

UNRAVELING BRAND PATRONIZATION DYNAMICS - INFLUENCE ON RETAILERS AND CUSTOMERS FOR TALC AS A BASE CASE

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Abstract

Brand loyalty and brand patronization are important aspects of the retail business, particularly when it comes to products with a long history of use and consumer loyalty like talcum powder. This study explores the complexities of brand loyalty in the context of talc for both consumers and retailers. Successful brand patronization strategies concentrate on creating meaningful connections, utilizing digital platforms for engagement, and creating a positive brand experience. In this study, the relationship between dependent variable and independent variable are taken with certain factors. This research study is descriptive in nature. Data are collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS software. A questionnaire was constructed for the retailers dealing in talcum powder. The participant is asked to strongly agree or Strongly Disagree with each statement and each response is given a numerical score to reflect its degree of attitude favorableness. The population size of retailers is known. A total of 260 retailers were investigated. The tools used for analysis are Regression, weighted average. Further, advertisement will make people who are not aware about the product make a purchase. The retailers expect profit margins, quantity discounts and offers from the company whereas they say that their consumers need premiums for the product. The preference of other brand is due to quality, fragrance, brand, price. The trade promotions which motivate the retailers profit margin, coupons, danglers, wholesale bonding and in-store displays which may eventually increase the sales of the talcum powder which will be the only motive of a retail store.

Keywords:

Brand Patronization, Talcum Powder, Retailers, Customers, Loyalty, Marketing Strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

People typically purchase goods not merely for the purpose of purchasing them but also in the hopes of benefiting from them and believing they will make their lives better. When it comes to talcum powder purchases, factors considered by consumers include health concerns, brand reputation, product features, and marketing strategies [1]. Because of its smoothing and absorbing qualities, talcum powder, commonly referred to as talc powder, is a widely used personal care product. Various face powders are sold in varying specialty hues to suit different skin needs [2]. In India, beauty and personal care products market is projected to generate revenue of USD 31.51 billion in 2024. Further, this market is expected to grow at an annual growth rate with a CAGR of 3.00% during the forecast period 2024-2028 [3]. In India, the revenue of talcum powder saw a growth of USD 431.1 million in 2022 and is expected to grow to USD 565.3 million by 2029, at a CAGR of 3.9%, during the forecast period (2023-2029) [4].

In recent years, questions have been raised over its safety, particularly when applied in the genital area. Over the years, there has been significant discussion regarding the safety of talc, in part because of the misconceptions surrounding the association between talc and asbestos [5] [6]. Skin-whitening creams are

highly sought after for their ability to lighten and beautify the skin. The halal status of a product may be impacted by the natural, semi-synthetic, and synthetic sources of ingredients used in cosmetics. Many consumers have serious concerns about the lack of scientific data about the dangers and safety of these chemicals. When it comes to talcum powder, consumers are heavily influenced by health factors [7]. Studies linking talc use to ovarian cancer have raised awareness and prompted consumers to evaluate the risks associated with using talcum powder. As a result, many consumers are now seeking alternatives or opting for talc-free products [8]. The standing of companies that produce talcum powder affects customer decision-making as well.

Well-known brands with a track record of dependability and quality are frequently favored over generic or unknown brands. The aim of consumers is to purchase skin care goods. While choosing personal care items like talcum powder, four aspects are taken into consideration by consumers: brand recognition, brand affinity and perceived quality, brand trust, and credibility [9]. Many of the products on the supermarket shelf succeed or fail mostly due to the visual components of packaging design (think color and form, image mould). Product attributes like fragrance, texture, packaging, and pricing also influence consumer buying decisions [10]. Fragrance preferences vary among individuals, with some preferring subtle scent while others prefer more pronounced ones. Although it was first hypothesized, the relationship between personality and scent is supported by the most recent psycho-physiological study [11].

Price sensitivity is another factor, with consumers weighing the perceived value of the product against its cost. Texture and packaging play a role in the user experience, affecting satisfaction and repeat purchases. When there are interactions between the packing texture and the senses—both tactile and visual—the effects of the texture on product perceptions are most noticeable [12]. Consumer preferences can be influenced by the marketing strategies used by talcum powder brands. Purchase decisions can be influenced by advertising efforts that stress the advantages of a product, provide safety assurances, and feature celebrity or medical expert endorsements.

