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## A Study On Consumer Brand Preference With Reference To Bath Soap In Vadodara City

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### Abstract:

Consumer preferences play a significant role in determining brand success in a competitive bath soap market. This research paper aims to understand the preferences of consumers in Vadodara City towards bath soap. The research will be conducted using a mixed-methods approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Quantitative data will be collected through a structured online survey, while qualitative data will be collected through focus group discussions.

The survey will be conducted on a sample of 160 respondents selected using an appropriate sampling technique. The survey questionnaire will consist of questions regarding consumer demographics, brand preference, product attributes and purchasing behavior.

The study will cover various aspects of consumer preferences, including product attributes such as fragrance, ingredients, packaging, price and brand reputation. The collected data will be analyzed using statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, regression analysis and factor analysis. The findings of this study will be useful for bath soap companies in Vadodara city to understand the preferences of their target audience and create effective marketing strategies to meet their needs and wants.

The results of the study will add to the existing body of knowledge on consumer preferences towards bath soap and provide insight into the specific needs and wants of consumers in the city of Vadodara. The study will also identify opportunities for further research and provide directions for future research in this area.

**Index terms:** Consumer preference, Brand preference, Bath soap, Advertising, Purchasing behavior.

## I. Introduction:

In today's competitive business world, understanding consumer brand preferences has become a critical aspect for companies to achieve success. In the personal care industry, choosing a bath soap is an important decision for consumers as it affects the health and hygiene of their skin. Bath soap manufacturers strive to create a unique brand identity and create a loyal customer base.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate consumer brand preferences for bath soap in Vadodara city. Located in the state of Gujarat, Vadodara is a fast-growing city with a diverse population, making it an ideal place to study. The research will examine various factors that influence brand preference such as price, packaging, fragrance, brand image and availability.

The study will use a mixed methods research design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. The quantitative method will involve a survey questionnaire to collect data on brand preferences, while the qualitative method will involve gaining a deeper understanding of their decision-making process.

The findings of this study will provide insight into consumer behavior which will be valuable for bath soap manufacturers in Vadodara city to develop effective marketing strategies and increase their market share. This research is significant because it will contribute to the existing literature on consumer brand preferences and help companies meet the ever-changing demands of the market.

## Major companies in the field

1. Godrej Consumer Products Limited
2. RB Health
3. Wipro Customer Care
4. ITC Ltd.
5. Jyothi Lab
6. Hindustan Unilever
- 7 Patanjali

## Product attribute

- Quality
- Brand name
- Price
- Promotion
- Trust in the brand
- The influence of advertising

## I. Objective of the research

- To find out which factor has a greater influence on bath soap brand loyalty based on the demographic factors of the respondents.
- Find out the properties of the product that are related to bath soaps influencing Customer buying behavior.
- To analyze consumer preferences associated with the purchase of bath soap.
- Understand the priority criteria for selecting brands and their products.
- To find out the factors that influence consumer loyalty to bath soap.
- To find out the factors that influence consumer loyalty to bath soap.

## II Scope of the study

The objective of the study on brand preference with reference to bath soap in Vadodara city is to understand the factor influencing consumer choice of bath soap brand in the city. The study will examine various aspects of consumer behaviour, including their preferences for fragrance, price, packaging, brand image and availability. Research examines the impact of advertising and promotion on consumer brand preference for bath soap.

The only instrument used in the survey is a questionnaire.

## III Research methodology

This research design is a descriptive method and uses a simple random sampling method, the link to the survey was shared in another group for respondents.

### 3.1 Population and sample size

A total of 160 respondents were interviewed for this purpose using the probability sampling technique. The selected study area is the city of Vadodara (Gujarat). From the observation, it can be seen that mostly women buy the soap. Thus, different age groups are also included in the sample. Similarly, various income groups are also covered.

### 3.2 Method of data collection

This study is based on both primary and secondary data.

**1 Primary Data** The primary data is collected by circulating the google form questionnaire. The questionnaire includes different questions from Likert Scale, and close-ended questions, ranking, scale questions.

**2. Secondary Data** The secondary data has been collected from various journals, the company website, and the educational portal.

