

# Integrated Marketing Strategies: Pricing, Distribution and Branding

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## Abstract

*Marketing strategy is the key in positioning value, the delivery of products, and the company's image in the market. This study aims to analyze the integrated marketing strategies specifically pricing, distribution and branding among the top brand of plastic water tank manufacturing company in Kattakada, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala-Capital Polymers Pvt. Ltd. The study focuses on a descriptive research design which uses stratified random sampling for collecting primary data from 118 customers both from Kerala and Tamil Nadu through structured questionnaires. To identify key patterns and relationships, analytical techniques such as Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney U test, and factor analysis were applied. The findings indicate that the attitude of the customers towards price, distribution and brand is similar across various demographic groups with significant differences found only in reasonable pricing ( $p = 0.029$ ) and affordability ( $p = 0.004$ ) by income and occupation respectively. Based on the factor analysis, four main factors were highlighted as having a significant role on the brand preference, which include Promotional and Product Strategy, Brand Image and Pricing Perception, Value Assurance and Certification, and After-Sales Support and Service. The distribution efficiency and product availability were homogeneous in all the regions, and the difference in market coverage was only significant in one region ( $p = 0.015$ ). The study findings confirm that a successful marriage of pricing, distribution and branding strategies, when executed in a customer-centric manner and supported by data, offers substantial benefits for consumers, such as higher satisfaction, brand preference and marketing performance, which in turn positively impact the long-term growth of the business.*

**Keywords:** Branding, Brand Preference, Consumer Perception, Distribution Strategy, Factor Analysis, Integrated Marketing, Pricing Strategy.

## Introduction

In general, marketing strategy is defined as a plan that drives the positioning of an organization's product or service in the competitive market. Each of these pricing, distribution and branding mechanisms has unique roles when considered separately in influencing consumer behavior. When working together as part of a comprehensive strategy, however, they can collectively spell a company's market success.

According to Kotler, Armstrong, and Opresnik (2021), integrated marketing is a coordinated approach that makes sure that all marketing decisions complement one another and that the brand is sent a consistent message and experience to the customers.

In actual markets, consumers' choice for a product is influenced by price signals, availability of products, and brand awareness. The price conveys value and quality, distribution makes the product available at the right place and right time, and branding helps to create recognition and emotional connection. These three elements complement each other when they are put together in the right way: Branding drives the perception of pricing, Distribution creates the brand promise, and Positioning influences the perception of price.

Capital Polymers Pvt. Ltd. is one of the top manufacturers of plastic water storage tanks based in Thiruvananthapuram District of Kerala, India, with headquarter located in Kandala, Kattakada. The company has a rich manufacturing history and has a large network of dealers in Kerala and southern Tamil Nadu, with a mission to 'Quality Products, Sustainable Future.' Its range includes black water tanks, multi-layer white tanks (3, 4, 5 and 8 layers), sump tanks, loft tanks, horizontal tanks, septic tanks, portable toilets and plastic road barriers.

Although the notion of integrated marketing in the polymer and water tank industry is gaining its ground, there has been little research studying the interaction of pricing, distribution and branding in this industry as a whole, especially with the rise of new regional manufacturers. This work aims to fill this void by investigating these strategies in action and felt at Capital Polymers and thus provide insights of value to those who practice, as well as to those who study the subject.

## Literature Review

The study of various aspects of IM has been increasing considerably among different industries. Ferry et al. (2025) concluded that the coverage, channel reach, delivery efficiency and product availability of the distribution strategy directly and significantly affect customer loyalty in the FMCG companies with a wider distribution network leading to higher retention rates and referrals.

Chea (2024) analyzed the various models of brands, and emphasized the importance of knowledge about consumer behavior, theory and the new challenges of digital transformation in the process of brand management.

Incorporating digital technologies, such as social media, to maximize the reach of distribution channels and brand awareness is crucial for international marketing success, and market research, cultural understanding, and strategic marketing efforts are essential, as noted by Musa et al. (2023). Similarly,

Mengni et al. (2023) investigated the concept of brand marketing strategy and concluded that the three pillars of a good brand management are brand awareness, brand positioning and brand promotion.

Reddy and Sankar (2023) also observed that pricing is the most flexible component of the marketing mix and is greatly influenced by external factors like competitor pricing, consumer demand, and macroeconomic factors.

