

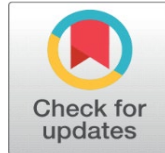
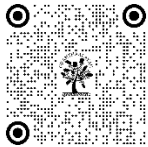
CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND ITS IMPACT ON STARTUP BRAND LOYALTY: A SURVEY-BASED STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of consumer behaviour on brand loyalty among entrepreneurs in India, with a particular emphasis on the consumer base in Chhattisgarh. The objective of the research is to comprehend the impact of demographic variables, including age, gender, education level, and income, on brand loyalty, as well as product quality, pricing, and customer service. The study determined that brand loyalty is substantially influenced by product quality, age, and education level, while pricing, customer service, gender, and income do not have a substantial impact, based on data collected from 214 respondents using ordinal regression analysis. The findings indicate that businesses should prioritise the improvement of product quality and the customisation of marketing strategies to target specific age and education demographics in order to cultivate brand loyalty. The results offer entrepreneurs valuable insights to refine their consumer engagement strategies and align their offerings with customer preferences.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Brand Loyalty, Startups, Product Quality, Demographics

1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of consumer behaviour have consistently been a critical focus in the field of marketing, as it is imperative to comprehend the process by which consumers make purchasing decisions in order to ensure the success of any startup. Technological advancements, government initiatives, and an emerging entrepreneurial culture have all contributed to the rapid growth of the Indian startup ecosystem in recent years. Intense competition and the challenge of establishing a loyal consumer base are the obstacles that entrepreneurs encounter as they emerge in a variety of sectors. A critical factor in the long-term success of these firms is brand loyalty, which is the commitment of consumers to repurchasing or consistently selecting a particular brand. The objective of this investigation is to

investigate the correlation between consumer behaviour and brand loyalty in the context of Indian entrepreneurs, with a particular emphasis on the consumers of Chhattisgarh.

The startup landscape in India is both vibrant and diverse, featuring a variety of enterprises, including traditional retail and service-orientated businesses and tech-driven innovations. In addition to increasing economic growth, these firms are also revolutionising the manner in which consumers interact with brands. Nevertheless, the transition from a startup to a recognisable brand is characterised by numerous obstacles, particularly in the establishment of a devoted customer base. In a competitive market, brand loyalty can be the deciding factor between survival and failure for entrepreneurs. It is of the utmost importance for entrepreneurs who aspire to cultivate brand loyalty to comprehend the factors that influence consumer behaviour towards startups.

Chhattisgarh, a state in central India, offers a distinctive environment for the examination of consumer behaviour. Chhattisgarh has experienced substantial economic growth in recent years, despite its traditional reputation as a region with a predominantly agrarian economy. The consumer landscape in the state has been significantly altered by the increasing urbanisation, increasing disposable incomes, and the increasing accessibility of digital platforms. This transformation offers a fertile environment for the investigation of how local consumers perceive and interact with entrepreneurs, particularly in terms of brand loyalty. The hypothesis that this investigation is based on is that consumer behaviour has a substantial impact on brand loyalty towards entrepreneurs. The research endeavours to determine the primary factors that influence the loyalty of consumers to startup brands in Chhattisgarh by conducting a survey of consumers. The study will also take into account the broader Indian startup ecosystem to offer a comprehensive comprehension of how these factors may differ across various regions and demographics. The research is designed to investigate several critical areas. Initially, it investigates the attributes of startup brands that are most effective in establishing consumer loyalty. The objective of this investigation is to enhance the existing body of literature on consumer behaviour and brand loyalty, with a particular focus on the startup environment in India. The research offers valuable insights that can assist businesses throughout the country in better understanding and responding to the requirements and preferences of their target audience. Ultimately, this can nurture stronger brand loyalty and achieve sustainable development by concentrating on the consumers of Chhattisgarh.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing research has extensively investigated the correlation between consumer behaviour and brand loyalty, particularly in the context of startups. It is essential for firms that are striving to establish and maintain brand loyalty to comprehend the dynamics of consumer behaviour. The following literature review synthesises critical research on the interconnection of consumer behaviour and brand loyalty, establishing the foundation for the study "Consumer Behaviour and Its Impact on Startup Brand Loyalty: A Survey-Based Study."

3. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Schiffman and Kanuk (2010) define consumer behaviour as the psychological, social, and economic factors that influence the purchasing decisions of individuals. Numerous theories have been proposed to elucidate the decision-making process of

consumers, with the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943) being particularly influential. As per Kotler and Keller (2016), consumer behaviour is influenced by a combination of personal, social, and cultural factors, which collectively affect attitudes and purchasing decisions. Liao, Chen, and Deng (2011) emphasise the significance of establishing trust and credibility during the initial phases of brand development, which are the specific challenges that entrepreneurs encounter when attempting to influence consumer behaviour. Furthermore, Stephen (2016) underscores the significance of digital marketing and social media in influencing consumer perceptions and behaviours, with a particular emphasis on entrepreneurs that capitalise on these platforms effectively.

Brand Loyalty Aaker (1991) defines brand loyalty as a consumer's consistent preference for a specific brand, as evidenced by positive word-of-mouth and recurrent purchases. Oliver (1999) elaborates on this definition by proposing a model that encompasses cognitive, affective, conative, and action loyalty stages, emphasising the progression of brand loyalty from mere recognition to a profound commitment to repurchase. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) identify consumer satisfaction, perceived quality, and emotional connection as critical factors in brand loyalty. Nevertheless, Kim and Peterson (2017) contend that entrepreneurs encounter substantial obstacles in establishing brand loyalty as a result of inadequate brand recognition and diminished consumer trust. Reichheld and Schefter (2000) recommend that entrepreneurs can cultivate brand loyalty by providing exceptional customer experiences and high-quality products, despite the aforementioned challenges.

4. BRAND LOYALTY AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN STARTUPS

The startup ecosystem is particularly dependent on the interaction between consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. Bennett and Rundle-Thiele (2005) characterise consumer behaviour in startups as characterised by high levels of inquiry and experimentation. Consumers are frequently interested in trying new brands, but they are less likely to demonstrate long-term loyalty. This poses a distinctive challenge for entrepreneurs, as they must maintain a balance between retaining existing consumers and recruiting new ones. According to Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrmann (2005), firms that comprehend and address the behavioural determinants of their target consumers are more likely to establish powerful brand loyalty. Personalised customer experiences and relationship marketing are effective strategies for converting initial consumer interest into long-term loyalty, as Grönroos (2004) has noted. Additionally, Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, and Farrelly (2014) underscore the significance of brand authenticity and transparency in cultivating loyalty, particularly for businesses that operate in trust-sensitive markets.

Additionally, digital platforms play a substantial role in mediating the relationship between consumer behaviour and brand loyalty. According to Godey et al. (2016), firms that effectively utilise mobile apps, e-commerce, and social media are more likely to cultivate brand loyalty and influence consumer behaviour. Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, and Gremler (2010) emphasise that these digital interactions enable entrepreneurs to gather real-time feedback, adapt to evolving preferences, and reinforce brand loyalty through personalised marketing strategies.

5. THE GAP IN RESEARCH

In digital contexts, there is a lack of comprehension regarding the specific impact of consumer behaviour and brand loyalty on startup brand loyalty, despite the extensive literature on these topics. The majority of research concentrates on established brands, which results in a lack of identification of the distinctive strategies that entrepreneurs can employ to influence consumer behaviour and cultivate brand loyalty. This disparity is particularly important because entrepreneurs frequently encounter unique obstacles, such as inadequate brand recognition and trust. In terms of practical, actionable strategies for entrepreneurs, the role of digital platforms in bridging these disparities remains underexplored. The objective of the survey-based study “Consumer Behaviour And Its Impact On Startup Brand Loyalty: A Survey-Based Study” is to address this gap by investigating the direct impact of consumer behaviour on brand loyalty in startups. The study will concentrate on the identification of effective strategies that startups can employ to transform consumer engagement into enduring loyalty.

5.1. OBJECTIVE

- 1) To identify and analyse the primary factors of consumer behaviour that influence brand loyalty towards startups.
- 2) To assess the influence of demographic variables on consumer brand loyalty in the Chhattisgarh market.

6. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

6.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The descriptive research design employed in this study is well-suited for the analysis and comprehension of consumer behaviour and its influence on brand loyalty towards startups. In order to obtain primary data directly from consumers, a survey-based methodology was implemented. The descriptive nature of the study enables a systematic description of the factors that influence brand loyalty among consumers, thereby providing insights into patterns, relationships, and correlations.

