Research Paper | **Commerce**

A Study on Customer Perception Towards Cement in Coimbatore City

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ABSTRACT

Cement has come a long way from being the ugly grey powder sold in plastic bags. Today they have become a brand by themselves. Cement was first invented by the Egyptians and it was later reinvented by the Greeks and the Babylonians who made their mortar out of lime. The study is undertaken in Coimbatore City which is the growing hub for educational institutions, pump sets and wet grinders, where many building constructions are undergone. Hence, this study is undertaken with a sample size of 200 respondents, to find out their perception towards cement by using simple random sampling method. The findings are used to frame suggestions for the seller and to the customer.

1. Introduction

The cement industry of any nation plays an important role in its development through the construction of infrastructure. India's cement production has increased at 9.7% to reach 272 million tonnes during FY 06-13. There are 139 cement plants,365 mini plants and 40 players in India.Presently, India is the second largest cement producer globally with a capacity of around 370 million tonnes.The production is expected to grow to 550 million tonnes by FY 20. The cement industry has been expanding on the back of increasing infrastructure activities and demand from the housing sector over the past many years Major cement demand drivers are housing sectors , infrastructure , commercial & institutional and industrial sector .

1.1 Statement of the problem

Need for own house is the need of the hour by all consumers. The rented house has many drawbacks, such as lack of privacy, frequent hikes in rental problems etc. These problems have led to construct new houses by each and every person in the society. Coimbatore , as highly growing hub for all aspects leads to have high buildings as schools, collages, hospitals, apartments etc. This study is undertaken to analyse the customers perception towards cement and to analyse their problems.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

➢ To study the awareness level of consumers towards Cement in Coimbatore city.
➢ To study the respondents preference towards Cement.
➢ To study the factors that influence the customers in purchase of Cement.
➢ To study the satisfaction level of consumers in purchase of Cement.
➢ To offer suggestions based on the results of the study.

1.3 Methodology of the study

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problems. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. It includes the overall research design, the sampling procedure, data collection method and analysis procedure.

Research design

The study adopts Descriptive research design. Descriptive design is one that gives a snapshot of the prevailing environment. It is used to provide a summary of some aspects of the environment when certain aspects of the problem are spec-ulative in nature. Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of this research is description of state of affairs as it exists at present. The study undertaken is of descriptive nature as its main objective is to find out the perception of cement in Co-imbatore.

Source of Data

Data is collected through primary source. Primary data was collected through a questionnaire. The research was done in the form of direct personal interviews.

Sampling design

The population consists of 200 respondents who are using the cement for their construction purpose.

Statistical tools used for Analysis

➢ Percentage analysis
➢ Weighted average score analysis

Limitations of the study

➢ The area of the study is limited to Coimbatore city alone. Hence the results may not be true for other geographical locations.
➢ Due to limitation of time, the sample size is restricted to 200. This study is fully based on customer perception, so it may vary from time to time.

2. Analysis and Interpretations

➢ The data collected from the customers are systematically presented under various headings. They are:
➢ **Section A:** Deals with analysis of data relating to the customers by using percentage analysis.
➢ **Section B:** Deals with application of weighted average score analysis.

2.1 Application of Statistical Tools

2.1(A) Section A – Percentage Analysis of Cement purchased by the respondents

➢ The data collected from the respondents are systematically analyzed and the results of percentage analysis are given below and it is depicted in **Table- 1 and Table – 2.** It is understood from **Table -1** that 11.5% respondents are aware about Ramco cement, 13% respondents are aware about ACC cement, 11% respondents are aware about Chettinad cement, 15.5% respondents are aware about Bharathi cement, 10% respondents are aware about India cement, 15% respondents are aware

about Coromandel cement, 15% respondents are aware about Ultra tech cement, 9 % respondents are aware about Dalmia cement. From **Table-2,** it is clear that 43.5% respondents bought less than 200 bags. 35.5% respondents bought 200 – 300 bags. 21% respondents bought more than 300 bags.