It was found that there is a positive relationship between value-based pricing strategies and marketing performance in Goodie-Okio (2022), suggesting that companies should match customer sensitivity and perceptions toward their value-based pricing strategies. Tsey, Boachie-Mensah and Agyapong (2022) noted that the performance of the distribution channel such as incentives offered to retailers and feedback systems positively affects consumer choice for fast-moving consumer goods.

In pricing, Khedkar and Khedkar (2021) noted that there are several pricing strategies, such as skimming, penetration pricing, competitive pricing, value-based pricing or psychological pricing

and they stated that pricing plan properly will prevent the company from the competition and satisfy the needs of their target market.

A strong story came out of a study by Suartina et al. (2021) that proves that an intensive distribution system, when combined with active social media promotion, is a clear factor that boosts brand loyalty and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), both of which are important factors mediated by the phenomenon of brand love. Jovanovska (2020) also found that over time, in the long run, strong brands and branding strategies build and create strong consumer loyalty and competitive differentiation.

After a review of the literature, it is observed that there is a definite gap in the research as most of the available work focus on pricing, distribution or branding alone. The combined and integrated impact of these on consumer perceptions and

There is a lack of research on marketing performance for emerging markets regional manufacturers. This study fills that gap.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To recognize and analyse the factors that affect brand preference in the integrated marketing mix.
2. To assess customer perception towards the company's pricing policy.
3. To study the product availability in various marketing areas.

### **Research Methodology**

This study is descriptive research type, providing an understanding of the opinions of the customers regarding the adopted integrated marketing strategies of the Capital Polymers. Primary data was gathered from 118 customers, across Kerala and Tamil Nadu, by using structured questionnaires with questions pertaining to pricing, brand preference and product availability. Secondary data was taken from Company Records, Reports, Journals and Industry Publications. Stratified random sampling was used for a proper representation of different groups of customers.

Since the exact number of customers going to the retail outlets is not known, then the sample size was calculated using the standard formula for an unknown population at a 95% confidence level. The number of customers that the study gathered was 118, with a minimum sample size of 96. Stratified random sampling facilitated the representation of customers from various occupation, customer categories and urban, semi-urban and rural areas of Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Data collected were analysed under SPSS software. Kruskal-Wallis test was used for comparing the customer opinion for different income group and occupational group and Mann Whitney U test was used to compare the customer opinion between Kerala and Tamilnadu. The main factors which affect the brand preference were determined using the factor analysis technique which was implemented by applying the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method with the Varimax Rotation technique. The main factors that affect the brand preference have been determined by applying the factor analysis technique using PCA method with varimax rotation.

### **Hypothesis**

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): There is a significant difference among different income level of customers and their perceptions towards pricing policy.

$H_0$  : There is no difference among different level of occupation of customers and their perception about pricing, distribution and branding strategy.

The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): No significant difference between locality and factors affecting brand preference.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): There is a significant difference between the area of purchase and the factors which influence brand preference.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): At least one occupational group has a different brand preference factors.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): There is a significant difference between area of purchase with respect to the availability of products.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): There is a significant difference between locality with respect to availability of products.

### Analysis of Demographic Profile of Respondents

The sample of 118 respondents consisted of 94.9% male and 5.1% female, which is consistent with the water tank market being dominated by male buyers in the industry. The majority (37.3%) were above 40 years of age, followed by the 21–30 age group (32.2%) and the 31–40 group (29.7%). From the marital status perspective, 62.7 % were married, 26.3 % were unmarried and 11.0 % didn't report.

Academically, the sample consisted of a diverse group; 32.2% of the sample had completed schooling, 28.0% had postgraduate degrees, 21.2% were undergraduates, and 16.9% had diplomas. In terms of occupation, the largest proportion was for Private employees (59.3%) followed by Business owners (26.3%). The majority (32.2%) was in the income bracket of Rs. The majority of the customer base is likely to be middle high wage earners with monthly income range of 20–30k. Geographically the sample was also equally distributed among urban (34.7%), rural (33.1%) and sub-urban (32.2%) locality, and 67.8% respondents were belonged to Kerala and 32.2% of them were belonged to Tamilnadu.

