

A STUDY ON CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT TOWARDS ROYAL CANIN

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Abstract - The rapid growth in internet and social media have given a huge boost from old form of marketing to consumer engagement, as it is recognized as new form of marketing. The core purpose of customer engagement is not just selling a brand to the customers but the involvement of brand experience and making the brand much more meaningful part to reach targeted customers. Moreover, the brand should grasp its reputation to attract the customers. In today's world customers are well- informed and more empowered than before. The marketing should follow pull marketing strategy instead of push marketing to attain goals. The successful customer engagement depends on customer satisfaction and genuine contribution to targeted customers through interaction and also with customer relationship development. Good customer relationship brings out customer satisfaction and the target customer remain loyal and spreads awareness about the company and its products in a good way of approach. The customer loyalty means manifesting itself by how willing a customer is to engage with repeated purchase. The customer retention is also another important aspect, that is to continue to buy the same brand instead of switching to competitors. The Royal Canin India Private Limited was established in 2007 has made a name for itself of top suppliers in India. The supplier company is located in Mumbai, Maharashtra and it is one among the top brand in India. Royal Canin is wholesome dog and cat food that gives your pet a healthy life. The Royal Canin pet food products supports and develops your pet's immune system and keeps their bodies strong, build strong bones and joints, which also provides complete balanced diet. The food and safety process ensures Royal Canin safe and secure delivery and high-quality products worldwide. Thus, it serves unique nutritional need or a health condition that necessitates a special diet.

Keywords: Customer loyalty and retention, brand awareness, customer satisfaction, marketing and competitor analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

The pet food brands were initially not recognized by the consumers, but in this modern era adopting and taking care of their health is becoming a favorite hobby to many pet persons. The health of the pets depends upon the food they eat. *Jean Cathary* was born in May 1927 in the small French town of *pul-en-velay*. Over the years he came to believe the food could impact the health of animals. In 1968, he created the 'yellow soup' for dogs. The Brand: *Royal Canin* was registered. The initial stages of Royal Canin in 1968 has started with a passion for pet health to provide nutrition and in recent years the brand has outstretched its performance by infrastructure development with global innovation Centre. It creates customized health plans and also brand partnerships to share vision in order to create better world for pet to achieve the target mission.

The intense competition between the business has become challenging day by day to attract customers from switching to competitors. The primary motive is customer loyalty and retention. Customer loyalty is the decision-making behaviour to make continuous purchase of company's selected goods or services [kajenthiran, 2018]. Basically, the

purpose of customer loyalty is engaging customers for repeated sales and to be loyal for the brand from switching. Customer retention is another important strategy, it is not only cost effective and profitable. It indicates true statement that depicts 80% of sales comes from 20% customers and clients [Lake Lawra, 2008]. Successful customer retention initially starts with first contract of an organization has with the customer throughout the entire lifetime of a relationship [Reicheld Fredrick, 1996]. When consumers prefer to buy a product, the first objective that comes to their mind is the brand name. If the brand is highly reputed among the consumers that results in higher brand awareness which has higher market share with better quality formulated. Brand awareness can be described as consumers ability to recognize the overall brand in a sufficient detail to make a purchase and also ensures the core requirements to identify the brand under different conditions [Kotler and Keller,2016]. More importantly, the perception of consumers as a result of consciously or unconsciously comparing their experiences with their expectations, the consumers will be completely satisfied when their needs are converted to desires [thomassen,2003]. Hence, the purposes of the study are to

explore: (1) the influences of brand awareness, perceived quality on purchase intention effect, (2) the effect of quality on customer loyalty and retention, (3) whether customer loyalty and retention reach targets on profit, growth and survival and (4) whether customer satisfaction plays a vital role in customer engagement.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Customer Engagement:

Customer Engagement is a on-going cultivation of relationship between organization and consumer that goes beyond the transaction. It involves building a rapport between company and customer and provide tailored solution. The customer Engagement follows some important tactics to attain goal which includes streamline purchase cycle, increases sales, improves customer relationship and boosts loyalty and retention.

