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A STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING PREFERENCE TOWARDS GROCERIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JAISURYAS DEPARTMENT STORES, ERODE

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Abstract

The study analyzes consumer buying preferences for groceries at Jaisurya's Department Stores in Erode using a sample of 100 respondents. It employs descriptive research design and convenience sampling, with questionnaires as the primary data collection method. Findings indicate no significant relationship between respondents' gender and product strategy, suggesting a need for an innovative culture to enhance product offerings and overall client satisfaction. Strategies targeting product quality, pricing, marketing, and delivery can address current issues and align with consumer expectations for improved satisfaction levels.

Keywords: Consumer buying preferences, Groceries, Jaisurya's Department Stores, Product strategy, Pricing strategies, Promotional strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer preference and buying behavior play pivotal roles in shaping market dynamics, influencing businesses' strategies and outcomes. Understanding the nuances of consumer preference involves dissecting factors that drive choices, including brand perception, pricing, and product features. This comprehension not only aids in aligning offerings with market demands but also in fostering brand loyalty and competitive advantage. In this overview, we explore the intricate interplay between consumer preference, buying behavior, and the strategies employed by businesses to navigate these dynamics successfully.

COMPANY PROFILE

Jaisuryas Department Stores in Erode is renowned for its commitment to quality, variety, and customer satisfaction over its 27-year journey. Offering a wide range of products through walk-in, door delivery, and personalized shopping experiences, it aims to redefine retail with a customer-centric approach. Recognized for excellence in retail, the store emphasizes community engagement, quality assurance, and digital convenience, ensuring a seamless shopping experience across diverse product categories.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To evaluate the effectiveness of various product strategies employed by the departmental store to influence consumer buying preference
- To assess the impact of different pricing strategies implemented by the departmental store on consumer purchasing decisions for groceries
- To analyze the influence of promotional strategies utilized by the departmental store on consumer preferences

- To understand the brand preference among consumers for groceries at the departmental store
- To obtain suggestions from the respondents to enhance consumer buying preference towards groceries for the departmental store.

NEED OF THE STUDY

In the competitive retail industry, department stores grapple with adapting strategies to meet changing customer preferences, impacting sales and profits. Customer dissatisfaction due to product, price, or marketing issues can lead to declining market share and brand image, affecting overall operations and finances. However, by conducting comprehensive studies to address these concerns, department stores can enhance relevance and appeal, focusing on improving product quality, pricing strategies, and promotional effectiveness to attract and retain customers.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study, centered on Jaisuryas Department Stores in Erode, aims to analyze consumer buying preferences for groceries. It focuses on product strategies, pricing impacts, promotional influences, and brand preferences to provide insights for strategic adjustments. With a sample of 120 consumers, the research seeks to optimize strategies, fostering increased satisfaction and loyalty among Jaisuryas' clientele.

LIMITATION

The study's findings are only applicable to consumers of Jaisuryas Department Stores in Erode and cannot be generalized. Limited to Erode, the study's scope may not represent broader consumer trends. The sample size of 120 may not fully encompass all consumer perspectives, and challenges in data collection arose from respondents' reluctance to share certain information.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Saravanan (2017) study provides valuable insights into consumer preferences for edible oils in Tiruchy city, emphasizing factors like purity, quality, and price. The empirical examination with 200 purposively selected respondents sheds light on the importance of addressing quality and hygiene concerns in packaged edible oil products.

2. Bhuvanewari (2016) exploration of customer attitudes towards branded edible oils in Coimbatore city highlights the significant influence of factors such as advertising, pricing, quality, and packaging on consumer purchasing decisions. The use of statistical methods like average rank analysis and chi-square adds depth to the analysis of customer preferences in the edible oil market.

3. Shahir Bhatt and Amola Bhatt (2015) research on rural customer preferences for packaged food products in Ahmedabad district, Gujarat, offers valuable insights into factors driving purchasing decisions in rural areas. Their study examines the relationship between factors like health, convenience, and proximity to purchase decisions, providing valuable insights for packaged food marketers targeting rural consumers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design: Descriptive Research Design.

