

Consumer Perception and Satisfaction of D2c (Digital-To-Consumer) in Consumer-Packaged Goods (Cpg): A Study Focused on Bengaluru Urban Region

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Abstract

This research investigates the dynamics of consumer perceptions and satisfaction within the Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) channels of the Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) sector, focusing specifically on the urban area of Bengaluru, India. The Indian FMCG market, valued at \$29.4 billion in 2017, demonstrates a marked dichotomy between urban and rural consumption patterns, with urban centers contributing significantly to sector revenues while rural markets show rapid growth, buoyed by substantial investments from major FMCG players such as Dabur and Hindustan Unilever.

Consumer perception is pivotal in shaping brand success, influencing key metrics such as customer acquisition, retention rates, and overall market reputation. These perceptions are shaped by multifaceted factors including product quality, pricing strategies, customer service experiences, and digital interactions encompassing social media engagement and online reviews. Within the realm of D2C brands, these factors assume heightened importance in cultivating trust and fostering direct consumer engagement.

This study employs qualitative research methodologies to delve into the nuanced impacts of digital marketing strategies, user-generated reviews, and pricing dynamics on consumer perceptions towards D2C offerings within the CPG domain. It explores consumer attitudes towards D2C channels as preferred alternatives for purchasing FMCG products, critically examining variables such as perceived time efficiency and payment security. By addressing existing gaps in literature, the study aims to provide valuable insights into how consumer satisfaction levels influence repeat purchasing behaviors and long-term brand loyalty within the evolving landscape of D2C commerce.

Keywords: Consumer Perception, Consumer Satisfaction, Direct-to-Consumer (D2C), Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG), Urban Markets, Digital Marketing Strategies

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

FASTMOVING CONSUMER GOODS (FMCG)

The Indian FMCG market is characterized by a split between the organized and unorganized sectors, and its dynamics vary significantly across rural and urban demographics. Urban markets contribute 60% of the FMCG sector's revenue, and in 2017, this sector achieved a market size of \$29.4 billion. While urban areas have historically driven the growth of the FMCG industry in India, the semi-urban and rural markets

are expanding at a notable pace. These segments now account for over 40% of the FMCG sector's total revenues.

FMCG companies in India have observed higher growth rates in rural areas compared to urban regions. With 12.2% of the global population residing in Indian villages, the rural FMCG market is of significant interest to investors. Dabur, a leading FMCG company in India, derives over 45% of its domestic revenue from rural sales of packaged consumer goods. Similarly, Hindustan Unilever, another dominant player in the Indian FMCG sector, generates over 35% of its revenue from rural areas.

Rural India contributes for more than 40% of consumption in key FMCG categories like as personal care, fabric care, and hot beverages. In urban areas, the home and personal care segment—including skincare, household care, and feminine hygiene products—continues to experience attractive growth rates. Within the food segment, processed foods, bakery products, and dairy are identified as long-term growth categories in both rural and urban markets.

The FMCG market remains highly fragmented, with approximately half of the market dominated by unbranded, unpackaged, homemade products. This fragmentation presents a significant opportunity for marketers of branded products to convert consumers to branded options. FMCGs typically require an extensive distribution network and are sold directly to consumers, highlighting the importance of robust supply chain infrastructure in this sector.

Consumer Perception: A Crucial Factor in Business Success

Customer perception is a critical determinant of a company's success, impacting acquisition, retention, and even capital raising efforts. This perception is shaped by customers' opinions formed through every interaction they have with the company, whether direct or indirect.

Influences on Customer Perception

Customer perception is influenced by numerous factors, including both direct and indirect interactions with the business. Social media, online reviews, pricing, product quality, and influencers all play significant roles. While companies can control aspects like product quality, pricing, and customer experience, they cannot control external factors such as reviews and social media posts.

Importance of Customer Perception

The importance of customer perception cannot be overstated, as it directly affects a business's bottom line. For example, if a customer becomes frustrated with a brand and decides to end their subscription, it may seem like a small loss. However, this churn represents a much larger impact. The lost customer could have potentially made additional purchases or remained loyal, recommending the brand to others. Recognizing the profound influence a single customer can have underscores the significance of maintaining a positive perception.

