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## SMALL PACKAGING- MAKING THINGS AFFORDABLE (A STUDY OF RURAL CONSUMERS)

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### ABSTRACT

Rural India is home to approximately 70% population of India. Economic reforms in India have brought about several changes in the whole marketing environment especially in rural market. Marketers use innovative packaging to capture the rural market because in modern marketing times packaging has become a very important part of product management. This paper aims to study the attitude of rural consumer towards sachet marketing of FMCG products by using convenience sampling. Mainly eight products washing powder, hair oil, shampoo, tooth paste, fairness cream and biscuits, talcum powder and mobile recharge cards are taken into account to study the behavior of consumers. It is evident from this study that rural consumers are price sensitive as they're daily wage earners. So they consider products in sachet cheaper and easily affordable. So companies should provide more and more products in sachets to tap the Indian rural market and to get success, more sales promotion schemes for sachets should be launched.

### KEYWORDS

affordable, innovative, rural, sachet, tap.

### INTRODUCTION

In modern marketing times, packaging has become a very important part of product management. With increasing competition, marketers are turning to innovative packaging to gain a distinctive edge to their overall product offers. Marketers also use packaging as a device for renovating the product. When a declining trend in the sale of the product noticed, marketers often use the packing to arrest the decline. They change the package and give a new look to the product without bringing about any substantive change in the product. The product is then advertised as new on the strength of the newness of the packing. Examples of innovating packaging are: Harpic liquid toilet cleaner with its directing nozzle, Bourn vita's 200gm reusable mug-cum jar pack, Cadbury' drinking chocolate in a shaker pack, its cococa in a special measuring cup, catch 22 and products like shampoo, biscuits are available in small pouch(sachets). In India more than 70% population lives in rural areas and rural India is dominated by unorganized retailing where local provisional stores caters to the needs of local population. They may or may not deal with branded products. But after the advent of visual media (e.g. television) into rural India, the rural consumers are also looking for designer and quality branded products from their village stores. Also because of its huge size, large industries and multinational companies ranging from cars to detergents, shampoos are rushing to rural India to market their wares and tap the huge potential. There is a vast difference in life styles of the rural and urban consumers and traditional four P's of marketing **Product, Price, Promotion and Place** have been replaced by a different framework for analysis. A no. of companies have taken four A's – **Acceptability, Affordability Availability and Awareness** as challenges for rural marketing and they are developing their marketing strategies accordingly. The rural consumers in India are price sensitive as they are generally the daily wage earners and they don't have monthly income like their urban counterparts. The companies are providing value addition to the products and greater benefits to the consumers through packaging route. They are focusing on their core competency such as technological expertise to design specific products for the rural economy that are affordable. The most remarkable example in this context is the launch of sachets, which has transformed the rural market considerably, as packaging in smaller units and lesser priced packs, increases the product's affordability.

### SACHET MARKETING

Sachet marketing is nothing but efforts made by marketers to make the goods available to those who otherwise cannot afford to buy branded and costly products. It can broadly be defined as micro-selling concept that comprises small sized offerings, light product versions, services and loans in small portions. It not only makes product affordable to the target consumer, but also motivates them to adopt new product. Today many items such as Washing powder, Coconut oil, Hair oil, Shampoo, Coffee etc are available in sachets. Majority of the products which were earlier not used by the rural consumers have today become a part of their lives due to sachets and cheaper price.

Sachet signifies a revolution in marketing. It introduces the customer into a product category and makes it accessible to him. It also gives consumers more opportunity to experiment with a larger range of brands. Sachet has picked up fast in rural areas. Lower purchasing power and limited availability of cash for shopping force the rural consumers to go for small packs( with low unit price).In some cases, consumers also prefer small packs so that they can make a trial on small scale and after satisfaction go in for bulk purchases. So it has become the ideal tool for entering the highly price sensitive rural markets.

