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ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR OF RURAL CONSUMERS TOWARDS BRANDED FMCG PRODUCTS IN PUDUKKOTTAI DISTRICT OF TAMILNADU – A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector is an important contributor to India's GDP. Fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs) constitute a large part of consumers' budget in all countries. This study is aimed at to rural consumer's behavior and attitude towards the branded in FMCG products. Products which have a quick turnover, and relatively low cost are known as Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). The FMCG products are those that get replaced within a year. The FMCG generally include a wide range of frequently purchased consumer products such as toiletries, soap, cosmetics, tooth cleaning products, shaving products and detergents, as well as other non-durables such as glassware, bulbs, batteries, paper products, and plastic goods. FMCG may also include pharmaceuticals, consumer electronics,

packaged food products, soft drinks, tissue paper, and chocolate bars. A subset of FMCGs is Fast Moving Consumer Electronics which include innovative electronic products such as mobile phones, MP3 players, digital cameras, GPS systems and laptops.

INDEX TERMS- Rural Consumer Behaviour and Attitude, FMCG Products.

INTRODUCTION :

India's FMCG sector is the fourth largest sector in the economy and creates employment for more than three million people in downstream activities. The FMCGs sector is a very dynamic sector in India. A major goal is to satisfy the needs and wants of rural consumer and their target markets more effectively and efficiently. Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)-alternatively known as consumer packaged goods (CPG) are products that are sold quickly and generally consumed at a regular basis, as opposed to durable goods such as kitchen appliances that are replaced over a period of years. The FMCG industry primarily engages in the production, distribution and marketing operations of CPG. FMCG product categories comprise of food and dairy products, pharmaceuticals, consumer electronics, packaged food products, household products, drink and others. Meanwhile, some common FMCG include coffee, tea, detergents, tobacco and cigarettes, soaps and others. The big names in this sector include Sara Lee, Nestle, Reckitt Benckiser, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, Coca-Cola, Carsberg, Kleenex, General Mills, Pepsi, Mars and others. In recent years, the fast moving consumer goods sector (FMCG) is witnessing increased use of sales promotion activities all over the world. This sector is characterized by products having low unit value and requiring frequent purchases and consumer behavior reflecting less loyalty, impulse buying, and low involvement on the part of a consumer (Kotler,



2003).

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The FMCG sector shows tremendous growth last few years. Compare to other investors prefer to make their investment in this sector only. However there is high growth tendency for FMCG sector it faces some difficulties in achieving their destination. Hence the purpose of this study the force that influence on rural consumer shopping pattern particularly in Pudukkottai district of TamilNadu.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Rural Consumer Behavior is the study of how individuals, groups and organizations select, buy and dispose of goods, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. Consumer behavior may be defined as the decision process and physical activity individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services. Several aspects of this statement need emphasis and elaboration so that their meaning can be more fully appreciated.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study target of Pudukkottai district rural consumers, understanding their behavior helps to identify the preference influence of brand in their purchase decision etc, on the purchase of particular FMCG product. The insight will help the manufactures to adopt new strategies which would help not only to attract new customer but also the maintain the loyalty of the existing customer, as in the present competitive scenario the consumer are prepared to choose their needs but also on the basic of personal interest shown by the manufacturers on them.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses mainly on the consumer behavior towards select Fast Moving Consumer Goods in Pudukkottai district of Tamilnadu, but with the prevailing trend, it is necessary to focus on the essence and emergence of vibrant in marketing efforts from the FMCG companies. Thus with more number of companies entering into the rural market, with a variety of products, it is a must for the companies to study the rural consumer behavior on FMCG. This study will highlight the attitude and behavior of rural consumer's behavior towards purchase of FMCG products.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) are products that are sold quickly at relatively low cost. The profit from these products is relatively very small and the selling is in large quantities, so the cumulative profit on such products can be large. The productions of Fast Moving Consumer Goods Companies have massive competition and they are forced to find new ways of making money. They did this by learning the consumer common needs and buying motives, and to developing the solution. At present the consumers are more dynamic, their taste, preferences are also changing. The consumers are also looking product differentiation and the convenience offered. The consumer has certain expectation from branded items in terms of its quality, price and packaging. Thus, appropriate planning for market in terms of trade for channel infrastructure, technology and behavioral dimensions needs greater emphasis for achieving better economic efficiency. The consumers are finding various problems in selecting their expectation to know the consumer behavior in the purchase decision in the FMCGs products. In this back drop it is identified that there is a need for research work in the field of attitude rural consumer behavior of FMCG in the Pudukkottai district of Tamilnadu.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to understand the rural consumer buying behavior towards FMCG products. For this the objectives of the research work are as under:

1. To study the attitude of consumer behavior towards purchase decision towards FMCG in Pudukkottai district

of TamilNadu.