Strategies to Enhance Customer Perception

Improving consumer perception involves several strategies:

1. **Stellar Customer Support:** Providing exceptional customer service demonstrates care and investment in the customer experience.
2. **Sharing Customer Success Stories:** Highlighting positive experiences can build trust and reinforce a positive image.

3. Encouraging Company-Wide Collaboration: Ensuring that all departments work together harmoniously can enhance overall customer satisfaction.
4. Supporting Social Causes: Aligning with social causes that resonate with customers can positively influence their perception.

Factors Shaping Customer Perception

1. Customer Reviews: With 93% of customers reading online reviews before making a purchase, these reviews significantly impact prospective customers' views of a brand.
2. Marketing Efforts: The portrayal of a brand through marketing channels such as the website, advertisements, and social media posts plays a crucial role in developing public image. Consistency across all company-owned media is essential to reinforce the desired customer perception.
3. Company Values: Customers prefer to do business with companies that share similar values. Publicly adhering to stated company values heavily influences how customers perceive the brand.
4. Quality of Customer Support: The level of customer support provided reflects the company's attitude toward its customers. Excellent support shows that the company values its customers, while poor support indicates a lack of care or capability, thereby negatively affecting customer perception.

Customer perception is vital for any business. By focusing on quality interactions, consistent marketing, strong company values, and excellent customer support, companies can significantly enhance how they are perceived by their customers, leading to greater success and growth.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction measures how content customers are with a company's products, services, and overall capabilities. It is typically assessed through various tools like surveys and ratings, which provide valuable insights into customer happiness and areas needing improvement. Understanding customer satisfaction involves evaluating how people feel when interacting with a brand, which can be influenced by multiple factors such as perceived product quality and value, convenience, expectations, communication, and complaint

Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG)

Consumer packaged goods (CPG) are items that customers frequently use and need to repurchase regularly. These products, which include perishable items like meats and dairy as well as longer-lasting items like paper towels and shampoos, are typically sold at low prices but generate profit through high-volume sales. Because of their rapid turnover, these goods are also known as fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). Common characteristics of CPGs include frequent purchase, rapid consumption, low cost, high sales volumes, wide distribution, and quick selection by consumers.

The CPG sector encompasses companies involved in the development, production, marketing, and sale of products intended for end-user consumption. These companies typically operate at the wholesale level, manufacturing products that are then sold to retail stores. Notable examples of CPG companies include Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, Unilever, Nestlé, General Mills, and Clorox, all of which have extensive brand portfolios.

Customer Perception and Satisfaction in the FMCG Sector

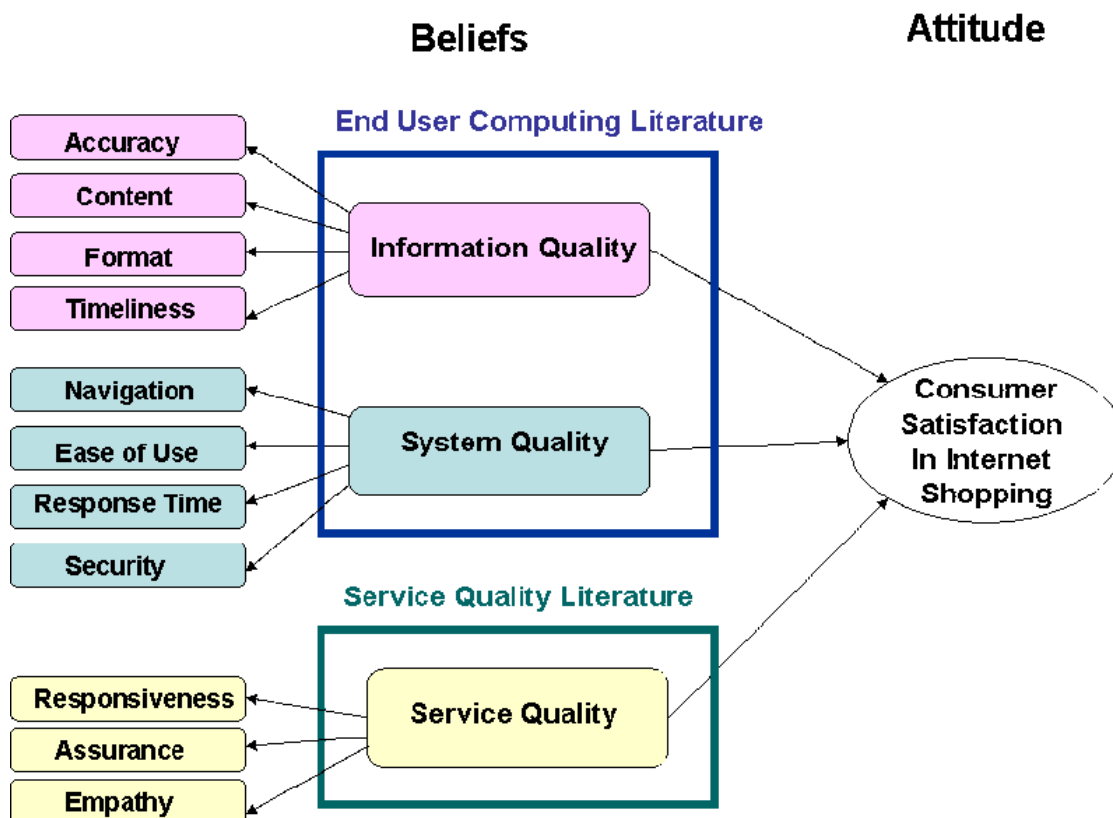
The FMCG sector is one of the most competitive industries globally, significantly disrupted by the rise of

