

# Consumer Preferences For Sales Promotions In The Indian Packaged Spice Market

Preyaa Patel

The Riverside School, Ahmedabad

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## **Abstract**

*This research seeks to understand consumer preferences and responses to sales promotions in the Indian branded spice market.*

*The study employed a survey-based approach, gathering data from a sample of 400 respondents with a 51.5 percent response rate. The collected data was analysed using frequency analysis, chi-square testing and correlation analysis to evaluate the impact of various promotional schemes on consumer purchase decisions.*

*The findings showed that majority of respondents displayed familiarity with Price Discounts, whereas "Buy 1 Get 1 Free" promotions were less recognized. Urban respondents exhibited a stronger inclination towards discounts than their rural counterparts. However, the study discovered that promotional schemes might not substantially influence purchase behavior, especially among the urban, high income and well educated consumer.*

*The results indicate a potential need for businesses in the Indian branded spice market to re-evaluate their promotional strategies. The findings suggest that more differentiated and targeted marketing strategies might be essential.*

*While previous studies have explored consumer perceptions of sales promotions, this research provides a unique lens into the Indian branded spice market. It offers valuable insights into the effectiveness of various promotional strategies and sheds light on potential areas for market strategy refinement.*

**Keywords:** *branded spice market, India, sales promotions, consumer preferences*

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## **I. Introduction**

Sales promotions are strategic tools employed by marketers to incentivize potential customers and stimulate immediate sales. Defined as short-term marketing tactics designed to encourage a quicker or greater purchase of particular products or services, sales promotions often encompass a range of activities such as price discounts, samples, coupons, and cashback offers. While sales promotions are ubiquitous across industries, their impact is especially noteworthy in the realm of consumer goods, specifically food products.

The effect of sales promotions on consumer behaviour, especially pertaining to food products, has been the subject of much academic inquiry. For instance, research conducted in Japan demonstrated an evolving interplay between advertising strategies and promotional offers, suggesting the fluid role of sales promotions in the Japanese food market (Kim et al., 2011). Likewise, studies in Nepal have underscored the compelling influence of promotions, such as discounts and free samples, in fostering brand loyalty and encouraging repeat purchases (Shrestha, 2012). A unique lens has been provided by research on ethnic minority consumers in the packaged food market, revealing distinct perceptions and preferences shaped by cultural contexts (Jamal et al., 2012). Such findings resonate with broader global patterns, suggesting a universal appeal of sales promotions, with specific nuances shaped by local contexts (Luxton, 2001; Yan et al., 2017).

However, despite the global interest in this domain, there remains a conspicuous paucity of research examining the impact of sales promotions within the Indian context, particularly in the branded spice market.

The market for spices and seasonings in India is projected to reach a value of \$10.8 billion by 2022, expanding at a CAGR of more than 13 percent between 2019 and 2028, according to RationalStat (2023). India has acquired a renowned reputation as the land of spices due to the centuries-long influence of diverse spices' aromas and flavours on its culinary heritage. The

spices market in India serves as a major contributor to the nation's export sector and primarily serves domestic demand. India is the foremost producer, consumer, and exporter of spices, accounting for 10.87 million tonnes of output in 2021-2022 (RationalStat, 2023).

Understanding the influence of sales promotions in this segment is paramount, given the growing

competition and evolving consumer preferences. Gaining insights into the effectiveness of various promotional strategies can offer invaluable guidance to marketers, ensuring not only increased sales but also sustained brand loyalty.

This research aims to bridge the existing gap, focusing specifically on the branded spice market in India. By investigating the role and impact of sales promotions, this study aims to offer actionable insights to businesses, marketers, and policymakers, enabling them to craft more effective and culturally resonant promotional strategies. Further, it holds the potential to benefit academia, offering a fresh perspective on the intricate dance between sales promotions and consumer behaviour in a context that has received limited attention so far.

Specifically, the paper addresses the following research questions:

*RQ1: What are Indian consumers' preferences for sales promotions for branded spice products?*

*RQ2: What is the impact of sales promotions for branded spice products on Indian consumers?*

*RQ3: Is the impact of sales promotions for branded spice products on Indian consumers affected by demographic variables?*

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. The following section is a comprehensive literature review on sales promotion and its impact on consumers in India and around the globe. The subsequent section elaborates on the adopted research methodology. The results of the survey of Indian consumers of branded then follows. Next, the conclusions drawn from

the findings are provided. The discussion section concludes with the study's practical implications, limitations, and future research directions.

