

IMPACT OF CONSUMER CENTRIC MARKETING MIX ELEMENTS ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR; AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION IN CONTEXT OF FMCG INDUSTRY OF PAKISTAN

Muhammad Ali

PhD Scholar-Superior University, Lahore

Contact: +92-300-4201334, Email: aliatwork247@gmail.com

Muhammad Ilyas

Assistant Professor, Business School-Superior University, Lahore

Contact: +92-042-35530361-8, Email: m.ilyas@superior.edu.pk

Chaudhary Abdul Rehman

Professor, Business School-Superior University, Lahore

Contact: +92-042-35530361-8, Email: ceo@superior.edu.pk

Abstract

The pivotal role of Consumers in modern marketing sphere has emerged the need for marketers to become customer focused rather product or producer focused. This transition has indeed revitalized the theory of marketing mix elements but with a modified form from 4P's to 4 C's paradigm. The ever increasing role of customers in the marketing philosophy has signified the need for shifting from being producer centric to being consumer centric. Keeping in view this need for an innovative marketing model, the aim behind this research is to discern the effects of 4C's on users purchasing behavior. Grounded on positivism paradigm the cross sectional technique was adopted for the collection of primary data but the use of quantitative research method. A Sample of 300 FMCG customers was selected using multiple sampling techniques to accommodate geographic dispersion as well as demographic diversity of the customers of FMCG. Three clusters were drawn from Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad. Then the data was gathered using close ended questionnaires. The Correlation and regression were applied for the testing of hypotheses. The results showed that the more companies are consumer centric, the more consumers behave in favor of the company's products. It is found that consumer solution, consumer convenience, consumer communication have positive and strong connection with the customer buying behavior. Whereas consumer cost have negative relationship with consumer buying behavior.

Keywords: Consumer Centric Marketing Mix Elements, Customer Solution, Customer Cost, Convenience, Communication, Consumer Buying Behavior

Introduction:

In this era of stiff competition, every organization is striving for higher market share. In this concern, customers and consumers have become central to the sphere of each activity performed by the businesses. Marketing evolution from production function to value based has vitalized the role of consumers by reversing the marketing process from producer centric to consumer centric. This shift in marketing has changed not only the focal point of marketing but also it has transformed the whole business activities ranging from business philosophies to profit earnings. Besides this shift in marketing, another critical change has arisen as a challenge for today's marketers and that is savvy and demanding customers. The

revolution in information technology has enabled consumers make decision about their purchases through cyber network even before visiting the store. This stance leads to the argument that in this era of marketing, the marketer's needs to focus on consumers' needs, wants and preferences based demand before deciding about product parity, pricing strategy, channel, or promotion of the product. In this regard the producers should get out of the so called traditional 4P's (product, price, place, promotion) and should indulge in 4C's (Customer solution, Cost, convenience, and Communication) to create a brand image and affect the consumer buying behavior. This shift of power from marketers to the consumer will stimulate the significance and pervasiveness of marketing as Lodish (2002) evidenced that 60% of business failures are caused by the ineffective marketing decisions. This snapshot has signified the need to study the role of 4C's in brand image and thus in consumer buying behavior. This paradigm shift has gained significance since the introduction of marketing era yet it is least researched and less focused by the researchers till date. Very few researches can be found with their focus on consumer centric marketing mix elements i.e. The 4 C's. This study is significant in this regard that it is one of the very few studies that have determined the impact of 4C's on the buying behavior of consumers along with the mediating effect of brand images.