Customer loyalty and Retention:

The consumers loyalty considers consumers attitude or behaviour towards a specific brand. Oliver defines customer loyalty as a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronise a preferred product consistently in the future despite of situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour. He proposed four categories of customer loyalty based on the assumption that the consumers first process information to form beliefs, then those beliefs are on the basis of attitudes and then make behavioural decisions based on relative attitude strengths. There are various types of customer loyalty programs that are being utilized by modern day business establishments to achieve the requirements of business needs that includes loyalty card programs, gift card or certificates ,extended return policy for loyal consumers and frequent buyer programs, bundling of additional products at no extra cost [**Demoulin and Zidda, 2008**].The consumers loyalty determines the result of long-term relationship development that has been undertaken by an organization in the market and it automatically reflects customer retention which continues the process and engages more consumers by bringing out the superior value [**Mogatef and Tamalieh, 2015**].

Customer retention is all about managing the customers and their buying experience in the market and this invariably helps an organization to earn good reputation and goodwill in an competitive industrial sector. The customer retention illustrates the strong base as the cost of acquiring new customers for an organization that are much higher than retaining the existing customers by maintaining strong customer relationship [**Meyer - Waarden ,2008**]. The loyal consumers are more likely to make a positive word of mouth about the company and try to encourage other customers to purchase the brand they recommend. therefore, it results in advantage for both the company as well as consumers with complete satisfaction that loyal consumers become referrers [**Buttle, 2009**].

Brand Awareness:

The brand awareness is a measure on consumers ability to identify brand under different conditions. It is the ability of the potential buyer to recognize or recall that brand is a member of a certain product category. Brand equity is the fundamental dimensions as it includes Brand awareness, brand perceived quality, Brand associations as well as Brand loyalty. The brand awareness is the first step towards increasing brand preferences which leads to increase in market shares and sales [**Cahners**]. Brand awareness acts as a critical analysis factor in customer purchase intention and certain brands will accumulate in consumers mind to influence consumers purchase decision. A product with high level of brand awareness will receive higher consumers preference because it has higher market share and quality evaluation [**Dodds et al., 1991; Grewal et al.,1998**]. therefore, brand name is more important element in brand awareness [**Davis, Golicic and Marquardt ,2008**]. [**Hoeffler & Keller (2002)**] indicate that brand awareness can be distinguished from depth and width. Depth means how to make consumers to recall or identify the brand easily, and width expresses inferences when consumers purchase a product. If a product owns brand depth and brand width at the same time, consumers will think of a specific brand when they want to buy a product.

Customer Satisfaction:

The customer satisfaction is the foremost factor to be considered in every phase of decision-making process. It is essential to set realistic goals and should consider the futuristic vision for the achievement of target which is to satisfy consumers. Earlier studies have found that customer loyalty provides foundation of company's sustained comparative edge and that developing and increasing customer loyalty is crucial factor in company's growth and performance [**Lee and Cunningham ,2001; Reichheld, 1996**]. Setting SMART goals always helps in achieving the goals. SMART specifies Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time goals that every successful organization must work on the target attainment.

Brand awareness has played a vital role in decision making process. Every brand today wants to connect with the target audience for the recognition. Moreover, consumers are more knowledgeable and aware about their purchase. So, it requires the utmost effort from the brand's side to win the consumers loyalty. However, the brand recall is also required a positive brand recall ensures behavioural, cognitive, emotional loyalty of consumer towards its existing and potential products by satisfying consumers.

(1)A study on brand awareness towards drool dog and cat food, Anil Kumar TM, MBA, GMTI Davangere, 2016:

In this research paper he states that drools company have various products for pets. He mainly focused on brand awareness, customer satisfaction and brand reputation which

would drive him to consumer loyalty and retention. In this study he used various statements for identifying the expected preferences of consumers. He interpreted data with various statistical tools (z test) and found relations between variables through hypothesis testing. Finally, he suggested to improve coordination between purchase and production department and also suggested drools company to provide good door to door delivery on time accordingly to the consumer needs and satisfaction.

