



Impact of Personality Factors on Brand Loyalty of Rural Buyers Towards Bath Soap (A case study of Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh)

*C.Saradamma **Prof. Mamilla Rajasekhar

* Research Scholar, Dept.of Commerce, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

** Professor, Dept.of Commerce, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

ABSTRACT

Personality changes from person to person, time to time and place to place. Therefore, it can greatly influence the buying behaviour of customers. Brand loyalty is an important component of enterprises marketing strategy. This study aims to analyze the five major factors of personality on brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap. The results of the study highlight impact of the value for money and recognition, regular use and exciting, brand personality, reliability, and variety on the brand loyalty, and it could be concluded that factor 1 consisting of 'value for money and recognition' was the most influencing one with as much as 31.5 per cent of the total variance explained, while the factor 5 'variety' was the least influencing one with 7.2 per cent of the total variance explained.

Keywords : Brand loyalty, personality, 4Ps of marketing, factor analysis.

Introduction

Rural India is vast in size but amorphous in detail. Yet, the rural market represents the largest potential market in the country. At present, rural consumers spend about USD 9 billion per annum on FMCG items and product categories such as instant noodles, deodorant and fabric, with the pace of consumption growing much faster than urban areas. The rural Indian market will be larger than the total consumer markets in countries such as South Korea or Canada today, and almost four times the size of today's urban Indian market and estimated the size of the rural market at \$577 Billion. It is no wonder that even MNCs have cottoned on to the idea of a resurgent rural India waiting to happen for their FMCG products.

Statement of the problem

The market structure in India is dichotomous having rural and urban markets. There are certain unique features which call for separate marketing strategies to be distinctively developed to suit the rural and urban market behaviour. The Indian rural market is worth studying closely, not only because of its unique size and spread, but also due to the variety of language, polity, religion, customs and values existing within. While a sound distribution network and an intricate study of the village psyche are an absolute essential for making inroads into rural markets, any generalisation whatsoever about rural India could be wrong. The focus of corporates, therefore, needs to be on the introduction of brands specific to rural customer and developing specific marketing mix and strategies. One of the deterrents for marketers to exploit the rural market potential has been the vastness in area to be covered and the location of the population. Hence, there is a great need to solve the problems by consistent changes in the marketing mix for the bath soap.

Importance of the study

The study focuses mainly on the brand loyalty and satisfaction level of rural buyers on bath soap. But with the prevailing trend, it is necessary to focus on the essence and emergence of vibrant rural marketing efforts from the bath soap companies. Thus with more number of companies, entering into the rural market with variety of products, it is an imperative for the companies to study the rural consumer behaviour, rural consumption pattern and brand loyalties so as to withstand the

competition, and survive and grow either to retain or expand market share in the bath soap market in India. This study will highlight the opportunities and challenges in rural market for the Indian corporates as well as MNCs for bath soap.

Sample selection

A total 450 sample consisting 150 consumers each from three revenue divisions of Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, namely Chittoor, Madanapalli, and Tirupati covering 15 villages were selected by using stratified sampling method. From each division 15 villages have been selected randomly for the study.

Objective of the study

1. To study the impact of personality factors of rural buyers on their brand loyalty towards bath soap.

Null Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant difference between the personality factors and their influence on brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap.

Results and discussion

Factor Analysis: Factors determining the impact of personality factors on brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap:

Tests of sample adequacy: Measure of sample adequacy such as Barlett's test of Sphericity (approx Chi-Square is 19519.601 for 378 dof at 0.000% level of significance) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy test was used to measure sampling adequacy. The KMO index ranges from 0 to 1, reaching 1 when each variable is perfectly predicted without error by the other variables. The KMO test interprets that the sampling data is 89.3% adequate for this factor analysis and thus falls in the meritorious range of 0.8 and above (Hair et.al., 1998).

Findings: Principal components analysis and Vari-max rotation were used for generating and extracting factors, as a result of which 28 factors (with Eigen value of more than 1.0 and with a total variance explained of 73.231%) namely 'value for money and recognition', 'regular use and exciting', 'brand personality', 'reliability', and 'variety' were rotated (table 2).

