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Kumar S. (2011): "Customer Value: A Comparative Study of Rural and Urban Customers," Thesis, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

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## THE EMERGING ORGANIZED JEWELRY RETAILERS IN INDIA AND THEIR CHALLENGES: A QUALITATIVE STUDY APPROACH

DR. TANU NARANG
ASST. PROFESSOR
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EARTHSPACE

#### **ABSTRACT**

As India makes rapid progress in the retail arena, the Indian Jewelry market is undergoing a gradual metamorphosis from unorganized to organized formats. Consumers are more quality conscious than ever before. The jewelry market is one of the largest consumer sectors in the country larger than telecom, automobiles, and apparel and perhaps second only to the foods sector. Interestingly, organized retailers have attempted to understand the market, anticipate social change and strategies appropriately. This Paper looks at understanding the branding and Innovation done by the Branded Jewelry retailers in order to deal with the local competition also understand the factors that appease the today's customers. Later a qualitative study conducted view in-depth interviews analysis these objectives and proposes certain recommendations accordingly.

#### **KEYWORDS**

customization, branding, new age buying.

#### INTRODUCTION

s India makes rapid progress in the retail arena, the Indian Jewelry market is undergoing a gradual metamorphosis from unorganized to organized formats. The jewelry business in India is estimated to beat Rs. 50,000 crores. According to the independent estimation studies conducted by World Gold Council & Mckinsey, out of the overall market share, the share of organized jewelry market is less than Rs. 1,000 crores. This accounts to about 2-3 % of the total market share. But given that this is a relatively new segment of the market, it is poised to grow. Jewelry retailing is moving from a "Storehouse of value" to a "Precious fashion accessory". Consumers are more quality conscious than ever before. The jewelry market is one of the largest consumer sectors in the country larger than telecom, automobiles, and apparel and perhaps second only to the foods sector. Interestingly, organized retailers have attempted to understand the market, anticipate social change and strategies appropriately.

Today, goods and services offered by any retailer are strongly driven by their identified Target Group. There are several examples of retailers who are drawing in consumers either across a wide swath or a segment of socio-economic classification, clearly defined by them. This has been the first step towards organized jewelry retailing in India. In a short span of time, organized retailers have successfully implemented a change in the buying pattern of the Indian consumers. This is evident from the shift from the traditional jeweler to the jeweler with an identity. This shift clearly indicates a change in viewpoint of jewelry as a commodity to brand identification.

#### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The gems and jewelry industry occupies an important position in the Indian economy and is one of the fastest growing industries in the country. Hence the research conducted would help us to:

- 1) Understand if branding and Innovation play an important role in guiding the purchase decision of the consumers from the retailers perspective.
- 2) To understand the factors that appeases the customers for buying decision and the efforts taken by the retailers in this regard.

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

(Subhro Prakash Ghosh, 2011) reported in his article "Glistening upturn in branded luxury jewellery" that Indian jewellery retail is witnessing a huge transformation. It has transformed from being an investment to a fashionable accessory. The entry of large number of luxury brands into India is further contributing to this transformation during the past few years especially in luxury jewellery retail market that is expected to gear up its current share of 4 per cent to 18 per cent of the total retail sales by 2010. He says, despite having the potential of the customers of tier I or II cities to buy luxury jewellery, they end up purchasing the merchandise from the main metros.

(Preethi Chamikutty, 2012) in her article "Branded gold & diamond jewellery attracting Indian buyers" reported that India consumed 125 tonnes of gold in pure jewellery form in the April to June quarter of 2012. "That will be more than what the entire US market will consume this year," reckons David Lamb, managing director, jewelry, World Gold Council (WGC), an association of the world's leading gold mining companies. That, in an increasingly brand-obsessed market like India, would spell a huge opportunity for organized players. GenY is looking for contemporary designs, convenience and an enjoyable shopping experience. Brand building helps a product carve its niche and demand a premium in the market. Spending your money on jewelry is so much cleverer than clothing that you will throw away or get bored of. Most Indian brides already know that but the challenge is to convince them to pick up the branded stuff rather than ounces of it from their family-friendly neighborhood store.