e-commerce. Traditionally, FMCG products were distributed through brick-and-mortar stores, but the growth of online shopping has shifted consumer buying patterns, with more people now purchasing FMCG products online.

To meet consumer demands and maintain satisfaction, FMCG companies are adopting the latest technologies to improve efficiency in various areas, such as automated production processes, better inventory management, enhanced logistics and transportation, and superior customer service. Additionally, investing in digital marketing is crucial for reaching the new generation of online consumers. This includes strategies like search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, and online advertising.

Customer satisfaction in the FMCG sector hinges on the ability to adapt to changing consumer behaviours and technological advancements. By focusing on quality interactions, efficient processes, and targeted digital marketing, FMCG companies can enhance customer perception and satisfaction, ensuring continued success in a highly competitive market.

2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:



Theoretical Framework for Studying Consumer Perception and Satisfaction in D2C Digital Channels for Consumer-Packaged Goods (CPG)

In marketing research, a theoretical framework provides a structured outline or model that establishes a conceptual foundation for the study. This framework guides the formulation of research questions, hypotheses, data collection methods, and data analysis. When studying consumer perception and satisfaction towards Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) digital channels in the context of Consumer-Packaged Goods (CPG), integrating various theories and concepts from marketing, consumer behavior, and e-commerce is essential. Below is a comprehensive theoretical framework to guide research in this area:

1. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Developed by Davis, the Technology Acceptance Model suggests that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of technology significantly impact an individual's intention to use it. In the context of D2C CPG, this model helps understand how consumers perceive the ease of using digital channels and their perceived value in terms of convenience and product access.

2. Innovation Diffusion Theory

Rogers' Innovation Diffusion Theory categorizes consumers into segments such as innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. This theory is valuable for analyzing how different consumer segments adopt D2C CPG offerings, aiding in the segmentation and targeting of D2C strategies.

3. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Theory

CRM theories emphasize the importance of building and maintaining long-term relationships with customers. In the D2C CPG context, this theory helps understand how digital channels facilitate personalized interactions, feedback loops, and their impact on consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

4. Perceived Risk Theory

This theory posits that consumers assess the risks involved in a purchase decision. For D2C CPG, it is crucial to understand how consumers perceive risks related to product quality, data security, and privacy in online transactions.

5. Online Customer Experience Model

This model explores various dimensions of the online customer experience, including usability, interactivity, trust, and aesthetics. It assesses how the design and functionality of D2C platforms influence consumer perception and satisfaction.