## **II. Literature Review**

### ***Sales Promotion***

Sales promotions are considered vital tools in marketing strategies designed to influence consumer purchasing behavior. The various definitions and dimensions of sales promotions have been the focal point of numerous studies over the years.

Sales promotion, at its core, refers to a collection of short-term marketing techniques aimed at stimulating consumer demand and improving product accessibility (Kotler & Keller, 2016). It encompasses a variety of incentives, often temporary, created to induce a faster or greater purchase of particular products or services by consumers or the trade (Yang et al., 2010).

Sales promotions serve multiple purposes in the marketing mix. According to Yang et al. (2010), they are utilized not just to increase sales in the short term, but also to gain a competitive edge, clear out inventories, and attract new customers. Huff, Alden, and Tietje (1999) further underscore the ability of sales promotions to create product awareness and trial, facilitate product repetition, and enhance brand image. Moreover, sales promotions can be instrumental in responding to competitors' actions and gaining a strategic advantage in the marketplace (Brito & Hammond, 2007).

Some of the types of sales promotions used by B2C companies are as under:

*Strategic Vs. Tactical Promotions:* Brito and Hammond (2007) introduced a differentiation between strategic and tactical sales promotions. While strategic promotions are long-term and focused on building brand loyalty, tactical promotions are short-term, aiming to boost sales immediately.

*Trade-Oriented Promotions:* Aimed at distributors, wholesalers, or retailers, these promotions may involve discounts, allowances, or merchandise support. Huff, Alden, and Tietje (1999) stressed the need for businesses to manage the sales promotion mix effectively to cater to the evolving needs of both consumers and trade partners.

*Consumer-Oriented Promotions:* These promotions target the end consumers. Common types include price reductions, coupons, rebates, free samples, and sweepstakes. Yang et al. (2010) detailed an examination of sales promotions in Hong Kong and discovered a disparity between what retailers offer and what consumers prefer, indicating the necessity for businesses to align their promotions with consumer preferences.

### ***Consumer-Oriented Sales Promotions***

Consumer-oriented promotions are designed primarily to encourage consumers to purchase a product or service. These promotions are crafted to draw attention, create interest, and eventually result in sales. Let's delve into the specifics of some of the popular

consumer-oriented promotions:

*Price Reductions (Discounts):* Price reductions, commonly known as discounts, refer to a direct reduction in the price of a product for a limited duration. An example that highlights this type of promotion is

the Black Friday sales, where products are often sold at significant markdowns. Such strategies can lead to an immediate surge in sales and are instrumental in clearing out excess inventory. However, a potential drawback is that if discounts are offered too frequently, consumers may become conditioned to expect these reduced prices, which might negatively impact the brand's perception. In the Indian context, these price reductions are a huge hit, particularly during festival seasons. Prominent e-commerce platforms like Flipkart and Amazon have their respective sales events — "Big Billion Days" and "Great

Indian Sale" — that offer hefty discounts, and these events are eagerly anticipated by the consumers (Mittal & Sethi, 2011).

*Coupons:* Coupons are certificates that provide consumers with a certain value off the item's price when presented during a purchase. An illustrative example would be coupons found in magazines, offering, say, INR 100 off on a particular skincare product. They have the potential to stimulate product purchases and might even encourage customers to switch brands. But a potential limitation is that they may not ensure repeat purchases in the absence of the incentive. In the evolving Indian retail landscape, especially with the rise of online shopping, digital coupons, notably those on mobile platforms, have become increasingly popular. They find frequent use in sectors like grocery shopping and food delivery.

*Rebates:* Rebates represent a promotional tactic where consumers receive a partial refund after overpaying for a product or service. For instance, a consumer might get a INR 500 cashback on a refrigerator upon sending the purchase invoice to the product's manufacturer. While rebates can indeed entice purchases by providing a subsequent discount on the total cost, the often involved processes might deter certain consumers. In India, rebates have seen a surge in popularity, especially those provided as cashbacks in digital wallets, primarily for online transactions (Mittal & Sethi, 2011).