6.2. SAMPLE AND POPULATION

Consumers who reside in Chhattisgarh, India, comprise the target population for this investigation. These consumers are ideal participants for gaining insight into consumer behaviour in the region, as they interact with a variety of startup brands across different sectors and represent a diverse demographic background. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 214 consumers for the study. This method guarantees that the population's various strata (e.g., age groups, income levels, and educational backgrounds) are evenly represented, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour. The sampling frame was composed of consumers who have previously interacted with startup brands, thereby guaranteeing that the study's emphasis on brand loyalty was appropriately addressed.

6.3. DATA COLLECTION

A structured survey questionnaire was circulated both online and offline to acquire primary data. The questionnaire was developed to collect data on a variety

of consumer behaviour factors that influence loyalty. In order to facilitate the segmentation and analysis of consumer behaviour across various demographic categories, the survey also included a demographic information investigation.

HYPOTHESIS

H01: There are no significant factors of consumer behavior that influence brand loyalty towards startups.

H02: Demographic variables have no significant impact on consumer brand loyalty.

VARIABLES

Dependent Variables

Brand loyalty is measured by the responses to the frequency of purchases from startups.

Independent Variables

Consumer behavior is measured by age group, gender, highest level of education, monthly income range, the importance of product quality in the decision to remain loyal to a startup, importance of pricing in the decision to remain loyal to a startup, importance of customer service in the decision to remain loyal to a startup.

Instrument of Research

The survey questionnaire was the primary research instrument, consisting of a combination of demographic enquiries, Likert scale items, and closed-ended questions. In order to guarantee the validity, reliability, and clarity of the questions, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a small sample of 30 respondents. In order to enhance the survey's efficacy, minor modifications were implemented in response to the feedback.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

7.1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The age distribution of the participants in the study is illustrated in Figure 1. The data indicates that the age group of 18-24 years comprises the largest proportion of respondents, accounting for 36.0% of the total sample (n = 77). Immediately following this is the age category of 25-34 years, which comprises 31.8% (n = 68) of the respondents. The sample is composed of 45 participants aged 35- 44 years, which accounts for 21.0% (n = 45). The smallest class is comprised of 24 participants aged 45 and older, which accounts for 11.2% (n = 24). The distribution of the respondents suggests that they are considerably younger, with a substantial concentration in the 18-34 age bracket (67.8%). This concentration implies that the study sample is predominantly composed of youthful adults.

Figure 1

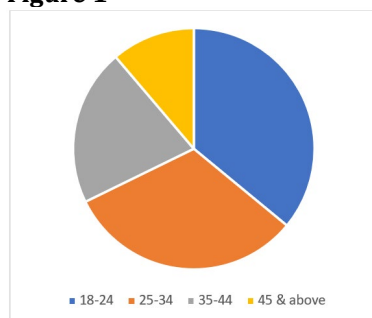


Figure 1 Age Distribution of the Respondents

The gender composition of the study sample is depicted in Figure 2. The dominant majority of the participants are male, comprising 65.4% ($n = 140$) of the total, while females comprise 34.6% ($n = 74$). This asymmetrical distribution suggests a gender imbalance among the respondents, with nearly two-thirds of the sample being male.

Figure 2

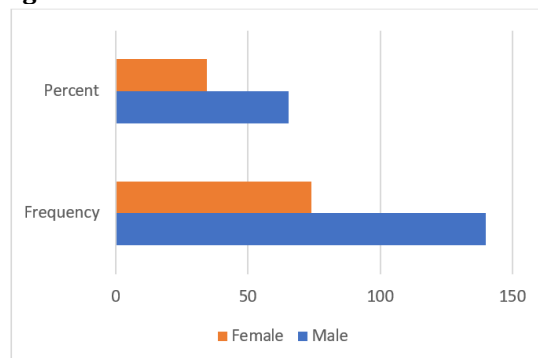


Figure 2 Gender Distribution of the Respondents

The participants' monthly income distribution is illustrated in Figure 3. Four categories are used to categorise the revenue range: "Less than 20,000," "20001-50000," "50001-100000," and "Above 100,000." The data indicates that the income group with the highest number of respondents is '50001-100000,' which accounts for 38.3% ($n = 82$) of the total sample. The 'Above 100000' group, which comprises 28.0% ($n = 60$) of participants, follows closely behind. The '20001-50000' category is comprised of 27.1% ($n = 58$) of respondents, while the 'Less than 20000' group is the smallest, comprising only 6.5% ($n = 14$). The income distribution is comparatively balanced, with the majority of respondents (66.3%) earning between Rs 20,000 and Rs 100,000.