Firms went in for small packs in order to-

- a. Capture new market segments.
- b. Boost the sales volume.
- c. Compete through differentiation cum price oriented strategy with a small size and a low unit price.

Sachet was first introduced in India in 1990 by Cavincare by launching a 10ml sachet of velvette shampoo, at a very low price. The other companies later followed the strategy with great joy. The company also offered single use perfumes at Rs.2. Most of the FMCG Products are available in small packs from facial creams to shampoos, detergents, tea, coffee biscuits and chocolates etc.

### EXAMPLES OF SOME FMCG PRODUCTS AVAILABLE IN SMALL PACKING

\* **SHAMPOOS:** Brands like velvette & chick were the sachets pioneers; they gained a lot of penetration in the rural market through sachets. The low unit price of the sachets at Rs 1 and in some cases 75 paisa made it affordable. Masses of consumers could not afford to buy 80-100 ml bottles with a starting price of Rs 30 - 45 and up, but they readily welcomed the Rs 1.50 sachet of shampoo. The contribution of the rural market in the region of 15% in the late 1980's has grown to 35-40%. Garnier now has products in sachets, which includes shampoos & conditioners (Rs 3 & Rs 4 respectively).

\* **SOAPS AND DETERGENTS:** HUL has launched lifebuoy at Rs. 2 for 50 gm and Godrej has Cinthol, fairglow in 50 gm at Rs. 4-5. Mysore sandal soap is available in travel pack. India today has mini planner cum wallet, which is easy to carry aimed at modern woman. HUL plans combo sachets of shampoo and hair oil at Rs 1.

It also hiked the price of its detergent bar Surf Excel (120 g) earlier known as Rin Supreme from Rs 13 to 15 and also increased some of their toilet soap brands.

\***PARLE:** Sales have gone up 250% ever since it launched the Rs 5 half - litre bottle of bailey.

\* **CADBURY'S CHOCOLATES:** Small pack volumes are now outstripping the volumes of the large dairy milk bar. Perk also came in the small pack- perk slim at Rs 5 and Cadbury gems are Rs 1 for a pack of four units.

\***CADBURY'S BOURNVITA:** It is pushing the sale of bourn vita through Rs 3.50 sachet.

\* **FAIR & LOVELY:** HUL's premium brand fair & lovely fairness cream came in 5 ml at Rs 3.

\* **NESCAFE:** It was launched in a single serve pack at Rs 5.

\* **KIT KAT:** It was launched in Rs 2 pack.

\***HORLICKS:** It was launched in a 25 gms sachet and then in 18 gms.

\***PROCTER & GAMBLE:** P&G has reduced the pack size of its flagship detergent brand 'Tide' from 1 kilo to 850 gm while maintaining the price point at Rs 62. They have also reduced the size of its 500 gm to 480 gm at the same price.

The 5 gms Vicks vaporub tin, small size lifebuoy soap, talcum powder, detergents are a couple of other examples.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

