

Reference Group : Key Challenge for Indian Rural Consumer's Buying Patterns for Health and Hygiene Product (Handwash)¹

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to examine the effect of reference group on buying pattern of rural buyers for handwash. Several studies examined the role of reference groups (brand ambassador, family & friend) on buying in FMCG marketing area. However, there is a shortage of examinations into the effect of reference group for buying pattern of rural buyers for handwash. After concluding from social identity theory and conducting experimental research with 384 rural respondents who are use hand-wash for their health, as well as analysis using general linear modelling in spss, the results shows that brand ambassador affect the buying pattern of rural buyers for handwash. However, family & friend also influence the buying pattern but not as brand ambassador. This study provides contribution to the social identity theory by revealing that the reference group provide a diverse effect on buying pattern of rural buyer.

JEL Code : M10, M31, M37, R00, I10

Keywords : Rural buyer, Hand hygiene, Reference group, Buying Patterns, Social identity theory

I. Introduction

THE AVERAGE HUMAN being desires to be a part of various groups. The group includes at least two or more individuals who share several common goals, inclinations, ideologies, and convictions. The relationship between group members can be explicit, as in a club association, family, or implicit, as in a group of highly influential celebrity stars collectively referred to as a group by their fans. On the other hand, a reference group is a collection of individuals who serve as a point of reference in synthesising behavioural patterns. Marketers typically focus on reference groups as the primary

¹ Presented in IIF International Research Conference & Awards Summit (Jan. 29-31, 2021)

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Submitted January 2021; Accepted March 2022

study explore the finding of the Nadira and Ali (2016), that the family and friend influence the buying of the rural consumers. The study further, support the finding of the Mittal (2016) that family significantly impact the buying pattern. The result of the study align with Korath (2016), that the recommendation of family and friend is higher in rural folks. Further the study explore the finding of Patel and Joshi (2013) that family & friend effect the buying patterns. Concerning rural India where the society norms are above all, the study supports the finding of Rajan, (2011) that orientation of the family have strong influence on buying patterns.

VII. Conclusions

The study examine reference group's (brand ambassador, family and friend) effect on the buying pattern of the rural consumers. Manova with univariate Anovas and follow up discriminant analysis was performed to find the effect of the reference group on the rural consumers. We found the overwhelming results to prove that the reference group's effect the buying patterns of rural consumers. In the run test brand ambassador, family & friend have a substantially effect the buying patterns. The discriminant follow-up analysis provides that both are well differentiated with a greater effect. Therefore it is conclude that the reference group effect the buying patterns.

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Annexure I Item Total Statistics

	Scale				
	Mean if	Scale	Corrected	Squared	Cronbach's
	Item	Variance if	Item-Total	Multiple	Alpha if Item
	Deleted	Item Deleted	Correlation	Correlation	Deleted
Brand Ambassador (7 items)					
Frequently, I look handwash brand that ambassador use.	73.59	53.699	.451	. .	.796
I search information about hand wash/ hygiene product from well-known influencer (brand ambassador).	73.59	53.699	.451	. .	.796
You Think, Brand ambassador is source of information for buying a hand wash (A Live handbook).	73.84	54.015	.580	. .	.791
I evaluate the hand wash/hygiene product on basis of information provide by brand ambassador.	73.85	57.280	.202	. .	.811
I buy hand wash/ hygiene products which make feel me like brand ambassador.	73.94	55.390	.361	. .	.802
I often buy hand wash/ hygiene products associated with well-known brand ambassador who I adore.	73.70	55.990	.285	. .	.806
My confidence increases when I buy same hand wash/ hygiene product brand associated with any brand ambassador.	73.83	54.143	.507	. .	.794
Friend & Family (8 items)					
I consult with my family before deciding to buy hand wash/ hygiene product.	73.70	54.838	.406	. .	.799
It is important for me that my family use hand wash/ hygiene product for health purpose.	73.73	55.068	.349	. .	.803
I always buy same hand wash/ hygiene product brand during shopping with my family.	73.93	52.389	.590	. .	.788
I always ask my friends about hand wash/ hygiene product that I want to buy.	73.73	55.048	.389	. .	.800
If I know what the favourite hand wash/ hygiene product brand of my friends is, I will buy that hand wash/ hygiene product.	73.90	54.677	.412	. .	.799
It is important that, others like the hand wash/ hygiene product which I have use.	73.93	52.389	.590	. .	.788
I feel I have same identity with my friends when I use same hand wash/ hygiene product with them.	73.93	56.369	.279	. .	.806
My friends have influenced with me when I purchase hand wash/ hygiene product	73.68	58.361	.110	. .	.816
Buying Pattern (4 items)					
I interest to buy (transaction) hand wash/ hygiene product	73.84	54.015	.580	. .	.791
I will refer (recommend) hand wash/ hygiene product that I regularly use to my friends and others.	73.85	57.280	.202	. .	.811
I seriously prefer (consider) the same hand wash/ hygiene product which I regularly use.	73.94	55.390	.361	. .	.802
I often explore (new brand) hand wash/ hygiene product when I go to buy hand wash/ hygiene product.	73.70	55.990	.285	. .	.806

Source : Self Constructed