

A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS SNA AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS

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Abstract: A Study on Consumer Perception Towards SNA Ayurvedic Products worthy to assess marketing practices and consumer perception of SNA. The paper aimed to find out to study the Consumer Perception towards SNA products. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 120 consumers of the SNA products residing in Thrissur corporation area through a structured interview schedule. Convenient sampling method was used to collect data. The collected data were analysed using appropriate statistical tools such as averages, percentages & indices. The study concluded that SNA is a leading company in the Ayurvedic manufacturers. The SNA may improve their market through the better marketing strategies by identifying the consumers pulse.

Keywords: Ayurvedic products, Brand awareness, Consumer perception, Product awareness

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a Sanskrit term, derived from the words “ayus” and “Veda”. “Ayus” means life and “Veda” means knowledge or the science. The term “ayurveda” thus means the knowledge of life or the science of life. According to the ancient ayurvedic scholar charaka, ‘ayu’ comprises the mind, body, senses and soul. Widely regarded as the oldest form of health care in the world, ayurveda is an intricate medical system that originated in India thousands of years ago. The fundamentals of ayurveda can be found in Hindu scriptures called Veda, the ancient Indian books of wisdom.

Ayurvedic system of medicine not only focuses on treatment of various ailments afflicting humans, but dwells on the prevention of diseases as well as a system of medicine it believes in striking the very root of the disease rather than treating the symptoms of the diseases.

Statement of Problem

S.N.A is a government approved renowned ayurvedic treatment centre offering panchakarma treatment in traditional atmosphere with modern facilities. SNA has a most modern manufacturing unit with a dedicated and well-trained work force. Their plant is a combination of traditional technique and modern technology. SNA produces 400 classical products and of which 50 are patent products. They market their product in India and abroad especially to USA, Canada, Europe, Russia, and the Middle East.

SNA adopted all possible strategies to market the products in the highly competitive market. Hence, the researcher

found that it was worthy of conducting a study on marketing practices and consumer perception of SNA.

OBJECTIVE

To study the Consumer Perception towards SNA products.

METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the consumers of the SNA products residing in Thrissur corporation area through a structured interview schedule. Moreover, the published annual reports and other documents of the firm, Research reports, books, journals, articles, and the regulations were also used for the purpose of analysis. Convenient sampling method was used to collect data. Consumers were interviewed at the point of purchase.

The collected data were analysed using appropriate statistical tools such as averages, percentages & indices.

$$\text{Index} = \frac{\text{Total score of the statement}}{\text{Maximum score}} * 100$$

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Number of studies were conducted in the field of ayurvedic products. The study conducted by Vijay Bhangale (2005) on “Marketing of Drugs” with an objective to determine the extent of Self Medication & Consumer attitudes towards ayurvedic medicines, in the study on “Examining Marketing Mix from an Ethical View: A Field Research on Ayurvedic product Marketing Executives” by Tuncer Tocol (2007), an empirical study conducted by Prof. A.S.Mohanram and Dr.C.Mahavi (2007) speaks about

Promotion and Marketing Mix are key tools in determining Purchase behaviour & Purchase decisions of Ayurvedic products by Teenagers. And the study conducted by Siti Nor Bayaah Ahmad and Nurita Juhdi (2008) on “Consumer’s perception and purchase intentions towards ayurvedic products: exploring the attitude among Malaysian consumers”, are some of the examples on this.

Data Analysis

Consumer Perception is more than just gathering information about a certain event at a certain time. It involves, recognizing stimuli, processing and storing them. Consumer perception is critical and fundamental to understand as it shapes their buying decisions, based on their sensory preferences-sight, sound, taste, smell and touch. Of course the culture, demographics, family and friends and other factors do influence the consumer perception and interpretations. Consumer perception towards SNA Ayurvedic products is presented in this chapter.

The study revealed that majority of the respondents (50%) were using ayurvedic products from 1-5 years. 25 % respondents were using ayurvedic products less than an year. 10.83 % respondents were depending on ayurveda from 5 to 10 years. 14.17% respondents were using the ayurvedic medicines for more than 10 years. It shows that the Ayurvedic medicine regularly attracts new users.

Primary Sources of Information about SNA

The researcher conducted the study also to understand the primary source of information about SNA products. The major sources identified were friends, parents, relatives, advertisements, doctors and others.

