



## CONSUMERS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS HAMAM SOAP IN THANJAVUR TOWN

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### ABSTRACT

The marketing scenario in India has undergone vast change since 1991 due to the economic reforms. Post-liberalization, competition intensified in every product line and market, which forced brands to redefine their norms of existence in all industries. In the FMCG industry, especially in toilet soap sector there has been severe competition among the MNCs, national and local players. Brand loyalty is determined by several distinct psychological processes of the consumers and entails multivariate measurements. Product features (Fragrance / Skin care / Germ fight features / Colour) is one of the most important factors that affect brand loyalty. The relationship between the availability of the toilet soap and the extent of brand loyalty was also found to be significant. The toilet soaps can be divided into four price segments: Premium, popular, economy and carbolic soaps. At the same time, penetration level of toilet soaps in urban areas is very high, but per capita consumption levels remain low. In this scenario, it is very important for marketers to know the consumer behavior with respect to toilet soaps, which will be very useful in adopting suitable strategies. This research paper attempts to analyze the brand loyalty, satisfaction, awareness regarding Hamam soap in Thanjavur town, Tamilnadu..

**KEYWORDS:** Brand Awareness, Consumer satisfaction, Brand Loyalty, Thanjavur, Hamam soap.

### INTRODUCTION

Marketing is the process of communicating the value of a product or service to customers, for the purpose of selling the product or service. It is a critical business function for attracting customers. From a societal point of view, marketing is the link between a society's material requirements and its economic patterns of response. Marketing satisfies these needs and wants through exchange processes and building long term relationships. It is the process of communicating the value of a product or service through positioning to customers. Marketing can be looked at as an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, delivering and communicating value to customers, and managing customer relationships in ways that also benefit the organization and its shareholders. Marketing is the science of Choosing target markets through market analysis and market segmentation, as well as understanding consumer buying behavior and providing superior customer value.

There are five competing concepts under which organizations can choose to operate their business; the production concept, the product concept, the selling concept, the marketing concept, and the holistic marketing concept. The four components of holistic marketing are relationship marketing, internal marketing, integrated marketing, and socially responsive marketing. The set of engagements necessary for successful marketing management includes, capturing marketing insights, connecting with customers, building strong brands, shaping the market offerings, delivering and

communicating value, creating long-term growth, and developing marketing strategies and plans.

#### Meaning of market

The word 'Market' is derived from the Latin word 'Marcatus' meaning merchandise, wares, traffic, trade or a place where business is conducted. The common usage of market means a place where goods are bought or sold.

#### Definition of Market

"Market refers to both place and region in which buyers and sellers are in free competition with one another." - Pyle

"The term market refers not to a place, but commodity or commodities and buyers and sellers who are in direct competition with one another." – Chapman

#### Meaning of Marketing

The management process through which goods and services move from concept to the customer. It includes the coordination of four elements called the 4 P's of marketing:

1. Identification, selection and development of a product,
2. Determination of its price,
3. Selection of a distribution channel to reach the customer's place, and
4. Development and implementation of a promotional strategy.

The essence of marketing is an exchange or a transaction, intended to satisfy human needs or wants. That is marketing is a human activity directed at satisfying needs and wants, through an exchange of process. A demand is a want for which the consumer is prepared to pay a price.

A want is anything or a service the consumer desires or seeks. Wants become demands when backed by purchasing power. A need is anything the consumer feels to keep himself alive and healthy. A transaction consists of two parties. A transaction differs from the transfer. A transfer may receive nothing in return. The main aim of marketing is to make sales in order to earn reasonable profit for the producer.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Survey of literature takes an important part in all researches and it is a systematic quest for available truths on a particular topic. It is very useful to know what has happened in the particular topic and what has been found out and to decide what should be found out in future research. The researcher can understand the gap in which aspect no research has been undertaken in the past period. In this way, such survey takes an important role in a research process. The following is a brief summary of review of literature- 'consumer behavior'.

**Andrew K. & Lawrence V (1984)** found out that the consumer was very much sensitive in the context of frequent hike in price of commodities.

