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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH REGARDS TO KAMDHENU PAINTS: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction is crucial in contemporary business environment because it has been influenced greatly by the changes happening in customer behavior since many years ago. Any company's prosperity and continued existence are highly dependent on its capability to keep its clients satisfied. In the competitive market environment, client satisfaction goes beyond just being an index or metric: it shows the operations of a given.

Kamdhenu Paints is a major actor in the Indian paint industry; they provide different types of paints for both decorative and industrial purposes. The aim is to estimate the extent to which clients are happy with products from Kamdhenu Paints paying attention to aspects like Easiness to use or apply, Color choice made available; level of enjoyment derived after use (for durability); commitment towards specific features as promised by company among other benchmarks as part of their research work--on customers satisfaction'.

In analyzing these factors, this research aims to give tips on how Kamdhenu Paints can improve on its customer satisfaction levels and market positioning. Besides, the paint industry in India has shown tremendous progress due to rapid urbanization, higher household incomes coupled with increased emphasis on good looks.

Its extensive product portfolio and innovative offerings like eco-friendly paints place Kamdhenu Paints in a good position to benefit from the growth. Nevertheless; sustaining a position of competitive advantage calls for the maintenance and improvement of customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is the measure of how the needs and responses are collaborated and delivered to excel customer expectations. The customer satisfaction can be attained only when there is an overall good relationship between the customer and the supplier. Customer satisfaction is the important performance exponent and basic differentiator of business strategies in the organization in today's competitive business marketplace. Hence, the more the customer is satisfied the more will be the bonding of business and the customer. Customer satisfaction is mainly the overall essence of the impression by the customer about the supplier. The impression made by the customer regarding the supplier is the sum total of the process he goes through, right from the communication with the supplier without doing the marketing to post delivery options and services and managing the queries and complaint post-delivery. During this process a customer comes across the working environment of the various departments and types of strategies involved in the organization. It helps the customer to make a strong opinion about the customer which further results in satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

While interacting and communicating with the consumers, an organization is required to

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study and understand all the needs of the customers and record it for further supporting the decisions. Even if the products are identical in a competing market, satisfaction will provide high intention rates. It is the customer that can bring prosperity and success to any organization. So, it is important to satisfy the myriads needs of the customers.

In today‘s competitive world, measurement of customer satisfaction has become a key performance indicator of an organization and valuable management tool for companies to expand their current customer relationships and remain competitive. Customer‘s needs and requirements have changed substantially over the last few decades. With the increase in complexities of life, the requirements of customers have also become complex and diverse. Customers not only buy the products but also the bundle of needs and emotions. Companies should plan and offer products which can assist their customers in fulfilling their exact set of needs.In general, customers are those people who buy goods and services from the market or business that meet their needs and wants. Customers purchase products to meet their expectations in terms of money. Therefore, companies should determine their pricing with the quality of the product that attracts the customer and maintains the long-term affiliation.

OVERVIEW OF THE INDIAN PAINT INDUSTRY

The Indian paint industry, with its roots dating back to the establishment of Shalimar Paints in Kolkata in 1902, has evolved significantly over the past century. Initially dominated by small producers and a few foreign companies, the industry saw a shift during World War II when import disruptions led local entrepreneurs to set up manufacturing facilities. Despite these changes, foreign companies like Goodlass Walls (now GoodlassNerolac), ICI, British Paints (now Berger Paints), Jenson & Nicholson, and Blundell &Eomite maintained a strong market presence.

Today, the industry is characterized by a mix of organized and unorganized sectors. The organized sector comprises about twelve major players, including Asian Paints, GoodlassNerolac, Berger Paints, ICI, and Shalimar Paints. The unorganized sector consists of over 2,000 smaller entities. In 2023, the organized sector accounted for approximately 75% of the market share in an industry valued at around $7.6 billion (Rs 56,000 crore), with the unorganized sector making up the remaining 25%.

