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## PERCEPTION AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS PRIVATE LABELS AT RETAIL OUTLET IN CHENNAI CITY – AN EMPIRICAL VIEW

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### ABSTRACT

Private Labels are product brands that are owned by the retailer instead of entity that produces the product. Private Labels are getting retailer attention due to higher profit margin on such products, compared with branded alternatives. The Pantaloon Retail (India) Ltd is India's leading retailer that operates multiple retail formats in both the value and lifestyle segment. It operates a nationwide chain of stores that include Big Bazaar, Food Bazaar, Pantaloons, Central, Home Town, eZone, Depot, Loot Mart, Brand Factory, Urbana, Indigo Nation, One Mobile, Staples, Lee Cooper Sports Bar, Copper Chimney and F123. Big Bazaar offers a wide range of products which range from apparels, food, farm products, furniture, child care, toys, etc of various brands like Levis, Allen Solly, Pepsi, Coca-Cola, HUL, ITC, P&G, LG, Samsung, Nokia, HP along with number of Private Labels like DJ & C, Tasty Treat and Clean Mate. This research is mainly focused to find out the market potential and Preference of Private Labels of big bazaar among consumers in Chennai city. This study will help the Big Bazaar to identify the buyers' behavior and to design their marketing strategy accordingly and also it gives an improved service quality in future scenario. The survey shows that customers of Big Bazaar store are satisfied towards the quality and price of Private Labels. The analysis is performed using Chi-square and weighted average analysis to draw meaningful inferences and conclusions.

### KEYWORDS

Retailing, Private Labels, Big Bazaar, Consumer Behavior, Satisfaction, Awareness level.

### INTRODUCTION

Private Label products or services are typically those manufactured or provided by one company for offer under another company's brand. Private Label goods and services are available in a wide range of industries from food to cosmetics to web hosting. They are often positioned as lower cost alternatives to regional, national or international brands, although recently some private label brands have been positioned as "premium" brands to compete with existing "name" brands.

Private Label describes products manufactured for sale under a specific retailer's brand. They are often designed to compete against branded products, offering customers a cheaper alternative to national brands. Though the public generally used to see them as low cost imitations of branded products, Private Labels have overcome this reputation and achieved significant growth in recent years. The most commonly known private label brand goods are the "store brands" sold by food retailers, though this is just one example of many. Department stores, electronic stores, and office supply retailers all offer private label products or services.

Private Labels were traditionally defined as generic product offerings that competed with their national brand counterparts by means of a price value proposition often the lower priced alternative to the "real" thing; in house brand or store brands carried the stigma of inferior quality and therefore inspired less trust and confidence. Yet, they still grew and prospered by providing consumers lower priced options for what was often a low involvement purchase decision. Retailers continued to push more and more in house brand products into different categories of the market place because they represented high margins and the promise of profitability with little to no marketing effort.

### NEED FOR THE STUDY

This study has conducted to identify the prospective market segments and the existing market potential in those segments. This study will help the store to identify the factor for which their brand is maintaining its position in the market and the factor need to be improved. The research on awareness level and promotion of Private Labels which will make the brand more preferable.

### OBJECTIVES

- To study the awareness level and customer satisfaction towards Private Labels of Big Bazaar
- To analyze the consumer behavior towards Private Labels.
- To suggest measures to promote the private label in market.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Peter et.al (2002), an empirical study in The Netherlands observed that in recent years, the quality of private label products and their market shares have grown to such an extent that most consumer goods manufacturers, brand leaders included, cannot afford to ignore them. The article concludes that performance of private labels plays a very important role in the market.

**Dr. Mario et.al (2005)**, study found that the odds of a consumer being highly pleased with a store label product when they are *supportive* of the quality of private labels, is more than the odds of the consumer being highly satisfied when purchasing private label products simply because they are *priced significantly lower* than manufacturer brands.

**Alison Fraser (2009)**, the study examines the Role of Store Image and customers' attitude towards private labels. The research concludes that the findings also suggest that store image should be incorporated in models predicting consumer proneness to private labels.

**Nirmalya Kumar, et.al (2007)**, found that retailers have become more powerful and global, they have increasingly focused on their own brands at the expense of manufacturer brands. Rather than simply selling on price, retailers have transformed private labels into brands.

**Kusum et.al (2003)**, the study reveals that a negative intrinsic relationship between store brand and national brand deal usage. Overall, our results suggest a competitive advantage for store brands. Store brands can attract many consumers by increasing their perceived quality. Manufacturers would then have a hard time attracting back these consumers even if they increase deal savings.

**Dr. Rajagopal (2008)**, observed that shopping malls contribute to business more significantly than traditional markets which were viewed as simple convergence of supply and demand. Shopping malls attract buyers and sellers, and induce customers providing enough time to make choices as well as a recreational means of shopping. The results of the study reveal that ambiance of shopping malls, assortment of stores; sales promotions and comparative economic gains in the mall attract higher customer traffic to the malls.