2. To find the awareness about the FMCG products.
3. To understand the overall satisfaction level of respondent using FMCG products.
4. To analyze the socio, economic profile of rural consumers and their attitude towards buying products.
5. To study the valuable findings and suggestions, conclusion.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gihan Wijesundera (2010) in this article "Factors influencing the demand of beauty soap among female consumers in the greater Colombo region " Purpose of this study is to explore how the marketing mix & demographical factors influence the brand preference & Purchasing behavior of beauty soap among the female consumers in the greater Colombo region. The results indicated that there were statistical relationship between price, product, education, occupation and brand preference and there was no statistical relationship between place, promotion, age, income level, marital status, skin type, social factors, and substitute product with the brand preference. Thus the research concludes that the price, product, education & occupation are only having a statistical relationship with the brand preference of female consumers in the greater Colombo region.

Suresh Bhagwat (2011) in his e-article "FMCG Markets to contribute in Indian rural Economy perspective in global era" The study focuses their efforts on empowering the rural consumer with the latest trends and technology and teaches them ways to improve their standard of living.

B.V.N.G. Chandrasekhar (2012) in his study, "Consumer Buying Behaviour and Brand Loyalty in Rural Markets: FMCG", aims to study brand loyalty of various brands in rural markets and identify the presence and the importance of local brands.

Chitra.R (2014) "an empirical study on customers purchase intention towards branded apparels, "this paper aims to study factors affecting customers" Purchase intention towards branded apparel. Purchase intention is explained in terms of general consumer variables (normative influence, consumer confidence) and brand specific variables (Perceived quality emotional value).

Rajeseakaran, B and Saravanan, P.A (2014) highlighted, "Consumer satisfaction on fast moving consumer goods". The study throws on the attitudes, values, beliefs and perception of the consumers with regards to the consumption of fast moving consumer goods. To study the brand preference of fast moving consumer goods, the preference and opinion of consumer towards popular brands have been taken into consideration.

SAMPLING DESIGN

The study is based on the convenience sampling method was adopted for the study. The study is confined to Pudukkottai district only. Since the size of universe is infinite, the researcher decided to select a sample size of 362 respondent rural consumers. Pudukkottai district comprises of six taluks namely, Alangudi, Aranthangi, Keeranur, Ponnamaravathy, Thirumayam and Viralimalai. In all 362 respondents are chosen from different age groups classifying them on the basis of literacy with the help of structured and Interviews and discussions with these respondents the information for this survey is gathered, the classified such as (i) Demographic Variables (ii) Opinion of economic status consumer purchasing of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG).

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research is descriptive in nature as the study aims to find out the rural consumer behavior about FMCG product. The study is carried out the naturalistic observation and survey questioning, which are attributes of descriptive research.

DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The sources of data are primary as well as secondary. Primary data are collected through a survey of the rural customers, using a well framed questionnaire. Information is also gathered through secondary sources like books, journals, magazines, dailies, and from the Internet. The data collected from the two sources as scrutinized, analyzed, edited and tabulated.

DESIGNING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire is designed by the researcher in such a way that there are several questions designed on the basis of scaling namely Likert type scales which have five scales like Excellent (Strongly agree), Very Good (Agree), Good (Neutral), Average (Disagree), Bad (Strongly disagree). This enables the respondent to answer the questions in a structured manner by choosing one option among five options. It provides a sense of comfort by choosing the precise answers. Each construct has minimum five sub constructs related to the key factor of the main construct.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

I-Demographic Variables of Fast Moving Consumer Goods

Sl. No.	Table No.	Demographic Variables	Classification of Variables	No. of Respondent's	Percentage (%)
1.	1.1	AGE:	Below 25 Years	134	37
			26-35 Years	94	26
			36-45 Years	65	18
			45-Years & Above	69	19
			Total	362	100
2.	1.2	GENDER:	Male	228	63
			Female	134	37
			Total	362	100
3.	1.3	MARITAL STATUS:	Married	257	71
			Unmarried	105	29
			Total	362	100
4.	1.4	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION:	Illiterate	07	02
			School Level	44	12
			Graduate or Diploma level	134	37
			PG level	91	25
			Professionals	79	22
			Others specify	07	02
			Total	362	100
5.	1.5	OCCUPATIONAL STATUS:	Student	54	15
			Self-employed	98	27
			Professional	39	11
			Housewife	83	23
			Business	36	10
			Government employee	41	11
			Private employee	11	03
			Total	362	100
6.	1.6	MONTHLY INCOME:	Less than Rs.5,000	29	08
			Rs.5,001-10,000	119	33
			Rs.10,001-15,000	94	26
			Rs.15,001-20,000	43	12
			Above Rs.20,000	77	21
			Total	362	100
7.	1.7	FAMILY TYPE:	Joint	087	24
			Nuclear	275	76
			Total	362	100
8.	1.8	FAMILY SIZE:	Less than 3	109	30
			3-4 members	156	43
			5-6 members	051	14
			More than 7 members	047	13
			Total	362	100
9.	1.9	FAMILY BREAD WINNERS:	Up to 1 members	235	65
			2 to 3 members	116	32
			4 to 5 members	007	02
			Above 6 members	004	01
			Total	362	100