Customers rely on peer evaluations and testimonials when selecting talcum powder goods, therefore social media and online reviews are also quite important. Social media provides people with an unparalleled opportunity to share their personal product reviews, promoting word-of-mouth recommendations [13]. Retailers have a significant influence on what consumers choose to buy, including talcum powder. Their preferences, strategies, and marketing efforts significantly influence how consumers perceive and buy talcum powder products. Gaining insight into the opinions of retailers regarding talcum powder can be quite helpful in understanding the dynamics of consumer decisions in this particular market area retailers now hold the majority of the channel power instead of manufacturers. They oversee in-store

marketing initiatives that impact customers' decisions during the "moment of truth," when a significant portion of purchases are made, in addition to serving as gatekeepers for new products to reach final consumers [14].

The talcum powder preferences of retailers cover a wide range of topics, including brand selection, pricing tactics, promotion strategies, and customer service approaches. For instance, retailers may favor stocking talcum powder brands that have a strong market presence, positive consumer perceptions, and effective marketing campaigns. Products with larger profit margins or ones that fit the preferences and demographics of their target market may also be given priority. There are only three components to SMM activities: word-of-mouth, customization, and trendiness. Through the mediation of brand trust, these social media marketing traits have a direct effect on brand loyalty and a secondary effect on brand equity [15].

Retailers may also be influenced by innovation in packaging, sustainability, regulatory concerns, and product quality when making decisions about talcum powder. They may decide to work with distributors or manufacturers of talcum powder who provide competitive advantages like exclusive offers, bulk discounts, or dependable supply chains. [16].

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous studies have demonstrated the connection between brand awareness and repeat purchases, which is a basic marketing concept [17]. Before any initial transactions are made, there is a relationship between brand awareness and purchases. When a company is introduced to consumers through successful marketing techniques, it sparks their curiosity and prepares them for their first purchase [18]. The factors such as fragrance, brand reputation, packaging, and price significantly influence consumers' purchasing decisions. User-friendly packaging, clear instructions, and a visually appealing design can attract buyers and enhance the overall user experience [19]. In addition to these factors there are few factors like product quality, availability, promotional activities, and brand loyalty, shedding light on how these factors vary between urban and rural consumers [20]. There is an impact of supplier relationships on retailers' preferences when procuring talcum powder by retailer-supplier interaction and conducting interviews with key stakeholders, the researchers identified that strong supplier relationships, including reliable deliveries, pricing flexibility, and collaborative marketing support, significantly influence retailers' choices in sourcing talcum powder products. Effective marketing strategies, including advertising campaigns, promotions, and endorsements, can sway consumer preferences towards specific talcum powder brands. Promotional offers, discounts, and bundling deals can make affordable talcum powders even more attractive to price-conscious consumers [21].

But the later stages of the consumer journey are where this relationship really shines. Recurring purchases are largely encouraged by positive experiences from the initial purchase. Customers are more likely to choose the same brand for subsequent purchases when they are satisfied, which is fueled by variables like high-quality products, first-rate customer service, and an easy-to-use purchasing experience. These recurring business dealings are an effective way to increase brand

awareness in addition to fostering consumer loyalty [18]. The growing awareness of environmental sustainability and ethical practices has influenced consumer preferences towards eco-friendly and cruelty-free talcum powder brands. Retailers have responded by partnering with sustainable suppliers, adopting recyclable packaging, and obtaining certifications like cruelty-free or vegan labels. Given recent concerns about talcum powder safety, consumers may prioritize products with certifications, safety assurances, and transparent labelling regarding potential risks [22]. This suggests that a brand's awareness increases its importance to consumers while they are making decisions. The importance of brand awareness is further highlighted by the notion that it finally influences the consumer's decision, with the premium brand being chosen as the top choice and with regard to its packaging. Packaging serves as a powerful tool for conveying the brand's identity and values. A brand that invests in attractive packaging sends a message of professionalism, creativity, and commitment to customer satisfaction. This positive brand image can influence consumers who are loyal to the brand or seeking products from reputable companies [23].

