

A Study of Consumer’s Preference Between Lux Bath Soap and Santoor Bath Soap in Indore City, Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract

Hindustan Unilever positioned Lux bathing soap as a beauty and fine fragrance soap while the Wipro consumer positioned Santoor bathing soap as a product of original ingredients and young looking. Both the brands are positioned competitively and prices are almost same and their marketing strategies are focussed on more market share. Many times, santoor have taken lead by selling more volume than Lux soap. In the latest AC Nielsen study of this quarter shows that Santoor has become number one bathing soap in India by beating the sales of Lux and also Lifebuoy. The study conducted in Indore to know the preferences of consumers of Indore shown that Lux is still ruling the heart of customers and still ahead of Santoor. Total 150 customers were contacted out of which 140 responses are useful. Data analysis was done by using Cronbach’s Alfa and T-test.

Keywords: Customer Preference, Bathing soap, original ingredients, Beauty, Fine fragrance

Introduction

Unilever launched Lux bathing soap in 1899 and it came to India in 1929. In the same year Lux was associated with biggest female film star all over world and positioned as beauty soap. Later on Hindustan Unilever positioned Lux bathing soap as a beauty and fine fragrance soap and associated with the current top Bollywood actresses from Shobhana Samarth to HemaMalini and current endorser Suhana Khan. Lux is available in 7 sizes 54, 80, 100,125,130,150 and 175 grams. And 8 variants. While the Wipro consumer ltd. Launched Santoor soap in 1985 positioned as soap with natural ingredients like sandalwood and turmeric. Later on, Santoor bathing soap was repositioned as a product of original ingredients and young-looking skin. Santoor has 7 variants and 4 sizes 45, 100, 125 and 150 grams. Both the brands are positioned competitively in the same segment and prices are almost same and their marketing strategies are focussed on more market share. Many times, santoor have taken lead by selling more volume than Lux soap. In the latest Org-Marg study of this quarter of 2025 shows that Santoor has become number one bathing soap in India by beating the sales of Lux and also Lifebuoy. The study conducted in Indore to know the preferences of consumers of Indore shown that Lux is still ruling the heart of customers and still ahead of Santoor. The city of Indore is situated in north part of India and exhibit the socio-culture of North. Total 150 customers were contacted out of which 140 responses are useful. Data analysis was done by using Cronbach’s Alfa and T-test.

Review of Literature

The Indian soap market is continuously growing with the rise of hygiene awareness, affordability of common people and urbanization. According to Imarc the Indian soap market reached the size of USD 4 Billion in 2024 and it will grow at CAGR of 3.19 from 2025 to 2033 and reached the size of USD 5.14 Billion in 2033. From last century Indian soap industry has grown from basic soaps to wide array of products including beauty, premium, medicated and Herbal soaps (Gupta & Sharma 2019). According to Kumar and Raj (2021) the Indian soap market is segmented into Medicated\antibacterial soap, beauty soap, Luxury and organic soap and Herbal and Ayurvedic soap. Consumer’s preferences changes on the basis of Age, Gender, Income group and Geographical region. According to Roy (2019) and Singh and Yadav (2020) consumer behaviour in soap industry is influenced by brand loyalty, perceived skin benefit, fragrance and packaging, advertising and price. Younger generation wanted aesthetic appeal and fragrance while the rural consumer still wanted better price and availability. Due to rising environmental awareness, there is strong shift for herbal organic and eco-friendly soaps (Chatterjee and Banerjee 2022). Advertising plays important role for influencing the customers and building strong branding of soap. Mass media advertising in newspaper and TV is still playing important role in promotion of soaps and internet marketing and particularly social media advertisement is growing fast and garnering huge customers.

According to Mehta and Joshi (2023) rise of online platform dramatically changed the promotion channel and distribution. Emotional branding and celebrity endorsement play important role in customer choice of soap (Dixit 2020). Brand loyalty is when customers repeated purchase same brand of product for long period of time and also reflect in his\her behaviour such as word of mouth advocacy (Dick and Kunal 1994). Customer are long period of time brand loyal to soaps and generally do not change to new soap easily due to brand loyalty, perceived risk, cultural preference, habit and lack of perceived benefits in new product (Bagchi p., 2019). If customers are self-satisfied and not by ant compulsion then they are brand loyal for the long time (Blomerandkasper 1995) and Lux has given constantly good quality and continuously innovative product for new generation of the customers since launch of brand in 1929. If loyal customer purchase same quantity of products, then they are less sensitive to price change and if quantity is high then they are highly sensitive to price changes (Krishnamurthi and Raj 1991). Soap consumption is almost equal for the customers and lux is constantly offering competitive price with santoor. A study conducted on woman found that brand switching in woman varies in different age group and in age group of 21 to 30 female switch mostly soap brands but after 40 hardly they change brand (Balamurugan, Gopi and Kothai, 2021)

The objectives of study

1. To know the preference of consumers between Lux and Santoor soap in Indore city.
2. To know the preference of consumers between beauty and young-ness while purchasing bath soap in Indore city.
3. To know the factors which influences purchasing behaviour of consumers for bathing soap in Indore city?

Hypothesis

H1: Customers have no difference of opinion while purchasing Lux and Santoor bath soap.

H2: Customers have no difference of opinion about effect of soap on beauty while purchasing Lux and Santoor soap.

H3: Customers have no difference of opinion about the sizes and variants for brand while purchasing soap.