Table 2: Impact of personality factors on brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap

Attribute no.	Factors retained (1,2 ,3, 4 and 5) and variables (from 1 to 28 in the questionnaire administered)	Loadings of variables/ (attributes)	Communalities	Percentage of variance explained and its Eigen value
Factor-1:Value for money and recognition				
24.	I normally treat new products with caution.	0.832	0.943	Variance explained=31.58% (Eigen value=5.055) No. of variables=8
19.	I will keep buying the brand that makes me realize what I am.	0.792	0.646	
6.	I want my achievements to be recognized by others.	0.790	0.745	
11.	My bath soap should offer me value for money.	0.777	0.726	
22.	I sometimes buy things just to make myself feel better.	0.772	0.665	
25.	I seek others' opinion before I try new product.	0.761	0.718	
26.	I like variety in whatever I buy.	0.714	0.645	
3.	The bath soap I use says a lot about the kind of person I am.	0.671	0.543	
Factor-2:Regular use and exciting				
7.	Using my regular brand helps me express my personality.	0.797	0.712	Variance explained=15.606% (Eigen value =2.086) No. of variables=5
15.	I will always buy a brand I can relate to.	0.742	0.759	
9.	My bath soap is my close friend.	0.621	0.590	
28.	I want a bath soap that excites me.	0.550	0.606	
20.	My brand of bath soap forms an important part of my everyday life.	0.385	0.297	
Factor-3: Brand personality				
23.	I reinforce my brand's personality in turn.	0.816	0.912	Variance explained=11.242% (Eigen value=1.574) No. of variables=5
18.	I am a good example of professional success.	0.811	0.856	
8.	It is important that I always look good.	0.797	0.741	
5.	My bath soap helps me be what I have always wanted to be.	0.789	0.793	
4.	I am very concerned with my appearance.	0.788	0.790	
Factor-4:Reliability				
14.	My parents made me loyal to a few brands they were loyal to.	0.825	0.812	Variance explained=7.635% (Eigen value =1.484) No. of variables=7
27.	Too much variety confuses me.	0.825	0.812	
16.	I will be loyal to a brand whose personality matches mine.	0.804	0.734	
21.	I have bought things that I could not afford.	0.791	0.646	
12.	I am most likely to use the same brand of bath soap for my future needs.	0.785	0.633	
1.	I want my bath soap to be reliable.	0.785	0.633	
13.	I feel proud to be seen buying my brand.	0.394	0.208	
Factor-5:Variety				
17.	My brand reinforces my personality.	0.795	0.641	Variance explained=7.220% (Eigen value=1.361) No. of variables=3
2.	I will try out a new product just for the sake of variety.	0.668	0.787	
10.	My brand must be accepted by my friends.	0.625	0.549	
Total variance explained				73.231
Total no. of variables				28

Source: Primary data.

Naming of factors: The opinion on the impact of personality on brand loyalty towards bath soap has been elicited by applying factor analysis. The analysis explained the following 5 factors that are responsible for personality towards bath soap.

Factor-1:Value for money and recognition: Of the 31.528% of the variance and 5.055 eigen value, the highest factor loading (0.832) is explained by the attribute 'I normally treat new products with caution' followed by 'I will keep buying the brand that makes me realize what I am' (factor loading of 0.792), 'I want my achievements to be recognized by others' (0.790), 'my bath soap should offer me value for money' (0.777), 'I sometimes buy things just to make myself feel better' (0.772), 'I seek others' opinion before I try new product' (0.761), 'I like variety in whatever I buy' (0.714) and 'the bath soap I use says a lot about the kind of person I am' (0.671). The above eight attributes have high communality indicating that the at-

tributes within the factor 1, have very high association among them. The researcher has named this factor as 'value for money and recognition'. It could be concluded that the above personality attributes are powerful and strong in influencing brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap.

Factor-2:Regular use and exciting: It is the second most important factor with explained variance of 15.606% and eigen value is 2.086. Five variables were loaded on this factor. The researcher has named it as 'regular use and exciting', as it includes 'using my regular brand helps me express my personality' (0.797), 'I will always buy a brand I can relate to' (0.742), considering bath soap as 'my bath soap is my close friend' (0.621), bath soap 'I want a bath soap that excites me' (0.550), and bath soap as 'my brand of bath soap forms an important part of my everyday life' (0.385) with higher factor loadings on its attributes. These five attributes have high communality

indicating that the attributes within the factor 2, have high association among themselves. It could be concluded that these personality attributes are powerful and strong that determines the brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap.