### 3.3 Review of Literature

**JOHN R. DILLON (1991)** Discussed different determinants of customer conduct, for example, Income, age, sex, religion, and other financial foundation and he arrived at a resolution that the customers were clear in their decision. Chosen in their investigation on shopper inclination of beauty care products that the customers' consideration would be on the cost and utility of the products.

**RUSSO AND FRANCE (1994)** Studied the idea of the decision procedure for regularly obtained on durables by following eye obsessions in a research center re-enactment of grocery store racks. The discoveries are completely good with the general view that the decision procedure is built to adjust to the prompt buy condition. While portraying about shopping directions.

**Sawmya Roy on As of August 18, 2009**, Sawmya Roy Although Godrej No. 1 has increased its market share, it is more because HUL made mistakes in gauging consumer attitude. Rural areas are where the growth figures for No. 1 came from. Rural purchasing remained mostly untouched throughout the slowdown's climax last year, despite declining metropolitan figures. Rural areas, meanwhile, are susceptible to price swings. As the cost of palm oil, a vital component of soap, began to rise, HUL enforced significant price increases. Godrej patiently raised prices at a significantly slower rate than HUL.

They emphasised the benefit they had received. The brand managers employed a mix of a clear mass market positioning, rural positioning, and a swift increase in distribution once customers began experimenting with Godrej No. 1 to solidify the gains. The business significantly expanded its rural distribution network. Due to its affordability and prevalence in the places where they want to be, No. 1 advertisements are currently solely shown on Doordarshan. With solely Doordarshan spending, Godrej No. 1's advertising-to-sales ratio is merely 1%, which is significantly lower than the industry average of 8–10%.

No. 1 was not well-known in other states but was historically well-liked in Punjab and Haryana. In order to compete with major rivals, it has increased distribution in Uttar Pradesh during the past two years. The Godrej group's rebranding initiative was also beneficial. Yet, No. 1 is not the only one to succeed. In order to market their soaps in rural areas, Wipro has also collaborated with microfinance organisations.

India and other emerging nations are significant sources of expansion for Unilever. The business is using novel marketing strategies to promote its products and portray itself as an ethical brand that contributes to broader societal good in these areas.

One illustration is the Lifebuoy "Swasthya Chetna" (or "Health Awakening") campaign by Unilever. This informs individuals of the value of health and hygiene in preventing diarrhoea and motivates them to start using soap to wash their hands. The largest-ever rural health and hygiene education programme in India is called Swasthya Chetna. HUL has employed forceful marketing techniques to advertise its "Swasthya Chetna" Campaign.

Overall, the literature suggests that various factors, such as fragrance, price, packaging, brand image, and availability, influence consumer brand preference for bath soap. Understanding these factors can help bath soap manufacturers in Vadodara city develop effective marketing strategies to meet the ever-changing demands of the market.

**SHASHANK SINGH CHAUHAN , DR.V.B.SINGH (2016)** In India, sales of bath soaps, a fast-moving consumer commodity, have increased significantly in recent years. People are becoming more open to the concept of experimenting with and utilising innovative bath soaps. This study makes an effort to cover the numerous aspects that affect customers' decisions to buy and/or use bath soap. The fourth-largest industry in India, the FMCG sector, affects everyone's daily lives. The FMCG industry makes a significant contribution to India's GDP. Consumer behaviour is the study of how individuals, groups, and organisations choose, acquire, utilise, and dispose of goods and services that meet their requirements.

With 700 enterprises and a combined yearly sale of \$17 billion, the Indian soap sector is distributed across all the major cities. In India, 460 g of soap are consumed year per person. 70% of Indians live in rural areas, and 50% of soap is sold there, according to the market capitalization of the country's bath soap industry. A survey was created and distributed throughout sections of Uttar Pradesh to achieve this goal.

### 3.4 Limitations of the study

- The study is limited to the geographical area of Vadodara.
- The study is limited to a certain demographic segment.
- The soap market is a very large FMCG segment, so it is not possible to cover all brands.
- Study is limited to stick and liquid form using respondent only.
- Some respondents may not have provided correct information due to their lack of interest and lack of time.