H4: Customers have no difference of opinion for promoting brand as protecting youngness while purchasing soap.

H5: Customers have no difference of opinion for claim of using natural ingredients by Santoor soap.

H6: Customers have no difference of opinion for more brand promotion on different media while purchasing soap.

Research methodology

The nature of this research study is exploratory research

Sample Design

Sample design is made to collect information from the online consumer by a structured questionnaire and target population is Indore city of Madhya Pradesh, India. Convenience random sampling method of data collection was used to collect information from online customers.

A sample size of 150 was selected out of which 140 respondents answered properly from Indore city of Madhya Pradesh India.

Tools used for data collection

Primary data

The primary data is collected by a structured questionnaire of 17 questions

Secondary Data

The secondary data is collected from following source

1. Journals and Magazines
2. Website
3. Reference Books
4. Newspapers

Tools for Data Analysis

Data analysis was done by using Cronbach’s Alfa for reliability test and data comparisons were done with T-test.

Data Analysis

Reliability statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.936	11

The value of Cronbach’s Alfa is greater than 0.5, which allows us to accept data

Demographic Analysis

Analysis of demographic data shows that 50.7% are male and 49.3% are female respondents who are using both the soaps and purchased.

Analysis of age group data shows that 35.7% are below 25 years, 36.4% are in age group of 25 to 45 and 17.9% are in age group of 45 to 65 and 10% are in age group of above 65 years.

Analysis of education qualification data shows that 15.7% are 12th and below, 22.1% are graduates, 32.1% are post graduates and 30% are professionally qualified.

Analysis of marital data indicates that 32.1% Unmarried are and 67.9% are married.

Analysis of Occupational data shows that are 27.1% private employees and 20% are government employees, 14.3% are retired and 22.1% self-employed and are 16.4% students.

Analysis of income data shows that 13.6% have less than 20,000 income, 36.4% are below 50,000, 29.3% are below 1,00,000 and 20.7% are above 1,00,000.

Test of Hypothesis

H1: Customers have no difference of opinion while purchasing Lux and Santoor bath soap.

$$T(139) = 33.407, \quad p = 00$$

The value of $p < 0.5$ which means there is significance difference in the mean value, which means the null hypothesis is rejected and customers are influenced by LUX 's marketing strategies and are purchasing more from it.

H2: Customers have no difference of opinion about effect of soap on beauty while purchasing Lux and Santoor soap.

$$T(139) = 34.034, \quad p = 00$$

The value of $p < 0.5$ which means there is significance difference in the mean value, which means the null hypothesis is rejected and customers are influenced by LUX 's marketing strategies of beauty and are purchasing more from it.

H3: Customers have no difference of opinion about the sizes and variants for brand while purchasing soap.

$$T(139) = 33.407, \quad p = 00$$

The value of $p < 0.5$ which means there is significance difference in the mean value, which means the null hypothesis is rejected and customers are influenced by more sizes and variants of LUX 's marketing strategies and are purchasing more from it.

H4: Customers have no difference of opinion for promoting brand as protecting youngness while purchasing soap.

$$T(139) = 33.692, \quad p = 00$$

The value of $p < 0.5$ which means there is significance difference in the mean value, which means the null hypothesis is rejected and customers are influenced by Santoor's marketing strategies of looking younger and are purchasing from it.

H5: Customers have no difference of opinion for claim of using natural ingredients by Santoor soap.

$$T(139) = 33.463, \quad p = 00$$

The value of $p < 0.5$ which means there is significance difference in the mean value, which means the null hypothesis is rejected and customers are influenced by Santoor’s marketing strategies of using natural ingredients sandalwood and turmeric and are purchasing more from it.

H6: Customers have no difference of opinion for more brand promotion on different media while purchasing soap.

$$T(139) = 33.446, p = 00$$

The value of $p < 0.5$ which means there is significance difference in the mean value, which means the null hypothesis is rejected and customers are influenced by LUX ’s marketing strategies of promoting aggressively on different media and are more purchasing from it.

Findings

1. Consumers have more preference for Lux soap which means Lux soap has more sales than Santoor soap in Indore city.
2. Consumers of Indore have more preference for beauty concept of Lux than younger looking concept of santoor
3. Lux offers more sizes and variants than Santoor which helps in more selling.
4. Lux has more aggressive promotional strategy on the different media including social media than Santoor which help in more selling.
5. Santoor used young looking skin and influencing customers but customers of lux also feel that beauty is also related with young age.
6. Santoor is promoting on the basis of natural ingredients like sandalwood and turmeric but Lux also promotes on the basis of fragrances from floral extract like rose, kewda etc.

Managerial Implications

Lux soap has maintained its’ market status after launch of nearly 100 years in India market due to its’ strong marketing fundamentals of product innovation, focussed promotion and understanding consumer behaviour of Indian customers. Lux has constantly innovated from basic bathing soap to beauty soap with different floral ingredients to make it relevant with present generation’s psyche. The promotion on different media including the social media has greatly helped the Lux to reach target customers. Managers of lux have great understanding of beauty concept of customer helped the company to maintain the sales of Lux.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that a determined marketing strategy of HUL helped the Lux bathing soap to maintain its market share in Indore city. HUL has good insight of consumer mind about the product, sizes and flavours and also media habit for promotion and distribution of the product. Study also showed the difference between North and south customers about the ingredients used for soap and beauty concept and younger ness.

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