6. Consumer Decision-Making Process

This framework outlines the stages consumers go through when making a purchase decision, from problem recognition to post-purchase evaluation. It can be adapted to understand how D2C channels impact each stage of the consumer journey in CPG, including information search, evaluation of alternatives, and post-purchase satisfaction.

7. Customer Satisfaction Models

Models like the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) or the SERVQUAL model evaluate consumer satisfaction with D2C CPG services. These models consider factors such as expectations, perceived quality, and perceived value.

8. Consumer Trust Theory

Trust is crucial in online transactions. This theory explores how trust in the brand, product quality, and data security influences consumer perception and satisfaction in D2C CPG.

9. Social Exchange Theory

This theory examines the reciprocity between consumers and D2C brands, exploring how consumers perceive the value they receive from the brand and how this influences their satisfaction and loyalty.

10. Marketing Mix (4Ps) Adaptation

The traditional marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) needs adaptation for D2C CPG. Research can explore how factors like product customization, pricing transparency, the role of digital advertising, and the online shopping experience impact consumer perception and satisfaction.

11. Customer Segmentation and Personalization

The theoretical framework should account for the role of data analytics, AI, and machine learning in segmenting customers and personalizing offerings. Understanding how these techniques impact consumer

perception and satisfaction is vital.

12. Regulatory Framework and Consumer Protection

Incorporate relevant legal and ethical theories, as well as the regulatory environment governing e-commerce, data protection, and consumer rights, to assess how these factors influence consumer trust and satisfaction in D2C CPG.

3.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

3.1 CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND PERCEPTION ON FMCG

3.2 CONSUMER SATISFACTION AND PERCEPTION ON CPG

3.3 CONSUMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS D2C

3.1 Consumer Satisfaction and Perception on FMCG

Naeun Lauren Kim, Daeun Chloe Shin, and Gwia Kim (2020) conducted research titled "Determinants of Consumer Attitudes and Re-Purchase Intentions Toward Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) Brands." This qualitative study analyzed the influence of website attractiveness, cost-effectiveness, sustainability, and brand uniqueness on consumer attitudes towards DTC brands. Data was collected through interviews and analyzed using transcription methods. The findings revealed that all variables—co-creation, cost-effectiveness, website attractiveness, brand uniqueness, social media engagement, and brand innovativeness—positively affected attitudes towards DTC brands, except for sustainability.

Gayathri (2020), in the paper "Consumers' Perception and Satisfaction on Cause-Related Marketing with FMCG Products in Tiruppur District," evaluated consumer preferences regarding cause-related marketing in FMCG products, focusing on the level of expectation and satisfaction. This descriptive study utilized a structured questionnaire to collect data from 672 respondents across the Tiruppur District. Statistical techniques such as Simple Percentage Analysis, Chi-Square Test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), T-Test, Multiple Regression Analysis, Factor Analysis, Cluster Analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were employed. The study found no association between the type of family and consumers' expectation levels, nor between marital status, monthly income, and satisfaction levels regarding cause-related marketing.

Mrs. P. Banumathi and Dr. S. Mabel Latha Rani (2018) aimed to understand the buying behavior and brand awareness of rural consumers towards selected FMCG products. The study examined the socio-economic backgrounds of respondents, the factors motivating FMCG purchases, and brand awareness and perception. It concluded that consumer behavior is significantly influenced by place, product price, promotion, people, and market-wide factors, although the impact of these factors varies by product.

Rambabu Gopiseti and G. Linganna (2017) in their article "Consumer Buying Behaviour Towards Fast-Moving Consumer Goods: A Study of Selected Personal Care Products in Nizamabad District of Telangana State," examined factors influencing consumer buying behavior for personal care products. They identified television commercials, quality, and brand loyalty as significant factors impacting consumer decisions, especially among middle and lower-income groups. The study recommended that marketers should use print media and incentive schemes to reach consumers and constantly monitor consumer behavior using electronic media.

Shashank Singh Chauhan and Singh (2016) in their article "A Study of Indian Consumer Buying Behaviour of FMCG Products (With Special Reference to Bathing Soap)," explored factors influencing the purchase of bath soaps. The study found that customers, particularly females, predominantly purchase bath soap monthly. Key factors attracting customers included brand, price, quality, and hygiene, with TV

and newspaper promotions, as well as celebrity endorsements and family opinions, serving as significant influencers.

