Marketing Intelligence Practices on Fmcg Consumer Preferences and Buying Behaviour Pattern Using Social Network Analysis

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MARKETING INTELLIGENCE PRACTICES ON FMCG CONSUMER PREFERENCES AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR PATTERN USING SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine influence of past environmental attitudes, social and personal environmental norms, social influence, and green self-identity on consumers' buying behavior. The article aims to explore hybrid consumption behaviour as an emergent consumption pattern on fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) that may make conventional consumer stereotypes outdated. Purpose – The present study aims to investigate the impact of perceived quality, brand extension incongruity, involvement and perceived risk on consumer attitude towards brand extension across three product types, namely, FMCG, durable goods and service (FDS) sectors. More importantly, the study seeks to explore the importance of involvement profile comprising relevance, pleasure, sign-value, risk importance and risk probability and perceived risk facets (financial, psychological and performance) in acceptance of brand extension across FDS.

INTRODUCTION

A new phenomenon in consumer behaviour has potentially significant implications for the marketing of both consumer goods and services. Specifically, we address the emergence of the hybrid consumer, a consumer type that does not fit into any particular market segment defined in traditional marketing literature. The hybrid consumer buys cheaper generics and low-end brands on some purchase occasions, and then on other occasions trades up to premium, high-end brands and happily pays for them. This study focuses on customers' various shopping motives through Omni-channel adoption and level of attainment of shopping motives. Customers adopt different channels and integrate the evidence to reach the optimal shopping motives (Arumugama & Jayakrishnana, 2020). None of these consumers' behaviours fit pre-specified consumer segmentation criteria, such that would buy products and brands designed for any specific target group. Accordingly, we may need to rethink the process of segmentation. Moreover, goods can also be categorised based on their durability and risk associated with them such as FMCG and consumer durables. Consumers have little problem in understanding FMCG products, such as soap, toothpaste and shampoo, as these products are associated with day-to-day consumption. FMCG products are bought with a larger frequency, which allows consumers to develop expertise in their purchase. On the other hand, durable goods, such as TV, refrigerator and microwave ovens, are associated with huge investment and are purchased once in many years.

Consumers are not always fully competent or knowledgeable about these products. Hence, purchase decisions for durable products are made after much deliberation (feature comparison). Based on the above, we assume that consumer evaluation of brand extension would vary across FMCG, durable goods and services. The present study aims to empirically test the differences in consumer evaluation between brand extensions for FMCG, durables and services (henceforth jointly called FDS) (Hem et al., 2003). the sales force to engage in marketing intelligence activities. The major focal point of the present research is to recognize the effect of sports celebrity ads on the purchase intention of the buyers. Both high involvement products and low involvement products have included in the research (Arumugam, Thangaraja; Hameed, S. S; Madhavan, S, 2020) . Similarly, the impact of perceived risk on brand extension evaluation (Hem et al., 2003; Grønhaugh et al., 2002; Nijssen et al., 1995) is investigated in the present study by considering various dimensions of risk: financial, social, psychological, time and performance risk.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many factors, including fit as the central one, influence consumer evaluation of brand extensions: the quality of the parent brand, the fit between the parent and extension categories and the interaction of the two (Aaker and Keller, 1990); the perceived quality of the brand (Bottomley and Doyle, 1996; Nijssen and Hartman, 1994; Sunde and Brodie, 1993); product feature similarity and brand concept consistency (Park et al., 1991); brand affect and category similarity (Boush et al., 1987). According to Background Indian Pharmaceutical industry has significant growth in recent decades and faces hyper competition in the local and international market. Aim The primary objective of this research is to explore the medical representatives' perception towards motivational measures implemented by selected pharma companies, Chennai city (Arumugam, Subramani, Jan, & Goute, 2019).Studies adopting the schema incongruity theory (Meyers-Levy et al., 1994) to the context of brand extensions indicate the following factors that influence brand evaluation: positive mood essentially influences extensions that are considered as moderately similar (Barone et al., 2000); customer relationship and brand positioning affect the acceptance of brand extensions (Davis and Halligan, 2002); brand ownership status (Fu et al., 2009), brand category personality fit (Batra et al., 2010) and consumer knowledge affect brand extension evaluation (Hem and Iversen, 2009).