When there is a difference in quality between rival brands, customers can be prepared to pay more for the well-known brand. A good brand reputation fosters loyalty among consumers. People are more inclined to repurchase talcum powder from a brand if they have had good experiences with it. Familiarity has an impact on brand loyalty as well since people stick with companies they are familiar with and believe in. Effective marketing strategies, consistent product quality, and engaging customer experiences contribute to building brand loyalty over time. This suggests that brand knowledge affects customers' decisions as well as their perception of a brand's worth, which increases their propensity to spend in it [24].

The purpose of this research is to find the impact of the various factors considered on retailers' satisfaction on talcum powder, to find out the customer perspective towards talcum powder and to find the impact of customer perspective on talcum powder on retailers' satisfaction for talcum powder.

3. METHODOLOGY

To address the objectives of this research the research design adopted was descriptive in nature. Both the primary and secondary data are used for the research. The factors considered for measuring the brand patronization pattern among retailers of talcum powders were profit margins enjoyed by the retailers, better price to customers, positive customer reviews, good brand reputation of talcum powder manufacturers, promotions done by talcum powder manufacturers, attractive packaging, good sales person relations with retailers, credit policy offered by the talcum powder manufacturers, timely delivery, damaged good return policy and address queries, concerns of retailers. Further, the retailers' view point of customer perspective [25] on factors influencing talcum powder preference are availability of a brand, affordable price, good fragrance, good brand reputation, recommended by family and friends, popularity, attractive packaging and positive customer reviews. The primary data required for this research was collected from the retailers using a structured questionnaire. The secondary data for this research is obtained from websites, journals and articles. The questionnaire

contains 5point scale questions and demographic questions. The data has been collected from the 260 retailers in Chennai region of Tamil Nadu, India. Various tools and methods were used for the purpose of analyzing factors were weighted average and regression.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first part of this section investigates the demographic profile of the retailers of talcum powder. The demographic data provides insights into the distribution of retailers based on their years of retailing of talcum powder, the type of store they operate, their income levels, and the popularity of different SKUs. Analyzing this information can help businesses make informed decisions regarding product offerings, target specific market segments, and develop effective marketing strategies tailored to the preferences and characteristics of different retailer groups to maximize sales and profitability through profit margins, good salesperson relations, credit policy, timely delivery, damaged good return policy and address queries, concerns of retailers. Customers preferences for talcum powder in the opinion of retailers are based on good availability, affordable price, good fragrance, good brand reputation, recommended by family and friends, high popularity, attractive packaging and positive customer reviews.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RETAILERS

Table.1. Demographic profile of retailers of Talcum powder

Variable	Groups	Number of Retailers
Years of retailing talcum powder	Less than a year	22
	Between 1 to 2 years	29
	Between 3 to 5 years	36
	Above 5 years	173
Type of store	Supermarkets	160
	Convenient Stores	14
	Departmental Stores	9
	Others	40
	Medicals	11
	Provisional Store	26
Income	< INR 1000 per month	46
	INR 1000 to 1500 per month	99
	INR 1500 – INR 2000 per month	78
	> INR 2000 per month	37
Popular SKUs	50 grams	36
	100 grams	191
	200 grams	0
	400 grams	33

This analysis provides insights into the characteristics and preferences of the retailers in the talcum powder retailing business. The distribution of retailers based on their years of retailing talcum powder shows that majority of the retailers are dealing

from more than 5 years(173) followed by 3 to 5 years with 36 retailers. Many of the retailers are from supermarket (160). The income generated from talcum powder is between INR 1000 to INR 1500 per month in view of retailers as it not frequently purchased by the customers. The popular SKU which is sold is 100 grams as it convenient for the retailers to sell and for customers to use. The retailers don't prefer 200 grams SKU as it has limited flavors compared to other SKUs.