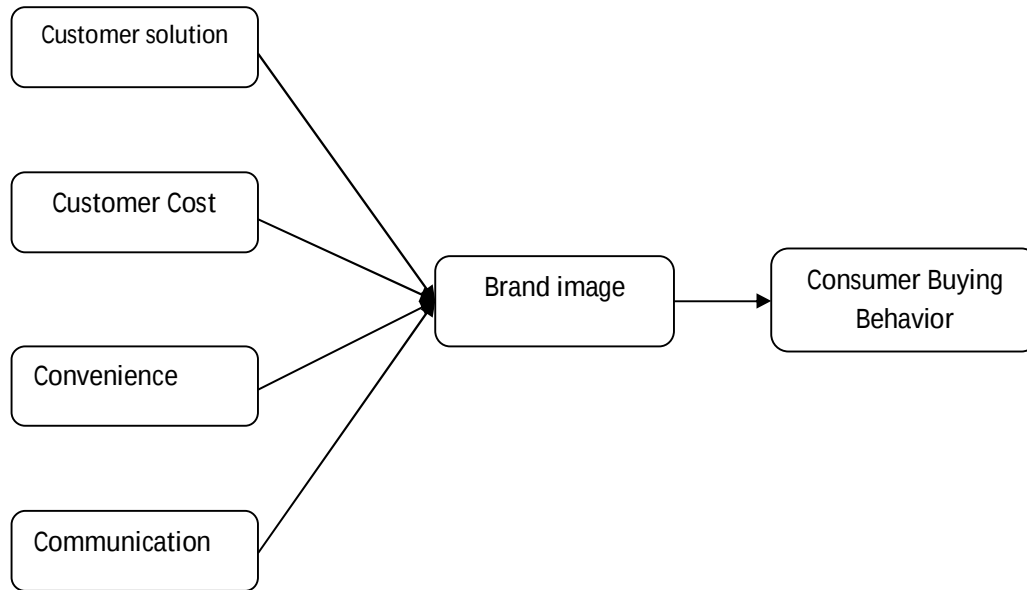
FMCG manufacturing concern in Pakistan mainly includes manufacturing, distribution and the advertising of the consumer packaged goods (merchandises which are used up at regular intervals). Pharmaceuticals, personal care, food, beverages, paper, stationery, plastic merchandises, and domestic goods etc. are included in the concerns of this sector.

Some major activities of the FMCG industry are purchasing, vending, advertising, financing etc. it is also involved in production, supply chain and general management operations. FMCG industry offers an extensive variety of consumables, therefore cash circulated against its produces is much higher. Moreover the rate of investment in the FMCG industry has also been increasing because of the growing competition amongst FMCG industrialists.

The pivotal role of Consumers in modern marketing sphere has emerged the need for marketers to become customer focused rather product or producer focused. This transition has indeed revitalized the theory of marketing mix elements but with a modified form from 4P's to 4 C's paradigm. The ever increasing role of customers in the marketing philosophy of all products and services, irrespective of their nature, scope and significance has signified the need for shifting from being producer centric to being consumer centric. On the other hand the revolutionary changes in technology has made the customers more savvy, critical and selective in their buying decisions resulting in tough competition among competitors through customer oriented product differentiation called brand image. Customers now a day's, have shifted their philosophy of buying from needs based buying to wants and value based buying resulting in dire need for learning consumer buying behavior in context of being consumer centric and brand images to gain higher market share and sustain larger consumer base.

Keeping in view this need for an innovative marketing model, the rationale behind the current study is to discern the influence of 4C's on the purchasing behavior of consumers along with mediating effect of brand image. In the proposed study "Consumer Centric Marketing Mix Elements (4C's)" are independent variables that are defined as the consumer centric marketing mix elements including customer value, cost, convenience and communication. Consumer buying behavior" is dependent variable which is defined as "the process through which consumers seek for, choose, buy, consume and dispose of goods in order to fulfill their necessities and wants (Solomon, 2011) whereas brand image is taken as mediating variable which is defined as that level where consumer perceives that the brand is different from that of all competing brands in terms of its quality, style, design, packaging, and/or image etc.

Theoretical Framework



Literature Review

The need to understand consumer-buying behavior was recognized in the marketing writings fifty years ago (Clover, 1950). Continually then, numerous researchers from various fields of research like marketing, psychology and economics have depicted curiosity in studying this complex and thought-provoking behavior in the customary commerce perspective. Such researchers have contributed significantly towards better understanding of concept of consumer behavior. Review of such literature shows that studies on consumer behavior in the traditional background can be classified in three common trends i.e. meaning, description, and extension. Firstly, researchers were mainly concerned regarding the meaning of phenomenon. Secondly, different models were suggested for the explanation of consumer buying behavior. Finally, attention has been given to the extension of consumer buying behavior study by finding different factors which intensify or make decline in consumer buying behavior. Belch and Belch describe consumer behavior as those procedures and actions in which individuals engaged for searching, consuming, choosing, buying, assessing, and disposing of services and goods in order to fulfill their necessities and wants. (Belch & Belch, 2007) described that customers commence both the internal (memorial) and the external search.