### The Factor Analysis of Brand Preference was used to Analyze the Data

A factor analysis was carried out using 15 brand preference variables. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic was 0.788, which is considered as adequate sample size for factor analysis, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant (Chi-Square = 395.258, df = 105,  $p < 0.001$ ) which supports the validity of the factor analysis. Varimax rotated component matrix (converged in 6 iterations) yielded four factors.

**Table 1 Factor Analysis of Factors Influencing Brand Preference**

Variables	Promotional Strategy	Pricing Strategy	Quality Strategy	Value Strategy
Promotional Influence	0.731			
Product Variety	0.656			
Replacement Policy	0.632			
Sales Promotion	0.569			
Product Quality	0.522			
Brand Reputation		0.708		
Price Satisfaction		0.687		
Packaging Quality		0.640		
Quality Certification			0.724	
Value for Money			0.694	

Warranty Service				0.793
After Sales Service				0.760
KMO = 0.788   Chi-Square = 395.258   df = 105   Sig = 0.000				

Source: Primary Survey

Factor 1: Promotional and Product Strategy encompasses promotional influence, product variety, replacement policy, sales promotion, and product quality. This factor underscores the central role of marketing activities and product-related attributes in shaping brand preference. Factor 2: Brand Image and Pricing Perception comprises brand reputation, price satisfaction, and packaging quality, highlighting that a strong brand image, fair pricing, and appealing packaging collectively reinforce consumer preference.

Factor 3: Value Assurance and Certification include quality certification and value for money, reflecting the importance of tangible quality signals and perceived economic value in consumer decision-making. Factor 4: After-Sales Support and Service consist of warranty service and after-sales service, confirming that post-purchase support is a critical determinant of brand loyalty and customer trust.

**Table 2 Kruskal Wallis Test (Locality vs factors)**

rs	Locality			Chi Square Value	P Value
	Locality	Locality	Locality		
Promotional & Product Strategy	59.46	60.97	58.10	.137	.934
Brand Image & Pricing	56.41	57.87	64.33	1.217	.544
Value Assurance & Certification	57.76	65.66	55.33	1.972	.373
After Sales Support & Service	61.87	57.38	59.08	.361	.835

Source: Primary Survey

The Kruskal-Wallis test further confirmed that none of the four factors differed significantly across locality groups (urban, sub-urban, rural; all  $p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 3 Mann Whitney U Test (Area of Purchase vs Factors)**

Factors	Area of Purchase		Z Value	P Value
	Tamil Nadu	Kerala		
Promotional & Product Strategy	57.16	60.61	.515	.607
Brand Image & Pricing	60.20	59.17	.154	.878
Value Assurance & Certification	61.20	58.69	.377	.706
After Sales Support & Service	66.74	56.06	1.614	.107

Source: Primary Survey

The Mann-Whitney U test found no significant regional difference between Kerala and Tamil Nadu customers on any of the four brand preference factors (all  $p > 0.05$ ). These results indicate a stable and consistent brand perception across demographic and geographic segments.

**Table 4 Kruskal Wallis Test (Occupation vs Factors)**

Factors	Occupational status				Chi Square	P Value
	Business	Govt. Employee	Private Employee	Unemployed		
Promotional & Product Strategy	57.95	43.14	58.1	77.56	4.079	0.253
Brand Image & Pricing	48.39	56.71	60.24	84.06	7.745	0.052
Value Assurance & Certification	53.18	63.21	59.55	65.81	1.399	0.706
After Sales Support & Service	54.73	65	56.28	86.88	6.915	0.075

Source: Primary Survey

The findings demonstrate that there is no statistically significant difference between the various occupational categories, with all p-values being greater than 0.05. This suggests that employment has little bearing on Value Assurance & Certification, Brand Image & Pricing, Promotional & Product Strategy, and After-Sales Support & Service. Despite being near to significance, Brand Image & Pricing ( $p = 0.052$ ) and After-Sales Support & Service ( $p = 0.075$ ) are still not statistically significant. As a result, the null hypothesis is accepted, suggesting that consumer perceptions are comparable among various occupational groups.

### Customer Perception Towards Pricing Policy

Table 1 presents the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test examining whether perceptions of pricing factors differ across income groups.