Perceived quality on fmcg products

Brand quality is used as a mechanism to judge the new extension (Aaker and Keller, 1990). Perceived quality is a judgment about the global excellence or superiority of a product offering (Zeithaml, 1988). Past research shows that consumers' evaluation of brand extension largely depends on the perceived quality judgment of the original brand (Sunde and Brodie, 1993; Bottomley and Doyle, 1996; Hem et al., 2003). Employee engagement has been extensively

researched lately as it delivers a positive business outcome. Due to the complex competition prevailing in the automotive industry, maintaining a high-level engagement among the employees is important for long term business performance. The level of employee engagement can be improved by identifying its drivers. (Arumugam, Vimala, Khuan, & Rasu, 2019).Highly reputed brands should be considered as great risk reliever and so encourage more positive evaluations than brands perceived as less reputed ones (Hem et al., 2003). This notion is true for all product types and particularly for services because less accessible information or tangible cues are available to consumers to evaluate the services as compared to goods (Murray, 1991). This scarcity increases reliance on service provider's image to evaluate new extensions (van Riel et al., 2001; van Riel and Ouwersloot, 2005). Further, services are intangible in nature, therefore more difficult to evaluate before purchase (Zeithaml, 1981). Consequently, consumers rely heavily on overall brand image of the service provider. Conversely, goods being high on search attributes, a consumer can collect more information about quality through visual inspection and thus the importance of inferences based on brand image may be reduced (Hem et al., 2003). Research also suggests that the importance of the effects of brand extensions is greater for experience goods than search goods (Smith and Park, 1992; van Riel et al., 2001). Vo¨lckner et al. (2010) provided evidence for parent brand quality as a dominant success driver compared to the perceived fit in the service context.

When consumers perceive a high "fit" between a brand and its extended product category, they transfer the positive affect associated with the brand to the new extension (Aaker and Keller, 1990; Bottomley and Holden, 2001; Broniarczyk and Alba, 1994; Kalamas et al., 2006; Park et al., 1991; Vo¨lckner and Sattler, 2006). Based on Mandler's (1982) theory, an alternative view suggests that extensions that are moderately incongruent with the parent brand are evaluated in a more favourable manner than congruent and extremely incongruent extensions (Jung and Tey, 2010; Maoz and Tybout, 2002; Meyers-Levy et al., 1994; Srivastava and Sharma, 2011a, b). Mandler (1982) contended that congruity (perfect match) between the product and the activated product-category schema does not require cognitive processing for resolution and easily assimilates into the existing cognitive structure, which results in a mild favourable response based on familiarity. Marketing intelligence is area continuing and interacting structure of people, equipment and procedures that, in combination, gather, sort, analyse and distribute pertinent, timely and accurate information for use by marketing decision makers to improve their marketing planning, implementation and control• Although many professionals do much of their own information gathering and analysis, there still needs to be a clear focal point of the Marketing Intelligence System responsibility (Arumugam, Thangaraja, 2016). By contrast, extreme incongruity (mismatch) requires much more cognitive elaboration for resolution and, therefore, either remains unresolved or can be resolved when people make deep changes in their existing cognitive structure. Unresolved extreme incongruity generates the feeling of frustration, helplessness and negative affect and hence may lead to low evaluation (Mandler, 1982).