**William J. Stanton (1990)** concluded that the consumer behavior would be determined by various psychological attributes rather than explicit factors such as change in quality, design of the commodity, packing etc.

**Edward F. Flippo (1990)** has told that the determinants of consumer behavior would make the consumer more sensitive and they influenced their buying process.

**John R. Dillon (1991)** discussed various determinants of consumer behaviour such as Income, age, sex, religion, and other socio economic background and he came to a conclusion that the consumers were very clear in their choice.

**K.V. Charles and V. Kohil (1994)** decided in their study on consumer preference of cosmetics that the consumers' attention would be on the price and utility of the products.

**P.K. Ghosh (1998)** described in his review that the economic status was the major factor to influence consumers' attitude.

**V.R. Choudhri (1999)** explained that the consumer would be willing to buy again and again when they were satisfied with their sentimental feelings and they usually evaluate their buying decisions in terms of expectations and satisfactions.

**J. Santhosh and K. Kamalesh Guptha (2000)** listed various strategies of consumer satisfaction in automobile industry and they concluded that the consumers' attitude would be influenced by the price and value of the products.

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

There is a wider scope for consumer research. Because, the consumers, taste, likes, preferences etc., change often because of financial, psychological, sociological and some other factors. Academic community as well as business firms has undertaken a lot of researches in the field of consumer behaviour, in different ways. The consumer differs in many respects. They form different segments in market. All the firms are interested in studying each segment separately. As for as the bath soaps are

concerned, the consumers may change their brand loyalty frequently because various new brands are coming every day. So, there are a lot of opportunities to probe into various aspects of consumer preference.

The present study would help the dealer to know the satisfaction of the respondents towards Hamam soap and various soap brands. This would help the company to determine the promotional measures based on the findings. The company can adopt the promotional measures in and around Thanjavur town as this study was conducted there.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Indian soap industry now has so many challenges, arising from globalization, increased competition, technological changes, and so on. It is more sensitive sector in one sense that the consumers shift their brand preference at least once in two or three years. They want new products so that the existing firms have to modify their product lines and various items in the lines. In most of the cases, the same product is supplied to the market with product differentiation. Very large number of consumers is strength to this industry. The total number of consumer is almost equal to the total population of our country. So, numerous companies engage in manufacturing of soaps. Role of small-scale industries and local industries are significant in this regard.

All the firms want to study the minds of consumers. But, it is a very difficult process, which includes various psychological issues. Consumer research takes a very important role in determining company's future plans. The consumers are influenced by many sociological, psychological, and economic, climate and some other factors very strongly.

These factors have been identified properly through various researches. When the firms understand those drives, product and promotional policies are given a final shape.

Consumer preference is a difficult area to be studied. Its coverage is comprehensive. The consumers are large in number and they are in different groups, their motives differ in many respects. So, the present study has taken up these issues.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives of the present study:

- To know the socio-economic profile of the consumers of the hamam soap.
- To determine the most influencing factor in the purchase of the hamam soap.
- To know the source of influence in the purchase of hamam soap
- To know the pattern of usages of the hamam soap.
- To study the satisfaction of the consumers towards the hamam soap based on the various products
- To give suggestions based on the study for the improvement of the product.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design work is a specified framework for controlling the data collection. It is the basic plan, which guides the data collection & analysis phases of the research project. This study is based on analysis of data so

that the present work is basically an analytical study, which tries to analyze the view of the customers using the information collected from them. To achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher collected the data from the customers and then analysis was done.

In social science there are two outstanding research methods:

- a) Primary data
- b) Secondary data

This study is based on both primary and secondary data.

#### **Sampling unit**

Users of hamam soap in Thanjavur town constitute population of the present study.

#### **Sampling size**

In this survey the sample size was determined as 150 arbitrarily.

#### **Sampling technique**

The researcher has adopted convenient sampling for the researches. Before selecting the samples, the town was divided into six divisions for the purpose of selecting samples from various parts of the town. The following list shows the details. Medical college area, New bus stand area, E.B. colony, Karanthai, Srinivasapuram, Rajarajan nagar. From each area 25 samples were selected by convenience sampling technique. As these areas have a heavy population and the people from all walks of life in these areas, the sample frame of the present study has contained all varieties of the consumers.

