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Impact of Marketing Strategies on Consumer Behavior: A Study of Bhopal City

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Abstract

In this competitive era of cut-throat competition among companies, marketing strategies play an important role in making a good consumer base and capturing market share. The marketing strategies affect the buying decision making process of a consumer in a big way and the companies with good marketing strategies easily get the customers attention. The present study has been undertaken to study the impact of marketing strategies on consumer behavior. This study is envisioned to provide inputs to the companies to take care of their marketing strategies and have a hawk-eye on consumer's behavioral patterns so that the growth of the company is improved with an increase in sales and revenue. 60 samples were taken from Bhopal city of Madhya Pradesh to study buying intentions and buying behaviour of consumers. The study is descriptive and exploratory. The theoretical information is collected with the help of various secondary sources. Primary data is used for the analysis of the effects of marketing strategies on overall consumer behavior.

Keywords: Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Buying behaviour, Advertisement, Bhopal

Introduction

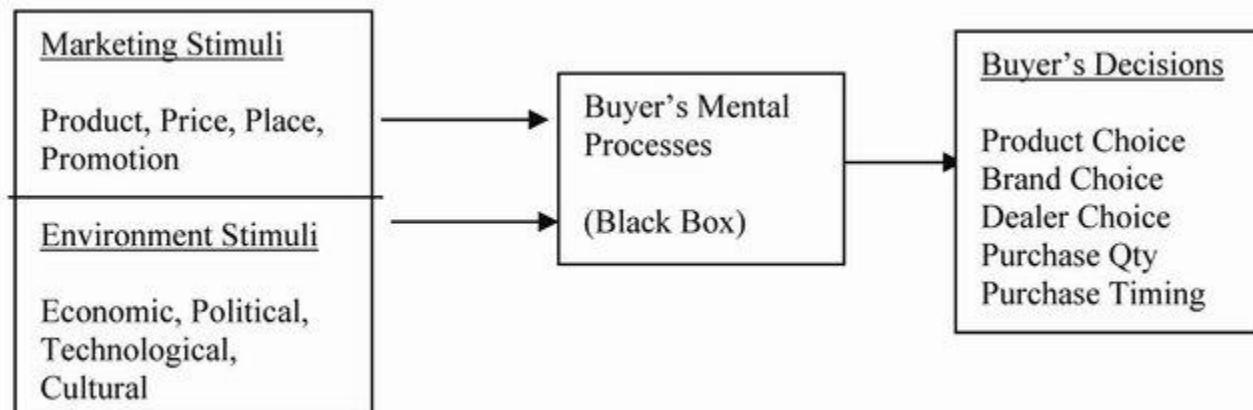
In this competitive era, every company wants to increase their sales and outperform their peers. To boost their sales, these companies are continuously devising new marketing strategies to market their product. A good marketing strategy includes the combination of product, price, distribution and promotion which suits the particular group of consumers. These marketing strategies include heavy advertisement, Sales promotion, public relations, direct selling, personal selling, events and experiences etc. The fundamental goal of a good marketing strategy is to gain a competitive advantage over competitors (Baker, 2008). Numerous marketing strategies are used by different companies in different industries. The most effective method of marketing is advertising. There is a bombing of advertising all over the places as it is easier to reach a large audience and it's effective and efficient. Due to the truck loads of information, a general consumer is often left confused to judge which company he should rely on. It is very difficult for him to choose the best one from a large range of products. In this situation, the consumer has to look for other factors as well to decide for the best. For taking the right decision, the consumer has to analyze the markets by himself. Keeping this in mind, the researchers have tried to look into the number of factors that a consumer assess before making the buying decision. The perception of consumers towards all components of marketing strategies has been looked upon to study what are factors which affect buying behaviour.

Every company must conduct a marketing research survey before launching their products in the market. Market research must answer certain questions through consumer behaviour analysis. According to (Valentin, 2019) A consumer behavior analysis should reveal the following information to the company

- What consumer think and feel about various alternative brands, products etc;
- What influences consumers to choose among various alternatives;
- Consumers behavior while researching and shopping;
- How consumers' surrounding influences their behavior.

