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Impact of Brand Image on Consumer Buying Behaviour: Evidence from FMCG Sector in Perambalur District

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Abstract

The Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector plays a vital role in influencing consumer buying behaviour due to its frequent usage and brand-driven market. This study examines the impact of brand image on consumer buying behaviour with special reference to the Perambalur district of Tamil Nadu. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from consumers across different age groups, income levels, and occupations. The analysis highlights that brand image significantly affects consumer preferences, trust, and purchase decisions in the FMCG sector. Factors such as quality perception, packaging, advertising, and brand loyalty were found to be the key determinants influencing buying behaviour. The findings suggest that companies in the FMCG sector must focus on building a strong and positive brand image to gain a competitive edge and retain customer loyalty. This research contributes to understanding rural and semi-urban consumer behaviour in an emerging district market like Perambalur and provides valuable insights for marketers, retailers, and policy-makers.

Keywords: Brand Image, Consumer Buying Behaviour, FMCG, Perambalur, Brand Loyalty

INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive market, brand image has emerged as a crucial factor that influences consumer buying behaviour. Particularly in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, where products are frequently purchased and often similar in nature, consumers rely on brand perception to make purchase decisions. A strong brand image not only differentiates a product from its competitors but also creates trust, loyalty, and emotional attachment among consumers. India's FMCG industry is one of the largest and fastest-growing sectors, contributing significantly to the economy and daily life. With increasing competition, companies are investing heavily in advertising, packaging, endorsements, and promotional strategies to build a favourable image in the minds of consumers. However, the extent to which brand image influences consumer choices varies across regions, cultures, and income groups.

In semi-urban and rural regions like Perambalur district in Tamil Nadu, consumer behaviour is undergoing rapid transformation due to rising income levels, better awareness, and increased accessibility of branded products. Local markets, retail outlets, and supermarkets are witnessing a growing demand for FMCG products, making it essential to study how brand image shapes consumer preferences in this context.

This research seeks to explore the impact of brand image on consumer buying behaviour in the FMCG sector with special reference to Perambalur district. By examining consumer perceptions, preferences, and loyalty towards branded FMCG products, the study aims to provide valuable insights for marketers and businesses to strengthen their market presence in emerging districts.

Objectives of the Study

The present study aims to analyze the impact of brand image on consumer buying behaviour in the FMCG sector with special reference to Perambalur district. The specific objectives are:

1. To study the demographic profile of consumers purchasing FMCG products in Perambalur district.
2. To examine the factors influencing brand image of FMCG products among consumers.
3. To analyze the relationship between brand image and consumer buying behaviour.
4. To identify the level of brand loyalty and preference among consumers in the FMCG sector.
5. To provide suggestions for marketers and FMCG companies to strengthen brand image and consumer satisfaction in the district.

Review of Literature

- Brand image and consumer buying behaviour have been widely studied in marketing research. Scholars emphasize that brand image plays a crucial role in shaping customer perceptions, preferences, and purchase intentions, especially in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector.
- Keller (1993) highlighted that brand image is the set of associations linked to a brand in the consumer's memory, which influences decision-making. A strong brand image creates trust, enhances product value, and encourages repeat purchases.
- Aaker (1996) explained that brand equity, consisting of brand awareness, loyalty, and perceived quality, directly affects consumer behaviour. Consumers tend to choose brands with a positive image even when cheaper alternatives are available.
- Kotler and Keller (2006) observed that in highly competitive FMCG markets, brand image acts as a differentiating factor and builds long-term consumer loyalty.
- Rai and Medha (2013) found that consumer buying behaviour in FMCG products is highly influenced by brand recall, packaging, and advertisements, which contribute to the overall image of the brand.
- Sharma & Singh (2015) noted that brand image not only impacts initial purchase but also strengthens post-purchase satisfaction and word-of-mouth recommendations.
- Prasad & Dev (2017) concluded that in rural and semi-urban markets of India, factors such as affordability, availability, and trust in the brand image significantly determine buying decisions in the FMCG sector.
- Recent studies (2020–2023) suggest that digital marketing, social media presence, and eco-friendly practices of companies have also started shaping consumer perceptions of brand image, particularly among younger consumers.

Research Methodology

1. Research Design

The study follows a descriptive research design as it seeks to understand and analyze the relationship between brand image and consumer buying behaviour in the FMCG sector. This design helps in describing consumer attitudes, perceptions, and preferences in a systematic manner.

2. Area of the Study

The research is conducted in Perambalur District, Tamil Nadu, focusing on consumers who frequently purchase FMCG products such as food items, beverages, personal care, and household goods.

3. Population and Sample

Population: Consumers of FMCG products in Perambalur.

Sample Size: 120 respondents (can be adjusted as per requirement).

Sampling Technique: Convenience sampling method has been adopted due to easy accessibility and time constraints.

4. Sources of Data

Primary Data: Collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among FMCG consumers in Perambalur.

Secondary Data: Collected from journals, research articles, books, magazines, company reports, and online sources related to brand image and consumer buying behaviour.