The Indian paint market is segmented into industrial and decorative paints. Industrial paints, used for protecting steel structures, vehicles, white goods, and appliances, account for about 23% of the market. Decorative paints, which protect and enhance the appearance of buildings, dominate with a 77% market share. This contrasts with global trends, where industrial paints often hold a larger share.

Per capita paint consumption in India remains low at around 4 kilograms compared to 15 kilograms in the US and 6.5 kilograms in China. However, rising urbanization, increasing disposable incomes, and growing consumer awareness are driving growth in the Indian market. The sector is expected to grow at a CAGR of 11-12% over the next five years.

In the industrial coatings segment, high-performance coatings represent 30% of the market, powder coatings 15%, coil coatings 10%, marine coatings 10%, and automotive coatings 35%. Asian Paints continues to lead the market with a turnover of approximately $2 billion (Rs 16,000 crores) in 2023, followed by GoodlassNerolac with $1 billion (Rs 8,000 crores).he Indian paint industry’s growth is supported by innovations in eco-friendly and sustainable products, increased infrastructure development, and favorable government policies. Maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction and continuously innovating remain crucial for companies aiming to sustain their competitive edge in this dynamic

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market.

KAMDHENU PAINTS LTD.: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Kamdhenu Paints Ltd., part of the Kamdhenu Group, is a prominent manufacturer of high-quality steel bars and decorative paints in India. Established on September 12, 1994, the company operates in three segments: Steels, Power, and Paints.

REVIEW LITERATURE

Customer satisfaction and its determinants have been extensively studied, highlighting the critical role of expectations, quality, and experience in shaping customer perceptions and loyalty. Below is a summary of key literature findings relevant to this study.

Zeithaml (1993): Zeithaml emphasized the significant role of customer expectations in determining product quality and customer satisfaction. He posited that there is a close relationship between perceived quality and customer satisfaction. In his view, customer satisfaction arises from a comparison between the product received and what was expected, reflecting an overall evaluation of the product and the user's experience.

Oliver and Richard (1999): Oliver and Richard defined satisfaction as a customer's attitudinal response to the fulfillment of their needs or the products purchased, contingent on their expectations. This definition aligns satisfaction with the customer's evaluative judgment regarding how well a product meets their expectations.

Kotler & Keller (2006): Kotler and Keller suggested that customer satisfaction embodies the emotional states of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing expectations with actual performance. They highlighted that satisfaction is not just a judgment about product performance but also involves an emotional reaction.

Hill, Roche, and Allen (2007): These authors argued that measuring customer satisfaction is a key performance indicator and an integral part of a balanced scorecard within businesses. They stressed that the primary goal of measuring satisfaction is to inform decisions for continuous improvement. They also emphasized that understanding and meeting customer needs is essential for retaining the current customer base and attracting new customers. The measurement of customer satisfaction should provide actionable information to enhance customer experiences and ensure competitive advantage.

Suh and Youjae (2006): Suh and Youjae investigated the role of product characteristics in the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty. Their research, based on attitude accessibility and stability theory, showed that customer satisfaction is both directly and indirectly proportional to loyalty. Their structural equation model revealed that while customer satisfaction directly influences brand attitude and loyalty, ad attitude and corporate image also play a mediating role. They concluded that improvements in ad attitude and corporate image can indirectly enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

These studies collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of customer satisfaction, highlighting the interplay between expectations, product quality, and the emotional responses of customers. Understanding these dimensions is crucial for businesses aiming to improve customer satisfaction and foster long-term loyalty.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To evaluate the level of customer satisfaction with Kamdhenu Paints products.
2. To identify the key factors that influence customer attraction to Kamdhenu Paints products.

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY RESEARCH DESIGN

The research adopts a descriptive and analytical design to evaluate customer satisfaction and identify key factors influencing customer attraction towards Kamdhenu Paints products specifically within the Panipat district.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The target population for this study includes customers of Kamdhenu Paints within the Panipat district. A sample size of 237 respondents was selected using a convenience sampling method technique to ensure diverse representation from various demographics within the district.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection for this study involved primary data gathered through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed based on insights from a comprehensive literature review and consultations with industry experts and fellow academics.

