

CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS WITH REGARD TO SELECT FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BRANDED TOOTHPASTE PRODUCTS (EMPIRICAL STUDY FROM MUMBAI CITY)

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ABSTRACT

Environment and Health consciousness is getting reflected through consumer's enhanced interest in Toothpaste. Our preferences are part of what makes us who we are and the brands we seek will reflect our preferences. The competition among the brands is fierce. In every product category, consumers have more choices, more information and higher expectations than ever before. Jockeying for position in a consumer's preference set requires an aggressive strategy and constant vigilance. The marketer's principal objective is typically to build a relationship with buyers, rather than merely to make a single sale. The marketing strategies like product, price, promotion, place, process, people and physical evidence play a significant role in assuring a success and sizable profits for the companies. On the other hand, customers face several problems such as delay in product supplies, unfair and discriminated prices, and lack of information about expired and obsolete products, deceptive advertisements, raising customer complaints, unsociable approach of sales force, reduced sales after service, etc., and these problems on the one hand, and increasing customer's dissatisfaction on the other.

Keywords: *Environment and Health, Product Supplies, Sales Force, Customer's Dissatisfaction.*

Introduction

Consumers across the globe are becoming increasingly concerned about nutritious, healthy, strong, brightness and freshness as their quality of Tooth Care Products. Ideally, the essence of that relationship consists of a strong bond between the buyer and the brand. The choice of an individual strategy or combination depends mainly on the nature of the branded product or service. The success of the strategy depends heavily on the marketer's understanding of the preference building and bonding process.

Need of the Study

In the shifting scenario of socio-economic environment across the world, all the economic activity like venture, production, marketing and international trade have been exposed to open ruthless competition. A similar change have been experiencing in the preference, attitude, lifestyles, likings, perceptions and in overall personality of customers. With these changes, marketing of goods and services has become the most critical task before the managers and executives of corporate. Endurance of profitability of any business firm depends upon their volume of sales. Higher volume of sales in term depends upon different type of marketing strategies.

India being the world's 2nd leading country by population and with an economic growth speed of 8.5% and the utmost population between the age group of 25 to 40 years, backed by growth in earnings. With hectic lifestyle and substantial increase in the share of disposable income, there is a need to examine marketing mix strategy adopted by companies to identify, segregate and reach its target consumer for realizing their objectives.

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As Mumbai being the financial capital of India and has a mix of the sample population ranging from Segment D Class to Segment Class A+ public. With a place bombarded with a variety of advertising, marketing and promotional strategy by dissimilar companies to reach its target. Against this background, an authentic need is felt to carry out an empirical study to analyze and understand consumer behavior with regard to Fast Moving Consumer Goods and therefore, a detailed study relating to select FMCG companies profile, marketing strategies and consumer behavior in respect to FMCG is carried out in Mumbai city of Maharashtra state.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the Marketing Strategies of select FMCG Companies.
- To assess the Consumer Preference, Top of Mind Brand and Level of Awareness in response to Branded Toothpaste.
- To study the Consumer Purchase Frequency, Substitute Brands, Purchase Point and Source of Information with respect to Branded Toothpaste.

Hypothesis

- There exists relationship between the Toothpaste top of mind with Toothpaste purchase cycle.
- There exists a relationship between Toothpaste top of mind and Toothpaste purchase point.
- There exists a relationship between the Toothpaste top of mind with the price importance.