Figure 3

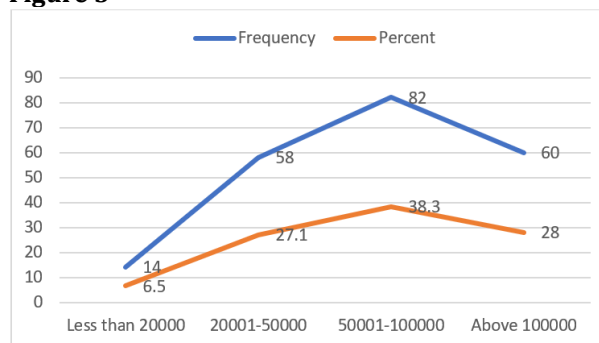


Figure 3 Income Distribution of the Respondents

The education level distribution among the respondents is depicted in Figure 4. The data suggests that 44.9% ($n = 96$) of the sample has a 'Undergraduate Degree,' constituting the largest proportion of participants. This is succeeded by individuals who possess a "Postgraduate Degree," which accounts for 41.1% ($n = 88$). The least represented group is those with a 'Doctoral Degree', at 5.1% ($n = 11$), while participants with only a 'High School' education account for 8.9% ($n = 19$). The

distribution indicates that the sample is primarily well-educated, with a significant majority (86.0%) possessing at least an undergraduate degree.

Figure 4

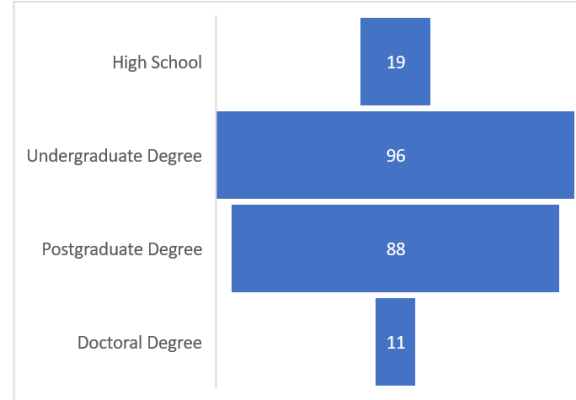


Figure 4 Education Level Distribution of the Respondents

8. MODEL FITTING INFORMATION

The model fitting information evaluates the extent to which the model's capacity to predict the outcome variable, in this case, brand loyalty, is substantially enhanced by the incorporation of predictors. The intercept-only model, which lacks predictors, has a -2 Log Likelihood value of 255.011. This value decreases to 192.950 in the final model, which encompasses all predictors (product quality, pricing, customer service, age, gender, education level, and income). The p-value (Sig.) is 0.000, and the Chi-Square value for this reduction is 62.061 with 12 degrees of freedom (df). The null model fit significantly worse than the model with predictors, as indicated by this p-value. Consequently, we can infer that the predictors (product quality, pricing, customer service, and demographic variables) make a substantial contribution to the prediction of brand loyalty. The below table 1 shows the model fitting information.

Table 1

Table 1 Model Fitting Information				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	255.011			
Final	192.950	62.061	12	0.000

9. TESTS OF GOODNESS OF FIT

The model's ability to suit the data is assessed through goodness-of-fit evaluations. The Pearson Chi-Square and Deviance statistics are both employed in ordinal regression. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 213.793, with 240 degrees of freedom and a Sig. value of 0.887. This high p-value implies that the observed data and the model's predicted data are not significantly different, indicating a high degree of fit. The model's fit to the data is further confirmed by the Deviance Chi-Square value of 152.807, which has 240 degrees of freedom and a Sig. value of 1.000. Deviance is a metric for model error; a p-value that is not statistically significant suggests that the predicted values of the model are reasonably near to the actual values. The model is suitable for the data, and the assumptions that underlie ordinal regression are satisfied, as indicated by both goodness-of-fit tests. The below table 2 shows the Goodness-of-Fit Tests.