> **2.2 (B) Section B –Weighted Average Score Analysis of the respondents**

In order to use this technique, first the qualitative information is converted in to quantitative data through a five point scaling technique similar to Likert Scaling Technique. From **Table-3,** it is clear that the respondents have given high level of opinion towards quality of the cement. Further, the respondents of 65 years are of the opinion that the discounts for bulk purchase is the factor which influenced them to buy from the same dealer.

3. Findings of the Study

The findings reveals that majority of the respondents are self employed and they discuss about their brand of purchase of cement with the architect or with an engineer, before their purchase. Good quality, easy delivery and credit purchases are the factors which motivated the customers to go in for their purchase of cement. Majority of the customers are satisfied with the brand of cement they are using and they have opined that the mixture of cement gets dried within one hour (quick fix), where by it can be protected from rain.

3.1 Suggestions of the Study
> **Quality and price**

The manufacturers have to concentrate in good quality and reduced price, so as to induce the customer in making bulk purchases.

> **Customer services**

Good services can be provided like free door delivery, discounts on bulk purchases and very quick setting facilities will serve the customer more.

> **Customer grievances**

The grievances of customers must be given due importance, in order to make the brand popoular and also for quick selling purposes.

> **Marketing ideas and distribution channels**

Marketing Ideas used by the cement companies should be very effective, so that it will help in for quick movement in the market. The distribution channel should be very limited to reduce the price of cement.

4. Conclusion

It is concluded that most of the people have used various cement in considering the factors such as price, quality, availability and convenience, which inturn focuses the cement companies to enter a new phase of developement cycle to improve their quality and to reduce the price, to face the toughest competition in the market. Moreover, the seller has to concentrate on new marketing strategies to make the brand withstand for a longer period without any fall in the product life cycle very quickly in the early stages.

Annexure
> **Percentage Analysis**

Table -1: Brand of cement purchased by the respondents

S. No	Cement Brands	Number of respondents`	Percentage
1	Ram co cement	23	11.5
2	ACC cement	26	13
3	Chettinad cement	22	11
4	Bharathi cement	31	15.5
5	India cement	20	10
6	Coromandel cement	30	15
7	Ultra tech cement	30	15
8	Dalmia cement	18	9
9	Others	0	0
	Total	200	100

Fig 1- Brand of cement purchased by the respondents
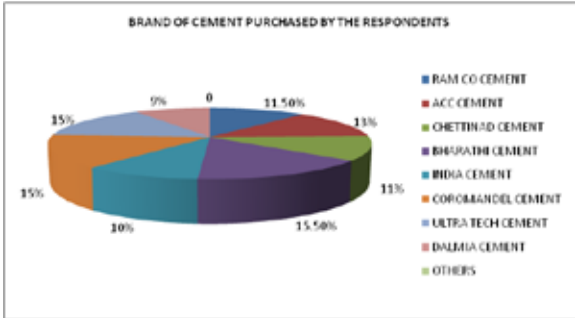
Table: 2 Quantity of cement purchased by the respondents

S.No	Quantity	Number of respondents`	Percentage
1	Less than 200 bags	87	43.5
2	200 – 300 bags	71	35.5
3	More than 300 bags	42	21
	Total	200	100

Table 3: Average Score – Personal Factors and other features in cement

Personal Factors		Price	Qualituy	Quick delivery	Discounts
Age (years)	Below 25	2.84	3.53	3.72	3.36
	25 to 45	3.13	3.56	3.35	3.33
	45 to 65	3.69	3.55	3.27	3.74
	65 above	3.18	3.65	3.3	3.70
Gender	Male	3.17	3.17	4.08	3.57
	Female	3.25	3.28	3.61	3.24
Marital Status	Married	3.29	3.38	3.51	3.60
	Unmarried	3.07	3.83	3.5	3.45
Educational Level	No formal education	3.37	3.29	2.63	3.60
	School level	3.04	3.51	3.5	3.53
	College level	3.35	3.57	3.65	3.41
	Professional Level	3.42	3.42	3.52	3.58
Occupational Status	Agriculture	3.39	4.2	4.6	3.2
	Business/self employed	3	3.25	4.5	3.45
	Government employee	3.22	3.36	3.8	3.4
	Private sector employee	3.14	3.69	3.58	3.42
	Others	3.42	3.46	3.17	3.93

Source: Primary data us ing spss

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