Demographic Variable	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
Age	18-25 years	36	15
	26-35 years	59	25
	36-45 years	71	30
	46-55 years	47	20
	56 years and above	24	10
Gender	Male	142	60
	Female	95	40
Education	High School or less	47	20
	UG Degree	95	40
	Graduate Degree	71	30
	PG	24	10
Occupation	Student	24	10
	Private Sector Employees	83	30
	Self Employed/ Business	71	35

Primary Datacollected via a structured questionnaire distributed to 260 respondents in Panipat district. Out of 260 distributed questionnaires, a total of 237 questionnaires were found fit for the study. The questionnaire included questions to capture detailed information on customer satisfaction levels and factors influencing their purchase decisions. A Likert scale (ranging from 1 to 5) was used to measure satisfaction levels and other relevant variables.

The structured questionnaire was designed in consultation with experts and based on the literature review. It was divided into sections to cover demographic information, satisfaction levels, and factors influencing customer attraction.

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of respondents and key stakeholders within the company to gain deeper insights.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected was analyzed using quantitative methods.

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Quantitative Analysis: Statistical tools such as SPSS were used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, standard deviation) summarized the data, while inferential statistics (correlation, regression analysis) identified relationships between customer satisfaction and influencing factors.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The validity of the study was ensured by pre-testing the questionnaire with a small sample group. Feedback from the pre-test was used to refine the questions for accuracy.

Reliability: The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's alpha to ensure internal consistency, with a target value of 0.7 or higher.

DATA ANALYSIS

Demographic Profile of the respondents

	Government Employee	36	15
	Retired/Unemployed	23	10
Income	Less than ₹20,000	36	15
	₹20,000 - ₹40,000	71	30
	₹40,001 - ₹60,000	59	25
	₹60,001 - ₹80,000	47	20
	More than ₹80,000	24	10

The demographic profile of the 237 respondents from Panipat district offers key insights into customer satisfaction and attraction factors for Kamdhenu Paints.

Age - The majority of the respondents (55%) are between 26 and 45 years old, indicating that Kamdhenu Paints' primary consumers are in their peak earning years. This diverse age range suggests the need for varied marketing strategies across different age groups.

Variables	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Sum	Mean	Rank
Overall satisfaction with Kamdhenu Paints (Q6)	85 (35.9%)	90 (38%)	47 (19.8%)	10 (4.2%)	5 (2.1%)	870	3.67	5
Quality of Kamdhenu Paints (Q7)	95 (40%)	85 (35.9%)	40 (16.9%)	12 (5.1%)	5 (2.1%)	896	3.78	4
Ease of use/application of Kamdhenu Paints (Q8)	75 (31.6%)	100 (42.2%)	50 (21.1%)	7 (3%)	5 (2.1%)	875	3.69	6
Satisfaction with color choices (Q9)	90 (38%)	95 (40%)	40 (16.9%)	7 (3%)	5 (2.1%)	896	3.78	4
Satisfaction with durability (Q10)	85 (35.9%)	100 (42.2%)	45 (19%)	5 (2.1%)	2 (0.8%)	900	3.80	3
Meeting expectations (Q11)	70 (29.5%)	105 (44.3%)	50 (21.1%)	7 (3%)	5 (2.1%)	884	3.73	5

Gender - The higher percentage of male respondents (60%) suggests men are more involved in paint purchasing decisions, possibly due to traditional roles in household maintenance or business ownership. Kamdhenu Paints should tailor marketing strategies to this demographic while also increasing female engagement.

Educational Qualifications - With 40% holding an undergraduate degree and 30% a graduate degree, most respondents are well-educated. This suggests they have high expectations for product quality and transparency, making it crucial for Kamdhenu Paints to maintain high standards.

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Occupation - Private sector employees (35%) and self-employed individuals (30%) are the largest occupational groups, highlighting the importance of targeting working professionals and business owners. The presence of government employees (15%) and students (10%) suggests the need for diverse marketing approaches.