**Holbrook (2001)**, suggest that consumers become brand loyal when they perceive some unique value in the brand that no alternative can satisfy. This uniqueness may be derived from a greater trust in the reliability of a brand or from a more favourable experience when a customer uses the brand.

**Schoenbachler et al. (2004)**, stating that not only does the brand loyal customer buy the brand but (s) he also refuses to switch, even when presented with a better offer.

**Bayus (1992)**, proposes that maintaining brand loyalty is becoming a critical component in the development of competitive strategy, thus highlighting the importance of developing methods to measure and evaluate brand loyalty.

**Davis (2002)**, identified Effective brands have been correlated with increasing market share; lending credibility to new product developments; giving a clear, valued and sustainable point of difference as well as commanding a premium. Most importantly, consumers appear less price sensitive and more trusting towards these brands.

**Jin and Yong (2005)**, observed that the success of private label brands is dependent on factors such as the country's retail structure, the level of retailer concentration, the advertising rate of manufacturer brands, economies of scale, management, and even imagination

**Wulf et al. (2005)**, suggest that consumers perceive manufacturer brands to be superior to private label brands.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The required information is collected through the following sources.

### PRIMARY DATA

A non-probability, convenience sampling technique was used to administer a consumer survey. Well structured questionnaire were prepared by the researcher to identify the market potential, consumer awareness and consumer satisfaction towards in private label brand at Big bazaar stores.

### SECONDARY DATA

These data are collected from journals, company records, those which have already been collected by someone else and which have already been passed through the statistical process.

### SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size is 200. The data has been collected from the Customers of Big Bazaar in Chennai city .The various Big Bazaar stores chosen for the study are Royapuram, Vadapalani, T.Nagar, and Annasalai

### TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The data collected through questionnaire were tabulated and further suitably analyzed by applying following statistical tools

- Chi square Test
- Weighted Average Method

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1.1: AWARENESS LEVEL OF PRIVATE LABELS

Private Labels	Awareness	Respondents	Percentage
Tasty Treat	Yes	74	36%
	No	126	64%
Fresh & Pure	Yes	58	29%
	No	142	71%
Ekta	Yes	52	26%
	No	148	74%
John Miller	Yes	87	43.5%
	No	113	56.5%
Clean & Care Mate	Yes	82	41%
	No	118	59%
Sach	Yes	28	14%
	No	172	86%

Source: Primary Data

The table shows that awareness level of consumers towards Private Labels at big bazaar out of 200 Respondents, 36% are Aware of Tasty Treat Brand at Big Bazaar, 29% are Aware of Fresh & Pure Brand, 43.5% are Aware of John Miller Brand, 41% are aware of Clean mate & Care Mate and 14% are aware of Sach Brand at Big Bazaar.

TABLE 1.2: FREQUENT VISITING TO BIG BAZAAR

PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	137	68.5%
No	63	31.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

The research shows that, 68.5% of the customers are frequently visiting to Big Bazaar, 31.5% of them are not a frequent customers at Big Bazaar.



TABLE 1.3: AWARENESS TOWARDS VARIOUS PRIVATE LABEL PRODUCT AT BIG BAZAAR

PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	61	30.5%
No	139	69.5%
TOTAL	200	100%

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

The above table reveals that out of 200 Respondents, 30.5% are aware of various Private Label products at Big Bazaar, 69.5% are not aware of various Private Label products.

TABLE 1.4: SPOT PURCHASE BY CUSTOMERS

PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	86	43%
No	114	57%
TOTAL	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

The research shows that out of 200 respondents, 43% of Customers go for Spot Purchase of products based on Sales man advice , 57% of Customers Purchase the products based on their own preference and brand loyalty.

TABLE 1.5: CUSTOMERS LOYALTY TOWARDS PRIVATE BRAND

PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	108	54%
No	92	46%
TOTAL	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

From the study it can be inferred that out of 200 Respondents, 54% of Customers always stick to a particular brand, 46% of Customers move to new brands easily.

TABLE 1.6: PURCHASES BASED ON INFLUENCE OF FAMILY MEMBERS

PARTICULARS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	147	73.50%
No	53	26.50%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

The analysis reveals that, 73.5% of Customers purchasing behavior is influenced by family members.

**CHI SQUARE TEST**

**1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND PRIVATE LABELS**

Chi-square test is used to test age of customer has influence on the awareness of private label promotion at big bazaar.

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between the Age of Customers and awareness of Private Label's promotion at Big Bazaar.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between the Age of Customers and awareness of Private Label's promotion at Big Bazaar.

