Brand Awareness in Rural Area: A Case Study of Fast Moving Consumer Goods in Pulwama District of J&K State.

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ABSTRACT: *The rural population in Jammu & Kashmir accounts for around 73 percent of total population which is 1.25 crore according to census 2011. The rural Jammu and Kashmir brings in bigger revenues as maximum consumers are from rural areas. The brand awareness particularly for Fast moving consumer goods in urban areas of Jammu and Kashmir is increasing manifolds. The purpose of this study is to examine the brand awareness in rural areas and to study the interest of consumers in branded products of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). To check whether the trend is replicated in rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir, the case study on brand awareness and consumer preferences in rural areas of Jammu And Kashmir State is taken up.*

KEYWORDS: *Brand Awareness, Rural Area, Fast Moving Consumer Goods.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Fast Moving Consumer Goods are products that are sold quickly and at relatively low cost. These satisfy the elemental and day-to-day household needs other than grocery, ranging from packaged foodstuff, dairy products, cooking oil, bread, butter, cereals, beverages like tea & coffee, pharmaceuticals, confectionery, biscuits, glassware, stationary items, watches, toiletries, detergents, shampoos, skin care products, cosmetics, toothpaste, dish washing liquid, shaving cream, razor, batteries, shoe polish, energy drinks, soft drinks, clothing, furniture and household accessories to electronic goods like cell phones, laptops, computers, digital cameras etc. that are usually categorized as Fast Moving Consumer Electronics (FMCEs).India is a mixed economy a proper mix of urban as well as of rural market. Rural markets are an important and growing market. The rural market in India is not separate entity in itself and it is highly influenced by the sociological and behavioral factors operating in the country. Rural markets offer vast growth opportunities like untapped market, large population, and huge scope for penetration .At the same time this market poses some challenges as well urban market is almost reaching towards the saturation point, thus there is an urgent need to focus on rural development. Moreover, more than 70% of India's population lives in villages and constitutions a big market for industry. At present Indian FMCG sector is worth Rs. 1300 billion and expected to be around a whopping value of Rs. 4000 to Rs. 6000 billion by 2020. Henceforth, FMCG and its closest companion Retail sector, both are likely to create most of the jobs in India in the coming years primarily in functions like marketing, sales, advertising, supply chain, logistics, human resources, product packaging and development, finance, operations, general management, supervising and so on.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The two important measures of brand awareness are brand recognition and recall. (Hoyer et al. 1990), reported "top of mind awareness is critical as it captures the 'consideration set' in a given purchase situation.(Laurent, et al. 1995) , Study on recall of pictorial advertisements as compared to non-pictorial advertisements indicated how much more effective rural consumers were as compared to urban consumers. In some studies, brand preference has been equated with brand loyalty (Rundle-Thiele and Mackay, 2001).In other studies; it has been evaluated as a precursor to brand loyalty (Odin et al. 2001). (Ben-Akiva et al. 1999), defined preferences as "comparative judgments between entities." Additional reasons (other than promotions) why consumers may purchase other brands despite a stated brand preference includes a desire to try and learn more about different brands in the category, changing needs or situations, variety seeking, and changes in the available alternatives due to new products or improvements to existing products(Coulter et al. 2003).Alba and Hutchison (1987), proposed that experts are more likely to search for new information because (a) expertise increases awareness of the existence of potentially acquirable information and (b) familiarity reduces the cost of information acquisition. Schmidt and Spreng (1996) further postulated that knowledge increases the perceived ability to search and therefore should decrease the perceived costs of search. Greater knowledge has been shown to be positively related to increased involvement with a category (e.g., Raju et al. 1995).Dunn et al. (1978), viewed advertising from its functional perspectives. Morden (1991) was of the opinion that advertising is used

to establish a basic awareness of the product. Those views of Etzelet coincide with the simple but all-embracing definitions of Davies (1998) and Aren (1996). Aaker (2000) regarded brand awareness as a remarkably durable and sustainable asset. Yee and Young (2001), aimed to create awareness of high fat content of pies, they studied consumer and producer awareness about nutrition labeling on packaging. Chen (2001) expressed a different thought on brand awareness and reported that it was a necessary asset but not sufficient for building strong brand equity. Beverland (2001) analyzed the level of brand awareness within the New Zealand market for zespri kiwi fruit.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH PAPER

The objective of the study was to understand the buying perception of the rural consumer towards FMCG Products. For this, the objectives of the Research Work are as under:
*   To study the perception of the rural consumer towards FMCG products.
*   To examine the brand preference and awareness of rural consumer towards FMCG products.
*   To study the impact of media on brand awareness & Preferences.