Source: Primary Data

II-Classification of Opinion of Rural Consumer Purchasing of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)

Sl. No.	Table No.	Classification of Variables	Opinion of Rural Consumer of Variables	No. of Respondent's	Percentage (%)
1.	2.1	FMCG's AWARENESS:	Yes	167	46
			No	195	54
			Total	362	100
2.	2.2	KNOWING OF FMCG. PRODUCTS:	Family members	039	11
			Relatives	127	35
			Advertisements	101	28
			Friends	095	26
			Total	362	100
3.	2.3	ADVERTISEMENT MEDIUM:	Television	087	24
			News paper/Magazine	123	34
			Radio	086	24
			Posters and Banners	066	18
			Total	362	100
4.	2.4	MEDIA INFORMATION:	Yes	174	48
			No	188	52
			Total	362	100
5.	2.5	ADVERTISEMENT TYPE:	Still Image (Magazines/Newspapers)	127	35
			Moving Images (Television/Internet)	235	65
			Total	362	100
6.	2.6	LEVEL OF PRODUCT PERFORMANCE:	Excellent	079	22
			Very Good	087	24
			Good	077	21
			Average and Bad	119	33
			Total	362	100
7.	2.7	PREFERENCE TO STORE:	Discount	047	13
			Variety	138	38
			Service	032	09
			Proximity	058	16
			Ambience	087	24
			Total	362	100
8.	2.8	OFFERS ON FMCG.	Always	069	19
			Often	119	33
			Sometimes	091	25
			Not at all	083	23
			Total	362	100

Source: Primary Data

FINDINGS

- + Majority of the respondents are below 25 years for their age groups.
- + Majority of the respondents are male.
- + Majority of the respondents are married.
- + Majority of the respondents are Graduate or Diploma level for their education qualification.
- + Majority of the respondents are self-employed.
- + Majority of the respondents are Rs.5001-10000 for their family.
- + Majority of the respondents are Nuclear for their type of family.
- + Majority of the respondents are 3-4 members for their family.
- + Majority of the respondents are Up to 1 member for their family.
- + Majority of the respondents are No for their customer awareness about the FMCG products.
- + Majority of the respondents are Relatives for their customers know about FMCG products.
- + Majority of the respondents are News paper/Magazine for their FMCG Advertisement.

- + Majority of the respondents are No for their media information.
- + Majority of the respondents are Moving Images (Television/Internet) for their FMCG advertisement.
- + Majority of the respondents are Average for their FMCG product performance.
- + Majority of the respondents are Variety for their customer purchasing reason.
- + Majority of the respondents are often for their customer purchasing reason.

SUGGESTION

- + Rural consumer's awareness advertising is very high. It should be kept in mind by companies for communication purpose.
- + Indian domestic companies should enhance their product standard and more effort to increase sales through sales promotion methods. These companies have to create consumer awareness to purchase the domestic products.
- + Use of televisions and newspapers are more planners also should use these media to reach to maximum number of viewers (Rural Consumer's).
- + Media are liked by customers due to their positive features. These points of high quality of audio, video, clearing of message and cost involved should be taken care of especially in advertising campaign.
- + Short advertisements on TV and radio, lengthy advertisement should be given in newspapers and magazines.
- + Brand loyalty is an important factor in FMCGs. It is very difficult to induce the consumers for brand switching. Any firm should study these very critically. The quality aspects coupled with competitive price may lead to change of brands.
- + Quality in FMCG products may be achieved through acquiring training in business development, quality product development, and marketing external monitoring of quality.

CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that, successes of many businesses depend on their ability to create and retaining the rural customers. Companies to sell their products in standard price with good quality, availability of brands in all stores and is less costly to attracting rural new customers. Brand loyalty provides companies strong and competitive weapons to fight with competitors in the market place. The importance promotional offers, availability of brands are important that companies must give it sufficient consideration before them plan and implement their marketing strategies. The FMCGs sector is a very dynamic sector in India. A major goal is to satisfy the needs and wants of rural consumer and their target markets more effectively and efficiently. Hence the researcher hopes that the information provided in this study will assist companies in shaping their marketing strategies and better serving their rural customers.

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