Table 1 Primary sources of information about SNA

Sources	Place of residence		Total	R a n k
	Rural	Urban		
Friends	1(4.56) (2.44)	21(95.45) (26.58)	22(100) (18.33)	3
Parents	4(28.57) (9.76)	10(71.43) (12.66)	14(100) (11.67)	5
Relatives	6(35.29) (14.63)	11(64.71) (13.92)	17(100) (14.17)	4
Advertis ements	16(43.24) (39.03)	21(56.76) (26.58)	37(100) (30.83)	1
Doctors	14(46.67) (34.15)	16(56.33) (20.25)	30(100) (25)	2
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	41(34.17) (100)	79(55.83) (100)	120(100) (100)	0

Source: Compiled from primary data
Note: Figures in brackets show percentage

majority of the respondent i.e. 30.83% were sourcing information about SNA through advertisements and it ranks first. The second important source From the table 1 it could be observed that of information is from nearby ayurvedic doctors. Through the influence of friends, 18.33% respondents were getting awareness about SNA. 11.67% respondents depended upon parent’s suggestion for SNA and 14.17% were getting information about SNA through relatives. No one specified any other form of sources. From this we can infer that SNA is popularised among people mainly through advertisements & doctors.

Opinion about SNA Brand

Table 2 Opinion about SNA Brand

Opinion	Place of residence		Total
	Rural	Urban	
Very good	13(41.94) (31.71)	18(58.06) (22.78)	31(100) (25.83)
Good	28(31.46) (68.29)	61(68.54) (77.22)	89(100) (74.17)
Bad	0	0	0
Very bad	0	0	0
Total	41(34.17) (100)	79(55.83) (100)	120 (100)

Source: Compiled from primary data

Note: figures in brackets show percentage

Table 2 reveals that majority of the respondents i.e. 74.17% opined that the brand name SNA is good. 25.83% respondents opined that the brand name SNA is very good. No one opined that brand name SNA is bad or very bad. We can infer that the brand name SNA has generally a good opinion among the respondents.

Table 3 Media Exposure of SNA Products

Media	Place of residence		Total
	Rural	Urban	
Television	10(40)	15(60)	25(100)

	(24.39)	(18.99)	(20.83)
Radio	2(66.67) (4.88)	1(33.33) (1.27)	3(100) (2.5)
Magazine	3(21.43) (7.32)	11(78.57) (13.92)	14(100) (11.67)
Newspaper	13(39.39) (31.70)	20(60.61) (25.32)	33(100) (27.5)
Hoardings	13(28.89) (31.70)	32(71.11) (40.50)	45(100) (37.5)
Total	41(34.17) (100)	79(65.83) (100)	120 (100)

Source: Compiled from primary data

Note: Figures in brackets show percentage

Table 3 reveals that majority of the respondents i.e. 37.5% were noticed about SNA through hoardings. In rural area 31.70% respondents and in urban area 40.50% respondents

have noticed SNA in the hoardings. In rural and urban area the media exposure of radio was less i.e. 4.88% and 1.27% respectively. 20.83% respondents have noticed about SNA in television and among them 24.39% respondents were in rural area and 18.99% respondents were in urban area. 11.67% respondents have read about SNA in magazines and rest of the 27.5% respondents have read in newspaper. We can infer that in rural and urban area SNA has good media exposure through hoardings and news paper.

Comparison between SNA and other brands of ayurvedic products

For the purpose of ranking the variable the respondents are asked to rank the variables based on their preferences. For the purpose 7 variables are selected and the variables for which 1st rank was given by the respondent weightage 1 will be given and 2 to the second rank and so on. Finally the variable which scored the least score will be ranked first.

Table 4 Comparison of SNA with other Brands

Brands	Purity	Hygienic	Company's commitment to quality of the product	Quality packaging of	Appropriateness	Convenience of packets	Medicines are affordable
	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
SNA	232	239	265	273	265	232	262
Rank	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Oushadhi	355	327	343	315	319	349	341
Rank	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Kottakkal	302	293	285	302	293	290	293
Rank	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Vaidyaratnam	422	448	417	424	459	435	419
Rank	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Nagarjuna	489	491	490	486	466	487	485
Rank	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

For understanding the position of the SNA by comparing with other brands, the researcher administered the questionnaire with some features of the product. Table 4 reveals that for all the selected variables SNA ranked first followed by Oushadhi and Kottakkal.

Table 5 Reasons for Preferring SNA Products

S. No	Features	Score	Index	Rank
1	Availability	330	27.5	2
2	Price	448	37.33	3
3	Quality	300	25	1
4	Formulations	737	61.42	6
5	No side effects	614	51.17	4
6	Effectiveness	660	55	5
7	Advertisement	821	68.42	7
8	Brand image	844	70.33	9
9	Better sales service	840	70	8
10	Other's influence	971	80.92	10
	Composite index	6565	54.71	