Methodology

- **Selection of Parameters:** In order to assess and examine the consumer behavior in response to Fast Moving Consumer Goods of Select FMCG, appropriate variables like consumer preference, product awareness, top of mind brand, purchase frequency, purchase point, substitute brand, sources of information and other appropriate variables are chosen and the same are included in the questionnaire.
- **Selection of Customer Respondents:** Mumbai city is taken as a sample unit for the proposed study. It is proposed to choose a sample size of five hundred customer respondents for the study. While choosing the customers, a multi-stage sampling tool is employed. At the first stage, the Mumbai city is divided into four centers viz:-North Mumbai, South Mumbai, West Mumbai and East Mumbai. At the second stage, customers are divided into house-wives, working women, professionals, youth and children. And at the third stage, it is proposed to select randomly total 125 respondents from each center comprising of 25 respondents from each category.
- **Sources of Data:** The primary information with regard to customer opinions relating to distinguished parameters is to be elicited through primary survey of select respondents. Viz: - Housewives, working women's, professionals, children and youths. The necessary secondary data relating to FMCG companies with regard to their history, present status, estimated growth, product portfolio, etc., of the respective companies; are collected from annual reports, reference books and from the websites of different companies.
- **Data Collection Instruments:** In order to collect primary information from the select respondents, a structured questionnaire is used. Questionnaire contains Ranking, Close end, Likert scale, and Ordinal questions.
- **Customer Contact Method:** The users information from the respondents is gathered through an in depth personal interview method.
- **Data Analytical Tool:** In order to analyze and understand customer respondents' impressions and opinions, simple percentages, averages and chi-square test are used and results are presented with the help of tables, diagrams, charts and graphs.

Scope of the Study

The study has covered consumer behavior with regard to FMCG products of select companies confined to Mumbai city. The findings of the study are of immense help to FMCG companies in particular and FMCG companies in general to understand about their products position in the consumer market and accordingly bring necessary changes for better performance.

Limitations of the Study

Findings of the study represent opinions of the customers residing only in Mumbai city and they are from the well organized markets. However, the FMCG consumers are spread and scattered in every nook and corner of the country and therefore, these findings do have the limitations of generalization. The researcher has frequently experienced with the customers about their unwillingness to spare time with the researcher.

Review of Literature

Parmar and Gupta (2007) examined the impact of demographic variables on consumers' preference for the cosmetics and found that age, occupation and family income have significant influence on the selection of cosmetics. Further, it was also found that brand loyalty does not have a significant influence on the buying behavior of consumers' when brand of their choice is not available.

Ashokan C. and Hariharan. G (2008) attempted to study the perception and profile of retail consumers – to understand the behaviour of consumers, visiting the new generation related malls like Spencer and Big Bazaar in a small town in palakkad of kerala state.

Bagla, Ashish and Gupta, Vivek (2008) have said that Promotion of brands in rural places requires the extraordinary measures. Due to the social and economic backward state the personal selling efforts have a challenging role to play in this regard. The Indian reputed Industries have the advantages, over multinational companies in this regard. The sturdy Indian brands have strong brand equity, consumer demand-pull and capable and dedicated dealer network which have been created over a long period. The rural market has a hold strong country shops, which influences the sale of diverse products in rural market. The companies are frustrating to trigger growth in rural areas. Companies are finding the fact that rural people are better in position with disposable income. The low interest rate of loan facility has increased the affordability of buying the high priced products by the rural population. Marketer need to understand the price compassion of a consumer in a rural area.