Collection Method: Data were collected through structured questionnaires.

Sampling Techniques: Convenience sampling (Simple random sampling).

Sample size: The sample size is 120 respondents.

Tools used for analysis: 1.Simple percentage analysis.2.Chi-square.3.Correlation

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

a) Simple Percentage Analysis: The study surveyed a predominantly male demographic, primarily aged between 21-30 years. A notable proportion of respondents held graduate degrees, while a significant portion reported earning below Rs.15,000 as income. Satisfaction levels regarding product features varied, with differing sentiments towards meeting needs and product packaging attractiveness. Regarding pricing, while transparency and clear pricing information were appreciated by some, others found consistency across channels acceptable. However, promotional communication effectiveness fluctuated, with differing responses regarding message alignment. Satisfaction with promotion-related activities was notable, along with brand preference and trust in department store brands. Educational qualifications exhibited a positive correlation with brand preference, while gender showed no significant relationship with product strategy.

b) Chi Square Analysis: difference between the gender of the respondents and product strategy.

Value	DF	Sig.	Interpretation
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Pearson Chi-Square	20.326	14	.120
Likelihood Ratio	22.695	14	.065
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.890	1	.027

Interpretation: The minimum expected count is 0.39. Thus null hypothesis is accepted and it is found that there is no significant relationship between the gender of the respondents and product strategy.

c. Correlation Analysis: relationship between educational qualification of the respondents and brand preference

Variable	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Educational Qualification	1.000	.755
Brand Preference	.029	1.000

Interpretation: Both correlations have a p-value of 0.755, indicating that they are not statistically significant at the conventional levels. Therefore, there is no strong evidence to suggest a relationship between educational qualification of respondents and brand preference.

FINDINGS

The study surveyed a predominantly male demographic, comprising 60.8% of respondents, primarily aged between 21-30 years, with 28.3% falling within this age bracket. Notably, 31.7% of respondents held graduate degrees, while a significant portion (37.5%) reported earning below Rs.15,000 as income. Satisfaction levels regarding product features varied, with 31.7% expressing high satisfaction towards meeting their needs, juxtaposed with 49.2% dissatisfaction regarding product packaging attractiveness. Regarding pricing, while 38.3% found transparency satisfactory, a substantial 51.7% highly appreciated clear pricing information, and 35.0% found consistency across channels acceptable. However, promotional communication effectiveness fluctuated, with 27.5% dissatisfied with promotions communication and 30.0% providing mixed responses regarding promotional message alignment. Satisfaction with promotion-related activities was notable, with 45.8% acknowledging urgency creation and 36.7% affirming effective channel utilization. Moreover, brand preference and trust in department store brands emerged prominently, with 46.7% favoring store brands and 35.0% expressing a willingness to pay a premium for exclusive brands. Notably, educational qualifications exhibited a positive correlation with brand preference, while gender showed no significant relationship with product strategy.

SUGGESTIONS

To maintain a competitive edge and align with evolving customer preferences, the organization should prioritize on going improvements in product features based on customer feedback and market trends. Investing in research and development is crucial to ensuring products remain visually appealing and in line with changing design preferences. Regular evaluation of market demands is necessary to expand the product variety and provide a diverse and fulfilling offering. Cultivating an innovative culture within the organization is imperative to consistently introduce new and enhanced items that enhance customer perceptions. Transparent communication of pricing information, including base prices and additional expenses, is essential to gaining customer confidence and credibility. Moreover, the business should strive for pricing uniformity across all sales channels and optimize promotional tactics to maximize their impact and relevance to the target audience's interests and preferences.

CONCLUSION

This research underscores the significance of the marketing mix components—distribution, pricing, promotion, and product strategy—in shaping consumer satisfaction. Ineffectiveness in any of these areas can lead to diminished satisfaction, attributed to factors like product quality, pricing discrepancies, marketing strategies, and delivery issues. By addressing these shortcomings, companies can enhance their marketing mix, catering more effectively to consumer demands and bolstering client loyalty in a dynamic market environment. Implementing practical recommendations derived from this study promises a comprehensive approach to improving consumer satisfaction and ensuring competitive success.

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