Consumers' involvement on fmcg products

The present study adopts the multidimensional approach of Laurent and Kapferer (1985) and defines consumer involvement in terms of relevance, pleasure, sign-value, risk importance and risk probability. Laurent and Kapferer (1985) suggested that this approach provides the full picture of the relationship between the consumer and the product and the involvement dimensions are very important in determining consumers' attitude towards brand extension (Srivastava and Sharma, 2011a, b). This is because conditions associated with involvement generally include the perceived importance of negative consequences, the hedonic value of the object and the expression of one's own personality or self, which are very critical to a purchase decision (Kapferer and Laurent, 1985a; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). A survey method of data collection was adopted to collect primary data from small scale manufacturing organisations in a regional manufacturing cluster. The two-step structural equation modelling approach is followed to examine the relationship between critical success factors of total quality management implementation and business performance (Arumugam, Thangaraja; Jan, Akbar; Subramani, A. K, 2019). Research suggests that involvement in the extension category affects the intention to buy a brand extension in a positive way (Hansen and Hem, 2004). Consumers with high involvement are more venturesome and more willing to try new brands than consumers with low involvement. Moreover, the level of involvement enables consumers to pick up news on additional brands. Thus, we argue that the potential consumers who are involved in and who have a perceived importance for actual product are more likely to buy the extended brand. In the present context, if the extended product is relevant for consumers and brings more pleasure for them, they are more likely to try new brand extensions. Research suggests that the differential nature of services can trigger a high level of involvement before purchase compared to acquisition of goods (Gabbott and Hogg, 1994; Bateson and Hoffman, 1999). Laroche et al. (2004) also indicate that the three main characteristics of services, human resources participation in the service production, consumer participation and the associated intangibility, produce a higher level of involvement compared to goods. Consumers' involvement in the extension category has a positive effect on attitude towards brand extension. The effect would be greater for services than for consumer durables and FMCG.

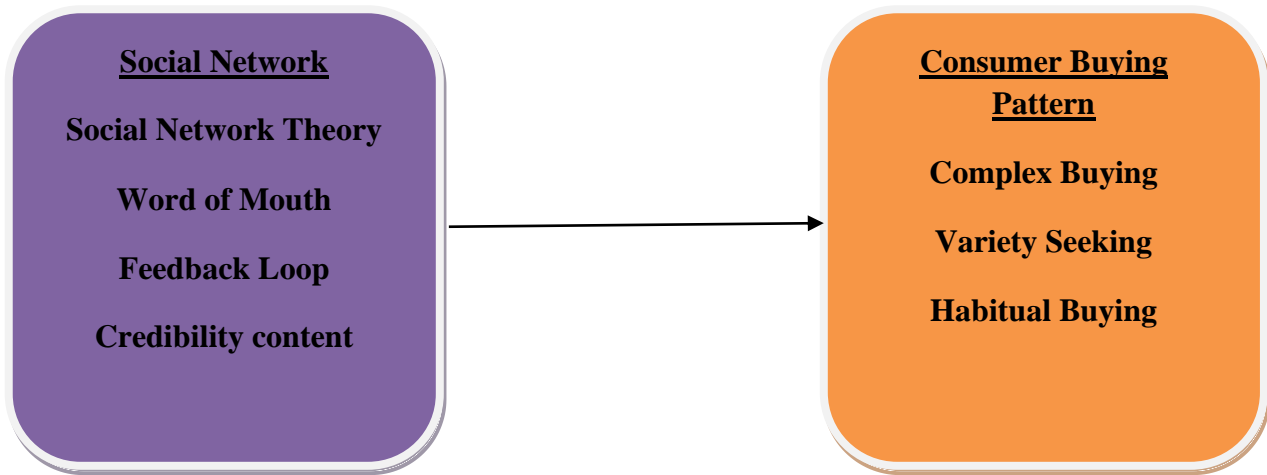### Consumers' Perceived risk on fmcg products

The concept of perceived risk is defined in terms of uncertainty and adverse consequences of buying a product (or service) (Dowling and Staelin, 1994). Brand extension strategies offer new alternatives to consumers but also influence their perception of risk. A recognized brand is considered as a means of coping with perceived risk (Cox, 1967; Roselius, 1973). Past research suggests a relationship between perceived risk associated with extension category and consumer evaluation of brand extension (Hem et al., 2003). (Thangaraja, 2015) Neuromarketing focuses on relationship between consumer's subconscious mind and the behavior. Those are the factors that decide the brand preference. FMCG sector in India is highly brand oriented, so application of neuro marketing in FMCG sector would help the marketing experts to make better use of their brand decisions.However, very few studies have investigated different types of risks such as