After a thorough analysis of consumer behaviour, it becomes possible for a company to design a marketing strategy that could be effective in the sales growth of the company's product. Consumer behaviour is a dynamic process and it is multi-disciplinary too, as it involves the study of commerce, management, economics, psychology, sociology etc. the consumer behaviour is built mainly on human behaviour and is often influenced by different factors. Those factors which are responsible for consumers buying behaviour have been referred to as stimuli. The marketers use these stimuli to lure consumers to buy their product. Among various studies about the marketing stimuli and their effects on consumer behaviour, the buyers black-box model has been the cornerstone and is one of the best models to study the mind of the consumer and how to get a positive response from them. The buyers black-box model briefly states that individual consumers are exposed to certain marketing stimuli such as product, price, place, and promotion; consumers are also exposed

to other stimuli in the marketing environment that includes economic, technological, political and cultural aspects (Kanagal, 2016). Figure 1 given below depicts the black box model



Source: The Buyers Black-Box Model, ((Kotler, 1997), (Kanagal, 2016)

Review of literature

(Bakator, Ivin, Vukovi, & Petrovi, 2016) studied the important factors of consumer behaviour along with important marketing strategies which must be developed by the companies to lure customers. They argued that strong market research is necessary before entering any new market as it allows the companies to know their customers, competitor and the overall market in a better way. The company must also develop its product according to the expectations of the consumer. Even if the product is of low cost and high quality but it is not upto the expectation and real need of the consumer, the product will not be accepted by the customer. (Indumathi & Dawood, 2016) studied the effects of marketing mix on consumer buying behaviour in an organic product. They identified various factors under product, price, and place and promotion factors that impact consumer buying behavior. They found that people were interested in buying organic products even at high prices as they believe that organic products are healthy.

(Chaubey & Pant, 2017) studied the effects of marketing strategies on the consumers buying behaviour and consumers intentions towards green products. They found that the kind of customers who had the understanding of environmental consequences of their consumption showed more environmentally concerned buying behaviour. Their analysis showed that the companies needed to promote their green product regularly to get recurring purchases.

(Pandian, 2020) studied the marketing strategies adopted by FMCG companies to attract customers to make purchase decisions. The study revealed that multi-branding and promotional strategies have an impact in luring the customers to buy the produuct. They also identified the most important factors which influence the consumer buying behaviour which included physical factors, psychological factors, visibility factors and internal factors. It was also revealed in the study that some store promotion strategies like in-store television disply and radio, discounts, gifts, prizes also affect the cconsumer buying behaviour.

Objective of the Research

The objective of the study is to study the effects of marketing strategies on the consumer's behaviors pattern.

Research methodology

- **Area of Research Study:**

- The area of research study is Bhopal City of Madhya Pradesh.

- **Sample size:**

- 60 respondents

- **Sampling design:**

- Convenience sampling

- **Research instrument:**

- The research instrument used for collecting data is a structured questionnaire:

- **Type of questions:**

- Closed ended questions: 14
- Open ended questions: 5

Data Collection

This is an empirical study and it is based on primary data. The primary data is collected with the help of a well thought-out structured questionnaire from the consumers of Bhopal city. Also, for the purpose of review of the literature and getting a better understanding of the topic, secondary data is used. The secondary data is retrieved from various sources like books, journal articles, magazines, industry reports, working papers etc.

Analysis and Interpretation

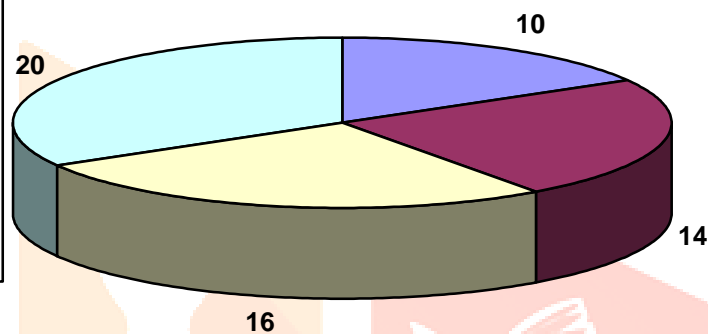
The questionnaire contained two types of questions viz. open ended questions and closed ended questions. The analysis is presented as follows

Part – 1 Close Ended Questions: -**1. Which type of goods do you prefer –**

- a) Branded b) Local c) Latest d) Anyone

Options	Responses	%age
A	50	83
B	04	07
C	06	10
D	0	0

- ☒ Surely enter in the scheme
- ☒ Check its quality & results for that
- ☐ Try it atleast once
- ☐ Not at all enter into it