One of the features of consumer buying practice is disclosure towards stimulus. Thus purchasing is a responsive behavior, in the way that customer depicts certain reaction when uncovered to stimulus in buying situation. One other important feature is the instantaneous nature of behavior. When disclosed to stimulus, customer senses an irresistible impulse of buying concerned products (Rook, 1987). In such situation, emotional force motivate consumers, such spontaneous behavior is considered extremely affective. Finally, as such behavior is responsive and exceedingly affective, buyer has little intellectual control over purchasing decision. The customer does not act intentionally, but instead reacts towards prevailing stimulus, such that cognitive progressions are retained to minimum.

(Dittmar, Beattie, & Friese, 1955) suggested a model of customer purchasing behavior to address constraints of former model depiction from societal constructionist viewpoint and mindset of substantial possessions. The chief supposition of this model was that customers no longer purchase produces only for their practical benefits, instead also for symbolic meanings. Goods are disbursed for symbolic meanings in the way that they are sign of wealth, societal standing, and the social position of people. (Puri, 1966) suggested two-factor cost and benefit accessibility design that addresses the constraints of former models. Model draws from investigation on self-control, impulsiveness, and time-inconsistent priorities and constructs on hedonic agenda, which depicts consumers sense an irresistible desire of buying produces when they are exposed to it.

According to the notion of time inconsistent priorities, when buyer is disclosed towards stimulus, advantages of immediate satisfaction overshadow future considerations e.g. monetary issues. The basic principle of the model is that the impulsivity rest on the level to which circumstances put emphasis on negative cost of the Impulsiveness, profits of buying the produce or both, and tendency of a person to be spontaneous. In circumstances when advantages overshadow the costs, temptation to surrender to manipulated urge is higher and is convincing force of spontaneity. On the other hand, when cost of spontaneity is much significant than the advantages, consumer resists the impulse, which then reduces the possibility of any impulsive action.

Grounded on the results of previous research, (Koufaris, 2002) suggested a theoretic model of customer buying behavior, which draws from study in the information systems, psychology and marketing. The dependent factors investigated were intention to return and unplanned purchases. The independent factors were challenges, product involvement, and value-added search mechanisms. The writer also studied impact of various mediating factors, namely concentration, shopping enjoyment, and perceived control. He experimented the association perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness and intension to return, however all the hypotheses were not supported. It was found that product involvement impact both concentration and shopping enjoyment. Both the perceived web expertise and the challenges were also found to effect concentration and shopping enjoyment, however perceived control was not effected by both. And the value-added search mechanisms which were used were found to only effect shopping enjoyment.

Marketing Mix evolution and significance in Marketing

Single P i.e. price in microeconomic theory gave origin to the marketing mix (Chong, 2003). (McCarthy, 1964) proposed marketing mix known as 4P's for bringing marketing plans into practices (Bennett, 1997). Marketing mix is the conceptual agenda and is not the scientific theory. The tools are capable of formulating both the long-term tactics and the short-term plans (Palmer, 2004). (Borden, 1965) claims as the first one using this term marketing mix, and he was advised by (Culliton, 1948) defined a corporate executive as the mixer of ingredients. An executive is that mixer of ingredients who occasionally adopt a recipe, but at times he adapt the recipe to material immediately accessible, however sometimes tries ingredients which were never tried before (Culliton, 1948). The initial marketing idea in the similar way to concept of marketing mix, grounded on the notion of action parameters proposed in 1930s by (Stackelberg, 1939). After then, (Rasmussen, 1955) formulated parameter theory. He stated that the four determining factors of sales and competition are quality, advertising, price and service. (Mickwitz, 1959) applied this theory to Product Life Cycle Concept.

Borden's marketing mix had the following 12 elements i.e. fact finding and analysis, promotions, physical handling, advertising, packaging, channels of distribution, display,

servicing, branding, pricing, personal selling, and product planning. (Frey, 1961) proposed that the marketing factors must be divided in two categories i.e. the offering which includes brand, product, service, price and packaging, and the tools and methods which involves publicity, advertising, distribution channels, sales promotion and personal selling. Whereas (Lazer & Kelly, 1962) and (Lazer, Culley, & Staudt, 1973) proposed three components of the marketing mix i.e. services and goods mix, communication mix and distribution mix. (McCarthy, 1964) polished (Borden, 1965) notion more and describe marketing mix as the mixture of all elements at the marketing manager's hold to satisfy target market. He reorganized Borden's 12 components into 4Ps which are place, price, product and promotion at the marketing manager's grip in order to satisfy aimed market.