Consumer-Oriented Sales Promotion in the FMCG Sector

Ravi Sharma and Rachna Arya (2017) in their article titled "Study of Consumer-Oriented Sales Promotion in the FMCG Sector," assert that promotion is a fundamental pillar of the marketing mix, and sales promotion is a critical component within this domain. The researchers analyzed consumer preferences regarding sales promotions in the FMCG sector, examining trade-offs and the relative importance of various attributes when responding to sales promotion offers. The study evaluated the effectiveness of sales promotion techniques, particularly in the soaps and detergents industry, and investigated consumer behavior in purchasing these products. Data was collected using a convenience sampling method with a sample size of 100 participants. The findings indicate that quality and price are the most influential factors in purchase decisions. "Price off" and "extra quantity" offers consistently attract consumers to particular brands. Television and newspapers emerged as the most effective media for marketing these products due to their broad viewership. The authors recommend that companies should utilize mass media to raise awareness about sales promotion schemes, given that FMCG products are characterized by low involvement and frequent brand switching.

Kavitha and Santhi (2017) investigated the factors influencing the purchase intentions of female customers towards skin care products, with a specific focus on Perambalur town in Tamil Nadu. The study involved 60 current customers using cosmetics, with data collected through questionnaires. Descriptive research techniques were employed to analyze the data, focusing on consumer expectations and satisfaction with Ponds skin care products. The study also explored the challenges customers face regarding the availability and quality of skin care products, thereby assessing their overall satisfaction levels. The research aimed to determine customer opinions and behavior, considering factors such as price, quality, and brand name. Data analysis was conducted using the SPSS package program.

Bello Ayuba (2014) conducted a study assessing the factors influencing consumer satisfaction among customers of Nigerian manufacturing companies. The primary objective was to identify key variables that significantly impact customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions. Both primary and secondary data collection methods were employed. Data was analyzed using Descriptive Statistics (mean, standard deviation) and Regression Analysis to evaluate satisfaction ratings in line with the study objectives. Among the major recommendations is the need for Nigerian manufacturing companies to embrace marketing concepts by providing essential services and establishing strong customer relationships through effective and efficient customer service. This approach is expected to foster brand loyalty and deeper market penetration, enabling companies to establish long-term profitable relationships with their customers.

Hariharan R. and Mr. M. Chandra Sekar (2021) conducted a study titled "A Study on Consumer Behaviour towards Selected Fast-Moving Consumer Goods in Coimbatore City." The researchers assessed the socioeconomic profiles and shopping patterns of consumers, identifying factors influencing the purchase of selected FMCG products. Primary data was collected through questionnaires distributed to 135 participants from Coimbatore city, while secondary data was gathered from various journals, magazines, reports, and newspapers. Data analysis was performed using Simple Percentage Analysis, and the convenience sampling method was adopted. The study recommends that consumers should be aware of the undue influence of media, especially television advertisements, on their preferences for FMCG products. Manufacturers are advised to utilize retail channels such as convenience stores, discount stores,

and off-price retailers, even though these are not yet popular in Indian markets.

Ganesh (2013) in his article titled "Consumers' Perception Towards Brand Loyalty of FMCG Products - An Analysis," examined consumers' perceptions of brand loyalty in FMCG products. The study considered variables such as brand awareness, knowledge, attitude towards the brand, risk aversion to changing brands, satisfaction, and brand trust. Other factors included brand image, product quality, product knowledge, product involvement, product attributes, and brand loyalty.

Consumer Satisfaction and Perception on CPG

Ghosh (2007) conducted a study to examine the awareness of Consumer-Packaged Goods (CPG) among customers in AVADI Taluk, Tiruvallur district. The research aimed to analyze the demographic profiles of respondents and their awareness of CPG products. Data sources included both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through surveys of rural customers, while secondary data was gathered from books, journals, magazines, reports, and daily publications. The collected data was scrutinized, edited, and tabulated before being analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and other computer software.