*Free Samples:* This involves offering consumers a small quantity of the product for free, allowing them to try before making a full purchase. An everyday instance would be free shampoo sachets found attached to magazines. This strategy is especially effective when introducing new products, as it minimizes perceived risk for consumers. In the Indian market, sampling has a strong presence, particularly in the FMCG domain (Mittal & Sethi, 2011).

*Sweepstakes:* Sweepstakes are promotional games of chance where consumers have the opportunity to win prizes. A marketing campaign might encourage consumers to buy a product with the lure of possibly winning a trip to Europe. Sweepstakes can inject excitement

around a product and serve as a tool for gathering consumer data. However, their ability to drive immediate sales isn't always guaranteed. In India, sweepstakes are often anchored around festivals or significant events, such as the Cricket World Cup, leveraging the widespread enthusiasm around such occasions (Mittal & Sethi, 2011).

### ***Sales Promotions in India***

According to the research conducted by Mittal & Sethi (2011), price-based promotions, such as discounts and rebates, are highly favoured among Indian consumers. This preference is attributed to the value-driven nature of the Indian market where consumers seek to maximize their value for money. However, non-price promotions, like contests or free gifts, also influence purchasing decisions, especially when they resonate with cultural or festive themes. Furthermore, the increased digitization of the Indian economy and the growth of online shopping have seen digital coupons and online cashback offers surge in popularity.

In conclusion, while price-based promotions hold significant sway in the Indian context, there's a burgeoning space for varied consumer-oriented promotions, especially as brands tap into the digital realm and align promotions with cultural nuances.

Thus, sales promotions remain a potent tool in a marketer's arsenal, especially in dynamic markets where consumer preferences are constantly shifting. As businesses continue to navigate the complexities of the market, aligning sales promotion strategies with both consumer and trade preferences will be paramount.

### ***Effect of Sales Promotions on Consumers***

Sales promotions, in various forms, have been widely implemented in the realm of consumer marketing to stimulate purchasing behaviours. The literature sheds light on the multifaceted effects of sales promotions on consumer behaviours, ranging from the immediate influence on sales volume to long-term impacts on brand perception.

Kim, Allaway, and D'Souza (2020) shed light on the antecedents of the adoption process, focusing particularly on consumer packaged food goods. Their insights emphasize that understanding the driving factors behind consumers' acceptance of promotions is crucial to ensuring their effectiveness (Kim et al., 2020).

"Buy X get X free" promotions, according to a study by Bhatt and Pai (2023), need to be assessed from an acquisition-transaction value perspective. Their findings indicated the intricate relationship between perceived value and promotion effectiveness, suggesting that not all "free" offerings are seen as equally valuable

(Bhatt & Pai, 2023).

Alvarez and Casielles (2005) delved into consumer evaluations of sales promotions, emphasizing the resultant effects on brand choice. Their findings highlighted that while certain promotions might significantly drive sales, they could also unintentionally shift brand preferences, either fortifying or weakening brand loyalty (Alvarez & Casielles, 2005).

The study by Reid et al. (2015) compared the effects of monetary versus non-monetary in-store sales promotions. They posited that while both types of promotions offer unique benefits, monetary incentives often present more immediate and tangible utilitarian advantages for consumers (Reid et al., 2015).

Bandyopadhyay et al. (2021) explored the relationship between various consumer sales promotions and impulse buying behaviours. Their research highlighted that not all promotions stimulate impulsive purchases, and the nature of the promotion plays a significant role in eliciting such behaviours (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2021).

In a similar vein, Sinha and Verma (2020) dissected the impact of promotional benefits on perceived value. Their findings underlined the moderating role of product category in shaping consumers' value perceptions, suggesting a nuanced approach to promotional strategies across different product segments (Sinha & Verma, 2020).

Mandolfo et al. (2022) employed a dual process approach to assess the influence of sales promotions on impulse buying. Their work emphasized the intricate cognitive processes at play, shedding light on the psychological mechanisms behind purchasing decisions (Mandolfo et al., 2022).