#### **Area of the study**

This study has been undertaken in different parts of **Thanjavur** town. Thanjavur town, know as an important tourist place, is the geographical area of this project work. The big temple is an excellent holy place which is the most attractive factor of this town. Agriculture is the main profession in around of this town. Now this town is popular for school and collegiate educations. A number of excellent matriculations school and arts and science colleges have been started for the last ten to fifteen years. At present, many engineering colleges and teacher training institutions emerge to fulfill educational requirements of this area. The area has a heavy population, consisting of people from different walks of life.

Thanjavur district stands unique from time immemorial for its agricultural activities and is rightly acclaimed as the Granary of the South India lying in the deltaic region of the famous river Cauvery. The river has also been named 'Ponni' because it is yielding 'pon' -Gold in the form of paddy. That is why it is said with pride that every iota of the earth of Thanjavur is equal to an iota of gold. The tillers in Tamil literature have been rightly called as 'Kauvirippudhalvars' - the sons of the Cauvery as they alone are worthy of this title for the rich production of grains in this fertile soil.

#### **Profile of Hindustan Unilever Limited**



In the summer of 1888, visitors to the Kolkata harbour noticed crates full of Sunlight soap bars, embossed with the words "Made in England by Lever Brothers". With it, began an era of marketing

branded Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG).

Soon after followed Lifebuoy in 1895 and other famous brands like Pears, Lux and Vim. Vanaspati was launched in 1918 and the famous Dalda brand came to the market in 1937.

In 1931, Unilever set up its first Indian subsidiary, Hindustan Vanaspati Manufacturing Company, followed by Lever Brothers India Limited (1933) and United Traders Limited (1935). These three companies merged to form HUL in November 1956; HUL offered 10% of its equity to the Indian public, being the first among the foreign subsidiaries to do so. Unilever now holds 52.10% equity in the company. The rest of the shareholding is distributed among about 360,675 individual shareholders and financial institutions.

The liberalization of the Indian economy, started in 1991, clearly marked an inflexion in HUL's and the Group's growth curve. Removal of the regulatory framework allowed the company to explore every single product and opportunity segment, without any constraints on production capacity.

#### **History of Hamam soap**

Hamam is a brand of soap made in India and marketed by Hindustan Unilever, the Indian unit of unilever. The name comes from the Arabic/Persian/Hindi word Hamam which refers to a public bathing establishment in the middle-eastern countries. It was launched in 1934 and is a leading product in its category.



Launched in 1931 as a 'mild, family soap', Hamam soon drew a large natural following long before it was trendy or fashionable. Perhaps the only Indian-made natural soap at the time, Hamam was embraced by mothers and doctors alike, for its purity and safety on skin. Only Hamam brings alive ancient time-tested skin care rituals that have been perfected over generations in convenient and contemporary formats. The three variants of Hamam - Sampoorna Snaan, Hamam Scrub Bath and AbhyangaSnaan embody traditional skin care practices.

#### **Key facts**

- Only 400 crore Herbal soap brand in the personal care segment
- 21.36% market share in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu

#### **About the brand**

- Assurance of being a soap which is "safe on skin"
- Manufactured in modern soap plants
- Contains polyols-Good moisturizers
- Made from a blend of vegetable oils
- Palm oil and coconut oil mixed in the right proportion
- Gives lather which is stable and can effectively remove oil, dirt from the surface of the skin.

**Totally safe**

- Toxicologically cleared by, the Safety and Environment Assurance Center, (SEAC) Unilever
- Meets all requirements mandated by IFRA (International Fragrance Association)

**Table 3.1 Socio economic profile**

The researcher has interviewed the different age group of people and the table shows the different age group of the respondents.

Age group	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Below 20	14	9
20-30	55	37
30-40	42	28
40-50	23	15
Above 50	16	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

**Inference:** From the above table it was inferred that 37% of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-30, followed by 28% are under the age group of 30-40, followed by 15% are under the age group of 30-40, followed by 11% are under the age group of above 50 and followed by 9% are under the age group of below 20.

