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CONSUMPTION PATTERN AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS IN KERALA

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ABSTRACT

Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. A huge population of consumers was spending large sums of money on goods and services. Besides this, consumer preferences were shifting and becoming highly diversified. consumer behaviour plays an important role in modern marketing practices. Most of marketing decisions are based on the study of consumer behaviour. This study was conducted in Kozhikode district of Kerala state.

Some goods and services which were essential for the life were selected for the study. The study also covers some luxurious and non-essential items. The study includes items like bag, dish wash, tooth paste, books, gold, cinema etc. The study reveals that consumer needs and preferences were changing according to the changes in lifestyle. Importance of conducting consumer behaviour and market studies can be understood from this paper.

KEY WORDS: Consumer behaviour, Market research, Consumer preferences

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. Consumer behaviour is a complex, dynamic, multidimensional process, and all marketing decisions are based on assumptions about consumer behaviour.

Leon G Schiffman and Leslie Lazer Kanuk defined consumer behaviour “as the behaviour that consumer display in searching for, purchasing using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs”. How consumers make decisions to spend their available resources such as money, time and effort on consumption and use-related items is the subject of consumer behaviour study. The study involves what consumer’s buy, why they buy it, how they buy it, when they buy it, where they buy it, how frequently they buy it and how they dispose of the product after use. A huge population of consumers was spending large sums of money on goods and services. Besides this, consumer preferences were shifting and becoming highly diversified.

Extensive consumer research studies are being conducted to understand the likes and dislikes of the consumer. These studies try to find out

- ◇ What the consumer thinks of the company’s products and those of its competitors?
- ◇ How can the product be improved in their opinion?
- ◇ How the customers use the product?
- ◇ What is the customer’s attitude towards the product and its advertising?
- ◇ What is the role of the customer in his family?

Consumer behaviour plays an important role in modern marketing practices. Most of marketing decisions are based on the study of consumer behaviour. It provides valuable information to design marketing mix and to modify it over time. Marketing managers can achieve marketing goals only by studying consumer behaviour and responding to it by designing appropriate marketing strategies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ➔ To analyze the consumption pattern of consumers in Kozhikode district towards selected goods and services
- ➔ To find out brand preferences of consumers towards selected goods and services
- ➔ To study the changes in consumer behaviour

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study analyzed the consumption pattern and behaviour of consumers in Kozhikode district in Kerala. Some goods and services which were essential for the life were selected for the study. The study also covers some luxurious and non-essential items. The selected items for the study are listed below:

- ⇒ Tooth paste
- ⇒ Gold
- ⇒ Dish wash
- ⇒ Bags
- ⇒ Books
- ⇒ Agarbathy
- ⇒ Cinema
- ⇒ Beauty parlour

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Secondary data was used for the study and for collecting data books, articles, newspapers etc. were used. From 14 districts of Kerala, Kozhikode district was selected for analyzing consumption pattern and preferences of consumers.

Data was analyzed and presented by using simple statistical tools like tables, bar diagrams and pie diagrams.

Population in Kerala (Census 2011)

| | | |
|-------|------------|---------|
| Rural | 17,471,135 | 52.30 % |
| Urban | 15,934,926 | 47.70 % |
| Total | 33,406,061 | 100 |

Population in Kozhikode (Census 2011)

| | | |
|-------|-----------|---------|
| Rural | 1,013,721 | 32.85 % |
| Urban | 2,072,572 | 67.15 % |
| Total | 3,086,293 | 100 |

The above census data says that in Kerala 52.30% of total population is residing in rural area and 47.70% are in urban area. In Kozhikode district 67.15% of total population is living in urban area. Only 32.85% are living in rural area.

I. TOOTH PASTE

Kerala is the state having highest sale of tooth paste in proportion to population. In a month around 15 crore rupees of paste is sold in Kerala. The sale of paste in Kozhikode district is for 1 crore rupees. Only below 5% of people are now using traditional methods for cleaning teeth. The new trend in this area is the decreased sale of tooth powders. The sale of tooth powder in Kozhikode paste market is only 5%. Before some years the duty of pastes were limited to cleaning of teeth. Nowadays pastes are offering a number of ways to the whole protection of teeth like whitening of teeth, removing the sensitivity of teeth etc., A number of customers are using sensitivity pastes according to the instructions of doctors.