Yoon, Chang, and Lee (2014) assessed the competitive nature of promotional messages. Their research highlighted the importance of target-oriented promotions, emphasizing that promotions framed as exclusive or competitive were generally more effective (Yoon et al., 2014).

Further, Sinha and Verma (2019) compared rural and urban consumers' perceptions of promotional benefits. Their insights underlined the significant differences between these two segments, stressing the importance of tailoring promotional strategies accordingly (Sinha & Verma, 2019).

Jee's (2021) work on discount sales promotions presented an intriguing contrast between utilitarian and hedonic perspectives. It suggested that while some consumers are driven by practical benefits, others may be enticed by the sheer pleasure of availing a discount (Jee, 2021).

Lastly, the study focusing on the Iranian FMCG industry measured the role of consumer-oriented selling and sales promotions in driving sales volume (Soltani & Davanloo, 2016). This reinforced the overarching theme that understanding local contexts and consumer preferences is paramount in designing effective promotional strategies.

In conclusion, sales promotions, while universally effective, require nuanced approaches tailored to specific consumer groups and regional contexts. Their multifaceted impact on consumer behaviour warrants continuous study to optimize their effectiveness in driving both immediate sales and long-term brand loyalty.

### ***Effect of Sales Promotions for Food Products***

Sales promotions, specifically on packaged consumer goods and food products, have attracted considerable research attention. These promotions play an instrumental role in shaping consumer behaviour across diverse geographies, reflecting both cultural nuances and industry dynamics. This review draws upon global studies to uncover the intricacies of sales promotions in this segment.

In a historical analysis spanning over three decades, Kim, Xu, and Hyde (2011) examined the dynamics between advertising and sales promotions within the Japanese food industry. They observed that the balance between these two promotional methods has undergone shifts, reflecting broader industry and market transformations. Their findings underscore the evolving role of sales promotions in the Japanese food market, suggesting a delicate interplay between advertising strategies and promotional offers (Kim et al., 2011).

Shrestha's (2012) exploration of consumers' responses to sales promotions in the context of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) in Nepal highlighted that such promotions significantly influence purchase decisions. The study revealed that sales promotions, especially discounts and free samples, exert considerable pull in the Nepalese market, fostering brand loyalty and repeat purchases.

Delving into the branded spice powder market in Bangladesh, Noor et al. (2017) elucidated consumers' preferences and their acceptance patterns. Their research emphasized the criticality of perceived quality and trustworthiness, indicating that successful sales promotions are contingent upon these foundational elements (Noor et al., 2017).

Jamal, Peattie, and Peattie (2012) provided a unique lens by focusing on the responses of ethnic minority consumers to sales promotions in the packaged food market. Their findings pointed out that these consumers possess distinct perceptions and preferences, underscoring the importance of culturally sensitive promotional strategies (Jamal et al., 2012).

Le Borgne, Sirieix, and Costa (2018) tackled the intricate relationship between perceived probability of food waste and its influence on consumer attitudes toward sales promotions. The study unveiled that consumers' likelihood to waste food impacts their reception and choice of sales promotions, a critical consideration for marketers (Le Borgne et al., 2018).

Kaur and Tomar's (2012) investigation into the purchase of branded spices, specifically in the Delhi (NCR) region, accentuated the role of trustworthiness and perceived quality. They suggested that these factors profoundly shape consumers' responses to sales promotions, influencing both initial purchases and subsequent brand loyalty.

Luxton (2001) rendered an in-depth analysis of sales promotions within the Australian food industry. The study highlighted that while sales promotions are pivotal, their success is intertwined with other marketing strategies, requiring a holistic approach for optimal results(Luxton, 2001).

Lastly, Yan, Tian, Heravi, and Morgan (2017) probed into the dichotomies of consumer choices, particularly in the context of price promotions. Their study emphasized that while promotions can act as strong inducements, they also introduce complexities in consumer decision-making processes (Yan et al., 2017).

Thus, sales promotions for packaged consumer goods and food products are influenced by a wide range of factors ranging from cultural nuances to industry dynamics. A comprehensive understanding is essential for crafting effective promotional strategies.