Vibhuti et al. (2014), in their article titled "A Study on Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Selected FMCG Products," highlighted the significant role of consumer behavior in the marketing of fast-moving consumer goods. The authors emphasized that globalization has led to changing consumer needs and wants over time. The FMCG sector is crucial for India's GDP growth, necessitating an understanding of shifts in consumer buying behavior. The study examined factors affecting consumer buying behavior towards FMCG products and their impact on decision-making processes. Findings indicated that consumer behavior is influenced by place, product, price, promotion, as well as physiological and psychological factors, with varying effects across different products.

Thanigachalam (2014), in his article "Consumer Behaviour towards Fast Moving Consumer Goods in Puducherry," discussed the importance of promotional offers and brand availability. The dynamic nature of the FMCG sector in India requires companies to consider these factors when planning and implementing marketing strategies. The primary goal is to effectively and efficiently meet the needs and wants of consumers and target markets.

Narayanan and Sharma (2020) provided a review of marketing techniques in the cosmetic product industry. Their article presented reviews on various topics, including brand loyalty, consumer behavior, customer satisfaction, environmental impact, and problems associated with cosmetic products. The reviews were organized in a logical and chronological order, offering insights into the level of awareness and marketing strategies.

Gomathi and Gomathi (2018) conducted a study titled "Consumer Preference Towards Selected FMCG Personal Care Products in Erode Town, Tamil Nadu." The study revealed that FMCG goods are typically consumed within days, weeks, or months, and are replaced frequently due to high consumer demand. The researchers examined consumer attitudes towards product availability and services, suggesting improvements to enhance consumer demand and satisfaction. This, in turn, would benefit organizations by increasing consumer loyalty.

Vasan (2018) explored consumer attitudes towards personal care products of Patanjali Ayurveda Limited. The study concluded that Indian consumers are becoming increasingly brand-conscious when purchasing cosmetics and personal care products. The researcher recommended focusing on word-of-mouth promotions in India's price-sensitive economy and emphasized the importance of visual merchandising

during the decision-making phase. Brand loyalty and customer satisfaction were found to be significantly influenced by consumer behavior, opinions, and experiences.

Anjana (2018) investigated the factors influencing cosmetic buying behavior among consumers. The research aimed to identify traits that affect the use of cosmetic products. The study found that quality, price, brand name, packaging, and advertising significantly influence purchasing decisions. Consumers undergo a rigorous thought process when making buying decisions, considering numerous competitive options available at relatively low costs and varying quality levels. Brand integrity and cost were identified as strong competing factors in consumer decision-making.

Consumer Buying Behavior towards Personal Care Products

Lavuri, R. & Sreeramulu, D. (2019) conducted a study titled “Personal Care Products: A Study on Women Consumer Buying Behaviour.” The results indicate that demographic factors of respondents significantly influence the purchase of personal care products. Key product attributes such as brand name, quality, price, brand loyalty, affordability, and sales personnel recommendations greatly impact consumer purchasing attitudes. Additionally, brand ambassadors and references from family and friends are significant factors affecting the purchasing decisions of female respondents.

Manimekalai, K. (2019) analyzed consumer buying behavior towards Lakme products in her study. The findings revealed that most respondents exhibit a high level of satisfaction with the integrity of Lakme products. Despite the cost, customers are highly satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of Lakme products, deeming them the best in meeting customer requirements. The study suggests that the company can enhance product design and appearance to attract more consumers.

Shajahan, M. & Safi, S. M. (2019) examined consumer behavior towards cosmetic products in Tiruchirappalli District. The study concluded that consumer behavior towards cosmetic products in this region is notably positive, encompassing both female and male users. The quality of the products emerged as the primary factor influencing both initial and repeat purchases. The study also found that the easy availability of cosmetics near the buyer’s location increases purchase frequency. While consumers may be influenced by relatives and friends, the final purchasing decision is made independently.

3.3 Consumer Satisfaction Towards D2C (Digital to Consumer)

Dr. A.B. Santhi (2017) conducted a study titled “A Study on Customer Satisfaction Towards Online Shopping in Tirupati Town.” The research aimed to identify factors influencing customer satisfaction in the context of online shopping. The study's objective was to understand how demographic factors affect customer satisfaction in India. The findings revealed that respondents are internet-savvy and are willing to purchase high-quality products online.