Particularly in 1980s onwards, many researchers offers new "P" in marketing mix. Judd (1987) introduces at the fifth "P" i.e. people. Booms and Bitner (1980) further added 3 more Ps to original 4Ps i.e. are physical evidence, process and participants in order to apply the concept of marketing mix to service. Kotler (1986) also added political influence and public view formation to Ps conception. Baungartner (1991) proposed the idea of 15 Ps. McGrath (1986) offers the adding of 3Ps which are process management, physical facilities and personnel. (Vignali & Davies, 1994) suggested S i.e. service to be added to marketing mix. (Goldsmith, 1999) proposed 8Ps namely: place, product, participants, price, physical evidence, promotion, personalization and process.

(Möller, 2006) presents an up-to-date image of present standing in debate around Mix as marketing paradigm and leading marketing managing tool by revising theoretical visions from five marketing managing sub-disciplines (customer marketing, association marketing, retail marketing, services marketing, and the industrial marketing) and an evolving marketing (E-Commerce) (Table 1-6). Many researchers and authors revised in such domains show thoughtful doubts as to part of Mix as marketing managing instrument in its original shape, suggesting alternate methodologies, which is adding fresh considerations to original Mix or substituting it with alternate frameworks altogether.

The main causes being marketing mix as powerful thought are it makes the marketing appear easy to be handled, permits the parting of marketing from the other activities of firm and allocation of marketing responsibilities to experts, and – the elements of marketing mix are capable of changing company's competitive position (Grönroos, 1994). Marketing mix agenda possesses two significant benefits, firstly it enables others to realize that marketing executive's work is, in the huge share, a matter to tradeoff off advantages of the one's competitive powers in marketing mix against advantages of others. Secondly marketing mix discloses other dimensions of marketing manager's work. All supervisors apportion existing funds amongst numerous demands, and marketing managers then allocate these accessible assets amongst several competitive strategies of marketing mix. It helps to implant marketing philosophy in organization (Low and Tan, 1995).

On the other hand, (Möller, 2006) emphasized that limitations of 4Ps of marketing mix agenda, as pillars of customary marketing organization have periodically become target of strong criticism. Most criticizers even go to the level of rejecting 4Ps, suggesting alternative frameworks.

Brand image

Due to a changing economic settings and fluctuating customer values, the communication tactics should be re-examined for the fulfillment of new buyer needs. Iconic brands are vanished from the background, and others are evolving as new frontrunners. It is assumed that those brands which fails to lead towards distinction, actually risk elimination. The brands build up consumer's personality image or how they intend to be observed. Use of brand

generates sensation of congruence with the personality image. It also serves as mode of projecting such image to other individuals. Gardner and Levy are accredited (Levy, 1958) with developing "brand image" in an expressive form in classic 1955 article of theirs. Arguing previous study for being too artificial in its concentration on conventional buying reasons, they proposed that now it important to search and identify much more enduring drives for buying. They gave the notion that merchandises had psychological and social nature along with physical one. And such attitudes, feelings and ideas which customers had regarding the brand as well as their image of the brand were very important and essential for buying decision.

However Gardner and Levy were first to apprehend essence of the brand image in literature, their writing regarding underlying notion was not exclusively new. It is evident that vendors of nineteenth century were progressively concerned with the brand's gestalt from advanced developments in the advertising, marketing and branding skills which took place in that era (Murphy, 1987). Whereas James Duesenberry in 1949 had witnessed that the action of consumption as representational behavior was perhaps more important for the individuals than the practical benefits of goods.

A review of literature work following Gardner and Levy's paper discloses that significant differences are present amongst writers on the five separate but interrelated features of the brand image. These are names that are ascribed to the phenomenon, formal definitions which are being offered, components of the brand image, instruments used for its measurement and viewpoints on the formulation, origin, creation and manipulability of the brand image.