Table 2

Table 2 Goodness-of-Fit Tests			
	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	213.793	240	0.887
Deviance	152.807	240	1.000

10. PSEUDO-R-SQUARED MEASURES

Pseudo R-Square values indicate the extent to which the model in Table 3 below explains the variance in the dependent variable (brand loyalty). Cox and Snell's R-squares: 0.252 McFadden R-Square: 0.198; Nagelkerke R-Square: 0.327 The Nagelkerke R-Square values, in particular, suggest that the predictors in the model can account for approximately 32.7% of the variance in brand loyalty. Although these values are not particularly high, they are within the typical range for social science research and indicate that the model has moderate explanatory capability.

Table 3

Table 3 Pseudo-R-Square	
Pseudo R-Square	Column1
Cox and Snell	0.252
Nagelkerke	0.327
McFadden	0.198

11. PARALLEL LINES TEST

The Test of Parallel Lines evaluates the validity of the proportional odds assumption, a critical presumption in ordinal regression. This test contrasts the null hypothesis, which posits that the location parameters are consistent across response categories, to a general model in which the parameters are permitted to vary. The Chi-Square value is 15.859, with 12 degrees of freedom and a Sig. value of 0.198. The null hypothesis is not rejected, as the p-value exceeds 0.05, indicating that the proportional odds assumption is satisfied. This substantiates the utilisation of the ordinal regression model in this investigation.

Table 4

Table 4 Test of Parallel Lines				
Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Null Hypothesis	192.95			
General	177.091	15.859	12	0.198

12. PARAMETER ESTIMATES

The parameter estimates offer a comprehensive understanding of the influence of product-related variables (such as pricing, quality, and customer service) on brand loyalty:

Product Quality: The coefficient estimate is -1.207 with a standard error of 0.299. The Wald Chi-Square value is 5.855 with 1 degree of freedom and a Sig. value of 0.016. This implies a statistically significant negative effect on brand loyalty for this product quality level. The likelihood of brand loyalty increases as product quality improves, as it progresses from lower to higher categories. The variables' categorization is indicated by the negative sign, which implies that lower categories are less loyal.

Pricing: The coefficient estimate is 1.135, with a standard error of 3.111. Nevertheless, the sig. value of 0.110 exceeds the 0.05 threshold. This suggests that the impact of pricing is not statistically significant in predicting brand loyalty in this model.

Customer Service

Brand loyalty is not significantly influenced by any of the customer service levels, as the Sig. values are all greater than 0.05. This implies that brand loyalty is not statistically significantly influenced by customer service, as perceived in the levels measured here. This could suggest that loyalty is more significantly influenced by other factors, such as product quality and pricing.

Age

The standard error of the coefficient estimate for age is 0.316, with a value of -1.151. The Wald Chi-Square value is 34.840, with 1 degree of freedom and a Sig. value of 0.000. This suggests that age has a statistically significant negative impact on brand loyalty. The negative coefficient implies that the probability of brand loyalty decreases as age increases. This may be indicative of generational disparities in brand preferences or attachments.

Income

The standard error of the coefficient estimate for income is 1.184, with a value of 0.169. The Wald statistic is 0.585 with 1 degree of freedom, and the Sig. value is 0.444, which is not statistically significant. This suggests that affluence does not have a statistically significant impact on brand loyalty in the current sample.

In the case of gender ([Gender=1.00]), the coefficient estimate is -0.101, with a standard error of 0.904 and a Sig. value of 0.784. This suggests that there is no substantial disparity in brand loyalty between genders in this dataset.

Level of Education

Brand loyalty is influenced by a variety of educational levels.

[Education level=2.00]: The coefficient estimate is -2.133 with a Sig. value of 0.045, indicating a statistically significant negative impact on brand loyalty for this education level.

[Education level=3.00]: The coefficient estimate is -2.331 with a Sig. value of 0.028, which also suggests a substantial negative impact.

These results suggest that brand loyalty is less likely to be exhibited at specific education levels. This could be influenced by factors such as critical thinking, exposure to alternatives, or various value systems associated with diverse levels of education.