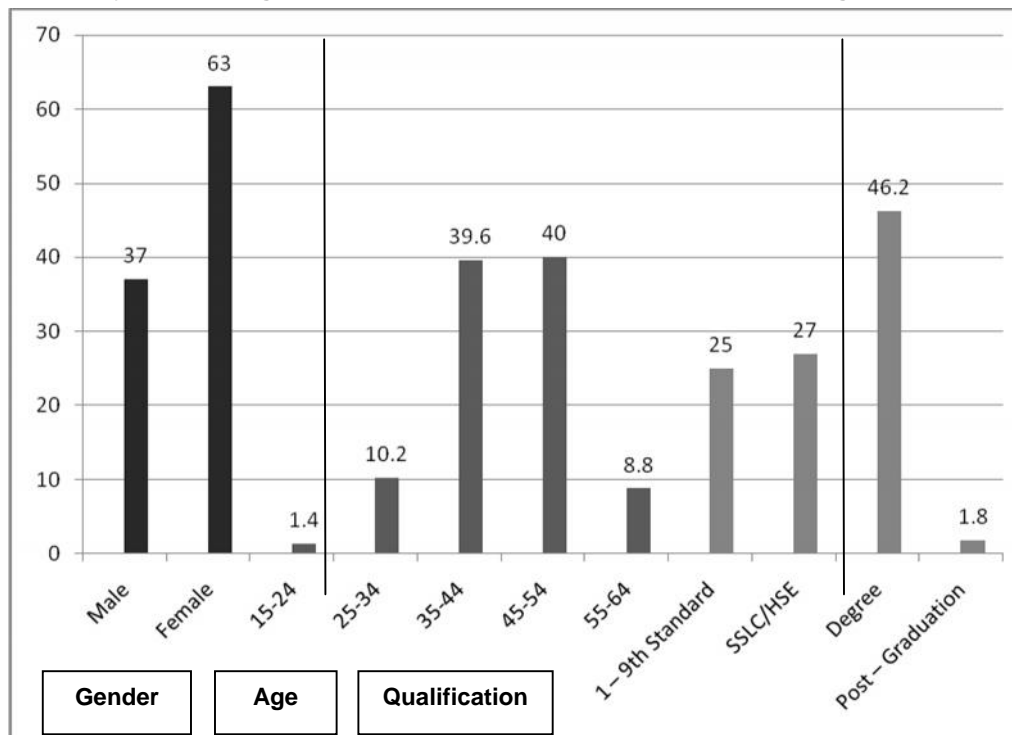
Bhandari, Bhupesh., Kar, Sayantani and Iyer, Byravee (2010) have tried to observe that, what young men and women want through across sectors to sell their products to the youth. In the networked world, communication should be bold, it has acted as a catalyst, fun and cheeky, and it must talk to people rather than talk behind them. In youth appeal companies now a day's track, first and foremost, the youth application of any celebrity before finalizing brand ambassador.

Data Analysis

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Analysis of Demographic Profile of Respondents based on Gender, Age and Qualification

S. No.	Variable	No. of Respondents	%
I	Gender		
	Male	185	37
	Female	315	63
	Total	500	100
II	Age		
	15-24	7	1.40
	25-34	51	10.20
	35-44	198	39.60
	45-54	200	40.00
	55-64	44	8.80
	Total	500	100
III	Qualification		
	1 – 9 th Standard	125	25.00
	SSLC/HSE	135	27.00
	Degree	231	46.20
	Post – Graduation	9	1.80
	Total	500	100

Chart 1: Analysis of Demographic Profile of Respondents based on Gender, Age, and Qualification

In the above table no.1 shows that 37% of male and 63% female respondents. It shows that more females are making purchases as compared to males. According to majority of the respondents are in the age group of 45-54 (40%) years and 35-44 (39.60%) both of this age group alone contains 79.60% of the total respondents. It shows that most of the decisions are influenced by 35-54 years of age.

S.No.3 shows that most of the respondents are graduates (46.20%), and up to Matriculation (42%) these two accounts for 88.20% of cumulative percent.

Table 2: Analysis of Demographic Profile of Respondents based on Income and Occupation

S. No.	Variable	No. of Respondents	%	
I	Income			
	Below Rs.5,000/-	31	6.20	
	5,001 – 20,000/-	188	37.60	
	20,001 – 35,000/-	173	34.60	
	35,001 – 50,000/-	66	13.20	
	50,001 & Above	42	8.40	
	Total	500	100	
II	Occupation			
	Unskilled Worker	6	1.20	
	Skilled Worker	70	14.00	
	Petty Trader	83	16.60	
	Shop Owner	89	17.80	
	Businessman	63	12.60	
	Self-Employed Professional	65	13.00	
	Clerical/Salesman	10	2.00	
	Supervisory Level	45	9.00	
	Junior Executive/Officer	32	6.40	
	Middle/Senior Executive/Manager	37	7.40	
		Total	500	100