4.2 IMPACT OF THE VARIOUS FACTORS CONSIDERED ON RETAILERS' SATISFACTION ON TALCUM POWDER

To analyze the impact of the variables such as Marketing and Promotional Support, Profitability and Margins, Distribution and Logistics Capabilities, Appropriate packaging, Credit Policy, Product Quality and Brand Reputation on the retailers' willingness to Talcum powder, linear regression model was used. Here simple linear regression was carried out separately for the eleven factors considered and the results were compiled in Table.2. The outcome of the regression is presented as $y = a + b x_n$, where Y is the dependent variable, ' a ' is the constant, ' b ' is the regression coefficient, ' x ' is the independent variable. The hypothesis considered is presented below.

- H_0 : There is no impact on retailers' satisfaction from the factors considered for the study.
- H_a : There is impact on retailers 'satisfaction from the factors considered for the study.

$$Y = 0.581 + 0.430x_1 \quad (1)$$

$$Y = 0.607 + 0.434 x_2 \quad (2)$$

$$Y = 0.573 + 0.398 x_3 \quad (3)$$

$$Y = 0.472 + 0.314 x_4 \quad (4)$$

$$Y = 0.570 + 0.377 x_5 \quad (5)$$

$$Y = 0.340 + 0.242 x_6 \quad (6)$$

$$Y = 0.626 + 0.473x_7 \quad (7)$$

$$Y = 0.646 + 0.466x_8 \quad (8)$$

$$Y = 0.554 + 0.499x_9 \quad (9)$$

$$Y = 0.604 + 0.557x_{10} \quad (10)$$

$$Y = 0.737 + 0.637x_{11} \quad (11)$$

where,

Y_1 is the Overall satisfaction of retailers towards talcum powder

X_1 is Good profit margin offered by manufacturers to retailers

X_2 is Better price to customers offered by talcum manufacturers to retailers

X_3 is Positive customer reviews by talcum manufacturers to boost sales

X_4 is Good brand reputation offered by manufacturers to create their brand image

X_5 is Good promotion offered by manufacturers to retailers to create brand awareness

X_6 is Attractive packaging offered to end consumers by talcum manufacturers

Table.2. Impact of various factors on the retailers’ satisfaction

Factors	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R ²	F	Sig. F	Co eff	Constant
Good profit margin	.430	.185	.182	.8487	.185	58.899	.000	.581	.430
Better price to customers	.434	.188	.185	.8472	.188	60.033	.000	.607	.434
Positive customers reviews	.398	.159	.156	.8624	.159	48.882	.000	.573	.398
Good brand reputation	.314	.099	.095	.8926	.099	28.410	.002	.472	.314
Good promotion	.377	.142	.139	.8710	.142	42.829	.007	.570	.377
Attractive packaging	.242	.059	.055	.9123	.059	16.133	.004	.340	.242
Good sales person relation	.473	.224	.221	.8282	.224	74.835	.000	.626	.473
Credit policy	.466	.217	.214	.8319	.217	71.901	.000	.646	.466
Timely delivery	.499	.249	.246	.8148	.249	85.916	.000	.554	.499
Damaged good return policy	.557	.310	.308	.7809	.310	116.56	.001	.604	.557
Address queries and concerns	.637	.406	.403	.7250	.406	176.71	.002	.737	.637

X₇ is Good sales person relation results in good bonding leads to satisfaction

X₈ is Credit policy offered to retailers by talcum manufacturers

X₉ is Timely delivery offered by talcum manufacturers to maintain brand reputation

X₁₀ is Damaged good return policy offered by talcum manufacturers is sufficient

X₁₁ is Address queries, concerns whenever required

4.3 CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS TALCUM POWDER

Weighted average is found out for each factor (Good availability, affordable price, good fragrance, good brand reputation, recommended by family and friends, high popularity, attractive packaging, positive customer reviews) separately. Ranking is done manually by giving the highest rank 1 to the highest value of weighted average and lowest rank 8 to the lowest value of weighted average.

Table.3. Ranking of weighted average

Factors	Weighted Average	Rank
Good Availability	4.53	1
Good fragrance	4.36	2
Affordable price	4.29	3
Good brand reputation	3.91	4
Recommended by family and friends	3.35	5
Positive customer reviews	3.08	6
High popularity	2.96	7
Attractive packaging	2.92	8

From the Table.3 it can be inferred that most of the retailers perceive that talcum powder is having good availability in the market and so they provide highest weightage to it which is ranked 1, similarly good fragrance and affordable price are ranked with second and third highest rank. According to customer perspective high popularity and attractive packaging are ranked least due to their preference.