physical, time, performance, financial, psychological and social risk for brand extension strategies (DelVecchio and Smith, 2005). Existing research suggests that different types of risk exist (Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972; Havlena and DeSarbo, 1991; Murray and Schlacter, 1990), and the importance of each varies across product categories (Kaplan et al., 1974). Thus, we assume that consumers' evaluation of brand extension should be sensitive to the degree and type of risk associated with the extension category. Zeithaml (1981) suggests that the level of perceived risk would be higher for consumers purchasing services as opposed to physical goods because services are intangible, non-standardized and usually sold without guarantees or warranties. (Arumugam, Thangaraja, 2016), Distribution channels play a pivotal role in marketing by performing a number of vital distribution functions. Firms rely mostly on their marketing channels to generate customer satisfaction and to achieve differentiation over competition. Thus, the amount and quality of comprehensible information for consumers is diminished and the level of perceived risk is anticipated to be increased (Cox, 1967; Murray and Schlacter, 1990). Because of intangibility and high experience qualities, services are selected on the basis of less pre-purchase information which may involve high financial, performance and psychological risks compared to goods (Murray and Schlacter, 1990). Based on this, we assume that consumers will perceive high risk for service brand extensions and there should be more reliance on parent brand (risk reliever).

Role of social network

Internet, and generally the web world, has become the most powerful and effective tool for consumers, societies, businesses and corporations with accessible information, social networks and improved communication (Kucuk and Krishnamurthy, 2007; Shabbir et al., 2016). The social network is defined as a binding tool which binds millions of individuals from all across the world on one platform. Few well-known examples are Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Youtube, LinkedIn, Instagram, blogs and much more for communicating and exchanging information (Kozinets, 2002; Ellison et al., 2007; Sin et al., 2012). (Arumugam, Thangaraja, 2016)Marketing intelligence will help the banks as well as the customers to use the technological innovations adopted by banks in an effective manner there by attracting customers. The study conclude that both the public and private sector banks compete each other in terms of attracting and retaining customers by providing comfort and luxury services such as mobile banking, online banking etc.Golden (2011) describes the social media sites as dynamic tools that facilitate online relationships. They are convenient for consumers in terms of the low cost or free marketing, their user-friendly nature and direct and easy contact (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). (Arumugam, Thangaraja, 2016)The impact of competition in the business environment has compelled many organizations to turn around and start scanning the environment for information, so as to have competitive edge over other similar organization within the industry. This advantage is being exploited by entrepreneurs in deciding which channel to choose to promote and which is the most cost effective one.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Social Network

Social Network Theory

Word of Mouth

Feedback Loop

Credibility content

→

Consumer Buying Pattern

Complex Buying

Variety Seeking

Habitual Buying

CONCLUSION

The Internet, and generally the web world, has become the most powerful and effective tool for consumers, societies, businesses and corporations with accessible information, social networks and improved communication (Kucuk and Krishnamurthy, 2007; Shabbir et al., 2016). The aim of this research was to investigate the impact of social network on consumers' buying decision behavior, whether positive or negative. The awareness of social media sites among the consumer is growing quite rapidly. (Arumugam, Thangaraja, 2014) Applications and systems of supermarket towards marketing intelligence that becomes vital and many organizations recent times concentrate highly on this way. People tend to surf for every little information they acquire which became a reason to investigate how the social media influence consumers' buying decision behavior. Quality perception of the parent brand, involvement with extension category, perceived risk and incongruity of extension with the parent brand are influencing factors in forming attitude towards brand extensions. These factors had significant differential effects on consumer evaluation of brand extensions across FDS product types. These results are at variance with the findings of van Riel et al. (2001) and Hem et al. (2003), which reveal perceived quality as the most stable variable across goods and services. On the contrary, our results suggest that consumers use quality of the parent brand as a more important cue to evaluate service brand extension than FMCG and durable brand extensions. With few search attributes, and their inherent characteristics (intangibility and experiential nature), making decisions about services is

much more complex than goods. In that case, the consumer has to rely on the provider's image to make decisions. Present results support this view and add further information on evaluation of brand extensions across FMCG, durables and services.

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