### III. Research Methodology

As previously stated, this research article addresses the following research questions:

*RQ1: What are Indian consumers' preferences for sales promotions for branded spice products?*

*RQ2: What is the impact of sales promotions for branded spice products on Indian consumers?*

*RQ3: Is the impact of sales promotions for branded spice products on Indian consumers affected by demographic variables?*

To answer these research questions, a survey of customers of branded spices in Ahmedabad, Gujarat was conducted. The survey had a sample size of 400 people. A Google Form containing the study instrument was shared with participants to conduct an electronic survey. A structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions served as the instrument. A total of 206 replies were received, resulting in a 51.5 percent response rate. The convenience sampling method was utilised. Responses were analyzed using frequency analysis and Chi Square analysis.

### IV. Findings

#### Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. It can be observed that majority of the respondents (around 80 percent) were females. Most of the respondents (45.6 percent) were in the age group of above 46 years, followed by 32 percent who were in the age group of 36 - 45 years. The least respondents were from the age group 19 - 25 years i.e. 6.8 percent. Majority of the respondents (88.3 percent) were married. The majority of the respondents had an annual income of more than INR 10,00,000. Only 3 percent of the respondents had an annual income in the range of INR 2,50,001-3,50,000. In terms of occupation, 46.6 percent of the respondents were in business followed by 33 percent of the respondents being homemakers. Only 3.9 percent of the respondents were students. Major of the respondents (42.7 percent) were Post Graduates followed by 37.9 percent of the respondents being graduates.

**Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents**

1. Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Female	160	74
Male	46	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
2. Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
19 years – 25 years	14	6.8
26 years – 35 years	32	15.5
36 years – 45 years	66	32.0
More than 46 years	94	45.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
3. Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Married	182	88.3
Single	24	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>

4. Annual Income	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than Rs. 2,00,000	12	5.80
Rs. 2,00,001 – Rs. 5,00,000	22	10.70
Rs. 5,00,001 – Rs.7,00,000	16	7.80
Rs. 7,00,001 – Rs.10,00,000	32	15.50
More than Rs.10,00,000	124	60.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
5. Educational Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
High school	8	3.90
Graduation	78	37.90
Post graduate	88	42.70
Professional Course	20	9.70
Doctorate	12	5.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
6. Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Student	8	3.90
Homemaker	68	33.00
Business	92	46.60
Salaried	34	16.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>

**Purchase Behaviour for Branded Spices**

Analysing the purchase behaviour showed that 88.3 percent of the respondents were from urban location while 6.8 percent of the respondents were living in rural areas.

Majority of the respondents (82.5 percent) of the respondents bought both single and blended spice powders. Most of the respondents (26.2 percent) bought spices once a month followed by 24.3 percent respondents buying it once every two months. Only 4.9 percent of the respondents bought spices once a fortnight. Most of the respondents (32 percent) bought 100-150 grams of spices in a month while 25.2 percent bought packs of 200-250 grams. Only 1 percent of the respondents bought 5 kgs packs in a month.

In terms of brands, 48.5 percent of the respondents bought spices of Everest brand, followed by 26.2 percent of them buying Wonder Masala. Badshah Masala was preferred by 10.7 percent of the respondents followed by 3.9 percent of respondents each buying MTR and a combination of brands as per taste. Only 1 percent of the respondents bought Ganesh masala. In terms of monthly spending on spices, 31.1 percent of the respondents spent INR 0-500 per month on spices followed by 24.3 percent of the respondents spending INR 701-1000. Only 11.7 percent of the respondents spent more than INR 1500 for branded spices in a month.

The locations for purchasing spices varied across respondents. Majority of the respondents (40.8 percent) bought spices from local grocery stores followed by 33 percent of the respondents buying it from supermarkets. Only 14.6 percent of the respondents bought their spices online.

There was a clear difference in the various sales promotions encountered. Majority of the respondents (48 percent) had observed price discounts associated with branded spices, followed by 25.97 percent of the respondents who had seen bonus packs being offered. 12.98

percent of the respondents mentioned seeing “Buy one get one free” (BOGO) scheme in this category. Only 3.25 percent of the respondents had encountered a contest with branded spices.