Vikash and Vinod Kumar (2017) explored “Customer Perception Towards Online Shopping.” Their research found that customers perceive online shopping positively, emphasizing convenience, satisfaction, and product availability. These factors show that online shopping provides significant convenience, as it eliminates the need to visit physical stores, resulting in a positive perception towards online shopping.

Ashish Bhatt (2014) examined “Customer Attitude Towards Online Shopping” through descriptive and exploratory research. The objective was to study customer attitudes towards e-shopping based on consumer behavior, beliefs, preferences, and opinions. The study concluded that the mode of payment depends on the respondent's income.

Dr. M. Rafia Meera et al. (2017) investigated “Customer Preferences Towards Online Shopping Applic-

cations.” The research aimed to identify factors influencing users to buy through online shopping applications. Both primary and secondary data collection methods were used. The study found that customers are satisfied with the Amazon shopping application, with most respondents preferring online shopping due to the wide variety of goods available.

Orbit-Biz-Dictum (2016) analyzed “Consumer Behavior Towards Online Shopping.” The study found that convenience, time savings, and price were the most motivating factors for online shopping. Amazon emerged as the most favored online shopping site among respondents, with a majority willing to spend Rs. 1000-3000 on a single online purchase. The study suggested raising customer awareness about the safety aspects of using credit cards online, particularly regarding disputed credit card payments for online transactions.

3.4 Evolution of Consumer Satisfaction in Online Shopping

Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2008) asserted that modern marketing has evolved into relationship marketing, which involves integrating customers into the entire business process. This approach emphasizes understanding and addressing customer needs to foster long-term relationships.

Olivia, Oliver, and MacMillan (1992) initially proposed the theory of “expectation inconformity,” suggesting that customer satisfaction occurs when the actual performance of goods exceeds expectations. They also noted that contemporary understanding includes the direct impact of product and service quality on customer satisfaction.

Lee and Lin (2005) identified key factors influencing customer perception of e-service quality in online shopping. These factors include website design (user-friendliness), reliability (reliability and security), responsiveness (helpfulness and promptness), trust (mechanisms provided by the website), and personalization (tailoring services to individual needs).

Muruganatham (2017) examined satisfaction with online shopping, highlighting that the process involves consumers buying goods and services directly from sellers over the internet without intermediaries. The study identified major issues such as credit card information theft and lack of online payment security. Addressing these concerns through precautionary measures can enhance consumer confidence in online shopping. The study concluded that consumers seek trust, security, and a wide range of choices in online shopping.

Aminul Islam (2011) investigated consumer satisfaction with online shopping in Malaysia, identifying factors affecting consumers' intention and satisfaction. The study found that online shopping offers a more comfortable alternative to conventional shopping, which is often associated with anxiety, crowds, traffic jams, limited time, and parking issues.

Mohammad Jamal Uddin (2015) developed a framework to measure the attitudes of Bangladeshi consumers towards online shopping. His extensive survey revealed a generally positive reaction to online shopping, primarily due to its convenience, time efficiency, and hassle-free nature. Factors such as age, gender, profession, occupation, family structure, and ICT familiarity were found to be critical in preferring online shopping.

Cheung and Lee (2005) proposed a research framework identifying key dimensions for customer satisfaction in internet shopping: information quality (accuracy, content, format, and timeliness), system quality (navigation, ease of use, response time, and security), and service quality (responsiveness, assurance, and empathy).

4.0 Identified Research Gaps

Existing literature predominantly examines customer satisfaction within the fast-moving consumer goods sector, with limited emphasis on brand loyalty. Furthermore, the majority of studies focus on FMCG products characterized by repeat purchase frequencies exceeding one year. Previous research exploring satisfaction and brand loyalty within this domain has often employed a limited set of variables.

Notably, there is a scarcity of research directly comparing consumer perceptions and satisfaction levels between direct-to-consumer (D2C) CPG brands and traditional brick-and-mortar retail channels. Investigating how satisfaction levels impact repeat purchases and customer retention over time, specifically within these distinct models, presents a valuable research opportunity. A deeper understanding of the nuanced consumer experiences and outcomes associated with each model constitutes a significant research gap.