IV. NEED OF THE STUDY

FMCG products are substantially used to enhance and protect the health and physical appearance and also the dignity of the people among their counterparts. The spending on FMCG products especially in the rural areas is showing an increasing tendency in the last 5 years. This is due to increase in income levels, fascination towards urban culture, good connectivity to near- by towns & cities, improvement in sanitary conditions, beauty awareness among teenagers of rural areas emulating their counterparts in the urban areas led to the increased usage of FMCG products particularly beauty & health care products in this region. With this backdrop the brand awareness in rural areas with reference to FMCG products is thought of. The study has been confined only to Pulwama District of J&K state. It is believed that the findings in this region are fairly representative of the other parts of the State and the lifestyle & other parameters are not much different from what exist in the area of survey.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the study is based on the primary as well as secondary data. The study depended mainly on the primary data collected through a well-framed and structured questionnaire to elicit the well-considered opinions of the respondents. The study was confined to 10 villages of the district Pulwama of J&K State a rural oriented region and about 85 % of total population of 5.7 lakh live in villages. Pulwama district comprises of four blocks namely Awantipora, Pampore, Tral and Pulwama. Due to paucity of time and financial constraints, 10 villages of 4 blocks were chosen for survey adapting simple random sampling technique. In all 100 respondents were considered as sample size from different age groups who were clasified on the basis of literacy with the help of structured & unstructured interviews & discussions

VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Following are some of the limitations of this study:
[1] Firstly, the research work covered only 10 villages of Pulwama district.
[2] Secondly, the respondents didn't want to disclose their personal information
[3] Thirdly, the sample size taken in this study does not ensure representativeness and conclusive findings and finally, detailed study is needed to be taken at larger scale to reach a strong conclusion.

VII. FINDING & INTERPRETATIONS
7.1 *The Demographic Profile of Respondents*

Details	*Frequency (N)*	*Population(%)*
Gender		
Male	50	50%
Female	50	50%
Age		
Below 20	10	10%
Between 20-30	40	40%
Between 30-40	30	30%
Above 40	20	20%

Academic Qualification *Up to School* *Up to Graduate* *Up to Post Graduation* *Illeterate*	*08* *42* *20* *30*	*08%* *42%* *20%* *30%*
Monthly Income *5,000-10,00* *10,000-15000* *Above 15000* *Dependant Respondent (No Income Group)*	*35* *25* *15* *25*	*35%* *25%* *15%* *25%*
Types of Products Prefers *Prefer Brand* *Prefer Non Brand* *Prefer Quality of Product over Brand*	*50* *15* *35*	*50%* *15%* *35%*

7.2 Brand awareness in rural market

Tea	*(%)*	*Soap*	*(%)*	*Toothpaste*	*(%)*	*Shampoo*	*(%)*
Tata tea	*65*	*Dettol*	*50*	*Pepsodent*	*60*	*Clinic*	*78*
Red Label	*55*	*Dove*	*45*	*Colgate*	*78*	*Lux*	*70*
Taj Mahal	*50*	*Lux*	*75*	*Close up*	*72*	*Sunsilk*	*72*
Taaza	*70*	*Lifeboy*	*70*	*Sensodine*	*43*	*Garnier*	*48*
Brook Bond	*45*	*Hamam*	*65*	*Miswak*	*47*	*Pentene*	*62*
Average	*57*	*Average*	*61*	*Average*	*60*	*Average*	*66*

Interpretation
It has been concluded from the above table that the average awareness of the respondents in the rural market is 57% in case of tea, 61% in case of soap, 60 % in case of toothpaste and 66% average awareness in case of shampoo.