Regarding reactions to sales promotions, 26.52 percent of the respondents preferred to buy the required quantity spices only even on being offered a promotion, while 21.97 percent of the respondents ended up buying larger quantity than required. 18.18 percent of the respondents tried a new brand of spices on finding discounts while 17.43 percent spent more than their budget amount on being offered sales promotions.

**Table 2: Purchase Behavior for Branded Spices**

1. Location	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Rural	14	6.8
Semi urban	10	4.9
Urban	182	88.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
2. Type of Spices purchased	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Single Spice powder (chilli, turmeric, etc.)	16	7.8
Blended Spice powder (Pav bhaji masala, Chole masala, etc.)	20	9.7

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Both	170	82.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>3. Frequency of purchasing spices</b>		
	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Once every six months	48	23.3
Once every three months	44	21.4
Once every two months	50	24.3
Once a month	54	26.2
Once a fortnight	10	4.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>4. Quantity of spices purchased in a month</b>		
	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Loose spices	6	2.9
50 gms	14	6.8
100 - 150 gms	66	32.0
200 - 250 gms	52	25.2
500 gms	32	15.5
1 kg	34	16.5
5 kgs	2	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>5. Brand Purchased</b>		
	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Everest	100	48.5
Wonder Masala	54	26.2
Fabindia/ organic	4	1.9
MDF	4	1.9
Badshah	22	10.7
MTR	8	3.9
Ganesh	2	1.0
Shaan	4	1.9
Combination	4	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>6. Spending on branded spices in a month</b>		
	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Rs.0 - Rs.500	64	31.1
Rs.501 - Rs.700	42	20.4
Rs.701 - Rs.1000	50	24.3
Rs.1001 - Rs.1500	26	12.6
Rs.1501 and Above	24	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>7. Location for purchasing branded spices</b>		
	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Online grocery stores	30	14.6
Supermarkets	68	33.0
Local grocery shops	84	40.8
Convenience store	24	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>8. Sales Promotions familiar with</b>		
	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Price Discounts (e.g., Rs 20 off on a pack)	148	48.0
Coupons (e.g., redeem this coupon at purchase of spices packet to avail Rs. 10 off)	16	5.2
Bonus Pack (e.g. get 20% extra in 200 gms packet)	80	26.0
BOGO (e.g. buy one get one free or buy this spice packet and get other spice packet free)	40	13.0
Scratch Card (e.g., scratch the card to get rewards)	14	4.8

Contest (e.g. submit your recipe and win a prize)	10	3.0
<b>9. Reaction to promotional offers</b>		
	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Buy another brand of spice powder that gives discount or offers	42	15.9
Buy the spice powder earlier than actually required	70	26.52
Buy the spice powder in more quantity than required	58	21.97
Buy a new spice powder brand for trial due to the discount/offer	48	18.18
Spend more than the budget on spice powder	46	17.43

**Reactions to Sales Promotions**

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements pertaining to various factors that might impact their reactions to various sales promotions schemes offered on branded spices on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. These factors – Value Shopping, Impulsive Buying Tendency, Positive Affect, Deal Proneness, and Urge to Buy Impulsively were derived from the existing literature.

The rating given by respondents to each statement was assigned a code (Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Neutral=3, Agree=4, Strongly Agree=5). Further, the mean was calculated for each statement, after which group means were arrived at. These parameters were ranked as per their group means. Table 3 shows the mean rating for all the statements in the questionnaire.

**Table 3: Mean Analysis of Respondents’ Opinions about Factors Impacting Reaction to Sales Promotions on Branded Spices**