Different types of Paste

- ✓ Salt Paste
- ✓ Herbal mint paste
- ✓ Total paste
- ✓ Visible white paste

II. GOLD

Before 10 years people were used to purchase gold from local shops in Kozhikode district. But in the last 10 years, the major change happened to customers in Kozhikode district is their shift from local shops to branded shops. This change mainly affected traditional goldsmiths. Due to the growth of branded shops the employment problems faced by the

particular group of goldsmiths were serious. It also affected the local small jewellery shops. In Kerala state Kozhikode district is having the third place in the sale of gold. Daily 10 crore rupees of gold is sold in Kozhikode district. The daily average sale of gold is 30 kilogram.

Table. I Daily Sale of Gold

| Item | Percentage | Number | Average Gram |
|------------------|------------|--------|--------------|
| Bangles | 30 | 1058 | 8.5 |
| Necklace | 35 | 300 | 35 |
| Chain | 12 | 260 | 13.8 |
| Ear rings | 10 | 880 | 7.5 |
| Rings | 6 | 1050 | 2 |
| Locketts | 3 | 450 | 2 |
| Bracelet | 3 | 150 | 6 |
| Others | 1 | 50 | 8 |

Table I explains daily sale of gold in the district. Bangles and necklace is having 30% and 35% of total sale respectively. Chain, ear rings and rings are also having a significant share in the total sale.

III. DISH WASH

Today people are using soaps and powders for cleaning plates. Since the last 5 years people are using soaps and powders for cleaning purposes. But around 20% of people are still using ash for cleaning plates. In a month dish wash soaps are sold for 70 lakh rupees and the total quantity is 75 ton.

The first item used by Kerala people are sabeena powder from Tamilnadu. At that time people were using ash and sand for cleaning plates. As there was no competitors sabeena captured the majority of the market. After some years the sale of sabeena is being reduced due to the entry of new brands like exo, vim etc.

IV. BAGS

Bags are used by all people irrespective of age, education, income etc. In Kozhikode district at the time of season the sale of bags ranges from 4 crore to 5 crore rupees. Kozhikode district is having the wholesale monopoly of bags in Malabar region.

In India different types of model bags are introduced in Kerala. According to traders in Kozhikode district, one model cannot be sold for more than 2 months in market. School bags are having highest sales at the time of season, but ladies bags are having demand for the whole year.

Branded Bags: In Kozhikode bag market the participation of branded bags is only 40%. The bags made by regional production units are having highest sale. In case of branded bags, Scoobie Day bags are having highest demand.

V. BOOKS

In Kozhikode district highest demand is for self help books. The latest trend in this market is decreased demand for fiction books and increased demand for self help books. In addition to academic purpose books, the monthly total sale of books ranges in between 35 lakh rupees to 40 lakh rupees.

The major share of book market is held by self help books. The second and third place is for cookery books and children's study books respectively.

Table.II Monthly Sale of Books

| Category | No of Copies |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Self help | 1000-1500 |
| Children's Study Books | 700-1250 |
| Cookery Books | 500-1000 |
| Sexual Science Books | 600-700 |
| Environment Books | 150-200 |
| Yoga Books | 200-250 |

The above table explains the sale of different types of books in the district. Self help books are having highest demand and monthly sale ranges between 1000 to 1500 copies. Children's study books follow self help books with a number of 700 to 1250 copies in a month. Cookery books are highly demanded by female customers and their monthly sale ranges between 500 -1000 copies. Sexual science

books, environment books and yoga books are also demanded by consumers in Kozhikode district.

Table.III Average Monthly Sale of Fictions

| Category | No. of Copies |
|----------|---------------|
| Novel | 500-750 |
| Story | 200-300 |
| Poem | 200-250 |

Table III shows average monthly sale of fictions. Fictions are classified into 3 categories. Among them novels are highly demanded by customers and its sale is in between 500 to 750 copies in a month. Stories and poems are also purchased by consumers.

Used Books: Used books are having a good demand in Kozhikode district. In one month the average sale of used books is for 10 lakh rupees. Highest demand is for English novels. Medical and Engineering books are demanded by students. College students and people aged above 50 are the permanent visitors of these shops.

VI. AGARBATHY

In Kozhikode district around 90% of homes are filled with the smell of agarbathies. The sale of agarbathies ranges in between 18 lakh rupees to 20 lakh rupees in a month. The yearly growth rate of agarbathy market is from 5% to 10%.

Mainly agarbathies are produced from Mysore in Karnataka. In a year around 500 crore rupees of agarbathies are exported from Mysore to 200 countries. In Kozhikode district brands like Cycle, Maya Supreme, Mangal Deep and Sandhya are having highest sale.