**Table 3.2 Gender classification of the respondents**

The researcher has interviewed the different gender group of people and the table shows the classification of the respondents.

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage of the Respondents
Male	60	40
Female	90	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

**Inference:** From the above table it was inferred that 60% of the respondents are female and followed by 40% of the respondents.

**Table 3.3 Monthly income**

Income is the revenue that a person earns and the income is an influencing factor on purchase behavior. The below table shows the income level of the respondents.

Monthly Income	No. of respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Below 5000	51	34
5000 – 10000	62	41
10000 – 15000	27	18
Above 15000	10	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Primary data

**Inference:** From the above table it was inferred that 41% of the respondents belong to the income group of 5000 – 10000 followed by 34% of the respondents belong to the income group of below 5000, followed by 18% of the respondents belong to the income group of 10000 – 15000 and followed by 7% of the respondents belong to income group of above 15000.

**Table 3.4 Members in the family**

If two or more blood related members live together then they will be called as family and following table shows the number of members in the family.

No. of Members in The Family	No. of Respondents	Percentage of respondents
2	16	11
3	37	25
4	65	43
5	32	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

**Inference:** From the above table it was inferred that 43% of the respondents have 4 members in their family 25% have 3 members in their family and 21% have 5 members in their family and 11 % have 2 members in their family.

**Table 3.5 Comparision of hamam soap with other brand soaps**

Usually people use some soap products to bath according to their preference and they will be changing the brand if not satisfied with that brand. The following table shows the purchase of hamam soap by the respondents comparing with other brand soap.

Brand	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Hamam	68	45
Lux	24	16
Dove	10	7
Pears	14	9
Lifebuoy	16	11
Rexona	18	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

**Inference:** From the above table it was inferred that 45% of the respondents purchase hamam soap followed by 16% of the respondents purchase lux soap, followed by 12% of the respondents purchase of rexona and followed by 11% of the respondents purchase of lifebuoy soap and followed by 9% of the respondents purchase of pears soap and 7% of the Respondents purchase of dove soap.

**Table 3.6 Regular purchase of hamam soap**

Table showing the purchase of hamam soap regularly.The following table shows the respondent purchase of hamam soap regularly.

Buy regularly	No. of respondents	Percentage Of respondents
Yes	82	55
No	68	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

**Inference:** From the above table it was inferred that 55% of the respondents purchase hamam soap regularly and followed by 45% of the respondents not purchase.

**Table 3.7 Reason for buying hamam soap**

There will be some underlying factor for an individual to buy a particular product. It differs according to the mentality. The following table shows the various influencing factor to buy hamam soap.

Reason	No.of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Price	17	11
Quality	90	60
Quantity	21	14
Brand Name	15	10
Availability	7	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Primary data

**Inference:**

From the above table it was inferred that 60% of the respondent select quality, 14% them select for quantity, 11% of them select for price, 10% of them select for brand name and 5% of them select for availability of the soap.

**Table 3.8 Source of influence to buy hamam soap**

To do a particular work there will be some influencing factor or persons. The following table shows the influencing factor for a consumer to use hamam soap.

Source of Influence	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Advertisements	20	13
Brand image	25	17
Quality	35	23
Parents	52	35
Friends	18	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

**Inference:**

From the above table it was inferred that 35% of the respondents are influenced by the parents followed by 13% of the respondents are influenced by advertisements, followed by 23% of the respondents are influence by quality and 17% of the respondents are influence by brand image and 12% of the respondents are influenced by their friends to buy hamam soap.

**Table 3.9 Quantity purchased**

The marketer will be selling their product in some quantity or weight age for the convenient purchase of the customer and the following table shows the quantity purchased by the customers.

Quantity	No.of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
100gms	94	63
150gms	42	28
38gms	14	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

**Inference:**From the above table it was inferred that 63% of the respondents prefer 100 gms pack followed by 28% of the respondents prefer 150 gms pack and followed by 9% of the respondents prefer 38 gms pack.

**Table 3.10 Total requirements of the hamam soap per month**

The customers require some quantity of soap products to bath and the following table shows that requirement of soap for the respondents per month.