**Interpretation: -**

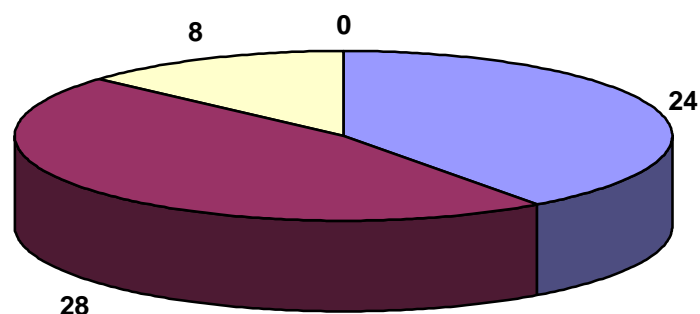
As the majority of respondents choosed the option **Branded**, thus we can say that generally people like Branded products in comparison to products of local and unfamiliar companies.

2. Are you attracted towards packaging of a product –

- a) Yes b) No c) To some extent d) Can't say

Options	Responses	%age
A	24	40
B	28	47
C	08	13
D	0	0

- ☒ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ To some extent
- ☐ Can't say



Interpretation: -

As the majority of respondents Chooosed the option **No**, thus we can say that generally people are not attracted towards packaging but there is a minor difference between those who said that Yes they are attracted towards the packaging.

3. Which aspect of the product you prefer while purchasing –

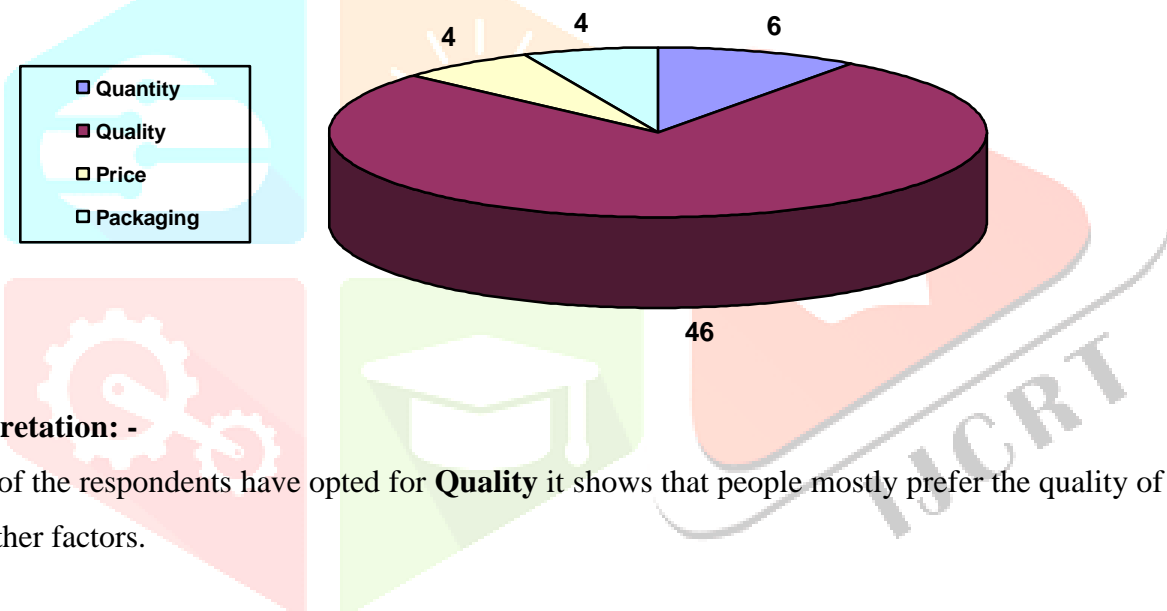
a) Quantity

b) Quality

c) Price

d) Packaging

Options	Responses	%age
A	06	10
B	46	77
C	04	07
D	04	06

**Interpretation: -**

As all of the respondents have opted for **Quality** it shows that people mostly prefer the quality of the products over other factors.