Factor-3:Brand personality: Five variables were loaded on this factor and together they accounted for 11.242% of the variance with 1.574 eigen value. Attributes that are positively loaded on this factor 'I reinforce my brand's personality in turn' (0.816), 'I am a good example of professional success' (0.811), 'it is important that I always look good (0.797), 'my bath soap helps me be what I have always wanted to be' (0.789) and 'I am very concerned with my appearance' (0.788) with higher factor loadings on its attributes. The researcher has named as this factor 'brand personality'. The variable 'reinforcement of brand personality' plays a leading role in gaining buyer satisfaction and the variable 'example of professional successes has shown least leading role.

Factor-4:Reliability: It has been found to be the fourth factor with an explained variance of 7.635% and an eigen value of 1.484. Seven out of twenty eight were loaded significantly onto this factor. This factor is named as 'reliability' and includes 'my parents made me loyal to a few brands they were loyal to' (0.825), 'too much variety confuses me' (0.825), 'I will be loyal to a brand whose personality matches mine' (0.804), 'I have bought things that I could not afford' (0.791), 'I am most likely to use the same brand of bath soap for my future needs'(0.785), 'I want my bath soap to be reliable' (0.785), and 'I feel proud to be seen buying my brand' (0.394). It could be concluded that the above factors play successful roles in influencing the personality on brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap.

Factor-5:Variety: It accounted for 7.220% of variance with eigen value of 1.361 and three variables namely, 'my brand reinforces my personality', 'I will try out a new product just for the sake of variety', and 'my brand must be accepted by my friends' (0.795, 0.668 and 0.625 respectively). The higher value of factor loadings and communality of attributes such as 'my brand reinforces my personality' and , 'I will try out a

new product just for the sake of variety' play a leading roles in gaining brand loyalty and the attribute 'my brand must be accepted by my friends' has shown least leading role.

It could be concluded that factor 1 consisting of 'value for money and recognition' was the most influencing one with as much as 31.5 per cent of the total variance explained, while the factor 5 'variety' was the least influencing one with 7.2 per cent of the total variance explained that influenced the brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap among rural buyers.

Acceptance or rejection of the formulated hypothesis: Based on the results of the factor analysis of the hypothesis that were formulated was rejected (table 3).

Table 3: Acceptance/rejection of the formulated hypotheses

Null hypothesis	Statement	Test used and acceptance/rejection of hypothesis
H01	There is no significant difference between the personality factors and their influence on brand loyalty of rural buyers towards bath soap.	Tools used for testing : Factor analysis H01 rejected (see table 3)

Source: Primary data.

Conclusion

To move rural buyers from trial to preference, brands need to deliver on their value proposition, as well as to dislodge someone else from the consumer's existing preference bath soap. Brand loyalty is a scale, and brands move up, down and even off that scale with and without a vigilant brand management strategy. Pricing, promotional deals and product availability, all have tremendous impact on the position of the brand in the buyer's preference bath soap. The brands' potential can only be fulfilled by continually reinforcing its perceived quality, up market identity and relevance to the buyer.

REFERENCES

Aaker, J., "Dimensions of brand personality", Journal of Marketing Research, Vol.34, No.3, 1997, pp.347-356. | De Raad, B., "The big five personality factors:The psycholexical approach to personality, Hogrefe & Huber, Gottingen, Germany, 2000. | Gupta, S.L., "Rural Marketing:Text and Cases", Wisdom Publications, pp.2-27. | Jacoby, Jacob and Chestnut, W., "Brand Loyalty Measurement and Management", New York, Wiley, 1978. | Sukphai Singh, "Rural Marketing Management", Vikas Publishing Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2001. | Ramesh Kumar, S., "Marketing and Branding-The Indian Scenario", Pearson Edition, New Delhi, 2008. | Tull, Donald and Hawkins, Del, "Marketing Research-Measurement and Method", PHI, New Delhi, 6th Edition, 2004. | Velayudhan, SK., "Rural marketing:targeting the non-urban customer", Response books, New Delhi, 2002, pp.142-143.