5.0 Research Objectives

This study aims to investigate consumer perceptions and satisfaction within the direct-to-consumer (D2C) consumer packaged goods landscape. Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. Analyse consumer satisfaction levels and perceptions towards D2C channels for selected CPGs.
2. Determine the impact of digital marketing strategies on consumer interest and engagement with D2C CPG brands.
3. Examine the influence of user reviews and recommendations on consumer decision-making and satisfaction within the D2C CPG context.
4. Evaluate consumer perceptions of D2C channels as a viable option for purchasing CPGs.
5. Investigate the relationship between online purchase experiences, online product pricing, and consumer satisfaction levels with D2C CPGs.
6. Analyse the impact of perceived time efficiency and payment security on consumer satisfaction levels with D2C CPG purchases.

6.0 GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF HYPOTHESIS:



7.0 Scope and Limitations

1. **Consumer Packaged Goods Focus:** This research centers on consumer-packaged goods (CPGs), encompassing categories such as food, beverages, personal care products, and household items distributed online. This focused approach ensures a detailed analysis within a specific product category.
2. **Consumer Perception and Satisfaction:** The study examines consumer perceptions of the Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) model in CPGs, including awareness, attitudes, beliefs regarding product quality, delivery, pricing, and customer service.
3. **Data Collection Methodology:** The chosen data collection methods, whether surveys, interviews, or data analysis, may introduce limitations related to accuracy and bias.
5. **Influence of Competing Factors:** Consumer perceptions and satisfaction are influenced not only by the D2C model but also by factors such as brand reputation, marketing strategies, and individual preferences.
6. **Digital Marketing Channels:** The research explores digital channels and platforms utilized by companies for D2C marketing and sales strategies.
7. **Geographical Focus:** Specific attention is given to geographical considerations, potentially focusing on a particular country or region to refine the study's scope.
8. **Impact on Marketing Strategies:** Insights from this study can inform marketing strategies, enabling companies to tailor their advertising and promotional efforts to effectively engage local consumers.
9. **Consumer Education Initiatives:** Findings will contribute to educating consumers in the Bengaluru region about the benefits and challenges of the D2C model in CPGs, empowering them to make well-informed purchasing decisions.
10. **Academic Contribution:** This study contributes to the academic literature on consumer behavior and D2C models, advancing understanding within this field of research.
11. **Policy and Regulatory Implications:** The research may identify regulatory and policy considerations impacting the D2C industry in Bengaluru, offering insights that could influence local government policies and decisions.

8.0 Research Design

Research design serves as the blueprint for conducting a study, outlining its structure, strategy, methods, procedures, and data collection techniques. A well-planned research design is essential for ensuring the reliability and validity of study outcomes.

8.1 Questionnaire Development

This study employs both primary and secondary methods of data collection. Primary data will be gathered through a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale, incorporating both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire is administered via Google Forms and distributed to respondents via email. Secondary data is sourced from articles, national and international journals, websites, books, magazines, and periodicals. Questions are formulated based on the study objectives, focusing on understanding respondents' perceptions of direct-to-consumer models and their implications for companies and society.

8.2 Sampling and Data Collection

The study targets online customers in the Bangalore region. Probability sampling, specifically random sampling, will be utilized, drawing 480 samples from the Bangalore Urban Region. This quantitative study exclusively employs structured questionnaires to collect data from online customers. Quantitative data gathered from diverse sources will provide multiple perspectives on the research problem. Data analysis will utilize SPSS statistical tools to examine relationships between dependent and independent variables, employing techniques such as one-sample Z-test and correlation analysis.

8.3 Scaling Technique

Interval scaling technique will be applied using a 5-point Likert scale: 5 – Strongly Agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 2 – Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree. This scale measures the relationship of independent variables (e.g., time consumption, online purchase price, secure payment) with the dependent variable (customer satisfaction) concerning direct-to-consumer models in consumer-packaged goods.

8.4 Statistical Tools for Data Analysis

Quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical tools such as Mean, Standard Deviation, one-sample Z-test, and Correlation to assess the relationship between independent and dependent variables. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) will be employed for comprehensive data analysis.

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