4. Are you affected by the advertisements of the products –

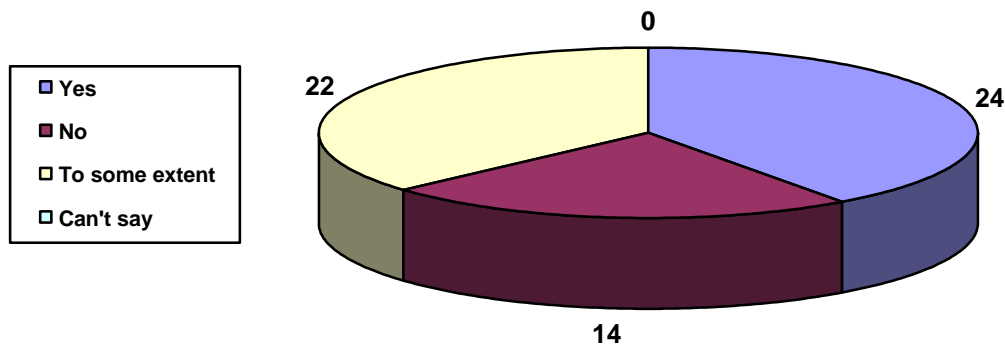
a) Yes

b) No

c) To some extent

d) Can't say

Options	Responses	%age
A	24	40
B	14	23
C	22	37
D	0	0



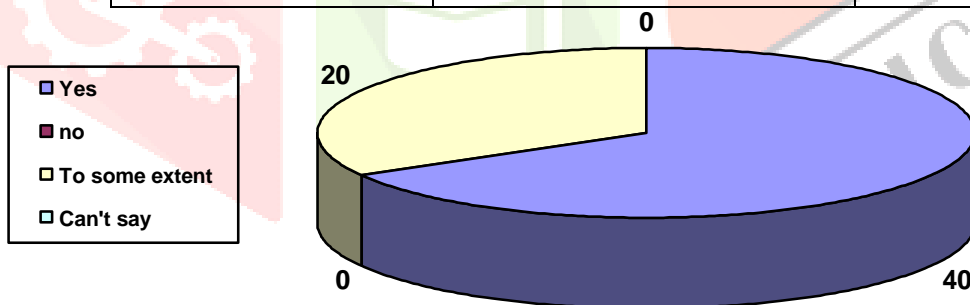
Interpretation:-

As the majority of people have opted **Yes** and many of them have opted **To some extent** it shows that people mostly are attracted towards the product by the effect of advertisements of the products. It shows that advertisements have a high impact on buying decision of the consumer.

5. Do you think advertisements increases the demand for that product–

a) Yes b) No c) To some extent d) Can't say

Options	Responses	% age
A	40	67
B	0	0
C	20	33
D	0	0



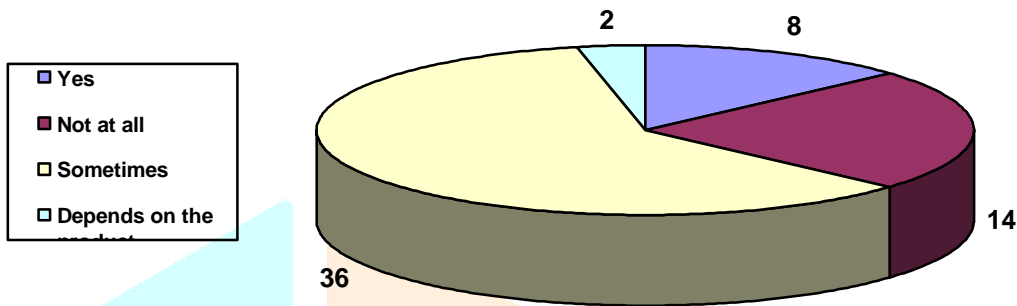
Interpretation: -

As majority of people have opted **Yes** and many of them have opted **To some extent** it shows that generally, people think that Yes advertisements help increase the demand for that product. It is clear that advertisements pull the customers towards the company's products.