- In a survey conducted by MART (a rural marketing consultancy) and RMAI (Rural Marketing Association of India), it is stated that against 17% growth rate in urban areas, the rural sector has seen a 20% growth last year- contributing over 50% of India's total FMCG Market.
- Mckinsey and co. predicts that given the right investment in rural infrastructure, the rural market may be worth \$500-\$600 billion by 2020.
- Industry body ASSOCHAM projects that growth in FMCG segment is likely to be driven by increased consumption in rural and semi-urban areas and market size of FMCG industry will be Rs.1,23,363 crore by 2012.
- According to Dr.B.Nagaraja (2004), quality, easy availability and price of product are dominating factors influencing the buying behavior in rural areas.
- According to Sakkthivel, Mishra (2005), sachet zing is a bold move by FMCG conglomerates to motivate rural consumers to try out new products .It is a positive step towards the modification of buying behavior and consumption pattern of rural consumer.
- Joseph A. Sy-Changco, Ramendra Singh and Avenida Padre Tomas Pereira, (2009) in their article on "Mini-sizing consumption or whetting the appetite? Managerial insights on sachet marketing strategies of consumer goods companies" describe that sachet marketing depends on the applicability of packaging and compatibility of product itself .Commodities like detergents, seasonings and personal products can be sachet dependent and get distributed in territory channels.
- Sara Huhmann in his article "Tapping India's Rural Market"(2004) concluded that rural Indians need to purchase consumer goods just as their Western counterparts do. Rural Indian consumers have a different set of needs that must be met by both package and product. Packages need to be designed to withstand more distribution abuse due to poor roads and more primitive modes of transportation. When creating a package for rural India, small sizes allow consumers to try new products. It also caters to the fact that most rural Indians have low disposable incomes and little storage space at home.
- Pricewaterhouse Coopers for IBEF in their report on Fast Moving Consumer Goods said that the Indian FMCG sector is the fourth largest sector in the economy with a total market size in excess of US\$ 13.1 billion. Availability of key raw materials, cheaper labour costs and presence across the entire value chain gives India a competitive advantage. a number of companies followed the strategy of launching a wide range of package sizes and prices to suit the purchasing preferences of India's varied consumer segment.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- \* To study the various reasons that influence the rural consumers to purchase goods in small packs.
- \* To study the time and place of using sachet package.
- \* To study the satisfaction level of rural consumer regarding quantity and quality of goods purchased in sachets.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study is intended to analyze the attitude of rural consumer towards sachet marketing of FMCG products. Mainly eight products washing powder, hair oil, shampoo, tooth paste, fairness cream, biscuits, talcum powder and mobile recharge cards are taken into account for the purpose of study.

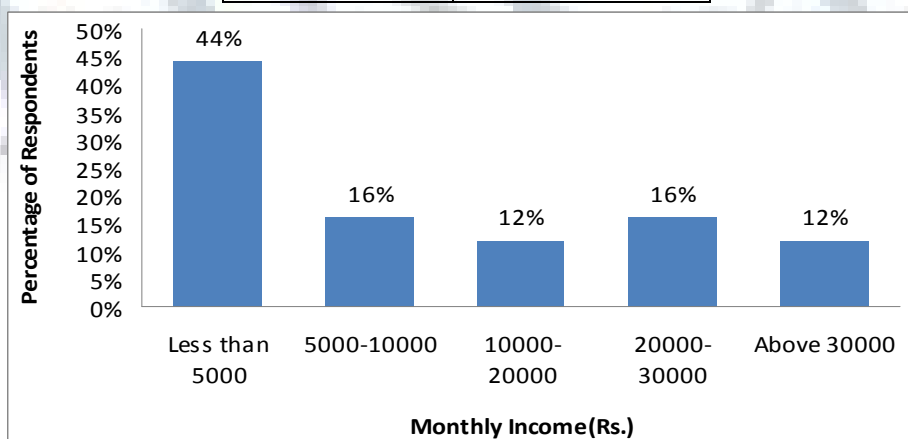
**SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION:** Data is collected from both primary & secondary sources. The data for the study, primary in nature, has been collected by using questionnaires. Secondary data is collected from journals, newspapers, books, business magazines and websites.

**SAMPLING DESIGN:** The present study was carried in Ludhiana district by selecting the respondents from four villages namely Begowal, Rampur, Malhipur & Rajgarh near Doraha. Sample of 100 customers was selected for collecting primary data. To carry out the study in a more accurate and easier way, convenience sampling was adopted.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**TABLE 1: MONTHLY INCOME OF RESPONDENTS**

Monthly Income(in Rs)	Respondents(percentage)
Less than 5000	44%
5000-10000	16%
10000-20000	12%
20000-30000	16%
Above 30000	12%