Factor	Item	Mean	Group Mean
Value Shopping	For the most part, I enjoy shopping when there are sales promotion offers.	3.0194	2.9773
	I enjoyed looking for offers in my last shopping trip.	3.0194	
	I enjoyed hunting for bargains in my last shopping trip.	2.8932	
Impulsive Buying tendency	I often buy things spontaneously.	2.8738	2.7985
	Sometimes I feel like buying things on the spur of the moment.	2.8641	
	I buy things according to how I feel at that moment.	2.8932	
	Sometimes, I am a bit reckless about what I buy.	2.5631	
Positive Affect	I felt excited while shopping for branded spice powders with discounts/offers/promotions.	2.8835	2.7403
	I felt enthusiastic while shopping for branded spice powders with discounts/offers/promotions.	2.6990	
	I felt happy seeing branded spice powders with discounts/offers/promotions.	3.0291	
	I felt upset seeing branded spice powders with discounts/offers/promotions.	2.3495	
Deal Proneness	I am more likely to buy a brand if it is on deal.	2.8447	2.7087
	Compared to most people, I would say I have a positive attitude toward deals.	2.9126	
	I have favourite brands, but if I see a promotional offer, I am more likely to buy that brand.	2.5631	
	Deals often influence me to buy brands I normally would not buy.	2.5728	
	I feel compelled to respond to deals.	2.6505	
Urge to Buy Impulsively	For branded spice powders with discounts/offers/promotions, I experienced many sudden urges to buy unplanned items.	2.5340	2.6731
	For branded spice powders with discounts/offers/promotions, I was tempted to buy many items that were not in my list.	2.6117	
	For branded spice powders with discounts/offers/promotions, I experienced no sudden urges to buy unplanned items.	2.8738	

Table 3 shows that attributes of Value Shopping have a group mean of 2.9, which implies that respondents are neutral for the same. Similarly, the mean for Impulsive Buying is 2.798 which denotes that respondents are neutral towards impulsive buying of branded spices.

Positive Affect, Deal Proneness and Urge to Buy Impulsively all have a mean of 2.6 which denotes that respondents are neutral to these factors too.

**Impact of Demographic Variables on Purchase Behaviour for Branded Spices**

In order to examine the extent to which buying behaviour for branded spices is associated with demographic characteristics, a Chi-square test was used. The test examined whether there was an association between mean responses of the respondents and their demographic characteristics. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 shows that there is no association between the purchase behaviour of respondents and various demographic variables such as gender, age, education, annual income and monthly spending on branded spices. The mostly highly observed (mode) opinion for each statement on branded spices purchase is “Neutral” followed by “Disagree/Strongly Disagree” demonstrating a consistent negative attitude towards impulsive purchase of branded spices and favourable reactions to sales promotions on branded spices.

**Table 4: Impact of Demographic Variables on Buying Behaviour for Branded Spices**

No.	H0	P value	Test Result	Conclusion
1.	There is no association between respondents’ purchase behaviour for branded spices and their age.	0.241	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
2.	There is no association between respondents’ purchase behaviour for branded spices and their gender.	0.287	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
3.	There is no association between respondents’ purchase behaviour for branded spices and their educational qualification.	0.241	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
4.	There is no association between respondents’ purchase behaviour for branded spices and their annual income.	0.287	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
5.	There is no association between respondents’ purchase behaviour for branded spices and their marital status.	0.287	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
6.	There is no association between respondents’ purchase behaviour for branded spices and their occupation.	0.265	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected

**Impact of Sales Promotion Scheme on Purchase Behaviour for Branded Spices**

Further, to evaluate whether the type of sales promotional scheme had an impact on the respondents’ purchase behaviour of branded spices, a Chi-Square test was conducted and the results are summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5: Impact of Sales Promotion Scheme on Purchase Behaviour for Branded Spices**

No.	H0	P value	Test Result	Conclusion
2.	There is no association between sales promotion schemes and the type of branded spices purchased.	0.287	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
3.	There is no association sales promotion schemes and the frequency of purchasing branded spices.	0.241	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
4.	There is no association between sales promotion schemes and the size of the branded spices packs purchased in a month.	0.285	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
5.	There is no association between sales promotion schemes and the brand of spices purchased.	0.306	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
6.	There is no association between sales promotion schemes and the total monthly spending on branded spices.	0.263	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected
7.	There is no association between sales promotion schemes and the place from which branded spices are purchased.	0.285	$p > 0.05$	H <sub>0</sub> is not rejected

As seen from the Table 5, there is no association found between the various sales promotion schemes observed by respondents for branded spices (buy one get one, bonus pack, coupons, price discount, scratch card or contest) and purchase behaviour of respondents for branded spices in terms of type of branded spice, frequency of buying, size of branded spice packs, brand, monthly spending and place from where they prefer to buy branded spices.