6. Can discount schemes can change your product preference –

- a) Yes b) Not at all c) Sometimes d) Depends on the product

Options	Responses	%age
A	08	13
B	14	23
C	36	60
D	02	04



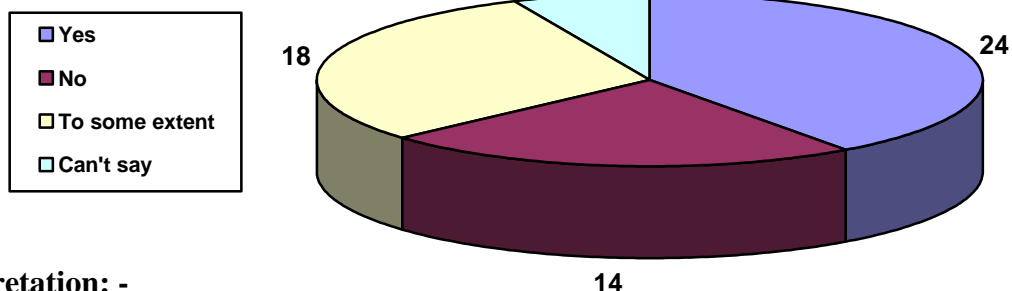
Interpretation: -

The majority of people say **Sometimes** thus it shows that generally, people can change their products preference according to the discount schemes on those products. This is a typical Indian buying behaviour as people often search for cheap products of high quality.

7. Are you affected by the after sale-services of a product –

- a) Yes b) No c) To some extent d) Can't say

Options	Responses	%age
A	24	40
B	14	23
C	18	30
D	04	07



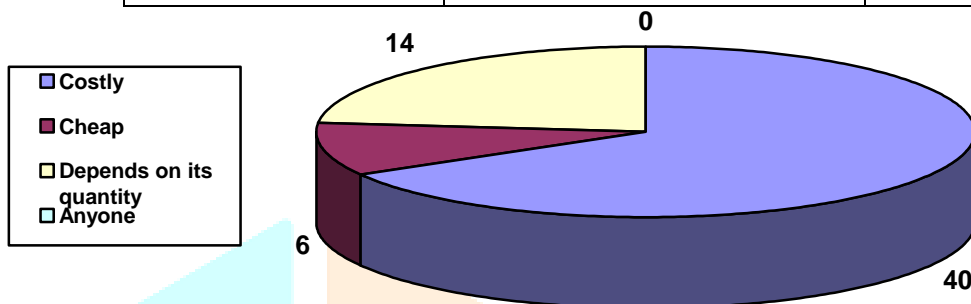
Interpretation: -

As the majority of people have opted **Yes** and many of them have opted **To some extent** it shows that people are affected by the after sale-services of a product. After sales services are an important factor in making buying decision nowadays. people study and examine the after sales services of the companies ever before buying the products.

8. If a product is durable but costly & another one is cheap but not durable then you will choose –

- a) Costly b) Cheap c) Depends on its quantity d) Anyone

Options	Responses	%age
A	40	67
B	06	10
C	14	23
D	0	0



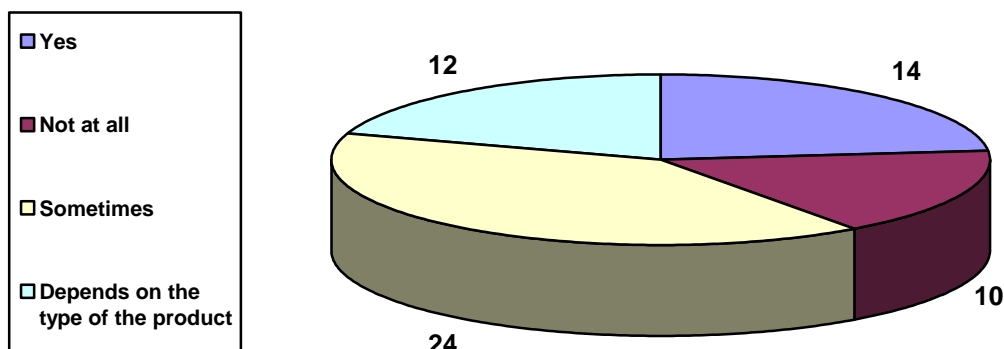
Interpretation:-

The majority of people have said **Costly**, it shows that mostly people prefer durable products.

