature related to store brands is conducted in western countries, thus, leaving very few papers from the Indian context. Consumers' buying attitude towards store brands is a vast area that needs further research. In this context, socio-demographic characteristics have been found to strongly influence buying attitudes towards store brands, as seen in previous research papers. There are few papers from the Indian context discussing this, but few papers were found to have studied the socio-demographic characteristics of consumers for impacting the buying attitude of store brands while deciding an FMCG store brand purchase.

V. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To study the relationship of the various socio-demographic characteristics on consumer's attitudes towards store brands in the FMCG sector.

VI. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

- H1₀: There is no impact of age on consumer buying attitude towards store brands
- H2₀: There is no impact of occupation on consumer buying attitude towards store brands
- H3₀: There is no difference in perception of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across genders
- H4₀: There is no difference in perception of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across preferred retail stores

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study's scope was limited to FMCG store brand consumers exclusively. As a result, the population for this study consisted of all FMCG store brand consumers; as a result, the sample frame was drawn from select consumers who had purchased and consumed FMCG store brands. Quantitative research was carried out to obtain primary data utilising the mall-intercept approach and a structured questionnaire. To express respondents' choices, a 7-point Likert scale was employed, with '1' denoting Strongly Disagree and '7' denoting Strongly Agree. Previous literature was consulted to build a scale for the demographic characteristics impacting the purchasing attitude of FMCG retail brands. Cronbach's alpha was determined to be 0.73, indicating moderate dependability. A purposive sample strategy was utilised to guarantee that each respondent has purchased FMCG store brand products. Although the sample frame was anticipated to be about 650, only 599 replies could be declared legitimate for the study. The information was gathered for three months from seventeen Reliance Fresh retailer outlets that offered FMCG store brands across cities of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Puri in the state of Odisha. The data was organised appropriately, and SPSS software was used to administer appropriate statistical methods to evaluate the hypothesis.

VIII. FINDINGS

The study investigated the impact of crucial demographic features (independent variables) on customer buying attitudes (dependent variable), resulting in the growth of FMCG store brands.

8.1 Demographic profile of consumers

The demographic composition of the 599 respondents recorded in the survey is presented in Table 8.1. In addition, the categorical variables like age, gender, occupation, family size, monthly grocery expenses, and frequency of retail store visits of the respondents were reported in the table 8.1 below.

Table 8.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Per cent
Gender	Male	250	41.7
	Female	349	58.3
	Total	599	100
Age	20-29 Years	98	16.4
	30-39 Years	215	35.9
	40-49 Years	72	12.0
	50-59 Years	131	21.9
	Above 60 Years	83	13.9
	Total	599	100
Occupation	Homemaker	107	17.9
	Student	62	10.4
	Full time	214	35.7
	Others	147	24.5
	Retired	69	11.5
	Total	599	100
Family Size	1 member	119	19.9
	2-3 members	250	41.7
	4-5 members	167	27.9
	Above five members	63	10.5
	Total	599	100
Monthly Grocery Expenses	Below Rs. 5000	82	13.7
	Between Rs. 5001-Rs.10,000	165	27.5
	Between Rs. 10,001-Rs.15,000	166	27.7
	Above Rs. 15,001	186	31.1
	Total	599	100
Frequency of visit to Retail Store	Once a week	60	10.0
	Twice a week	70	11.7
	Every fortnight	321	53.6
	Once a month	148	24.7
	Total	599	100
Preferred Retail Store	Big Bazaar	253	42.2
	Reliance Fresh	346	57.8
	Total	599	100

Source: Field data

It can be viewed from Table 8.1 that females were the majority of the respondents in the survey, with 349 respondents, which is approximately 58.3% of the sample. Similarly, most of the respondents lie between 30-39 years of age, i.e., 35.9%. The maximum numbers of respondents were full-time professionals at 35.7% of the total sample. Further, according to the sample data, the family size group of 2-3 members had the maximum respondents with 41.7 % of the entire sample data. Also, maximum respondents were in the Above Rs. 15,001 categories for the monthly grocery expenses category at 31.1%. The frequency of visits to the retail store was the maximum for every fortnight at 53.6%, and 57.8% preferred Reliance Fresh as their choice retail store.

8.2 ANOVA test

An ANOVA test determines whether or not differences between groups of data are statistically significant.

8.2.1 ANOVA Test of the impact of consumer attitude towards store brands across age groups

To achieve the study's objectives, the following hypothesis was developed for statistical testing. The hypotheses are:

H₁₀: There is no impact of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across age groups

H₁₁: There is the impact of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across age groups

Table 8.2: ANOVA test for the impact of consumer attitude towards store brands across age groups

Age	Mean	Variations	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
20-29	3.42	Between Groups	9.596	4	2.399	2.844	0.024
30-39	3.11						
40-49	3.01	Within Groups	501.039	594	0.843		
50-59	3.16						
60 and above	3.19						
Total	3.17	Total	510.635	598			

Source: Field data

It can be depicted from Table 8.2 that the p-value corresponding to the F-test was less than 0.05, which implied that there is a significant difference in consumer attitude towards store brands across age groups. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H1₀) "There is no impact of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across age groups" is rejected. As a result, it is concluded that there is a significant impact on consumers' attitudes towards store brands across age groups.