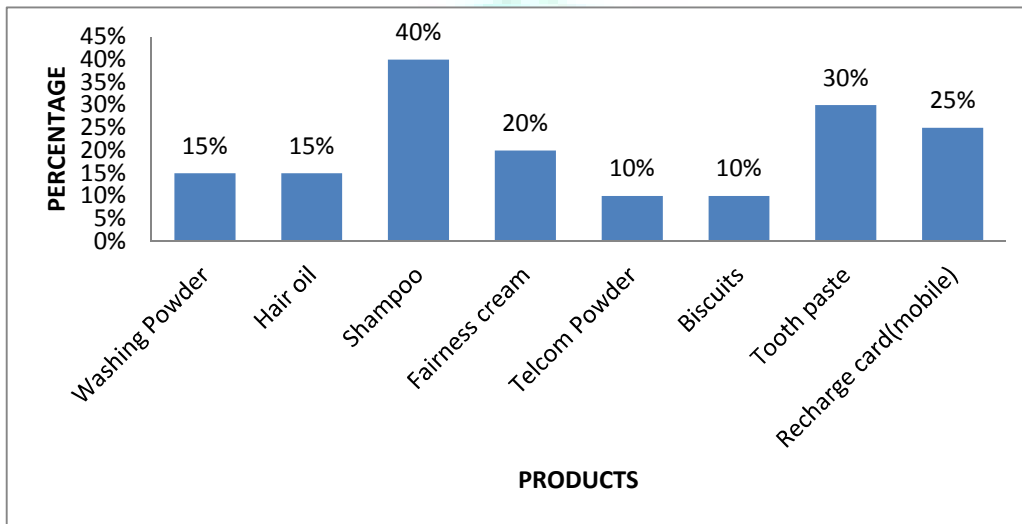


It is evident from this table that the majority of (44%) respondents belongs to income group whose monthly income is less than Rs 5000. Due to their low income, they prefer to purchase items in sachets than in large packs.

2. The respondents were asked to tick the products given in the list, they are purchasing in sachet. The responses are as follows:

TABLE 2

Products	Percentage of respondents
Washing Powder	15%
Hair oil	15%
Shampoo	40%
Fairness cream	20%
Talcum Powder	10%
Biscuits	10%
Tooth paste	30%
Recharge card(mobile)	25%

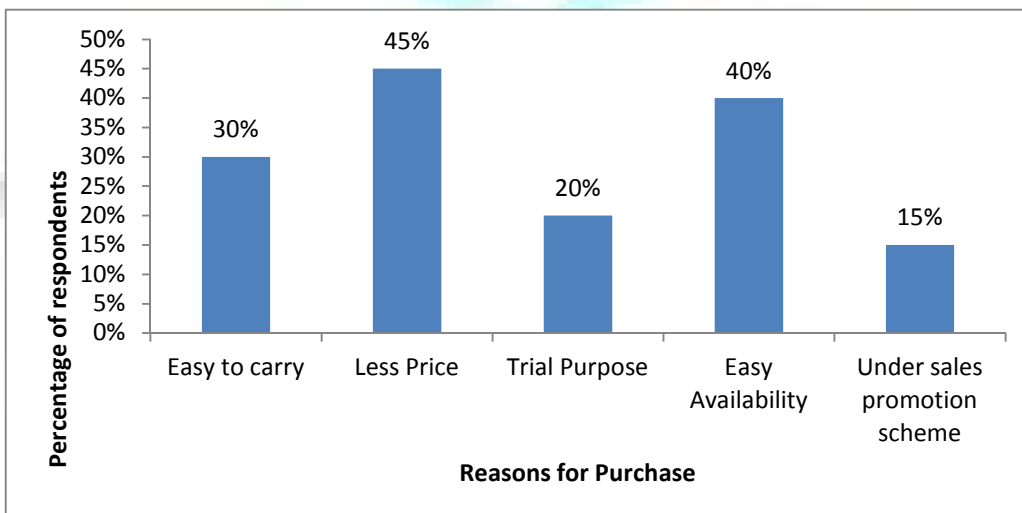


The respondents were asked to choose as many product categories as they purchase in small packs. So the above table shows that out of the 100 respondents, 40% respondents purchase shampoo in sachets, 10% biscuits, 30% toothpaste, and 15% washing powder and 20% fairness cream, 10% talcum powder, 15% hair oil and 25% mobile recharge card. So majority of respondents purchase shampoo in sachets followed by toothpaste and mobile recharge card.