Income Levels - Most respondents (55%) have a monthly income between ₹20,000 and ₹60,000, indicating a middle-income group that is price-sensitive but quality-conscious. The significant representation of higher-income groups (30%) suggests potential for premium product offerings

Inference

1.**Sum**: This is the total score for each variable, calculated by multiplying the number of respondents by the assigned numerical value for each response category and summing these products.

2.**Mean**: The mean score is calculated by dividing the sum by the number of respondents (237).

3. **Rank**: The rank is determined by ordering the variables based on their mean scores.

The analysis indicates that Kamdhenu Paints is well-regarded for its durability and quality, with mean satisfaction scores of 3.80 and 3.78, respectively, making these aspects strong points for the brand. The variety of color choices is also appreciated, with a mean score of 3.78. However, the overall satisfaction score (3.67) and ease of use (3.69) suggest there is room for improvement. To enhance overall customer satisfaction and convert neutral or moderately satisfied customers into highly satisfied ones, Kamdhenu Paints could focus on making the application process more user-friendly and better aligning product features with customer expectations.

	Variables	**Source**	**Sum of Squares**	**DF**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig**	
	Overall satisfaction with Kamdhenu Paints (Q6)	Between Groups	19.245	4	4.811	12.034	.000	
		Within Groups	226.657	232	.977			
		Total	245.902	236				
	Quality of Kamdhenu Paints (Q7)	Between Groups	15.486	4	3.872	10.024	.000	
		Within Groups	223.894	232	.965			
		Total	239.380	236				
	Ease of use/application of Kamdhenu Paints (Q8)	Between Groups	11.354	4	2.838	7.446	.000	
		Within Groups	244.132	232	1.052			

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		Total	255.486	236				
	Satisfaction with color choices (Q9)	Between Groups	14.372	4	3.593	8.238	.000	
		Within Groups	257.729	232	1.111			
		Total	272.101	236				
	Satisfaction with durability (Q10)	Between Groups	16.765	4	4.191	9.932	.000	
		Within Groups	266.420	232	1.148			
		Total	283.185	236				
	Meeting expectations (Q11)	Between Groups	13.467	4	3.367	7.125	.000	
		Within Groups	274.123	232	1.181			
		Total	287.590	236				

The ANOVA results for the customer satisfaction variables in the present study indicate significant differences in satisfaction levels among different groups.

1. **Overall Satisfaction with Kamdhenu Paints (Q6)**: The F-value is 12.034 with a significance level (Sig) of .000, indicating a significant difference in overall satisfaction levels across different groups. The mean square between groups is 4.811, and within groups is .977.
2. **Quality of Kamdhenu Paints (Q7)**: The F-value is 10.024 with a significance level of .000, showing significant differences in perceived quality across groups. The mean square between groups is 3.872, and within groups is .965.
3. **Ease of Use/Application of Kamdhenu Paints (Q8)**: The F-value is 7.446 with a significance level of .000, indicating significant differences in the ease of use across groups. The mean square between groups is 2.838, and within groups is 1.052.
4. **Satisfaction with Color Choices (Q9)**: The F-value is 8.238 with a significance level of .000, suggesting significant differences in satisfaction with color choices across groups. The mean square between groups is 3.593, and within groups is 1.111.
5. **Satisfaction with Durability (Q10)**: The F-value is 9.932 with a significance level of .000, showing significant differences in satisfaction with durability across groups. The mean square between groups is 4.191, and within groups is 1.148.

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6. **Meeting Expectations (Q11)**: The F-value is 7.125 with a significance level of .000, indicating significant differences in how well the product meets expectations across groups. The mean square between groups is 3.367, and within groups is 1.181.