(2) Analysis and recommendations for marketing the brand Royal Canin, 2011:

In this research paper they deeply explored about the marketing strategy of Royal Canin. They found that Royal Canin serves tailored nutrition for pure-dog breeds and believed that every dog is unique and so are their health needs differs from one another. They analyzed various factors like macroeconomic segments that oversees social, political, technological, economical, demographical and geographical factors and also derived microeconomic factors such as competitors, public, marketing intermediaries, suppliers, company and consumers from this analysis he suggested that increasing diversification of products to meet the demands of desperate needs and requirements as dictated by physical characteristics of pets which will improve sales volume through pull marketing strategies.

(3) Consumers buying behaviour towards premium dog food brands, Jonkoping international business school, 2010:

The purpose of this thesis is to contribute the knowledge of consumers buying behaviour towards premium dog food by examining their brand association this study is conducted in the form of single case study as a survey instrument they used phone call interviews and questionnaire to collect data on awareness and also to identify behavioural beliefs. This study has found that Swedish customer have build a positive image associated with premium dog food brands by their quality and their performance according to the health of their pet. Pet owners are influenced by various social group and demographic factors. Thus, it suggested to focus on these factors to improve their marketing performance and to satisfy customers.

(4) Proactive marketing: The Royal Canin Way, Jean-Claude Thoenig & Charles Waldman, 2007:

“A person who understands and shares Royal Canin’s vision and philosophy is more valuable than the most brilliant of our executives”- According to this research paper they identified the Royal Canin in five different segments. The initial segment deals with mass consumption and followed by mainstream brands, premium, super-premium etc... consumers may vary their purchases according to various different segments as it easily helps customers to choose among segments. The brand keeps outdoing initial forecasts. It is furthermore concentrated in specialized distribution

circuits that overtakes the value and sales volume in supermarkets and mass-market channels.

Objectives of the study

1. To understand the consumers behaviour towards the brand reputation and to know whether the consumers are well aware about the brand.
2. To identify consumers preferences and satisfaction towards the expected end result of brand on the basis of profit, growth and survival in order to attain the long-term goals.
3. To examine the overall progress of consumer engagement and by eliminating the problems.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

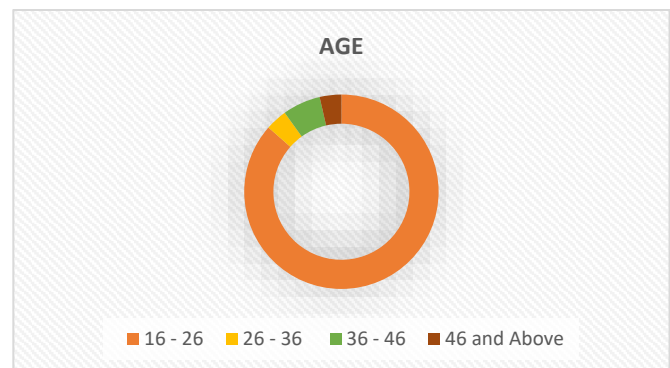
This research was conducted by selecting random sampling technique by selecting 120 sample respondents and 110 responses received. It is concerned with accurate and proper knowledge about the research that is analyzed. This research adopted various objectives as followed,

- ✓ Type of research – Analytical & Descriptive
- ✓ Sample size – 110
- ✓ Type of sampling – Random
- ✓ Sample design association
- ✓ Data collection method – Questionnaire

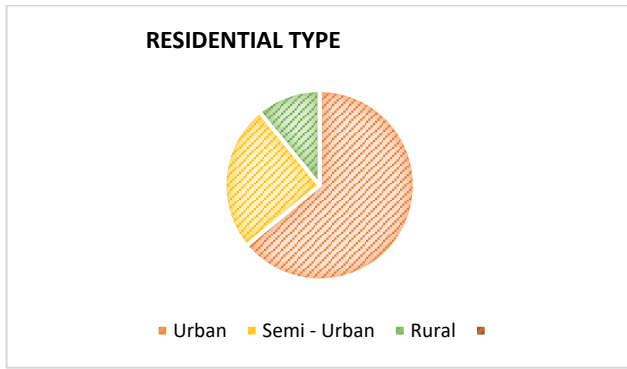
The Primary data was collected by survey that is electronic interview. The questionnaire is the key tool of data collection for the survey. The primary motive of questionnaire is to help researcher to gather information from the consumers to analyze the research findings. The secondary data was collected from research papers, websites and books. The data are analyzed and represented in the form of table, bar graph and pie chart. The sample is drawn from the sample unit by customers. The data is analyzed with the help of statistical tool like percentage analysis, Likert scale, garret ranking method and chi square test.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS:

Analysis 1: It illustrates demographic factor age and respondents. The statistics shows that approximately 86% of the respondents are between the age 16-26, 4% of respondents are between the age 26-36, and maximum of respondent’s residential type is urban (64%) and with the combination of semi-urban (25%) and rural (11%).