3. The respondents were asked to mention the reason of purchasing the products in sachet. The responses are as follows:

TABLE 3

Reasons for purchase	Percentage
Easy to carry	30%
Less Price	45%
Trial Purpose	20%
Easy Availability	40%
Under sales promotion scheme	15%

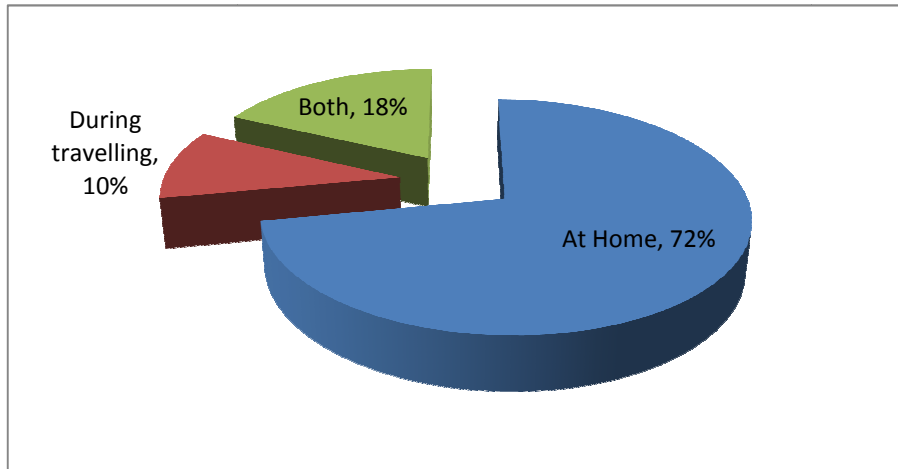


The respondents were asked to mention as many reasons as they consider for purchasing the products in sachet. The above table reveals that the main reason behind sachets purchasing is less price. Out of 100 respondents, 45% said that they purchase sachets due to lesser price, 40% due to easy availability as these are easily available from any shop, 15% respondents purchase due to sales promotion schemes, 20% for trial purpose, and 30% find them easy to carry.

4. The respondents were asked whether they use sachet only at home or during travelling or both. The responses are as follows:

TABLE 4

At Home	72%
During Travelling	10%
Both	18%

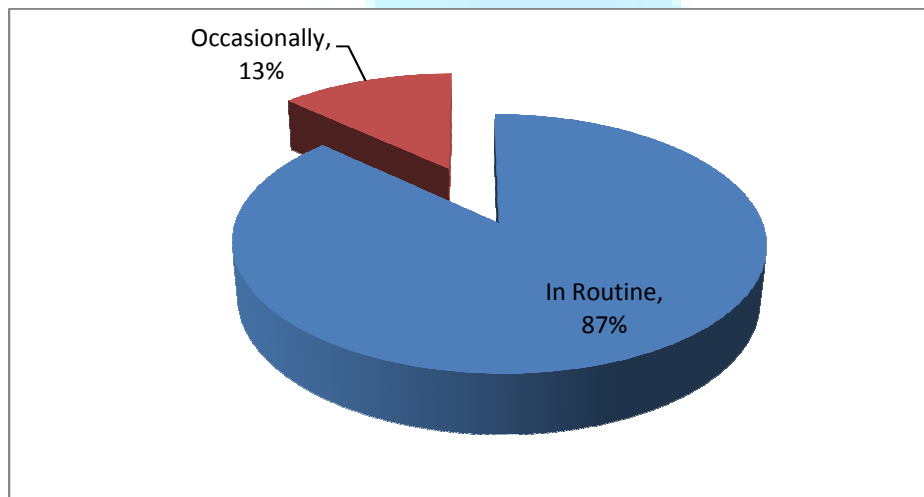


So it is evident that majority of respondents use sachet both at home.