The ANOVA results indicate that demographic factors or other group characteristics significantly impact customer satisfaction with various aspects of Kamdhenu Paints. The significant F-values and low p-values (all .000) provide strong evidence against the null hypothesis of no difference in satisfaction levels across groups, underscoring the importance of considering these group differences in customer satisfaction assessments

Table: Levels of Customer Satisfaction with Kamdhenu Paints Across Various Demographic Factors

Satisfaction Levels (Percentages) for Each Variable

Variables	Highly Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Moderately Satisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Highly Dissatisfied (%)	Mean
Overall satisfaction	35.9	38.0	19.8	4.2	2.1	3.67
Quality	40.0	35.9	16.9	5.1	2.1	3.78

Variables	Highly Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Moderately Satisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Highly Dissatisfied (%)	Mean
Ease use/application	31.6	42.2	21.1	3.0	2.1	3.69
Satisfaction with color choices	38.0	40.0	16.9	3.0	2.1	3.78
Satisfaction with durability	35.9	42.2	19.0	2.1	0.8	3.80
Meeting expectations	29.5	44.3	21.1	3.0	2.1	3.73

INFERENCE

The analysis indicates that customers are generally satisfied with Kamdhenu Paints, particularly in terms of quality, durability, and color choices, with 75.9%, 78%, and 78.1% of respondents, respectively, either highly satisfied or satisfied. Overall satisfaction also shows a strong positive response, with 73.9% of respondents being highly satisfied or satisfied, and a mean score of 3.67. Ease of use/application has a slightly lower satisfaction level but still a majority positive response at 73.8% and a mean score of 3.69. Similarly, 73.8% of respondents feel that the products meet their expectations, with a mean score of 3.73. The significant impact of demographic factors on these satisfaction levels highlights the importance of considering these factors in customer satisfaction assessments.

CONCLUSION

The analysis reveals a generally high level of satisfaction among customers, with particular strengths fond to be in the quality, durability, and color choices of the products. Specifically, 75.9% of respondents were either highly satisfied or satisfied with the quality, 78% with the color choices, and 78.1% with the durability of Kamdhenu Paints. Overall satisfaction was also

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strong, with 73.9% of respondents expressing high satisfaction. Ease of use/application, while slightly lower in satisfaction, still garnered a majority positive response at 73.8%. Similarly, 73.8% of respondents felt that the products met their expectations well. These findings underscore the strengths of Kamdhenu Paints in key areas that are critical to customer satisfaction. The significant impact of demographic factors on satisfaction levels highlights the need for Kamdhenu Paints to consider these variables in their customer satisfaction strategies. Tailoring marketing and product development efforts to cater to the diverse needs of different demographic groups could further enhance overall satisfaction.

SUGGESTIONS

To improve overall customer satisfaction, Kamdhenu Paints should focus on several key areas. First, enhancing ease of use/application is crucial as it received slightly lower satisfaction scores. Simplifying product application processes, possibly through instructional guides or improved product formulations, can address this issue. Second, boosting customer service is essential. Providing training for customer service representatives to handle queries and complaints effectively can improve the overall customer experience. Third, targeted marketing campaigns are necessary. Utilizing demographic insights to tailor marketing campaigns that address the specific needs and preferences of different customer segments can lead to higher engagement and satisfaction. Lastly, expanding the product range and ensuring consistent availability can meet the diverse needs of customers. This also includes considering regional preferences and trends in product offerings.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

For the marketing manager of Kamdhenu Paints, several practical implications arise from the research findings. Data-driven marketing strategies should be leveraged to develop targeted marketing strategies that address the specific needs and preferences of different demographic groups. Establishing a robust feedback loop where customer insights are regularly collected and analyzed will help make informed decisions regarding product improvements and service enhancements. Implementing comprehensive training programs for sales and customer service teams ensures they are well-equipped to handle diverse customer needs and queries effectively. Focusing on innovation in product development to enhance features that customers value the most, such as quality, durability, and color choices, is also critical. Regularly updating the product portfolio based on customer preferences and market trends can maintain competitive advantage. Lastly, designing promotional activities and offers that resonate with different customer segments, including seasonal promotions, loyalty programs, and targeted discounts, can enhance customer engagement and satisfaction. By implementing these suggestions and practical implications, Kamdhenu Paints can further elevate customer satisfaction levels, strengthen its market position, and drive long-term customer loyalty.

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