7.3 Brand Preferences in rural market

Tea			Soap			Toothpaste			Shampoo		
Category	Wt score	Rank	Category	Wt score	Rank	Category	Wt score	Rank	Category	Wt score	Rank
Taaza	*3.5*	*1*	*Lux*	*3.0*	*1*	*Colgate*	*3.58*	*1*	*Clinic*	*3.12*	*1*
Tata tea	*2.6*	*2*	*Hamam*	*2.99*	*2*	*Close up*	*3.17*	*2*	*Sunsilk*	*2.9*	*2*
Red Label	*2.2*	*3*	*Lifeboy*	*2.38*	*3*	*Pepsodent*	*2.16*	*3*	*Lux*	*2.8*	*3*
Taj Mahal	*2.0*	*4*	*Dettol*	*2.0*	*4*	*Miswak*	*1.79*	*4*	*Pentene*	*2.48*	*4*
Brook Bond	*1.44*	*5*	*Dove*	*1.8*	*5*	*Sensodine*	*1.5*	*5*	*Garnier*	*1.92*	*5*

Interpretation
It can be concluded from the above table that in case of tea category, Taaza tea is given 1st   rank, Tata Tea is on 2nd rank, 3rd rank is given to the Red Label and 4th rank is given to Taj Mahal by the respondents. In case of soap 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th ranks are given to the Lux, Hamam, Lifebuoy, and Dettol respectively. In case of tooth paste respondents gave 1st rank to Colgate, 2nd to close up, 3rd to Pepsodent, 4th to Miswak. In case of shampoo 1st rank is given to the Clinic, 2nd is given to the Sunsilk, 3rd to the Lux, 4th to the Pentene.

7.4 Sources of Brand Preferences

Factors	*Percentage(%)*	*Rank*
Television	*40*	*1*
Advertisements	*25*	*2*

Friends	20	3
Internet	15	4

Interpretation
From the above table, it can be concluded that respondents mostly become aware from the television as it is on 1st rank in the sources of awareness. Advertisement and Friends are on 2nd and 3rd rank and Internet is on 4th rank. The awareness through television is 40%, 25% by advertisement, 20% by friends and 15% by internet.

VIII.   EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS
Results of the study have been concluded in the following section:
- The average awareness of the respondents in the rural market is 57%, 61%, 60%, 66% in case of tea, soap, toothpaste, shampoo respectively, this shows that people in the rural areas have a slightly above average awareness about most of the products available in the market.
- In case of Tea, respondents have given the 1st rank to Taaza, 2nd to Tata Tea, 3rd to Red Label, 4th to Taj Mahal. In case of soap 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th ranks are given to the Lux, Hamam, Lifebuoy and Dettol respectively. In case of shampoo, 1st rank is given to the Clinic, 2nd is to Sunsilk, 3rd to Lux, 4th to Pantene. In case of toothpaste respondents reported 1st rank to Colgate, 2nd to Close-up, 3rd to Pepsodent, and 4th to Miswak.
- As far as the sources from which the respondents became aware, the 1st rank goes to Television, 2nd to Advertisement, 3rd to friends and 4th to the internet, as most of the people are not aware to the use of internet.
- It is clear from the above study that respondents of different gender groups have different attitude towards the various brand products.
- Income factor greatly influences the demand for branded products, as is clear from the study; the dependents are more aware and conscious about the brand of their daily consumption goods.

IX. CONCLUSION
The brand awareness in rural areas particularly in respect of beauty care and health care products is showing an increasing tendency. (Most of the people both from illiterate & literate groups prefer branded products with the belief that quality is assured as the manufacturers are reputed companies. For example Colgate Tooth Paste, Clinic shampoo).There is an increasing trend among the people of rural areas about the awareness of various brands of the daily consumption goods. People of rural areas are becoming more conscious about their health and other aspects of life. This change in the attitude to spend more on the highly priced branded products among high income groups in rural areas clearly suggests that there is an ample scope for such products to capture the markets in these areas by increasing the supply of these products. Usage of branded products is seen as status elevator in the villages.The need of the hour is only to make aware the rural customers regarding the brand availability of daily consumption goods by educating them about the need to the use of branded products.

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