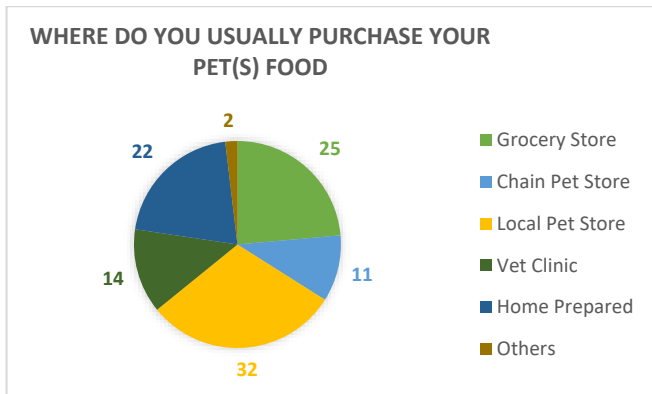


Graph: 1

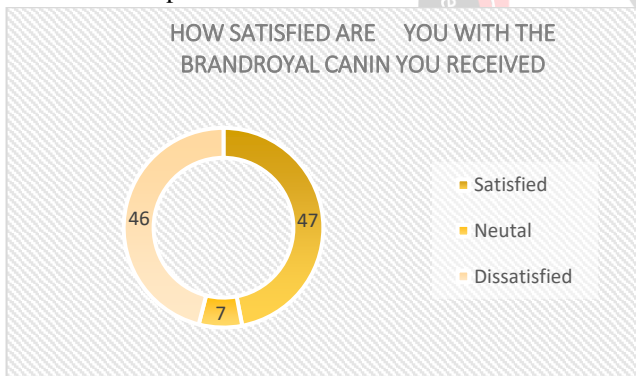


Graph: 2

Analysis 2: While accessing the below parameter that represents the question, where do you usually purchase your pet food as drive the researcher to answer that 30.2% of the respondents by pet food from local pet store and rest are listed in the graph. The satisfaction level being derived 47% by the consumers and rest listed in the graph.

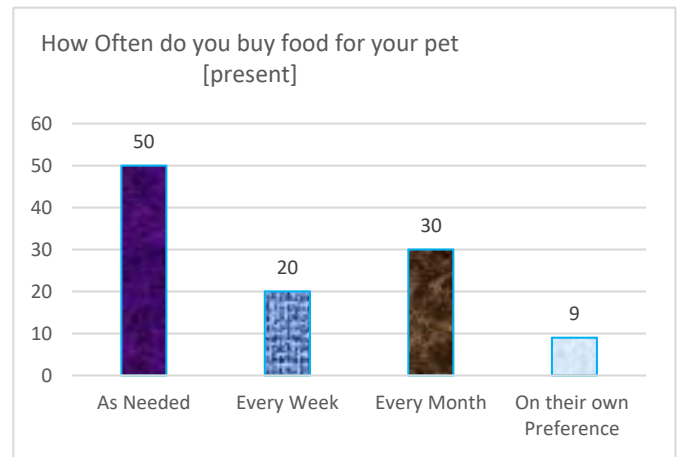


Graph: 3



Graph: 4

Analysis 3: The level of significance is taken as 5% as default and for t – test 2.5% level of significance is the considered. Therefore $t_{0.025} = 2.447$. Calculated value = 0.169 and table value = 2.447. Hence, table value is greater than calculated value. Thus, Hypothesis is accepted and two samples are not taken from same population.