### 3.5 Statical Tool

#### Data Interpretation

**Table 1** Data is formed based on questionnaire responses.

General Profile of the Respondents				
S. No	Particular	Classification	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	40	25
		Female	120	75
		Total	160	100
2	Age	Below 18	12	7.5
		18-30	148	92.5
		30-40	1	0.625
		Total	160	100
3	Occupation	Student	99	61.875
		Employed	43	26.875
		Unemployed	4	2.5
		Self Employed	14	8.75
		Total	160	100
4	Income	Upper Class	1	0.625
		Upper Middle Class	31	19.375
		Middle Class	115	71.875
		Lower Middle	13	8.125
		Total	160	100

From the above table, the general profile of the respondents shows that:

- 25% of respondents are Male and 75 % of respondents are female.
- 7.5 % of respondent are below the age of 18, 92.5 % of respondent age are between 18-30 and 0.625% of the respondent is between the age of 30-40.
- 61.875% of respondent are Student, 26.875 % of respondent are Employed 8.75% are Self Employed and 2.5 % is unemployed.
- 71.875% of respondents are upper middle class, 0.625 % are upper class and 8.125% are from Lower Middle class.

**Table 2** Soap Brand Used by the respondent.

Brand	Frequency	Percent
Dettol	22	13.8
Dove	19	11.9
Pears	12	7.5
Wild Stone	8	5.0
Lux	18	11.3
Lifebuoy	8	5.0
Santoor	16	10.0
Pantajali	7	4.4
Cinthol	10	6.3
Nivea	12	7.5
Khadi	7	4.4
Forest Essential	2	1.3
Biotique	2	1.3
Mamaearth	14	8.8
Other	3	1.9
Total	160	100.0

The highest using soap is Dettol around 14% and dove 12% of the respondents.

**Table 3** Fragrance they prefer.

Fragrance	Frequency	Percent
Sandal & Turmeric	32	20.0
Alovera	9	5.6
Lemon	25	15.6
Cool Water	26	16.3
Peach	16	10.0
Rose	28	17.5
Lavender	18	11.3
Neem	6	3.8
Total	160	100.0

We found that variety of people have different choice, 20% prefer Sandal and turmeric, 6 % prefer alovera, 16 % prefer lemon, 16% prefer cool water, 10% prefer peach, 18% prefer rose, 11% prefer lavender, 4 % prefer Neem.

**Table 4** Reason for selecting Specific Brand.

Particular	Frequency	Percent
Price	12	7.5
Fragrance	67	41.9
Foamy	19	11.9
Glycerin	13	8.1
Anti-bacterial	26	16.3
Brand Factor	22	13.8
Quality	1	.6
Total	160	100.0

The above table shows us the actual reason why they are using the specific brand the majority of the population are using it because of the fragrance of the soap, the percentage of such people is 42 % after that 14 % population are selecting it because of brand factor and 12% people using for their foamy feature and only 8 percent people are considered price and 8 % people using for the product is glycerine and 16% people are using because anti-bacterial function. So, we can say that mostpeople usethe product because of the fragrance.

**Table 5** Promotion Program affect on Purchase Behaviour.

Particular	Frequency	Percent
Yes	101	63.1
No	13	8.1
Sometimes	46	28.7
Total	160	100.0

63% of respondent agreed that the promotion program affect on their purchasing decision and 29% of respondents also sometimes affected by the promotion program we found in our research.

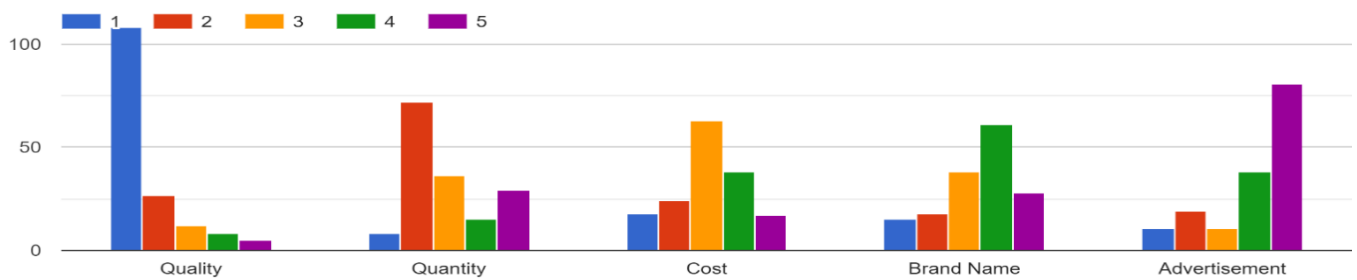
**Table 6**Reason for Consumer Switch over brand.