5. The respondents were asked whether they use sachet in routine or occasionally. The responses are as follows:

TABLE 5

In Routine	87%
Occasionally	13%

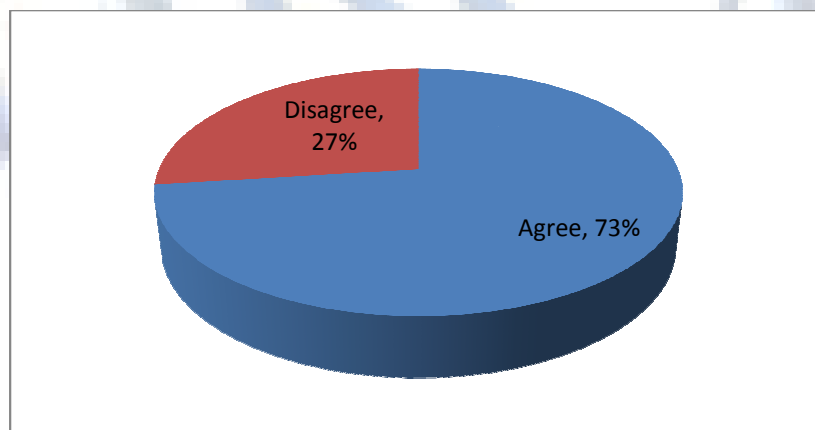


So it is evident that majority of respondents use sachet both at home as well as during travelling.

6. The respondents were asked whether they agree that multiple sachet purchasing is cheaper than one time large pack purchasing or not. The responses are as follows:

TABLE 6

Agree	73%
Disagree	27%

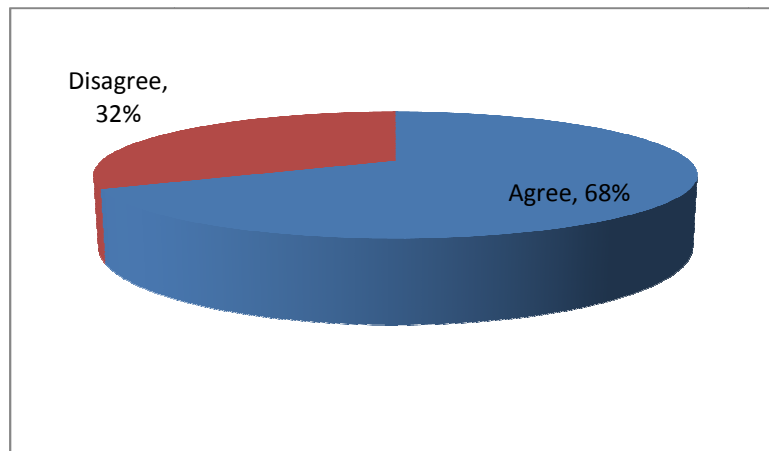


The above table indicates that out of total 100 respondents, 73% respondents think that purchasing multiple sachets for a particular quantity is still cheaper than purchasing a large bottle of same quantity.