Table 5

Table 5 Parameter Estimates								
		Estimate	Odds ratio	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound Upper Bound
Threshold	[Purchase frequency = 3.00]	-7.370		1.380	28.528	1	0.00	-10.074 -4.665
	[Purchase frequency = 4.00]	-5.180		1.306	15.738	1	0.00	-7.739 -2.621
Location	Age	-1.151	0.316	0.195	34.840	1	0.00	-1.533 -0.769

Income	0.169	1.184	0.221	0.585	1	0.44 4	-0.264	0.602
[Gender=1.00]	-0.101	0.904	0.370	0.075	1	0.78 4	-0.826	0.623
[Gender=2.00]	0				0			
[Education level=1.00]	-1.089	0.336	1.299	0.703	1	0.40 2	-3.635	1.456
[Education level=2.00]	-2.133	0.119	1.064	4.022	1	0.04 5	-4.217	-0.048
[Education level=3.00]	-2.331	0.097	1.062	4.814	1	0.02 8	-4.414	-0.249
[Education level=4.00]	0				0			
[Product quality=3.00]	-1.165	0.312	0.887	1.725	1	0.18 9	-2.903	0.573
[Product quality=4.00]	-1.207	0.299	0.499	5.855	1	0.01 6	-2.185	-0.229
[Product quality=5.00]	0				0			
[Pricing=3.00]	17.391		0		1		17.391	17.391
[Pricing=4.00]	1.135	3.111	0.71	2.555	1	0.11	-0.257	2.526
[Pricing=5.00]	0				0			
[Customer service=3.00]	0.305	1.357	1.163	0.069	1	0.79 3	-1.973	2.584
[Customer service=4.00]	0.729	2.073	0.549	1.766	1	0.18 4	-0.346	1.804
[Customer service=5.00]	0				0			0

13. CONCLUSION

The research emphasises that brand loyalty within startups is significantly influenced by consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of consumers in Chhattisgarh. The most significant predictor of brand loyalty was product quality, which implies that consumers are more inclined to remain loyal to brands that consistently produce high-quality products. Brand loyalty is also significantly influenced by demographic factors, including age and educational level. This suggests that the level of loyalty exhibited by younger consumers and those with diverse educational backgrounds is not consistent. Nevertheless, the absence of a substantial impact on pricing, customer service, gender, and income suggests that these factors may not be the primary determinants of brand loyalty for entrepreneurs. These results emphasise the necessity for entrepreneurs to concentrate on the development of targeted marketing strategies that are tailored to the unique needs of various age groups and educational levels, as well as the delivery of exceptional product quality.

14. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Startups should prioritize product quality as a critical factor in fostering brand loyalty. This can be achieved by instituting rigorous quality control measures, investing in research and development, and consistently updating product features to correspond with changing consumer expectations. Targeted marketing strategies

are indispensable due to the substantial impact of age and education level on brand loyalty. For example, younger consumers may be more inclined to favour social media marketing and influencer endorsements, whereas older and more educated consumers may prefer value-driven campaigns and detailed product information. Although this study did not demonstrate a direct correlation between pricing, customer service, and brand loyalty, it is important to consider these factors. In order to prevent negative experiences that could indirectly impact loyalty, pricing strategies should be aligned with perceived product value, and customer service should remain satisfactory. Furthermore, the study's emphasis on Chhattisgarh underscores the need for localised market research to effectively tailor strategies, as consumer behaviour varies in various regions of India. The results also indicate a potential for education-based segmentation, as entrepreneurs may develop unique value propositions for different educational groups, such as offering more comprehensive product information to highly educated consumers.

15. LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Future research could incorporate a broader geographic sample to enhance generalisability, as the study is geographically restricted to consumers from Chhattisgarh, which may not completely represent the diverse consumer behaviour across India. However, the sample size of 214 respondents, while adequate for ordinal regression analysis, may limit the profundity and generalizability of insights, suggesting that a larger sample could yield a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior. Furthermore, the investigation concentrates on demographic variables and product-related factors, disregarding psychological and cultural factors that are essential in the development of brand loyalty. Future research should take these factors into account in order to provide a more comprehensive perspective. This study is cross-sectional in nature, as it captures consumer behaviour at a specific moment in time. Consequently, longitudinal studies could investigate the evolution of consumer behaviour and brand loyalty over time. Additionally, the study may fail to account for the distinctions in brand loyalty dynamics between startups and established brands as a result of its exclusive emphasis on startups. Future research could compare these dynamics to identify distinctive challenges and opportunities.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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