9. Are you attracted towards the imported products –

- a) Yes b) Not at all c) Sometimes d) Depends on the type of the product

Options	Responses	%age
A	14	23
B	10	17
C	24	40
D	12	20



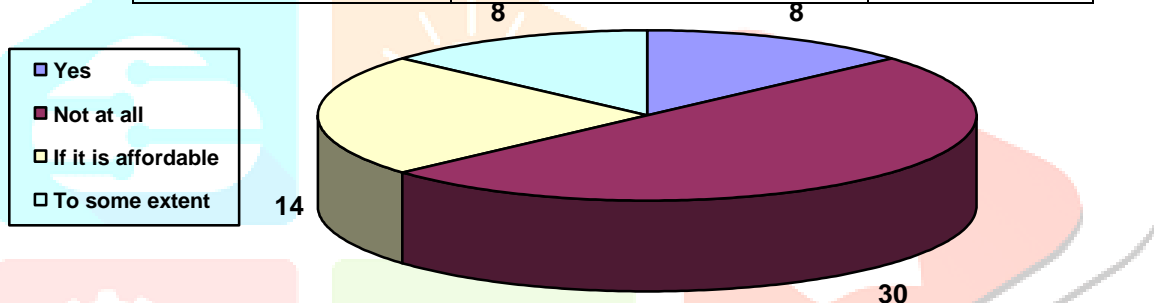
Interpretation: -

Majority of people have opted **Sometimes**; it shows that mostly people are attracted towards the imported products in some specific situation. This is due to the fact that some international brands are not easy to find in Indian markets. They are world class brands and people feel privileged by owning the products of such brands.

10. Do you follow those products, which are endorsed by your favorite celebrity –

- a) Yes b) Not at all c) If it is affordable d) To some extent

Options	Responses	%age
A	08	13
B	30	50
C	14	23
D	08	14

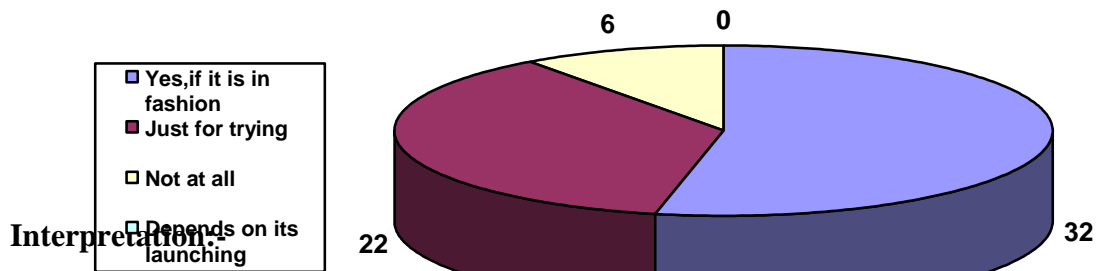
**Interpretation:-**

Most of the people have opted **Not at all**, it shows that people do not follow those products which are endorsed by their favorite celebrity. This is contrary to popular belief and is shocking at the same time. But it may be due to the fact that people in Bhopal city are well informed and they make their analysis before buying any kind of product.

11. Will you shift to a newly launched product –

- a) Yes if it is in fashion b) Just for trying it. c) Not at all
- d) Depends on its launching

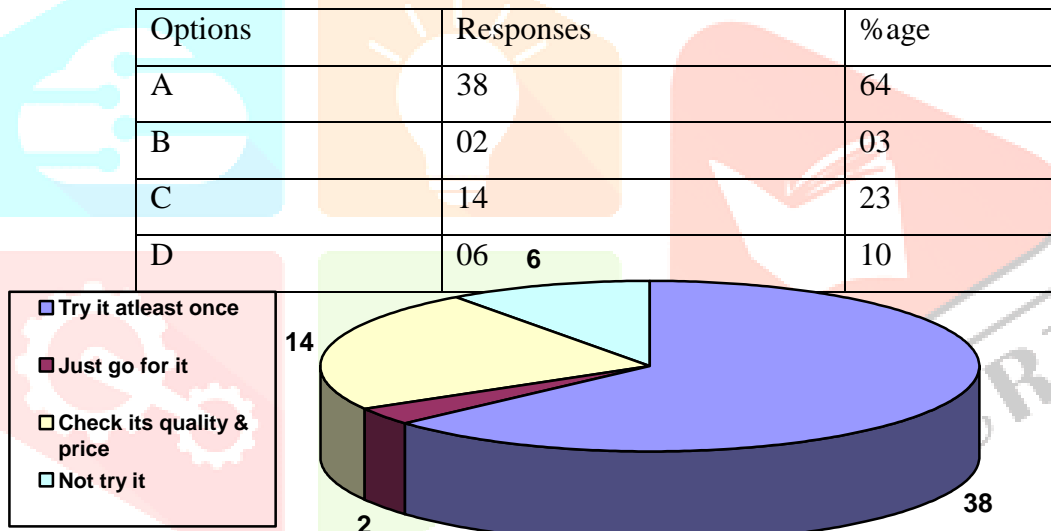
Options	Responses	%age
A	32	53
B	22	37
C	06	10
D	0	0