8.2.2 ANOVA Test of the impact of consumer attitude towards store brands across occupation groups

To achieve the study's objectives, the following hypothesis was developed for statistical testing. The hypotheses are:

H2₀: There is no impact of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across occupation groups

H2₁: There is the impact of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across occupation groups

Table 8.3: ANOVA test for the impact of consumer attitude towards store brands across age groups

Occupation	Mean	Variations	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Homemaker	3.2841	Between Groups	9.131	4	2.283	2.704	0.030
Student	3.3548						
Salaried Person	3.1598	Within Groups	501.504	594	0.844		
Businessman	3.0082						
Retired	3.1971						
Total	3.1693	Total	510.635	598			

Source: Field data

It can be depicted from Table 8.3 that the p-value corresponding to the F-test was less than 0.05, which implied that there is a significant difference in consumer attitude towards store brands across age groups. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H2₀) "There is no impact of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across age groups" is rejected. As a result, it is concluded that there is a significant impact on consumers' attitudes towards store brands across occupation groups.

8.3 Independent sample t-test

The Independent sample t-test is applied to analyse the difference between attributes of specific demographic dimensions towards buying attitude of store brands. The hypotheses were tested, and conclusions were made for each dimension.

8.3.1 Difference between customers' attitude towards store brands across gender

To achieve the study's objectives, the following hypothesis was developed for statistical testing. The hypotheses are :

H3₀: There is no difference in perception of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across genders

H3₁: There is a difference in perception of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across genders

Table 8.4: T-test for consumer's attitude towards store brands across gender

Variable	Gender	Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Consumer buying attitude towards FMCG store brands	Male	3.10	1.52	597.00	0.13
	Female	3.22			

Source: Field Data (Note: * F-test under Levene's was significant for equality of variances)

From the above table 8.4, it can be observed that there is no significant difference in the mean consumer attitude of store brands across gender. The t-value is 1.52 and sig. value is 0.13, more significant than 0.05 (95 percent confidence interval). Hence the null hypothesis (H3₀) are accepted. This indicates no difference in consumer buying attitudes towards store brands across genders.

8.3.2 Difference between consumers' attitude towards store brands across preferred retail stores

To achieve the study's objectives, the following hypothesis was developed for statistical testing. The hypotheses are:

H4₀: There is no difference in perception of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across preferred retail stores

H4₁: There is a difference in perception of consumer buying attitude towards store brands across preferred retail stores

Table 8.5: T-test for consumer's attitude towards store brands across preferred retail stores

Variable	Retail store	Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
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Consumer buying attitude towards FMCG store brands	Big Bazaar	3.19	0.36	597.00	0.72
	Reliance Fresh	3.16			

Source: Primary Data (Note: * F-test under Levene's was significant for equality of variances)

Thus, it can be observed from table 8.5 that there is no significant difference in the mean consumer attitude of store brands across preferred retail stores. The t-value is 0.36 and sig. value is 0.72, more significant than 0.05 (95 per cent confidence interval). Hence the null hypothesis (H_{40}) are accepted. This infers no difference in consumer buying attitudes towards store brands across preferred retail stores.

IX. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the responses stated that age and occupation were some of the most critical demographic factors are influencing the buying attitude of FMCG store brands. Also, the study verified that although the present study is in tandem with previous studies that overall demographics profile of the consumer has an influence on the buying attitude of store brands to a great extent, yet there are specific attributes of demographics like gender or choice of preferred retail stores which have no significant impact on the shopping behaviour of FMCG store brands. However, age and occupation are responsible for the rise in the upward trend of the FMCG store brands. According to the existing literature and secondary data, the current study also validated that the significant surge in the growth of FMCG store brands was attributable to consumers' good response to purchasing Food and Beverage segment. Secondary statistics show that store brands have had a strong influence in the FMCG industry due to higher customer consumption. The success of store brands has spurred merchants to innovate and develop cutting-edge tactics that have resulted in high food safety standards, higher quality items, tailored pack sizes with consumers' needs in mind, and appealing, eye-catching packaging. The new wave of consumerism and the development in e-commerce sales will benefit India's future expansion of FMCG retail brands. The rise of FMCG store brands in online platforms across many product categories has resulted in a boom in online marketplaces over several years (Fan et al.,2012; Gangwani et al.,2020; Kakkar & Mathur,2020). However, because the scope of the study was limited to offline brick-and-mortar FMCG store brands, future research might focus on the rise of store brands in online platforms.

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