**Table 5 Kruskal-Wallis Test — Income vs Pricing Factors**

Factors	< Rs.15K	Rs.15–20K	Rs.20–30K	> Rs.30K	Chi-Square	P Value
Reasonable Pricing	79.22	51.66	62.59	54.03	9.051	0.029*
Price Quality Match	74.03	58.70	57.13	55.55	4.025	0.259
Attractive Discounts	71.28	60.41	56.49	55.84	2.752	0.431
Affordability	57.44	64.43	61.57	51.98	2.501	0.475
Competitive Pricing	74.13	56.00	55.00	61.55	4.267	0.234
Brand Awareness	69.75	53.36	64.39	54.84	4.244	0.236
Brand Recall	74.38	55.90	52.33	65.03	6.444	0.092
Brand Consistency	61.06	56.40	65.87	54.03	2.579	0.461

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$  Source: Primary Survey

The Kruskal-Wallis test reveals that among all pricing-related factors, only Reasonable Pricing exhibits a statistically significant difference across income groups (Chi-Square = 9.051,  $p = 0.029$ ). Respondents earning less than Rs. 15,000 registered the highest mean rank (79.22), indicating greater sensitivity to price reasonableness at lower income levels. All other factors Price Quality Match, Attractive Discounts, Affordability, Competitive Pricing, Brand Awareness, Brand Recall,

and Brand Consistency did not show statistically significant differences ( $p > 0.05$ ), suggesting a broadly consistent perception across income categories.

**Table 6 Kruskal Wallis Test (Occupation vs Pricing factors)**

Factors	Occupational status				Chi Square	P Value
	Business	Govt. Employee	Private Employee	Unemployed		
Reasonable Pricing	64.16	62.86	53.11	79.94	6.679	0.083
Price Quality Match	50.1	66.43	60.06	70.5	4.043	0.257
Attractive Discounts	56.19	63.29	56.61	79.75	3.992	0.262
Affordability	44.53	88.86	60.38	69.63	13.073	0.004*
Competitive Pricing	60.71	61.14	55.18	76.69	3.367	0.338
Brand Awareness	55.34	56.36	60.23	57.5	0.539	0.910
Brand Recall	55.05	62.5	57.51	77	3.201	0.362
Brand Consistency	53.9	60.93	58.62	73.13	2.306	0.511

Source: Primary Survey

A second Kruskal-Wallis analysis examining occupational groups found that Affordability was the only factor with a significant difference ( $p = 0.004$ ). Government employees recorded the highest mean rank (88.86) for affordability perception, indicating that this group perceives the company's products as more affordable relative to other occupational categories. All remaining factors were accepted under the null hypothesis, confirming perceptual consistency across occupational group.

**Product Availability Across Marketing Areas**

**Table 7 Area of Purchase with Respect to Availability of Products**

Factors	Area of Purchase		Z Value	P Value
	Tamil Nadu	Kerala		
Market Coverage	49.26	64.36	2.421	.015*
Product Availability	55.64	60.61	.804	.421
Distribution Efficiency	67.20	55.84	1.756	.079
Retailer Support	54.95	60.95	.934	.350
Infrastructure Facilities	54.95	61.66	1.037	.300
Competitive Pressure	55.87	59.78	.616	.538
Market Availability	61.83	58.39	.537	.591
Timely Delivery	63.01	57.83	.800	.424
Multichannel Availability	62.63	58.01	.714	.475

Source: Primary Survey

The Mann-Whitney U test compared product availability perceptions between Kerala and Tamil Nadu customers. Among nine availability-related factors, only Market Coverage showed

a statistically significant difference ( $Z = 2.421, p = 0.015$ ), with Kerala customers (mean rank = 64.36) perceiving better coverage than Tamil Nadu respondents (mean rank = 49.26). All other factors Product Availability, Distribution Efficiency, Retailer Support, Infrastructure Facilities, Competitive Pressure, Market Availability, Timely Delivery, and Multichannel Availability did not differ significantly ( $p > 0.05$ ), confirming that Capital Polymers' distribution network operates with broadly uniform effectiveness across regions.