Source: Compiled from primary data

Table 5 shows the reasons for preferring the SNA products by respondents. It could be observed that 1st rank was given to quality of the SNA products with the index of 25%. 2nd rank was given to availability of products with and index of 27.5%. The respondents preferred the SNA products due to its reasonable price and it secured 3rd rank. The respondents have given the low rank to the other's influence as the reason for preferring SNA products. So we can infer that the majority of the respondents preferred the SNA products due to its quality, availability and price. It clearly indicates the respondents wish to consume quality medicines, which is also in line with the Kerala consumer's established behaviour. Higher the score, higher the index, higher the index, lower the rank. Hence, the least score and index

Table 6 Defects of SNA Products

Defects	Respondents	Percentage
Old stock	1	12.5
Contaminated material	-	-
Under weight	2	25
Un hygienic packet	5	62.5
Others	-	-
Total	8	100

Source: Compiled from primary data

Table 6 reveals that 6.67% respondents pointed the defects in the SNA products and majority of the respondents (62.5%) were pointed the defect of unhygienic packet and 25% respondents were pointed the defect of underweight. Rest 12.5% respondents have observed the defect of old stock in SNA products. SNA should be more careful in packaging of products. No one opined that that there is contaminated material.

Table 7 consumer perception towards the SNA Products

Features	Score	Index	Rank
SNA medicines are highly effective	523	87.17	1
SNA medicines are of good quality	481	80.17	2
SNA medicines have adequate shelf life	475	79.17	3
Packaging is available in required quantity	463	77.17	5
The packaging of SNA medicines is capable of imparting a sense of pride to existing customers	448	74.67	10
Price of SNA products are reasonable compared to other ayurvedic company's products	474	79	4
Price of SNA products are reasonable compared to other systems of medicine	455	75.83	8
Medicines are affordable	463	77.5	6
SNA products are available always	458	76.33	7
SNA products are available at all places	462	77	9
SNA brand name has good recalling power	447	74.5	11
It has wide media coverage	446	74.33	12
Composite index	5595	77.74	
Source: Compiled from primary data			

From the table 7 we could observe that 1st rank is given to the 'SNA medicines are highly effective'. Its perception index was 87.17%. 2nd rank is given to the quality with the index of 80.17%. The statement "SNA medicines have adequate shelf life" was already given 3rd rank with all index value of 79.17%. 4th rank is given to the reasonable price of SNA product compared to other company's products with the index value of 79%. 5th rank was for packaging (77.17%) and 6th rank was for affordable price of product with the index value of 77.5%. 7th rank is given to the always availability of SNA product with the index of 76.33% and 8th rank is given to the feature "price of SNA products are reasonable compared to other system of medicines(75.83%). 9th rank is given to the availability of SNA products at all places with the index 77%. About the packaging feature of SNA products as capable of imparting a sense of pride to customers, the respondents had only the perception index of 74.67%. For the feature of SNA brand name, there was only less perception index value i.e. 74.5%. The lowest perception level indicates for the media coverage of the SNA products.

We can infer from the analysis that majority of the respondents are satisfied in the effectiveness and quality of the SNA products. But the perception level is low in the media coverage of the SNA products. So for the better sales the media also should effectively used by the company.

Summary of findings

The consumer perception towards SNA products were analysed with product awareness of respondents and brand awareness of products.

- Majority of the respondents (60%) have used ayurvedic products from 1-5 years.
- The primary source of information about SNA is received from advertisements and doctors mainly.
- Majority of the respondents (89%) were opined that SNA brand is good. .
- SNA products had good media exposure through hoardings and newspaper.
- When the researcher compared the sna brand with other leaders like, Oushadhi, Kottakkal, Vaidyaratnam and Nagarjuna, it revealed that SNA is the first position among them.
- The SNA is preferred by the respondents due to its quality, price and availability.
- Among the different products of SNA lehyams are mostly used product.

- The majority of the respondents (38.33%) have used lehyams previously and 29.17% respondents were using lehyams currently.
- The study revealed that SNA medicines are highly effective, of good quality and medicines have adequate shelf life.
- 62.5% respondents have observed the defect of unhygienic packet in SNA products.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The major recommendations for SNA are:

- The SNA should be more careful in the packaging and availability of products.
- The recalling power of SNA brand name was not satisfactory. So that the firm should take more steps to improve brand image of SNA.
- SNA products had good media coverage through hoardings. So that the hoardings and similar types of media should be used more effective advertising.
- The media exposure of products through radio showed an insignificant response. So that company should try their advertisements through FM Radio other than All India Radio.
- The study revealed that company's commitment to quality of the product was high to SNA when compared to other brands. So the company should continue to maintain the standard.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that SNA is a leading company in the Ayurvedic manufacturers. The SNA may improve their market through the better marketing strategies by

identifying the consumers pulse. The SNA is a manufacturing company of Ayurvedic products with the efficient management structure. It ensures the overall image of company and its products. If they concentrate much more in the marketing of products, they can become a big industry among the Ayurvedic companies.

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