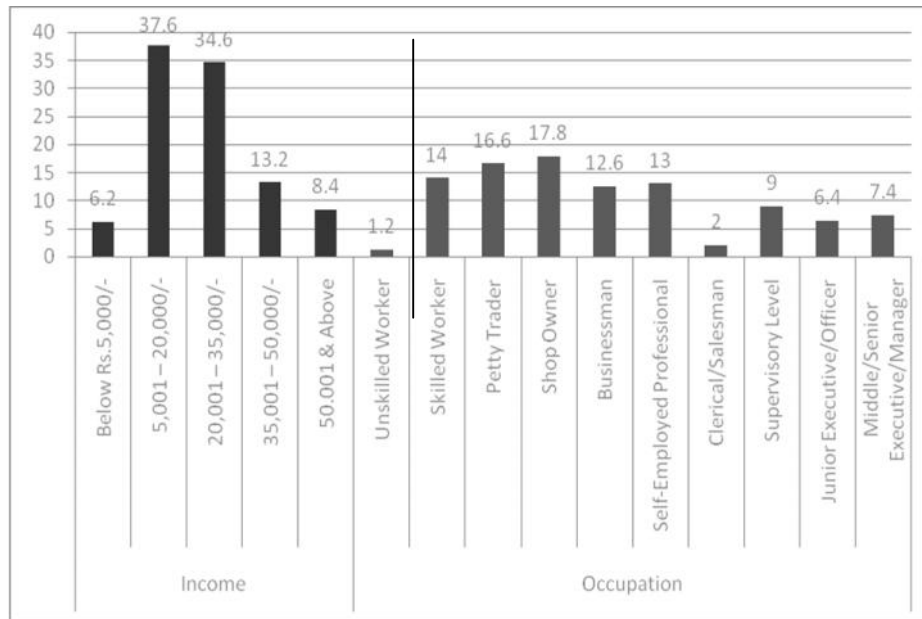
Chart 2 : Analysis of Demographic Profile of Respondents based on Income and Occupation

Table No.2 explains the study of 500 respondents across Mumbai city on their socio-economical condition. The members are housewife, bachelors who look after the primary grocery shopping for the house. The same has been topped by the respondents who are having disposable income of Rs.5,000/- to Rs.35,000/- (37.60% + 34.60%) that is 72.20%.

Table No.2 explains that, majority of the respondents (16.60% + 17.80%) that is 34.40% are petty trader and shop owners, and businessman and self employed professionals i.e., 25.60% followed by skilled worker and self employed professionals with 14% and 13% respectively.

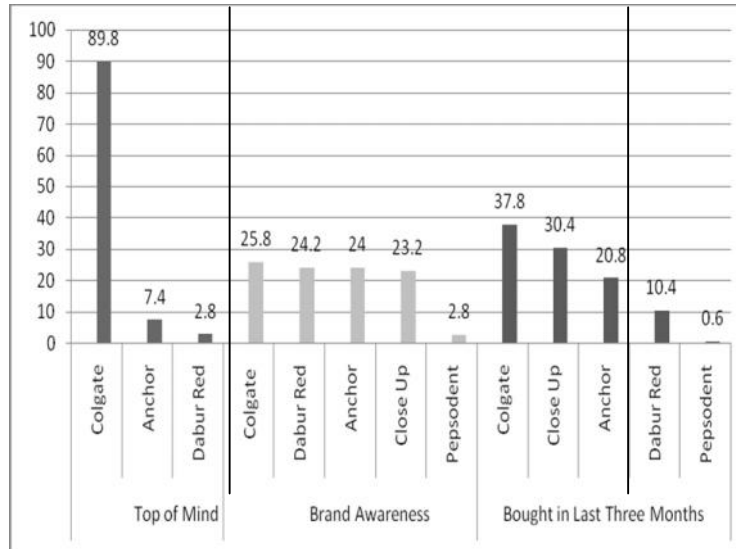
Consumer Behaviour in Response to Toothpaste