Graph: 5



Graph: 6

Table 1:

Past [sample1]	47	16	12	25	100
Present [sample2]	50	20	30	9	109

X1	$X1 - \bar{X1}$	$X1^2$	X2	$X2 - \bar{X2}$	$X2^2$
47	22	484	50	23	529
16	-9	81	20	-7	49
12	-13	169	30	3	9
25	0	0	9	-18	324
100		734	109		911

Analysis 4: From table 1, the researcher analyzed factors influencing while purchasing the pet food of various brand using Likert’s scaling technique. “Quality” ranked first place with the mean score of 4.281, followed by “Pet preference” with the mean score of 4.262. The factors that consist of “Availability and Cost” ranked least with the mean score of 4.20 and 3.854 respectively.

Table 2:

S. No	Factors	5	4	3	2	1	Total	Likert’s Mean	Mean Rank
1	Quality	46	43	12	1	1	441	4.281	1

2	Brand name	44	42	14	2	1	435	4.223	4
3	Cost	28	35	37	3	0	397	3.854	6
4	Health Benefit	46	34	20	3	0	435	4.223	3
5	Pet reference	49	36	15	2	1	439	4.262	2
6	Availability	47	38	13	3	2	433	4.20	5

Table 3:

Analysis 5: From Table 2 the researcher figured out that reasons for buying pet food through garret’s ranking method. The reason “Health of pet” ranked first with the mean score of 68.543, followed by “Confidence of Consumers ranked second with the mean score of 64.757 and the reasons “Cost” and “Advertisement” ranked least with the mean score 59.514 and 57.475 respectively.

S. No	Factors	Rank Scale value	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Garret’s Mean	Mean Rank
			75	60	50	40	25			
1	My pet’s food is the most important factor in his/her health and well-being.	f	66	27	9	1	0	103	68.543	1
		fx	4950	1620	450	40	0	7060		
2	My pet’s taste preference determines what I feed them.	f	37	46	18	1	1	103	63.106	3
		fx	2775	2760	900	40	25	6500		
3	I feel confident I am feeding my pet the correct food.	f	46	38	18	1	0	103	64.757	2
		fx	3450	2280	900	40	0	6670		
4	If cost were not a factor, I would purchase better food for my pet(s).	f	38	29	23	6	6	103	59.514	5
		fx	2850	1740	1150	240	150	6130		
5	Advertisement was the main factor to buy the indicated brand.	f	30	32	26	5	10	103	57.475	6
		fx	2250	1920	1300	200	250	5920		
6	Customer engagement was the key factor to rely on this brand.	f	34	31	30	5	3	103	60.048	4
		fx	2550	1860	1500	200	75	6185		

V. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Communicating frequently with the consumers serves as the base for successful consumer engagement. The brand Royal Canin can develop its features through involving the consumers by providing new features and updates.
- When compared to other pet food brands Royal Canin Advertising didn’t reach the target customers. Therefore, In the field of advertisement the brand should be well-versed.
- By collecting reviews and feedback Royal Canin must enhance the corrective measures for the

growth of products and engage consumers that may increase customer retention and decrease chaos.

- Nowadays, social media is a valuable platform for the active customer engagement. By creating a profile one can host a contest and reward winners with giveaways from a product line which can be promoted to boost engagement and product visibility.
- By publishing videos, blogs and social posts of Royal Canin with practical tips and product

updates for customers will find helpful. Creating clear valuable content can ensure the existing customers to seek out what they are looking for answers.

VI. CONCLUSION

Attaining to this research paper on consumer engagement was a tremendous and knowledge gaining experience for the researcher. Despite of the small sample size for questionnaire of this research paper helped the researcher to find the consumer satisfaction level on the pet food brands. This research mainly went on to the consumer engagement, which was derived by the survey and the data analysis. The brand Royal Canin has many positive feedbacks from the respondents and also have improvements activities as suggested in the research paper. According to the most of outlets, researcher came to know that Quality and pet preference of the main factor to rely on any brand of pet food products. Consumer loyalty and retention can be acquired by any organization, only if they engage customer as per their demands, needs and wants. The awareness of the brand can be conveyed to the consumer only when the brand makes many unique promotional activities. Any Brand can sustain in the market when the consumers are satisfied. The growth of Royal Canin in the market is increasing with the positive recommendation by the customers. The goal of consumer engagement is by which company creates relationship with it's customer base to foster brand awareness and customer retention.

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