


Determinants in Selecting Cement Brands

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Abstract

Customers' preferences for cement brands are influenced by various factors including price, quality, brand image, durability, and availability. However, the relative importance of these factors and their impact on customers' purchasing decisions are not well-documented. The present study aims to identify the highly preferred cement brand in the study area and to reveal the factors influencing their preference. One hundred fifty respondents were selected to express their opinion by adopting convenience sampling technique it is non probability sampling. The data was analyzed using Simple percentage and Friedman Rank Test. Ramco is identified as highly preferred cement brand in Tiruppur district. Price was the most prioritized factor while Packing was the least factor influencing the preference for cement brands. By maintaining competitive pricing and the value proposition effectively, the companies can strengthen its market and sustain customer loyalty.

Keywords: Cement Industry, Consumer Behavior, Product Quality, Pricing Strategy, Brand Image

Introduction

India's cement industry plays vital role in building economic development of country. It is largest cement producing country in the world next only to china. It provides employment to more than a million people, directly or indirectly. With the increasing demand for housing and infrastructure development, the cement industry has witnessed rapid growth in recent years. The choice of cement brand often depends on factors such as product quality, reputation, price, availability and compliance with industry standards.

Review of Literature

(Tadasse and Tessema, reveals that the preference for cement are significantly influenced by their income level, gender, services, price and quality.

(Mbui) observed that the choice of preferred cement brand was influenced by brand ideals.

(Langat), found that the word-of-mouth by mason, brand loyalty by contractor and brand loyalty by distributor influence customers preference towards cement brand.

Statement of the Problem

Cement is the integral part of house construction. Customers' preferences for cement brands are influenced by various factors including price, quality, brand image, durability, and availability. However, the relative importance of these factors and their impact on customers' purchasing decisions are not well-documented. This study aims to consider the determinants that influence customers' in selection of cement brands in Tiruppur district, Tamil Nadu, India.

Objectives of the Study

The present study is carried out to reveal the following objectives:

1. To identify the most preferred cement brand in the study area
2. To determine the factors influencing the preferences for cement brands

Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected with the help of interview schedule. Articles in journals, magazines and websites form the secondary sources. One hundred fifty respondents were selected to express their opinion by adopting convenience sampling technique. The data was analyzed using Simple percentage and Friedman Rank Test.

Significance of the Study

The results would give potential contribution to the construction industry, to consumer in decision – making process, and the development of marketing strategies for cement manufactures.

Limitations

The study is based upon the opinions given by the consumer and the limitation related to it may apply.

Table 1 Socio Economic Factors

Factors	Category	No. of Respondent	%
Area of Residence	Rural	72	48.0
	Urban	45	30.0
	Semi Urban	33	22.0

Age (in Years)	Up to 27 years	33	22.0
	28- 43 years	94	62.7
	44 years & above	23	15.3
Gender	Male	87	58.0
	Female	63	42.0
Marital Status	Married	99	66.0
	Unmarried	51	34.0
Size of Family	Below 3 Members	30	20.0
	3-5 Members	66	44.0
	Above 5 Members	54	36.0
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	72	48.0
	Joint Family	78	52.0
No of Earning Members	1 Member	24	16.0
	2 Members	87	58.0
	3 & above Members	39	26.0
Educational Qualification	No Formal Education	15	10.0
	Upto HSC	33	22.0
	Diploma	21	14.0
	UG Degree	36	24.0
	PG Degree	45	30.0
Occupation	Agriculture	18	12.0
	Business	39	26.0
	Private Employee	51	34.0
	Government Employee	22	15.0
	Professional	20	13.0
Monthly Income (in Rs.)	Upto 24000	15	10.0
	24001-54000	114	76.0
	55000 & above	21	14.0

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

The majority (48.00 percent) of the respondents are from rural area. The majority (62.70 percent) of the respondents in the age group of 28- 43 years. The majority (58.00 percent) of the respondents are male. The majority (66.00 percent) of the respondents are married. The majority (44. 00 percent) of the respondents have 3-5 Member in

the family. The majority (52.00 percent) of the respondents belong to joint family. The majority (58.00 percent) of respondent are from family having 2 earning members. The majority (30.00 percent) of respondents are post graduates. The majority (34.00 percent) of respondents are private employee. The majority (76.00 percent) of the respondents earn monthly income Rs.24,001 - Rs.54,000.

Preference for Cement Brands

Cement industry is poised with numerous cement brands. The leading cement brands namely Ultra Tech, Ramco Cement, Dalima Cement, ACC Cement and Birla Cement were selected for the study.

From table 2, It is revealed that the respondents in Tiruppur district highly prefer Ramco (30 percent)

followed by Ultra Tech (25 percent), Dalima (20 percent), ACC (15 percent) and Birla (10 percent).

Table 2 Preference for Cement Brands

Cement Brand	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Ultra Tech	37	25.00
Ramco	45	30.00
Dalima	30	20.00
ACC	23	15.00
Birla	15	10.00
Total	150	100.00

Source: Primary Data

Reason for Preferring for Cement Brands

Friedman rank test is applied to reveal the factors that influence respondents brand preference towards cement.

Table 3: Reasons on Factors Inducing Selecting for Cement Brands

S. No.	Influencing Factors	Level of Influence			Total	Mean Value	Rank
		High	Medium	Low			
1	Grade	75 (50.00%)	53 (35.33%)	22 (14.67%)	150 (100%)	2.35	5
2	Price	82 (54.67%)	51 (34.00%)	17 (11.33%)	150 (100%)	2.43	1
3	Quality	84 (56.00%)	44 (29.33%)	22 (14.67%)	150 (100%)	2.41	2
4	Durability	79 (52.67%)	48 (32.00%)	23 (15.33%)	150 (100%)	2.37	4
5	Strength	71 (47.33%)	52 (34.67%)	27 (18.00%)	150 (100%)	2.29	9
6	Packing	64 (42.67%)	53 (35.33%)	33 (22.00%)	150 (100%)	2.21	10
7	Cement Color	80 (53.33%)	40 (26.67%)	30 (20.00%)	150 (100%)	2.33	6
8	Availability	78 (52.00%)	42 (28.00%)	30 (20.00%)	150 (100%)	2.32	7
9	Brand Image	81 (54.00%)	45 (30.00%)	24 (16.00%)	150 (100%)	2.38	3
10	Workability	68 (45.33%)	60 (40.00%)	22 (14.67%)	150 (100%)	2.31	8

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 reveals that based on the rank score, Price (First Rank) is the most influencing factor followed by Quality (Second Rank), Brand Image (Three Rank) and Durability (Fourth Rank). Packing is the least factor influencing the preference for cement brands in Tiruppur district.

Suggestions

- To attract more customers, cement producers have to concentrate on aggressive price tactics
- Prioritizing quality will help manufacturers to meet customer expectations
- Well organized distribution networks should be used address price difference among merchants

Conclusion

The study reveals that the high preference for Ramco Cement indicates a strong brand position and price remains the key determinant for customer decisions towards brand. By maintaining competitive pricing and the value proposition effectively, the companies can strengthen its market and sustain customer loyalty. To providing exhortation for manufacture cement brand balances, durability and environmentally friendly production responsibility to continue in the industry.

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