Table 3: Analysis of Brand Preference, Awareness and Brand purchased in the past three months with regard to select Toothpaste

S. No.	Variable	No. of Respondents	%
I	Top of Mind		
1.	Colgate	449	89.80
2.	Anchor	37	7.40
3.	Dabur Red	14	2.80
	Total	500	100
II	Brand Awareness		
1.	Colgate	129	25.80
2.	Dabur Red	121	24.20
3.	Anchor	120	24.00
4.	Close Up	116	23.20
5.	Pepsodent	14	2.80
	Total	500	100
III	Bought in Last Three Months		
1.	Colgate	189	37.80
2.	Close Up	152	30.40
3.	Anchor	104	20.80
4.	Dabur Red	52	10.40
5.	Pepsodent	3	00.60
	Total	500	100

Source: Primary Survey

Chart 3: Analysis of Brand Preference, Awareness and Brand purchased in the past three months with regard to select Toothpaste



Source: Primary Survey

Tooth paste segment is also one of the major Fast Moving Consumer Goods and an everyday item of every consumer. The Brand preference, brand awareness and brand purchased in the past three months of the consumer respondents are displayed in table-3. From the table, it is clearly evident that of the total three toothpastes, Colgate is proved and preferred toothpaste in excess of 89% of the whole consumer respondents followed by Anchor (7.40%) and Dabur red (2.80%). This obviously conveys that Colgate toothpaste is used by the great part of the people and this brand also remains on the top of mind of the major junk of consumers. This maximum preference of consumer respondents to this brand could be attributed to whitening the teeth, mouth freshness, smell, anti-bacterial, anti-cavity, taste, foam generating ability, popularity, vegetarian and herbal, history of the brand, suitability of the price with the quantity offered and ultimately consumer satisfaction.

As far as brand awareness of these brands is concerned, analysis reveals interesting results that of all the above brands, though Colgate tops as more than 25% of the sample respondents are familiar with this brand yet no significant variation in the brand awareness is seen. Besides this, the percentage of consumers who have preferred and used Colgate is the highest one. This shows that there is correlation between brand awareness and brand use.

With regard to purchases of diverse brands in the last three months is concerned, the table exhibits that of all the five brands, Colgate is found to have been purchased by majority of the consumer respondents followed by Close-up, Anchor, Dabur red and Pepsodent. It is further noted that in case of all the brands, the consumers who have purchased all the brands except Pepsodent which is the least preferred and there is no significant distinction in the percentage of consumers who have purchased different brands in the last three months. By and large analysis indicates that Colgate tooth paste brand has made a sizable influence on the consumers mind followed by other brands.