Table.IV Usage of Agarbathy

| Category | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|
| Home | 50 |
| Prayer Homes | 40 |
| Office | 10 |

Table IV explains the usage of agarbathies by different categories. 50% of the agarbathies sold in the market are consumed in homes. The second major user of agarbathies are prayer homes.

VII. CINEMA

Films from all the languages are accepted by the audiences or people in the Kozhikode district. Number of audiences in a month ranges from 4 lakh to 5 lakh. At the time of special occasions like festival seasons it increases to a range of 10 lakh to 12 lakh. The total number of seats in all the theatres are above 6000 numbers.

Table.V Audience Participation

| Category | Percentage |
|-------------|------------|
| Youth | 30 |
| Childrens | 25 |
| Teenagers | 25 |
| Aged people | 20 |

The above table explains audience participation of films. The majority of the audiences belongs to the category of youth, children and teenagers. Aged people constitutes a small part of the entire audience.

VIII. BEAUTY PARLOUR

Beauty parlours are introducing new experiments and methods to attract more and more customers to their shops. In a week around 90000 customers are visiting beauty parlours for different purposes. In the urban areas most of the visitors of beauty parlours are male customers. The majority of the audiences belongs to the category of youth, children and teenagers.

Art of Cutting: People are not interested in just removing hair from their head, but they are interested in making them more beautiful. Nowadays the main function of beauty parlours is designing. People are searching new ways to design their hair and the latest trends are spike, v model, tail cutting and finger cutting.

70 % of the female customers are coming to beauty parlour for the purpose of threading and among them 40 % are doing facial.

Table.VI Classification of Customers

| Category | Percentage |
|---------------|------------|
| Teenagers | 50% |
| 20 yrs-40 yrs | 30% |
| Above 40 yrs | 20% |

The above table shows that the majority of the customers are teenagers. 30% of the customers coming under the age group of 20-40 yrs.

In Kozhikode district majority of the workers of beauty parlours were Tamil peoles. But since last 5 years, 40 % of the work is captured by the workers from other states. Today beauty parlours are changed from traditional work to business activity and a lot of people are starting beauty parlours by using workers from other states as employees.

The main problem faced by beauty parlours are the hair waste. Before the last 10 years, the hair waste was taken to Chennai and it was used as a raw material for making Asbatows sheets. But today they were not taking hair waste from Kozhikode district and disposal of hair waste is a serious environmental problem. It is necessary to find out appropriate solution for this problem. In a month Kozhikode district is having around 4000 kilo hair waste.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Kerala is the state having highest sale of tooth paste in proportion to population.
- In recent years there is a decrease in the sale of tooth powders and the market share of tooth powder is only 5 %
- In kerala state Kozhikode district is having the third place in the sale of gold.
- Customers in Kozhikode district shifted from local shops to branded shops for purchasing gold.

- 95% of the total gold sold in the district is consumed by female consumers.
- Dailly 10 crore rupees of gold is sold in Kozhikode district.
- In a month dish wash soaps are sold for 70 lakh rupees and the total quantity is 75 ton.
- Exo brand is having the highest sale with a share of 40% of total market.
- Kozhikode district is having the wholesale monopoly of bags in Malabar region.
- In Kozhikode district bag market is dominated by unbranded items.
- The major share of book market is hold by self help books.
- Used books are having a good demand in Kozhikode district and monthly average sale of used books is for 10 lakh rupees.
- The sale of agarbathies ranges in between 18 lakh rupees to 20 lakh rupees in a month and the yearly growth rate of agarbathy market are from 5% to 10%.
- 50%of the agarbathies sold in the market are consumed in homes.
- Number of film audiances in a month ranges from 4 lakh to 5 lakh.
- The majority of the audiences belongs to the category of youth,children and teenegers
- In a week around 90000 customers are visiting beauty parlours for different purposes
- In a month Kozhikode district is having around 4000 kilo hair waste and disposal of hair waste is a serious environmental problem

CONCLUSION

Consumer behaviour plays an important role in modern marketing practices.Companies should identify consumers' needs and satisfy them more

effectively than competitors. For understanding changing needs and wants of consumers ,continous consumer behaviour studies are essential.If companies are able to meet changing expectations of the buyers, they can retain its consumers for a long period.Moreover consumer behaviour studies helps to face competiton and development of new products.It is better to conduct studies by taking small parts of the population.

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