**Impact of Type of Sales Promotion on Reaction Towards Sales Promotions For Branded Spices**

Further, to examine the impact of type of sales promotion scheme observed by respondents for branded spices (buy one get one, bonus pack, coupons, price discount, scratch card or contest) and reaction towards the sales promotion (purchase of another brand, earlier purchase, purchase of larger quantity, purchase of new brand or spending more than budgeted amount), a correlation analysis was conducted. The results of the same are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Impact of Type of Sales Promotion on Reaction Towards Sales Promotions For Branded Spices**

Correlation Analysis	
Sales promotion	Reaction towards sales

	observed for brandedspices	promotion offer on brandedspices
Sales promotion observed for branded spices	1	-.472
Reaction towards sales promotion offer on branded spices	-.472	1

As Table 6 shows, the correlation co-efficient is -0.472 which denotes that there is a moderate negative correlation between sales promotion observed for branded spices and reaction towards sales promotion offer on branded spices. This implies that irrespective of the sales promotion schemes on branded spices, respondents do not react in terms of changes in purchase behaviour.

### **V. Discussion**

The results of this study, where majority of the respondents were familiar with Price Discount are in line with Jee's (2021) work, which examined consumer perceptions of discount sales

promotions from both a utilitarian and hedonic perspective. This might indicate that similar to other markets, discounts are perceived favorably in in the Indian branded spice market too.

A very small proportion of respondents were familiar with "Buy 1 Get 1 Free" promotions, in contrast with Bhatt and Pai (2023). This might stem from consumers not sharing the perception that they are getting more value for their money in contradiction to the findings of Alvarez and Casielles (2005).

As for the geographical preferences in sales promotions, this study found that urban respondents showed a greater inclination towards discounts compared to their rural counterparts. This observation could be compared with the study by Sinha and Verma (2019) which explored the link between sales promotion benefits and consumers' perceptions, distinguishing between rural and urban consumers. Their findings suggested that urban consumers might be more exposed and hence responsive to aggressive promotional strategies compared to rural consumers, which is also reflected in the current study.

However, overall, the results of the chi-square tests show a lack of impact of sales promotion scheme on purchase behaviour for branded spices indicating that the Indian branded spices consumer is not affected by sales promotions. This could signal a desire for more differentiated products which could form the basis for changes in purchase behaviour, especially among the urban, high-income and high education consumers represented by the respondents of this study.

Similarly, the study reveals a moderate negative correlation between sales promotion observed for branded spices and reaction towards sales promotion offer on branded spices. This implies that irrespective of the sales promotion schemes on branded spices, respondents do not react in terms of changes in purchase behaviour. Again, this could be a result of the urban, high-income and high education consumers represented by the respondents of this

study. A similar study with rural or semi-urban consumers from lower income and lower education categories might reveal different results.

### **VI. Conclusion**

Drawing from the results of the study, it is evident that consumer preferences within the Indian branded spice market lean towards Price Discounts. Urban consumers display a pronounced preference for discounts, highlighting potential regional variations in reactions to sales promotion schemes. However, a notable finding is that promotional schemes in this market might not significantly impact overall purchase behaviour, especially among the urban, affluent, and well-educated demographics.

#### *Limitations*

This study has a few limitations in terms of the small sample size and the possible respondent bias due to the use of self-reported data. Additionally, the prevalence of urban, high-income, and well-educated respondents in the sample may restrict the findings to this demographic only. Such a focus might not provide a holistic view of the entire market, leaving out potentially significant insights from rural or semi-urban consumers or those from lower income and educational backgrounds.

#### *Implications*

Given the observed preferences, companies within the Indian branded spice market might need to reconsider their promotional strategies, especially if targeting the urban, affluent demographic. The evident inclination towards price discounts and the potential lack of impact of promotional schemes suggest a need for more nuanced and differentiated marketing approaches.

*Scope for Further Research*

Future studies could delve deeper into understanding the preferences of rural and semi-urban consumers, providing a more comprehensive insight into the market dynamics. Research could also be aimed at understanding the specific factors beyond promotions that influence purchase decisions. Evaluating the efficacy of non-traditional promotional schemes or exploring the role of branding and product differentiation in influencing consumer choices could also provide valuable insights for businesses and marketers alike.

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