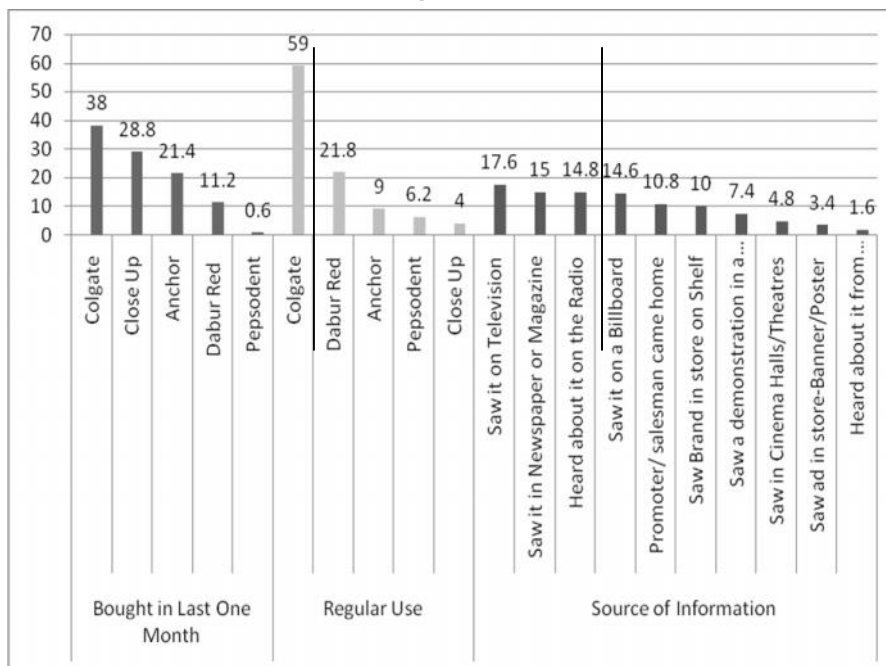
Table 4: Analysis of Brand purchased in the past One month, Regular Use and Source of Information with regard to select Toothpaste

S. No.	Variable	No. of Respondents	%
I	Bought in Last One Month		
1.	Colgate	190	38.00
2.	Close Up	144	28.80
3.	Anchor	107	21.40
4.	Dabur Red	56	11.20
5.	Pepsodent	3	00.60
	Total	500	100

II		Regular Use	
1.	Colgate	295	59.00
2.	Dabur Red	109	21.80
3.	Anchor	45	9.00
4.	Pepsodent	31	6.20
5.	Close Up	20	4.00
		Total	500
III		Source of Information	
1.	Saw it on Television	88	17.60
2.	Saw it in Newspaper or Magazine	75	15.00
3.	Heard about it on the Radio	74	14.80
4.	Saw it on a Billboard	73	14.60
5.	Promoter/ salesman came home	54	10.80
6.	Saw Brand in store on Shelf	50	10.00
7.	Saw a demonstration in a shopping mall/market	37	7.40
8.	Saw in Cinema Halls/Theatres	24	4.80
9.	Saw ad in store-Banner/Poster	17	3.40
10.	Heard about it from Friend/Relative	8	1.60
		Total	500

Source: Primary Survey

Chart 4: Analysis of Brand purchased in the past One month, Regular Use and Source of Information with regard to select Toothpaste



Source: Primary Survey

Analysis of Buying Behavior of Consumers reveals some interesting aspects while judging the pattern of toothpaste brands bought in last one month. Going through table 4 head I COLGATE among the toothpastes tops the chart with an acceptance of 38% on account of established brand image, blessed with certain unique features including plaque removing capacity, teeth whitening ability, cavity repair contents and unique taste. In addition to this, Colgate covers different niche markets depending upon taste, preferences and habits of individuals and thereby has already captured the market with a pool of offerings including Colgate total, Colgate max-fresh, Colgate strong and Colgate active salt etc., the basket of differentiated products is an excellent example of generating more product lines so to

penetrate various segments of the market. On second position with pride comes in CLOSE- UP with the score of 28.80%, the credit for that goes to presence of micro whiteners, germs removing ability, mouth wash effect and fluoride contents for stronger teeth. Third in row comes the brand ANCHOR with an acceptance level of 21.40%. The acceptability of the product is on account of features including power of eliminating bacteria, removing cavities, and presence of calcium and fluoride. As visible in table 4 head I DABUR RED comes 4th in the ranking, but even then is a strong player owing to the traditional perceptions associated with the product (recalling the image of dabur danth manjan). The commendable features include fighting capacity against plaque, gingivitis, and bad breath. The product possesses an extra edge over others as of its authentic Ayurvedic image. Finally, we have PEPSODENT enjoying solid brand image and the credit for which goes to heavy acceptance of the brand among kids in addition to general domains of acceptability (adults). As of the very reason the product occupies 5th position with an acceptance level of 00.60%. The unique features include presence of sodium and phosphate, gum attacking ability and germ check formulae. In spite of the aforementioned facts, the product has least acceptance which may not be of quality factors.