Most of the people have opted **Yes, if it is in fashion** that people will shift to a newly launched product according to fashion. It shows the behavior of people to go with the flow and not look outdated in their social circle.

12. Suppose a product offers you “money refund offer”, then you will –

- a) Try it at least once b) Just go for it. c) Check its quality & priced d) Not try it

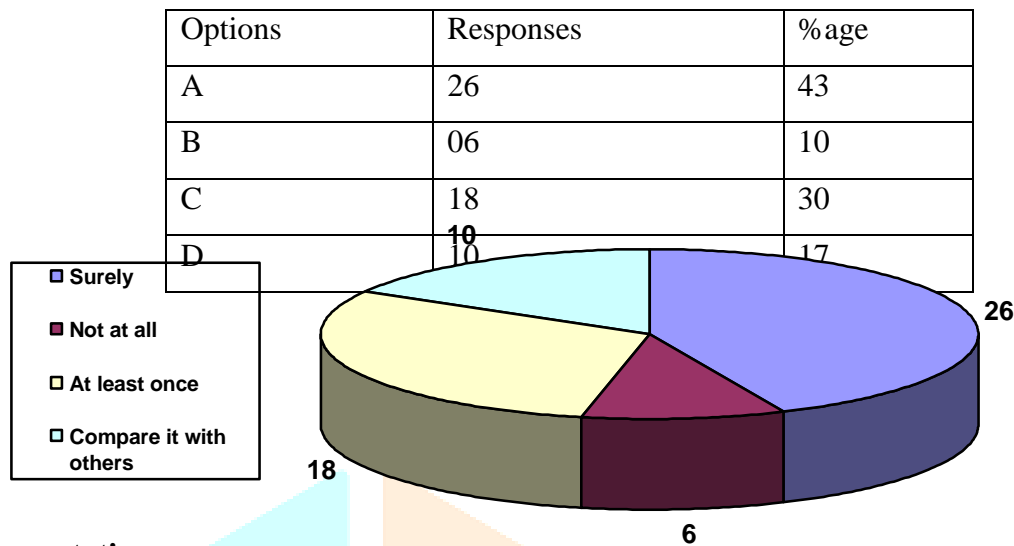


Interpretation:-

Most of the people have opted **Try it at least once**, this shows that the people are attracted towards “money refund” offers. They are open to try new products which may or may not be better than the current products they are using.