Requirement	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1 Soap	8	5
2 Soaps	77	51
3 - 4 Soaps	49	33
4 – 5 Soaps	16	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Primary data

**Inference:** From the above table it was inferred that 51% of the respondents require 2 soaps per month followed by 33% of the respondents required 3 -4 soaps and 11% of the respondents required 4–5 soaps and 5% of the respondents require 1 soap per month.

**Table 3.11 Availability of hamam soap in the market**

The following table shows the availability of hamam soap in the market.

Availability	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Yes	144	96
No	6	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

**Inference:** From the above chart, the opinion of 96% of respondent says that the Hamam soap is easily available in the market while opinion of 4 % of respondent says that the Hamam soap is not available in the market.

**Table 3.12 Consumer's opinion about the price of hamam soap**

The following table shows the opinion about the price of hamam soap.

Price	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Reasonable	118	79
Costly	9	6
Cheaper	23	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Primary data

**Inference:** From the above chart 79% of respondent feel that the price of Hamam soap is reasonable, 6% of respondent feel it is costly and 15% of respondent feel it is cheaper.

**Table 3.13 Consumer's suggestions to improve the sales of hamam soap**

The following table shows the respondent gave some suggestion to improve the sales of the hamam soap .

Suggestions	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Improve Quality	25	17
Advertisement	19	13
Brand awareness	38	25
Price	12	8
Fragrance	56	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Primary data

**Inference:** From the above chart, 37% of respondent suggest to add some fragrance. 25% of respondent suggest to create brand awareness, 17% of the respondent suggest to improve quality and 13% of the respondent suggest to improve advertisement, 8% of the respondent suggest to improve the price.

**Table 3.14 Respondent's recommendation of this brand to others**

Usually users of a particular product will be using that product regularly and if they are satisfied with that product they will be recommended to others. The following table shows the how many of them recommend this brand to others.

Recommendation	No. of Respondents	Percentage of respondents
Yes	122	81
No	28	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

**Inference:** From the above table it was inferred that 81% of the respondents are recommend this brand to others and followed by 19% of the respondents are not recommend this brand to others.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

- 37% of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-30.
- 60% of the respondents are female.
- 41% of the respondents belong to the income group of 5000 –10000.
- 43% of the respondents have 4 members in their family.
- 45% of the respondents use Hamam soap.
- 55% respondents purchase Hamam soap regularly.
- 60% of the respondents prefer quality to buy Hamam soap.
- 79% of the respondents feel that price of the Hamam soap is reasonable.
- 51% of the respondents require 2 soaps per month.
- 63% of the respondents prefer 100gms pack.
- 35% of the respondents are influenced by the parents.
- 96% of the respondent says that the Hamam soap is easily available in the market.
- 37% of the respondents suggest to add some fragrance.
- 81% of the respondents recommend this brand to others.

**SUGGESTIONS**

- Most of the respondents are under the age group of 20 -30 years so company should take Efforts to attract other age group people in order to increase their sales.
- Most of the respondents are under the income group of 5000 to 10000 per month. So the company should take efforts to position their products in this group in order increase their sales
- As a quality is the first influencing factor of the company has to focus on quality and improve it for better sales.
- The company may give more offer and discount to improve the sales.

As, 38 grams pack moves slowly the manufacturer has to give some discounts or free gift with that pack to increase the movement of 38gms pack. The company has to give effective and attractive advertisements because only 13% are influenced by advertisements.

**CONCLUSION**

Customers are the king of the market, superiors in an organization and Goose laying Eggs. Customers' satisfaction plays a significant role in modern marketing era. Soap is a important product for the day to day consumption of the customers. Nowadays competition is going on with a flame of advertisement war. A lot of varieties of soap are being introduced by several producers.

In these competition situations, some soap because evil effects due to a mixture of chemical compounds. People need quality of soap for which they are ready to have brand loyalty or switch over from one brand to another. In order to capture the needs of all the segments of people, the products are introduced in different quantity for perfect quality of users if it so, the soap will definitely bring more market potential for soap.

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