It is interesting to find that when it comes to regular usage lot of deviations are visible in respect of buying behavior of consumers on regular basis vis-à-vis consumption in last one month. The factors attributable to such deviation (hierarchy of the brands used) are on account of the inbuilt pricing component, the promotional strategies (Radio advertising, Television advertising, Print Media advertising, Billboard positioning etc.) and the final mind setup of the potential buyers just before cracking the deal. In addition to this, offers such as buy one – get one free, get more for the same price, free complimentary gifts, bundle offers definitely act as catalyst towards generating sales of the brand that otherwise, could have not bought owing to the current association of the consumers with their favorite brand.

As per table 4 head III print media plays a critical role in convincing the brand awareness among consumers where as word of mouth remains least impressive source of information. All other sources of information including shelf display, poster display, billboard positioning, mall advertising land between the two extremes.

Testing of Hypothesis

S. No.	Hypothesis	Calculated Value	df	P Value
1	There exists relationship between the Toothpaste top of mind with Toothpaste purchase cycle.	43.314	6	.000 Accepted
2	There exists a relationship between Toothpaste top of mind and Toothpaste purchase point.	15.563	4	.004 Accepted
3	There exists a relationship between the Toothpaste top of mind with the price importance.	47.332	6	.000 Accepted

In case of first, second and third hypothesis, the calculated P-value is less than (<0.05) therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between Toothpaste top of mind with Toothpaste purchase cycle, purchase point and with the price importance.

Analysis of Toothpaste

- It is clearly evident that of the total three toothpastes, Colgate is proved and preferred toothpaste as more than 89% of the total consumer respondents preferred Colgate followed by Anchor (7.40%) and Dabur red (2.80%). As far as brand awareness of these brands are concerned, analysis reveals an interesting results that of all the above brands, though Colgate tops as more than 25% of the sample respondents are familiar with this brand yet no significant variation in the brand awareness is seen. With regard to the purchases of diverse brands in the last three months is concerned, the study exhibits that of all the five brands, Colgate is found to have been purchased by majority of the consumer respondents followed by Close-up, Anchor, Dabur red and Pepsodent. The study indicates that Colgate tooth paste has made a sizable influence on the consumers mind followed by other brands.
- Analysis of Buying Behavior of Consumers reveals some interesting aspects while judging the pattern of toothpaste brands - COLGATE among the toothpastes tops the chart with an acceptance of 38% on account of an established brand image, blessed with certain unique features including plaque removing capacity, teeth whitening ability, cavity repair contents and unique taste. On second position with pride comes is CLOSE-Up with the score of 28.80%, the credit for that goes to presence of micro whiteners, germs removing ability mouth wash effect and fluoride contents for stronger teeth.

- The study further reveals that, print media plays a critical role in convincingly the brand awareness among the consumers where as word of mouth remains least impressive source of information. All other sources of information including shelf display, poster display, billboard positioning, mall advertising remain the same.

Based on the findings of the study, the following **suggestions** are made to the FMCG Companies for the improvement in their respective marketing strategies.

- It is found that CPIL is currently focusing much on kids, adults and age old segment, whereas HUL is only into youth segment and hence, it is suggested to innovate new products to cater to the needs of the kid segment and for DIL too as there is a scope for developing new products banking on different traits for toothpaste to capture the potential market.
- The study reveals that toothpaste brands of CPIL are more popular in urban as well as rural markets. Since real India lives in rural areas and it is potential market for all types of toothpaste brands. It is advised to the HUL and DIL companies to develop a customer driven marketing mix with more emphasis on product mix to capture rural market too. Rural sales promotional activities should be strengthened by HUL and urban market by DIL to take the advantage of both urban and rural markets.

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