7. The respondents were asked whether they agree that sachet has the same quality as that of large pack or not. The responses are as follows:

TABLE 7

Agree	68%
Disagree	32%

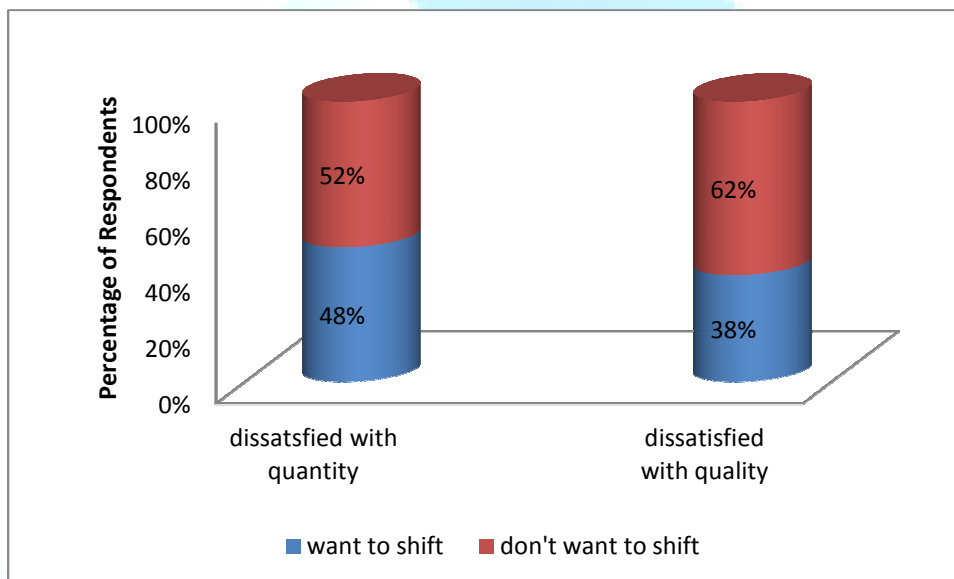


It is evident that 68% agree and 32% disagree, which shows that majority of consumers agree that the quality of sachet corresponds the quality of large size pack.

8. The respondents, who were disagreed with the quantity or quality of sachet packing, were asked whether they want to shift towards large pack purchasing or not. The responses are as follows:

TABLE 8

	Respondents dissatisfied with quantity	Respondents dissatisfied with quality
Want to shift	48%	38%
Don't Want to shift	52%	62%



It shows that out of 27% customers who were not satisfied with the quantity of multiple sachets in comparison to quantity available in large pack, 48% want to shift their purchasing to large size pack.

On the other hand, out of 32% respondents, who are not satisfied with the quality of sachet, 38% want to shift to large size pack.

**MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

- Majority of the rural consumers are of lower income group. So they prefer these products in sachets.
- Products like shampoo, toothpaste and mobile recharge cards are mostly purchased in sachets.
- Majority of respondents think that the items in sachets are quality wise good which shows that they are satisfied with the quality of products available in sachets.
- The major reasons behind their purchase are lesser prices followed by easy availability. Also majority of respondents purchase sachet because it is easy to carry. But some persons also use these products for trial purpose. Only few consumers purchase under sales promotion schemes.
- Majority of respondents use product sachets at home in routine. Only few use small packs during travelling and also on special occasions.
- Majority of consumers think that purchasing multiple sachets is cheaper rather than purchasing one time large pack. And majority is satisfied with the quality of product available in small pack.
- Out of 27% respondents who are not satisfied with quantity available in sachet, only 48% want to shift and out of 32% respondents who are not satisfied with the quality of product available in sachet, only 38% want to shift towards large pack purchasing. So majority of respondents want to continue their purchase of small packs.

**CONCLUSION**

So it is evident that packages are invaluable aid to decision making by the consumers. A package design itself acts as a registered brand. The rural consumers in India are price sensitive and sachets have transformed their life style. They have shifted their purchase from non branded goods to branded ones which are now available in affordable price. Companies are spending crores of rupees on attracting rural customers by designing the products and package as per their requirements. But to get more and more success in this move of making the product affordable to rural consumers, more and more sales promotion schemes for sachets should be launched. Also, the companies must ensure that the quality of product available in small pack must correspond to quality available in large pack. They should try to put more products in the consumption basket of rural consumers by practicing this move of sachet packing on other products also.

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