4.4 IMPACT OF FACTORS ON CUSTOMER BETWEEN RETAILERS PERSPECTIVE WITH PERSPECTIVE ON SATISFACTION

Multiple regression test is used to show the association between Overall level of satisfaction and other related satisfactory levels of the respondents

- H₀: There is no significant relationship between Retailers perspective with overall satisfaction of retailers of Talcum powder.
- H_a: There is significant relationship overall satisfaction of retailers of Talcum powder.

Table.4. Multiple regression between the antecedents for talcum powder with overall satisfaction

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Std Coefficient	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
Good Availability	.324	.080	.205	.000
Affordable price	.453	.072	.322	.017
Good fragrance	.074	.071	.051	.293
Good brand reputation	.168	.065	.129	.011
Recommended by family and friends	.083	.078	.053	.291
High popularity	.326	.104	.172	.002
Attractive packaging	.315	.105	.171	.003
Positive customer reviews	.460	.096	.261	.000

Observing the Table.4, it is found that there is a significant relationship between the independent variables like good availability, affordable price, good brand reputation, high popularity, attractive packaging, positive customer reviews with dependent variable Overall satisfaction, where the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate hypothesis was accepted (p < 0.05). The other factors like good fragrance and Recommended by family and friends where the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternate

hypothesis is rejected ($p > 0.05$) where there are no significant variables between the variables.

$$Y_2 = 0.324 b_1 + 0.453 b_2 + 0.168 b_3 + 0.326 b_4 + 0.315 b_5 + 0.460 b_6 - 4.448$$

In this analysis the regression result is,

Y_2 is Overall satisfaction of customers towards talcum powder

b_1 is Good Availability

b_2 is Affordable price

b_3 is Good brand reputation

b_4 is High popularity

b_5 is Attractive packaging

b_6 is Positive customer reviews

The null hypothesis is rejected, according to the above table, since the p-value is less than 0.05. As a result, it is found that various variables like good availability, affordable price, good brand reputation and overall satisfaction of retailers are related. The multiple correlation coefficient is 0.729 measures the degree of relationship between the actual values and the predicted values of the Overall performance that influences various variables. Because the predicted values are obtained as a linear combination of the factors, the coefficient value of 0.729 indicates that the relationship between Overall Performance and various variables like Good availability, affordable price, Good brand reputation and the independent variables of the factors is moderate and associative.

5. CONCLUSION

The phenomena of talcum powder in brand patronization among retailers and customers are complex and are influenced by multiple factors. Retailers frequently place a higher priority on carrying well-known, reliable brands that provide benefits like profitability and marketing assistance. Conversely, customers are more likely to support brands that meet their wants, preferences, and beliefs on efficacy, safety, and quality. The calming and revitalizing properties of talcum powder are among the reasons why customers trust and remain loyal to businesses that continuously provide positive outcomes. Consumer brand loyalty is also significantly shaped by variables like promotion, product availability, pricing, and brand reputation. The retailers are satisfied with talcum powder and are satisfied in dealing with the company because they provide good profit margins, prompt delivery to the retailers and have a very strong sales team. The trade promotions can be made stronger by providing price discounts, quantity discounts, coupons, in-store displays, danglers, wholesale bonding providing offers to the retailers. As talcum powder is quite slow moving as people are aware but not interested in buying the product and this can be rectified by providing advertisement, celebrity endorsement and displays to the retailers. The fast-moving SKU Talcum powder is 100gm, as it is convenient for retailers to sell and easy for customers to use. The majority of sale of Talcum powder is based on monthly basis and can be delivered to retailers whenever the stock is less. A few improvements must be made to increase sales like more advertisement, offers, and celebrity endorsement. This is a good sign and large customer base can be attracted to buy through focusing on below the line promotions. Moreover, long-term

success in the talcum powder sector depends on adjusting to changing consumer tastes, making investments in product innovation, and keeping open lines of communication with both merchants and customers.

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