Because of its multidimensional characteristics the brand image became an important notion for the marketing managers. It is evident from those findings which approve that the image perceptions guide buying decision (Dolich, 1969), that product is normally bought or avoided not on basis of its qualities but due to the impact of its symbol on consumer's status and esteem (Levy, 1969), and also that products are probably consumed and valued more if there exists congruity between product's image and ideal or real self-image of consumer (Sirgy, 1985)

For clarification, it must be noted that authors in literature on this topic intended to use product and brand interchangeably. However in marketing it is acknowledged that these two concepts are significantly different, literature on imagery have indistinct this difference by using both concepts in perspective of distinguishing products of one competitor from another. These two concepts are used as synonyms here (unless otherwise stated).

Methodology

The ever increasing role of customers in the marketing philosophy has signified the need for shifting from being producer centric to being consumer centric. Keeping in view this need for an innovative marketing model, the purpose of this research is to determine the impact of 4C's on Consumer buying behavior. Based on positivism paradigm, cross sectional design was used to collect the primary data objectively using quantitative Research approach. A Sample of 300 FMCG customers was selected using multiple sampling techniques to accommodate geographic dispersion as well as demographic diversity of the customers of FMCG. Three clusters were drawn from Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad. Then data was collected through close ended questionnaires. Correlation and regression statistics were applied to test the hypotheses.

Analysis and Results
Correlation

	CS	CC	Con	Com	BI	6
Consumer buying behavior	0.853*	0.745*	0.622*	0.814*	0.808*	0.860*
	*	*	*	*	*	*

Simple Regression

Model	(Constant)	Adj. R ²	F	Sig	t – value	Sig
Consumer Solution	.003	.273	163.995	.000	12.806	.000
Consumer Cost	.029	.537	127.064	.000	23.202	.000
Convenience	.053	.443	120.325	.000	19.508	.000
Communication	.035	.679	138.339	.000	16.192	.000
Dependent variable: Brand Image						

Interpretation

Simple regression is performed to determine the causal relationship of Brand Image (outcome) with Advertising (predictor), Personal Selling (predictor), Sales Promotion (predictor), Public Relation (predictor), and Direct Marketing (predictor) one by one. The significance values ($p < 0.05$) show that all the predictors; Advertising Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relation, Direct Marketing, have significant relationship with the outcome variable Brand Image. The significance value of F test ($P < 0.05$) for all predictors show that all the models are good fit. The beta coefficients are presented in table. The adjusted R² value for the predictors show that Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relation, and Direct Marketing defines 27%, .5%, .4%, .7%, and .4% variance respectively in outcome variable, Brand Image. This indicates that advertisement has major role in predicting Brand Image.

Model	(Constant)	Adj. R ²	F	Sig	B	t – value	Sig
Brand image	.008	.434	133.908	.000	.477	11.572	.000
Dependent variable: Consumer Buying Behavior							

Interpretation

Simple regression is performed to determine the causal relationship of Consumer Buying Behavior (outcome) with Brand Awareness (predictor) and Brand Image (predictor) one by one. The significance values ($p < 0.05$) show that both predictors; Brand Awareness and Brand Image, have significant relationship with the outcome variable Consumer Buying Behavior. The significance value of F test ($P < 0.05$) for all predictors show that all the models are good fit. The beta coefficients are presented in table. The adjusted R² value for the predictors show that Brand Awareness and Brand Image defines 43% and 23% variance respectively in outcome variable, Consumer Buying Behavior. This indicates that Brand Awareness has major role in predicting Consumer Buying Behavior.

Multiple Regressions

General Model			
Variables	B	t-value	Significance
(Constant)	.043	.906	.365
Consumer Solution	5.240	2.100	.000
Consumer Cost	2.236	1.990	.003
Convenience	3.009	.059	.028
Communication	.532	5.501	.000
Adjusted R Square	.731		
F	15.996		
Significance	.000		
N= 435			
Dependent Variable: Brand Image			

Interpretation:

Simultaneously multiple regression is performed to determine the predictors of Brand Awareness. The significance values show that all the predictors Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relation, Direct Marketing have significant relationship with the outcome variable Brand Awareness. The significance value of F test ($F = 15.996$, $P < 0.05$) shows that the model is good fit. The beta coefficients are presented in table. The adjusted R^2 value is .731. This indicates that 73% of the variance in Brand Awareness is defined by the model which shows that variation in Brand Awareness are explained by the variation of five independent variables Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relation, Direct Marketing.