(Deepa Balasubramanian, 2012) reported in her article "South India brands are going national" that South India has many successful regional brands that are going national. Sharing their success stories were some of these brands during a panel discussion: 'South Champions: Creating Successful National Brands'. Pointing out the challenges the marketers face, she said, "The biggest challenge is to sell unique and different products. Only then will people come to buy". The biggest challenge she feels is advertising, which he has to across mediums, and languages. The key challenge for her has been to find a motivated buyer to what she sells. "And the secret is to be innovative and be unique in what you sell," she added. (Winda Angraini Jalaham & Sifrid S. Pangemanan, 2014) told in their study "The customer perception of local gold jewelry retailer in traditional market" that Gold jewelry is the one of complete package especially for women and is something that includes needs and wants. Hobby is specific with needs. Someone that has hobby to buy gold jewelry is someone that compels their action for their satisfaction. Others oppose gold jewelry is something that someone want. Lifestyle and self-esteem can make someone desire something in satisfaction. In business, perception of customers is important. Most of the customers are interested in non-branded products because non-branded products have many kinds of model variants, price is affordable, and appropriate for all society. In traditional market, promotion should further be enhanced. However, promotion of product quality and product design that they have should be able to show that their product can compete with branded products. (Debiprasad Nayak, 2014) in his article "jewelry brands take on new shine" reported that when Indian families would buy gold jewelry a few years ago, they would always step into a neighborhood shop. But now more of them are heading into branded stores to get better quality and newer designs. The shift in buying trend has ushered a boom in

(Shubhra Saini, 2015) concluded in her article "From occasion-based purchase to everyday use: Jewellery retail shines bright in India" that the jewellery market in India is one of the largest in the world. With a multitude of players in both organized and unorganized spaces, consumers are spoilt for choice. According to a recent report by the Indian Brand Equity Foundation, the overall gross exports of Gems & Jewellery in April 2016 stood at US\$ 3.23 billion, whereas exports of cut

and polished diamonds stood at US\$ 1.78 billion. According to a report by Research and Markets, the jewellery market in India is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15.95 percent over the period 2014-2019. The jewellery market in India is expected to see reasonable growth in the coming years. There is a dynamic change in consumer preferences due to exposure that has made the customer more astute and aware about trends and quality. (Chaudhary & Ghosh, 2015) In their article titled "Branded jewelry is the new darling of investors" mentioned that branded jewelry, is attracting the attention of investors over the past two years, there has been an increase in investor interest in the jewelry business in India: In 2014, there were nine such transactions worth \$277 million, compared to four deals worth \$35 million in 2013. The reason for this newfound interest lies in the fact that gross margins are higher in jewelry businesses that are design led. Also, massive profits can be registered by offering a mix of gold and diamond jewelry.

(Khadekar, Wanjari, Kohad 2016) published in their paper that in last decade tremendous growth happened in gold sector in India. People are more attracted towards gold because of their growing prices. It's seen to be a pure investment. The demand for gold & gold Jewelry increases day by day. In this age-old sector the traditional craftsman jewelers handled the sector. In some last years a huge growth &opportunity has to be seen in this sector so, many private organized companies also entered in the market. Just like Tanishq, Kalyan jewelers, TBZ, Malabar gold etc. In current scenario new age consumers want a new variety, latest designs of Jewelry with more awareness & knowledge. Thus the industry is having more opportunity to get the market share.

(Deveshwar & Kumari 2016) published in their paper "Customer preference towards branded jewelry" that Jewelry industry is one of the fasted emergent industries in the Indian economy. There are both organized and unorganized sector. The jewelry industry in India is mainly unorganized at present with a small share of organized sector. But in the past few years the share of organized sector is enlarged regularly. This may be possible due to the increasing level of awareness and preference of branded jewelry. Jewelry industry uses a number of techniques for escalating their profit and market shares. They try to win the trust and confidence of the customer. They start to give preference to lightweight and fashionable branded jewelry as compared to local and unbranded jewelry. There is a shift from content to design in jewelry.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the market there are largely fragmented Local & Nationally known retail jewelry shops. In spite of product quality and services in terms of reparability, variety, returns & majorly customization, people are still buying gold jewels form local retailers. The Study focuses on the challenges that the organized / branded Jewelers face in contrast to the Local unorganized market of jewelers.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- RQ 1: To identify the points of appease to customers by both the Local Retailers and Branded retailers
- RQ 2: -To understand the Branding done by both the Local and Branded Jewelry Retailers

#### **METHODOLOGY**

In designing this study, researcher used qualitative method through observation, depth interview and document review. Researcher uses multi case study, comparing more than one case, total 3 organized (branded jeweler's) and 3 unorganized (local jeweler's) of Surat city resulting in rigor research. Qualitative research included in-depth interviews of owners of the Local retailers and Managers of the Branded retailers. The focus was to study and compare the challenges faced by the organized (branded) jewelry retailers.