Particular	Frequency	Percent
Low Quality	62	38.8
High Price	28	17.5
Habitual	70	43.8
Total	160	100.0

From the total respondents, 39% of people switch brands because of low quality, 17.5 % switched because of high price and 44 % population switchedbrands of their habitual tendency.

**Table 7:** Importance of Variables while purchasing soap.

Rate what you look for in order of importance while selecting a product of this kind.



From the Above figure, we can say that the Ranking or importance which consumer keeps in the mind while buying soap is whether the products is available online and offline or are available in the retail store too. Moreover, consumers also see whether products are made up of natural ingredients and whether the products are good quality and trusted brands while purchasing.

#### IV. Findings:

The survey is based on cumulative data based on 160 respondents from the geographical area of Vadodara based on age, gender, occupation and income to research brand preference towards bath soap in the city i.e. the highest group of respondents is 61.875% between 18-30 years of age and occupation is a student

Of the total number of respondents, the dominant gender is 75% female.

Of the total number of respondents, 88% use soap, 12% use liquid soap.

About 54% of people buy soap from offline stores, 22% of respondents buy from the online portal and 24% buy from Provision/General Stores

Of the total number of respondents, 67% of the population learns about their brand through TV advertising. approximately 2% of people are aware of newspaper ads, 22.5% learned about them from social media, and 13% of people use them through recommendations from friends and family.

Out of a total of 160 respondents in Vadodara how long have they been using the same brand of soap 8.8% of respondents have been using one brand of soap for the past month 58.1% of respondents have been using it for the past year 23.1% of respondents have been using the same brand for the past 2 years and 10% of respondents have been using the same brand for more than two years.

In the study, I found the reason why they choose specific brands 42% of the respondents chose because of the smell and 14% of the respondents chose according to the brand factor and 8% of the respondents consider the price.

#### V. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study on consumer brand preference for bath soap in Vadodara city provides useful insights into the factors that influence consumer preference and purchasing behavior. The findings of the study indicate that consumers in Vadodara city consider various factors such as product features, price, packaging, advertising and brand reputation while making purchase decisions.

The study revealed that fragrance, ingredients and packaging are the most important product attributes that influence consumer brand preference for bath soap. The study also found that brand reputation is a critical factor in determining brand preference. Moreover, the study showed that consumers in Vadodara city are influenced by advertising while choosing a brand of bath soap.

However, it is important to note that the study has some limitations. The sample size was relatively small and the study was conducted in a specific geographic location. Therefore, the findings may not be representative of the larger population of bath soap consumers in India. Future research is needed to explore consumer brand preferences in other regions and obtain a more representative sample size.

## Recommendation

Based on the scope and literature review of the study on consumer brand preference with reference to bath soap in Vadodara city, the following recommendations can be made:

The study should use a representative sample of the population in Vadodara city to ensure that the findings are generalizable to a larger population.

The study should consider a wide range of factors that influence consumer brand preference for bath soap, including fragrance, price, packaging, brand image, availability, and advertising and promotion.

The study should analyze and compare consumer preferences for natural and synthetic bath soaps.

The study should examine the impact of demographic variables such as age, gender, income, and education level on consumer brand preference for bath soap.

The study should provide a detailed analysis of major bath soap brands available in the market in Vadodara city and compare their performance on various factors such as price, quality and brand image.

The study should provide recommendations to bath soap manufacturers in Vadodara city to develop effective marketing strategies based on the findings.

The study should highlight research limitations and provide suggestions for future studies in this area.

Overall, the study should aim to provide valuable insights into consumer behavior and preferences for bath soap in Vadodara city and its findings can be used by businesses in the personal care industry to develop effective marketing strategies and increase their market share.

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