**Table 8 Locality with Respect to Availability of Products**

Factors	Locality			Chi Square Value	P Value
	Urban	Sub- Urban	Rural		
Market Coverage	54.93	57.22	66.53	2.973	.226
Product Availability	59.98	58.76	58.21	.067	.967
Distribution Efficiency	60.23	59.43	58.79	.039	.981
Retailer Support	57.04	56.69	63.26	1.003	.606
Infrastructure Facilities	60.83	59.42	58.18	.130	.937
Competitive Pressure	61.08	58.72	55.65	.565	.754
Market Availability	59.76	56.17	62.47	.730	.694
Timely Delivery	64.23	61.21	52.86	2.545	.280
Multichannel Availability	54.62	60.34	63.81	1.599	.449

**Source:** Primary Survey

The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to compare the differences between availability factors across the three localities (urban, sub-urban, rural) with the same nine availability factors and no statistically significant differences were found (all  $p > 0.05$ ), indicating that customers have a similar perception of product availability, distribution efficiency, and support services across all localities. The figure is an outcome of the company's multi-depot distribution network that encompasses almost the entire territory of Kerala and the southern part of Tamilnadu.

### Findings

- The majority of the respondents are middle class and price sensitive, placing an emphasis on the value for money. This emphasizes how crucial it is to keep up competitive pricing tactics.
- There was significant variation in the perceptions of prices and purchasing power between occupational groups ( $p < 0.05$ ), suggesting that the perceptions of prices and purchasing power are influenced by occupation.
- There were no significant differences between demographic groups on discounts, competitive pricing, price-quality match or other characteristics. This indicates that consumers have a uniform point of view.
- No difference was found between groups in terms of brand-related variables such as brand awareness, memory and consistency. This shows a consistent and consistent brand image in the marketplace.
- Brand reputation, price satisfaction, and packaging perceptions are significant factors in positive customer perception. These are the elements that help a brand stand out.

## Suggestions

- The company should maintain the prices of the products, which may be reasonable, and still make sure that the products are of good quality as most of its clients are price sensitive and fall under the middle-income group. Value packs, seasonal offers and low cost pricing can help to draw in and keep customers.
- The perceptions of affordability vary by occupational groups, the company should have flexible pricing and promotional approaches for various customer groups. Discounts or customisations for customers such as students, employees or business people can lead to better customer satisfaction and customer interest in buying the product.
- If the company has customers from varying demographic groups who have similar views on discounts, prices, and quality of products, then the company should have a uniform quality and price. By conducting market analysis and customer feedback regularly, it can be further maintained that this positive perception will be maintained.
- All groups perceive the brand as being the same, meaning it has a strong brand image. The firm must persist with brand-building initiatives like promotions, social media presence and client relationship strategies in order to build trust and loyalty among clients.
- The packaging quality and brand reputation are factors that have a significant impact on customers' perception and satisfaction with the price, so it is recommended that the company improve the packaging design and keep the quality of the products. Competitive brand positioning and positioning can be reinforced and strengthened through a more appealing package and customer-oriented strategies.

## Conclusion

Integrated marketing strategies of Capital Polymers Pvt. Ltd (a leading plastic water tank manufacturing company in Kerala) has been examined with special emphasis on pricing, distribution and branding as interconnected marketing strategies. The study, based on primary data collected from 118 customers in Kerala and Tamil Nadu and using rigorous non-parametric statistical techniques produced several significant results.

Within demographic and geographic groups, consumer perceptions of price, brand, and distribution are mostly similar, and the differences found are statistically significant only for reasonable pricing (by income) and affordability (by occupation). The factor analysis was carried out to determine the strong dimensions of brand preference: Promotional and Product Strategy, Brand Image and Pricing Perception, Value Assurance and Certification, After-Sales Support and Service. Distribution effectiveness was observed to be more or less uniform in all the regions with the only exception being market coverage, where there was a significant difference between Kerala and Tamilnadu.

The study concludes that, for manufacturers such as Capital Polymers, pricing, distribution and branding strategies are not just tactical but strategic, and must be integrated to work effectively. In the event that these components are aligned with the expectations and market reality of customers, they all lead to better customer satisfaction, building brand equity and improving business performance on a sustainable basis. This study could be extended to compare the generational differences in product preference, role of digital channels in brand perception, and impact of integrated marketing strategies in DRM and supply chain performance.

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