13. If a company donates for noble causes from its sales, then will you purchase its products –

- a) Surely b) Not at all c) At least once d) Compare it with others

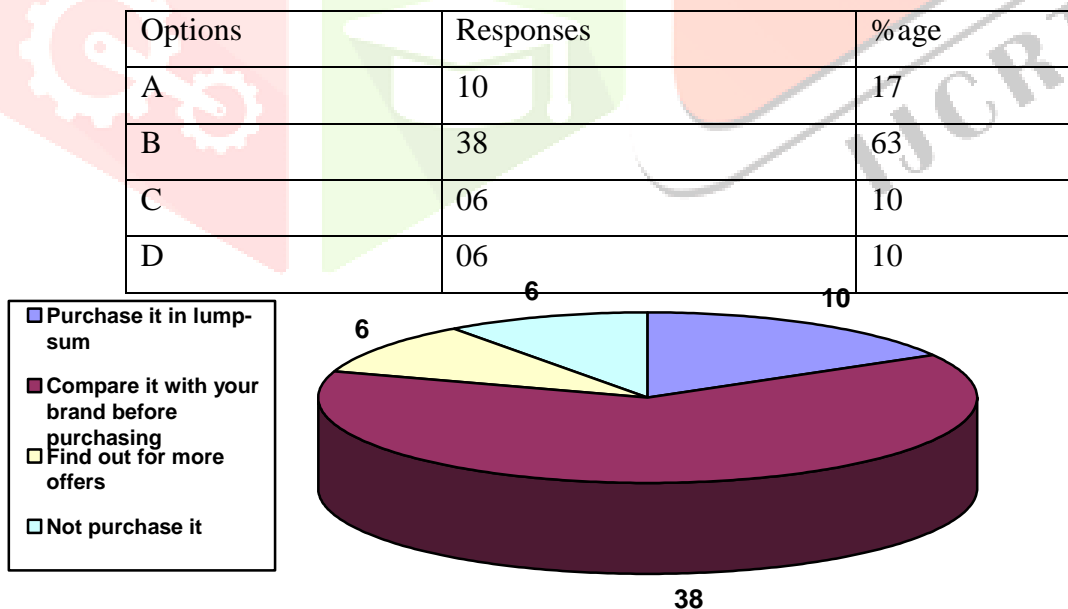


Interpretation:-

Many people said **Surely**, this shows that people are ready to purchase those products which donate for noble causes. There can be a discussion as to what if the quality of the product is not up to the par.

14. A product offers you free gifts, then you will -

- a) Purchase it in lump-sum b) Compare it with your brand before purchasing
c) Find out fir more offers d) Not purchase it



Interpretation: -

Mostly people said that **Compare it with your brand before purchasing**, it shows that people are conscious about the brand they are currently using.

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS:-

We framed five open ended question and sought responses from the customers. The responses received were studied and are summarized below

1. Do you think advertisements increases the sales of a product? How?

Ans. According to our survey, we come to know that people think that it is true that advertisements are the main reason for raising the sales of a product because advertisements educate people about the features of that product and also provides publicity to that product. According to people, highly advertised products are demanded more and due to this price raises and this, in turn, makes that product a brand name.

2. What aspects of a product do you see while purchasing?

Ans. According to our survey, people prefer only the quality aspect of a product. All the respondents said that they cannot compromise the quality of the product. People are quality conscious and that is why they trust the branded products because they think that branded products ensure good quality products.

3. Do you think that “Branded Products” are the BEST options? Why?

Ans. According to the questionnaires, many people said that branded products are the best because they can trust them as they ensure quality. People are quality conscious and cannot compromise with the quality and in the local products, it is not always necessary that they will provide good quality but on the other hand brands ensure good quality. These all are the reasons why the branded products are the best options.

4. Do you think that providing Discounts & Offers reduces the image of that product? How?

Ans. According to the survey, we come to know that people don't accept this statement. They think that Discounts & Offers are given to raise the sales of their products. Discounts & Offers are the tools of promoting the products and it can be used by any company either small or large, it is not at all related with the image of that company. But some of them say that the established brands don't give such type of offers on their products because they think that providing such offers reduces the image of that product.

5. Do you think that Indians consider price more than quality? Why?

Ans. According to our survey, we can say that people don't agree with this statement. People in Bhopal have started using the branded products because many of them have started preferring the quality more than the price before purchasing the products. But some of them also think that still, the people of Bhopal consider price more than quality because a large population of Bhopal belongs to middle or lower income group that is why they still consider price more than quality.

Conclusion

The study reveals that the buying decisions of consumers get affected heavily due to the marketing strategies of the companies. We observed that the customers see discounts and gifts as an opportunity to try different products to find a cheaper alternative. But they make sure that this should not come at the cost of quality and durability of the product, since most of them preferred quality over cost. The customers in Bhopal are well aware of the newer marketing tactics of the companies and they do not blindly fall into pray of their marketing tactics. Responses show that they do not even follow their favorite celebrities blindly. When asked about branded products, they consumers responses showed that on many occasion they would always prefer branded products over products from less known companies. According to the study, we may conclude that the companies must make sufficient marketing efforts to position themselves. The customers would not easily shift from one company to another if the quality is compromised. So the companies must do extensive marketing research as to what are the expectation and needs of the customers. The companies must also make use of digital means for the promotion of their products through social media platforms. Overall, it is a game of competence to make a better quality product, hit the minds of the customers and get the reward in the form of recurring purchases and customer loyalty. The customers are well informed and cunning tactics to gain customers will not be sustainable in the long term.

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