Regression equation thus derived is given below;

$$\text{Brand Awareness} = .043 + 5.240 (\text{Advertising}) + 2.236 (\text{Personal Selling}) + 3.009 (\text{Sales Promotion}) + .532 (\text{Public Relation}) + 1.301 (\text{Direct Marketing}) + E$$

General Model			
Variables	B	t-value	Significance
(Constant)	.007	.160	.873
Consumer Solution	.641	5.879	.000
Consumer Cost	.530	4.759	.000
Convenience	.619	4.589	.000
Communication	.144	1.520	.029
Brand Image	.068	.678	.035
Adjusted R Square	.631		
F	27.517		
Significance	.000		
N= 435			
Dependent Variable: Consumer Buying Behavior			

Interpretation:

Simultaneously multiple regression is performed to determine the predictors of Consumer Buying Behavior. The significance values show that all the predictors Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relation, Direct Marketing, Brand Awareness, Brand Image have significant relationship with the outcome variable Consumer Buying Behavior. The significance value of F test ($F= 27.517$, $P< 0.05$) shows that the model is good fit. The beta coefficients are presented in table. The adjusted R^2 value is .631. This indicates that 63% of the variance in Consumer Buying Behavior is defined by the model which shows that variation in Consumer Buying Behavior are explained by the variation of seven independent variables Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, Public Relation, Direct Marketing, Brand Awareness, Brand Image.

Regression equation thus derived is given below;

$$\text{CBB} = .007 + .641(\text{CS}) + .530(\text{CC}) + .619(\text{CON}) + .144(\text{COM}) + .068(\text{BI})$$

Discussion

This study was aimed to explore the scope and implications of consumer centric Marketing Mix elements and to determine the relative impact of all elements of 4C's of marketing mix on the customers buying behavior having brand image as mediator. Besides seeking through all possible secondary sources of literature, least research was found on consumer centric marketing mix named 4 C's model. Since the introduction of marketing mix by Neil Borden in his paper named "The Concept of the Marketing Mix", it has adapted varied elements in varied contexts suggested by number of researchers but this term itself has been very popular since then. The first set of elements was suggested by E. Jerome McCarthy named as 4P's classification model that later became the recognition of marketing in the world. This 4P's classified the whole marketing efforts made by marketers on behalf of producers in four major elements including the product, price, placement and promotion. No doubt till date this model has been the most suitable function classification of marketing yet it lacks in encompassing the diversity that the modern world has adapted to cater the consumer behaviors.

It is conventional to use the 4 P's model for the fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs) and it has been found suffice to justify marketing efforts till the emergence of value based marketing. With the increased competition at local, national, international as well as at global level, the need satisfaction of the customers has not been merely a minor task, rather the competition is transferred to the level of value given by the competing firms.

The results show that consumer solution has positive and strong relationship with brand image, means the more a market offering prove a better solution to the problem of the consumer the better image it will have in the mind of the consumer. Though the studies have proven that the product in 4P's model do have strong impact on brand image yet now consumers are more concerned with the solution to their problem rather the set of a shape, features and style. Customers now days prefer the products of the companies that are offering more and more services to address the limitations of mobility, payments, and physical displacement.

On the other hand, inflationary trends round the globe have made the customer selective in buying and preferring the products that offer more benefits in lesser prices. Price is now considered as cost that a customer has to bear, rather as an investment to gain a specific benefit. As the results of the study reveal that consumer cost has strong association with brand image. Very high priced brands are getting their market share declined and are

switching to the low priced brands to reduce the cost of customers. Just like producers and manufacturers, consumers are also keen to become cost efficient by saving the amounts as much as possible.

Besides this, making a product available at a certain point of sale is left no more beneficial for the producers. Besides making it available at some accessible points, the philosophy of providing conveniences to the customer needs to be applied. Customer, now a days, doesn't consider it convenience that a product is available in accessible points but customer seeks convenience in locating it within store, conveniences in its packaging to handle and carry it, convenience in payments through modern technologies, convenience in transporting it, convenience in unwrapping it, conveniences in using or consuming it and even convenience in disposing off or replacing it for another updated version of the solution.