Chi square test =  $\sum (O-E)^2/E$

The calculated value of Chi square = 3.9222

Therefore degrees of freedom =  $(r-1) (c-1)$   
 =  $(2-1) (5-1) = 4$

The table value of Chi square with 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 9.49

By applying Chi square test, it was found that calculated value of chi-square is (3.9222) which is lesser than the table value at 5% level of significance (9.49), hence H0 is accepted.

**Inference:** There is no significant difference between the Age of Customers and awareness of Private Label's promotion at Big Bazaar. Hence the research conclude that the age of customer has no influence on the awareness Private Label's promotion at big bazaar

**2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AGE AND BRAND LOYALTY**

Chi-square test is used to find out the significant difference among the age and Brand Loyalty

**H0:** There is no significant difference between age and Brand Loyalty

**H1:** There is a significant difference between age and Brand Loyalty

Chi square test =  $\sum (O-E)^2/E$

The calculated value of Chi square = 15.98

Therefore degrees of freedom =  $(r-1) (c-1)$   
 =  $(2-1) (5-1) = 4$

The table value of Chi square with 4 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 9.49 By applying Chi-square it was found that the calculated value of chi-square is (15.9882) which is greater than table value (9.49). Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Inference:** There is a significant difference between the Age of Customers and Brand Loyalty

**WEIGHTED AVERAGE METHOD**

TABLE 1.7: SATISFACTION LEVEL OF TASTY TREAT KETCHUP QUALITY

Attributes	X	RANK	W	XW
Highly Satisfied	12	1	5	60
Satisfied	7	2	4	28
Moderate	21	3	3	63
Dissatisfied	11	4	2	22
Highly dissatisfied	3	5	1	3
TOTAL	54			176

=  $\sum xw / n$   
 = 176/54

Weighted average (XW) = 3.25

**Inference:** The study proves that the respondents are satisfied with quality of Tasty Treat Ketchup.

TABLE 1.8: SATISFACTION LEVEL OF TASTY TREAT KETCHUP PRICE

Attributes	X	RANK	W	XW
Highly satisfied	18	1	5	90
Satisfied	11	2	4	44
Moderate	15	3	3	45
Dissatisfied	7	4	2	14
Highly dissatisfied	3	5	1	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>			<b>196</b>

Calculation of weighted average

$$= \frac{\sum xw}{n}$$

$$= \frac{196}{54}$$

Weighted average (XW)

$$= 3.62$$

**Inference:** The weighted average analysis shows that respondents are satisfied with the price of the Tasty Treat Ketchup.

## FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

- The research shows that 68.5% of the respondents are frequent customers of Big Bazaar visiting monthly or weakly.
- It was found that 33.33% of the respondents are highly satisfied with the price of in house brand product of Big Bazaar.
- The study reveals that 43.5% of the respondents are aware of John Miller brand, 41% of the respondents are aware of Care mate & Clean mate, 36% of the respondents are aware of Tasty Treat brand and 14% of the respondents are aware of Sach brand.
- The weighted average analysis shows that the consumers are satisfied about the quality and price of Tasty Treat Ketchup.
- Out of 200 respondents 114 of them are easily change their brands based on availability.
- The survey shows that nearly 70% of the respondents are unaware of Private Labels of Big Bazaar.
- 43% of respondents go for spot purchase based on the salesman advice.
- The study reveals that nearly 74% of the respondents' purchases are based on the influence of family members.

## SUGGESTIONS

- Free Samples can be provided to increase the awareness level among consumers.
- Frequent paging about Positive aspects of Private Labels
- Display of Brand names in different way like wooden carvings
- Conducting Separate festivals or Mela for each Private Labels.
- Conducting spot competition to the kids and providing the in house brand product as gift.
- Selling of smaller packs like 100,250 grams, in Fresh & Pure Ghee, Tea.
- Providing separate credit points system for every in house brand purchase with surprise gift.
- Selling the product with Money Refund option if customers are not satisfied
- SMS Campaigns to frequent visiting customers about the new arrival.
- Brand promotion can be done by providing the following items to the customers like Book Marks ,Invitations, Prize Coupons ,Calendars ,Wristbands ,T Shirts and Cap Merchandise

## CONCLUSION

Brands reflect the complete experience that customers have with products. Brands play an important role in determining the effectiveness of marketing efforts such as advertising and channel placement. Strong Brand always own greater security of demand and can easily sold at premium price. Higher sales volumes could be achieved with strong brands with sustainable profits. Private Labels can attract many consumers by increasing their perceived quality. The study shows that Private Labels can be positioned as premium quality products with price levels ranging from marginally below to above prices of category-leading manufacturer brands. On the hand, retailers can position their Private Labels based on pure value for money. Private label communication strategies have successfully reached large proportion of customers.

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