The data of this study using depth interview, observation, document review and triangulation. (Yin 2004) stated that in data collection, we should use main principle: using multiple not just single, source of evidence; creating a case study data base; maintaining chain of evidence.

#### **ANALYSIS**

Proposition 1: Retailers efforts on Appeasing customers in terms of Value for Money, Design Innovation, Variety and Customize the jewelry as per customer's requirement.

#### TABLE 1: ANALYSIS ON CONSUMER APPEASE METHODS IMPLEMENTATION

Indicators	Actual Conditions	Analysis
1. Customiza-	Local Retailers has a winning point in terms of customization over the Branded retailers because the customer	Keeping in mind the
tion	seeks design copies that can be provided by the Local Retailers and is not a possibility with Branded retailers	points of appease for
	since designs are centralized.	the customer and its
2. Ready to	Both the Local Retailers & Branded retailers are able to provide a full range for ready to wear jewellery in their	various indicators Local
wear	stores yet the perception in the consumers mind is inclined towards the Branded retailers having a wider variety.	Retailers are able to
3. Reparability	Local Retailers are open for services such as repairing of jewellery both bought by them and other retailers	provide better services
(service)	whereas the Branded retailers do not provide such facility and are policy-driven.	in terms of reparability,
4. Return poli-	Return Policies do not have geographical limitations with Branded retailers yet sometimes policy themselves are	variety, returns & ma-
cies	stringent whereas Local Retailers are more flexible but less approachable geographically.	jorly customization.

Proposition 2: The Efforts done in terms of branding to market themselves and survive in the competitive jewelry market by focusing on attributes like Designs, Price, Patents and Innovation in their Jewelry lines.

#### TABLE 2: ANALYSIS ON THE BRANDING EFFORTS DONE BY RETAILERS

Indicators	Actual Conditions	Analysis			
1. Designs	Branded retailers are able to outsource a wide variety of designers and therefore are				
	able to have an edge over the Local Retailers.	Survival of the Local Retailers is based upon hy-			
2. Pricing	Many Branded retailers are also to innovate in their pricing policies in terms of various promotions & offers but the local retailers are able to maintain the essence by providing long credit period to their Loyal customers.				
3. True copy	Local Retailers are able to create copies of designs of Branded retailers effecting their branding & also making Branded retailers try for better & innovative designs.				
4. Innovation (Jewellery lines)	Branded retailers are able to segment the market and therefore come up with a wide variety of jewellery lines and do brand extension but the Local Retailers were also seen to establish Shop-in-shop fulfilling the gap of brand extension.	national jewellery retail brands.  The USP of Branded retailers is the long jewellery lines and the brand equity due to their national presence.			
5. Patents/Logo visibility	Though the product itself doesn't have the logo visible & patents of design do not seem to be working effectively yet the presence of national brands plays an effective role in the minds of the customers.				

#### CONCLUSIONS

Local Retailers are better at providing points of Appease in terms of customization, Reparability, Return Policies or Ready-to-wear variety to their customers as compared to the Branded retailers as they have the centralized system to follow and cannot be flexible with appeasing the customers. The survival of the Local Retailers is based upon hybrid of customization and branding of jewelry designs whereas that of Branded retailers is based upon hybrid of long jewelry lines and the brand equity due to their national presence. And customization is the key point of difference when it comes to the local v/s branded jewelry retail brands.

#### SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF RESEARCH

The study has immense further scope of study in terms of understanding various government regulations in the organized market and also a detailed quantitative study can be carried out on the perspective on the consumer tastes and preferences.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Just like Local Retailers, Branded Retailers should focus more on appeasing the customers by providing flexibility in their centralized system for returns, Reparability (service), variety and especially providing customization which is mostly preferred by the customers. The new age buying is on the spree henceforth the USP of the branded retailers in terms of innovative designs should be retained and grown as this will become the key factor to deal with the competition.

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