In addition to this, the concept of promotion is getting obsolete and the concept of communication with the customer is getting raise in the philosophy of marketing. The customer has become so savvy about marketing strategies and tactics and has learnt that the cost of promotion is paid from his pocket. This feeling has lead him against mass marketing campaigns and now customer is interested in getting communication through relatively free mediums including social media, and internet based direct marketing. Word of mouth has become the most popular medium for spreading message as it is closer to the philosophy of communication rather than the concept of promotion. Although the two are flip sides of the same coin yet the logic behind the two approaches is totally different. The promotion approach being producer centric exaggerates the simple things in a way that the expectations of the customers get too high to be satisfied.

Communication is the process of transferring a message to the targeted in a way that no difference of perception is created and is understood in the same meanings.

It is also shown from results that the rate at which mediating variable is effecting in multiple regression is greater than the rate at which independent variable is influencing dependent variable i.e. consumer buying behavior. This reveals the significant mediating effect of brand image in the association between the promotion mix elements and the consumer buying behavior.

Conclusion

Based on all the analysis, results and discussions vide supra, it can easily be concluded that consumer centric marketing model also known as 4C's model is the most appropriate alternative for the long lived producer centric marketing mix model also known as 4P's model. In addition to this the 4C's model is more appropriate and valid in its nature with the philosophies of marketing and consumer behavior psychologies. Its consumer centric nature is more aligned with the prevailing philosophy of value based marketing. The 4C's becomes more authentic approach since marketing emphasizes on satisfying consumer contentment. Philip Kotler, known as marketing guru, states that the marketing should concentrate more sharply on consumers. He persuasively said that vendor's model of the 4Ps i.e. price, product, promotion and place should be the 4 Cs of consumer's mix as advocated by Robert Lauterborn (1990) in discussion with Mazur (1991-2).

In the consumer-centered marketing mix approach produces become commodities - the goods for users, price come to be the cost to client and involves energy cost and time, place for client is the channel and campaign becomes the communication. It can be argued that it is simply playing on words but actually it depicts the considerable modification in the marketing management tactics, thinking and its beliefs. It is not the words which matters but the finest way of proposing value to consumers.

However, excitingly the client contracts which are nowadays flourishing also serves as an example of a paradigm move towards consumer contentment as priority.

In actual terms 4 c's instead of 4 P's means considering wants of consumers rather than focusing on selling products, not only considering profit but also keeping in mind willingness of consumers in bearing cost, focusing on ease of purchasing from customers end instead of distribution of products from vendors end and way of communication demanded by consumers must be kept in mind while designing promotion strategies. Such marketing perspective well suited to the CRM mantra i.e. right message to right person in right way at right time.

Limitations

The study was conducted in a developing country, with number of limitations including financials, physicals and intellectual. Besides this the major limitation occurred while contacting with the population with least research awareness considering information sharing as a threat to their personal, social or professional lives. These limitations will lead to certain delimitations restraining the generalizability of the study at different levels that are as follows

- The lesser amount of availability of literature on the topic will delimitate the study for having very rich literature support yet ensuring the review of all available literature on the topic.
- The study needed to encompass both in-depth as well as generalized views of the customers as the theory was to be tested in a culturally diverse setting as compare to the prior studies thus providing rationale for a pragmatic investigation yet having expertise only in quantitative procedures, it was delimited only to quantitative investigation.
- Customers being proposed population for the study are very large in numbers require a very large sample size to be investigated to ensure the external validity of the results thus derived from the study yet the time constraints as well as other resource limitations restricted to delimitate the study for a sample of 460 customers only that might restrict the generalizability of the results to larger population of customers of the FMCG sector in specific and the customers of the other industries in general
- There is huge diversity in the buying behaviors in metropolitan cities, towns, and other rural areas. Taking only stores as research sites might limit the results to be generalized to other geographic location.

Future Research Scopes

Research dimensions in future can be recognized easily on the basis of limitations stated above, this study has unlocked new perspectives and scopes for exploration in the field of marketing as well as branding which will lead towards larger number of researches in future. However, in the future, a person free of the limitation discussed above can proceed to the researches taking larger sample size in the research. A field research with other mediating factors can reveal better and comprehensive results with greater understanding and the accuracy. In addition to this, researchers can conduct the comparative studies and Meta-analysis study on the marketing mix models.

In addition to this, a study with the approach of integrated marketing mix elements encompassing all the possible elements can be conducted to draw a holistic picture and thus proposing an integrated marketing mix framework. Using the mix method research tactic (grounded on pragmatic paradigm) can also disclose the concealed facts regarding the actuality of associations between the notions narrated in this research.

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