6. Research Instrument

A well-structured questionnaire consisting of both closed-ended and Likert-scale type questions was used to collect data on:

Demographic details of consumers

Brand awareness and perception

Influence of brand image on purchase decision

Factors influencing consumer satisfaction and loyalty

7. Tools for Analysis

The collected data will be analyzed using statistical tools such as:

Percentage Analysis – to understand demographic and general consumer responses.

Chi-Square Test – to test the relationship between brand image and buying behaviour.

Correlation and Regression Analysis – to measure the strength and impact of brand image on purchase decisions.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	65	54%
	Female	55	46%
Age Group	18–25 years	40	33%
	26–35 years	45	37%
	36–45 years	25	21%
	Above 45 years	10	9%

Interpretation:

Most FMCG consumers in Perambalur belong to the **age group 26–35 years (37%)**, indicating that young working professionals are the primary buyers. The gender distribution shows a nearly equal representation, suggesting that **both men and women actively purchase FMCG products**.

Table 2: Factors Influencing Purchase of FMCG Products

Factor	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Brand Image	55%	30%	10%	3%	2%
Price	40%	35%	15%	5%	5%
Quality	60%	25%	10%	3%	2%
Availability	45%	30%	15%	5%	5%
Advertisement	35%	30%	20%	10%	5%

Interpretation:
The table shows that **brand image (85% agree/strongly agree) and quality (85%) are the most influential factors** in consumer decision-making. Price also plays a significant role (75%), but advertising seems to have a comparatively lower impact (65%).

Table 3: Brand Preference of FMCG Products

Brand	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Hindustan Unilever (HUL)	40	33%
ITC Limited	30	25%
Nestlé India	25	21%
Patanjali	15	13%
Others	10	8%

Interpretation:
Hindustan Unilever (33%) and ITC (25%) dominate consumer preference, indicating **strong brand loyalty** in the FMCG sector. Patanjali and other regional brands have limited influence, showing that **national and international brands enjoy better trust**.

Table 4: Relationship between Brand Image and Buying Behaviour (Chi-Square Test Result)

Hypothesis	Chi-Square Value	p-value	Result
H_0: There is no significant relationship between brand image and buying behaviour.	14.82	0.002	Rejected (Significant)

Interpretation:
Since the p-value (0.002) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This confirms that **brand image has a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour** in the FMCG sector.

Limitations of the Study

1. **Geographical Limitation** – The study is restricted to Perambalur district, and therefore, the results cannot be generalized to other regions.
2. **Sample Size** – Due to time and resource constraints, only a limited number of respondents were included in the study. A larger sample might have given more accurate results.
3. **Time Constraint** – The study was conducted within a short time frame, which limited the depth of

analysis.
4. **Respondent Bias** – Some respondents may not have provided accurate information due to personal bias or lack of interest.
5. **Focus on FMCG Sector Only** – The study is confined to FMCG products, and findings may not apply to other product categories.
6. **Dynamic Consumer Behaviour** – Consumer preferences and brand perceptions change over time, so the results represent only the period during which the study was conducted.

Suggestions

1. **Strengthening Brand Awareness** – FMCG companies should invest more in promotional campaigns, advertisements, and social media marketing to create a strong and positive brand image.
2. **Quality Improvement** – Since consumers associate brand image with product quality, companies must maintain consistent quality standards to build long-term trust.
3. **Affordable Pricing Strategies** – FMCG firms should adopt competitive and value-for-money pricing strategies to attract price-sensitive customers in semi-urban and rural areas like Perambalur.
4. **Improving Packaging and Labeling** – Attractive packaging and clear labeling with essential details (expiry date, nutritional content, eco-friendly message) can enhance brand perception.
5. **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** – Companies should highlight their involvement in environmental protection, organic product promotion, and community welfare to strengthen their brand reputation.
6. **Customer Feedback System** – Establishing effective feedback mechanisms will help companies understand consumer expectations and improve brand loyalty.
7. **Retailer and Distributor Relationship** – Strong coordination with local retailers and distributors ensures better product availability, visibility, and promotion in the Perambalur market.
8. **Digital Engagement** – Companies can use mobile apps, WhatsApp marketing, and influencer collaborations to connect with young consumers and build a modern brand image.

Conclusion

The study reveals that **brand image plays a significant role in influencing consumer buying behaviour** in the FMCG sector, particularly in Perambalur district. Consumers tend to associate brand image with factors such as product quality, trust, packaging, price, and promotional activities. Among these, **quality and trustworthiness of the brand** emerge as the most critical determinants of purchase decisions.

It is evident that a **strong brand image creates positive perceptions**, which not only attract new customers but also help in retaining existing ones through loyalty. In Perambalur, where consumers are becoming more brand-conscious, companies must focus on maintaining consistency in quality, adopting affordable pricing strategies, and engaging with customers through effective communication channels.

The findings suggest that **brand image is not just an influencing factor but also a strategic tool** for FMCG companies to gain a competitive edge in semi-urban and rural markets. Therefore, firms should invest in building and sustaining a favorable brand image to achieve long-term growth and consumer loyalty.

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