

Consumer Purchase Decision towards Private Label Brands: Evidence from the Indian Market

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Abstract-The aim of this study is to explore the key factors which Indian consumers considers during purchase of Private label brand products and how these identified factors impact the purchase decision of consumers towards private label brand. The research is initially exploratory in nature followed by causal research to test various hypothesis developed. The research instrument used is structured questionnaire to collect responses from different consumers in retail segment of National Capital Region (NCR) in India. Thereafter factor analysis followed by multiple regression analysis was performed. EFA explored five key factors price consciousness, quality variability, brand image, store image and self-perception. Thereafter hypothesis testing was done on explored factors to study the impact on PLB purchase decision which revealed that Brand Image is a most significant factor followed by Price consciousness, Quality Variability, Store Image whereas self-perception emerged as insignificant as it varies among different consumers.

Keywords- Private Label Brands, Store brands, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Purchase Decision, Multiple Regression Analysis.

1. Introduction

Retail market in India is anticipated to grow one trillion dollar by year 2020 from 650 billion dollar in 2015 due to urbanization, increased income and change in consumer attitude and behavior [1]. While the overall retail market will grow at 12% per annum, modern trade will grow twice as

fast at 20% per annum, and traditional trade at 10%. Increase in modern trade due to emergence of large number of hyper market, supermarket, specialty store and other organized retail outlets. Modern trade is expected to grow from 60 billion dollars in 2015 to 180 billion dollars in 2020. Also rapid growth of ecommerce is pushing modern trade which is anticipated to become 70 billion dollars in next few years.

Average household income is increasing in India and expected to grow from 6,393 dollars in year 2010 to 18,448 dollars by year 2020. Urbanisation is also increasing and anticipated to grow upto 40% from 31% Also, shift in consumer attitude due to generation I population which consists of 75% of people belonging to age less than 14 years resulting in higher consumption level and huge economic growth.

Private Labels has strongly captured the retail market of developed nations such as Europe, UK and USA, and are also upcoming in developing nations like China and India. The evolution of organized retail in India has resulted in production of private label brands by leading retailers such as shopper stop, Big Bazaar, Westside etc. All the major retailers are coming with private label products to gain market share few of private label products easily found in Indian retail stores are Tasty Treat in Big Bazaar, STOP in Shopper Stop, Network and Net Play in Reliance Trends etc. So what is a Private Label? According to research [2], a private label is: "a consumer product produced by, or on behalf of, retailers and sold under the retailers' own name or trademark through their own outlets"

Retail industry in India is growing by 10% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) due to Increase income, change in people's lifestyles, and favorable consumer demographics. Organized retail is booming in India and is on the threshold of success. With increased market the another challenge in organized retail is between the manufacturer brands and private label brands of retail chains, that is a low cost and better quality alternative to the consumers .Private brands are in house or store brands that are produced and sold by the retailers in their respective stores at reasonable lower price due to low advertisement and marketing expenses which is attracting more and more consumers worldwide and hence retailers are becoming more powerful and providing threats to leading brands.

2. Literature review

Private label brands in India is growing with the emergence of big retail players there is a competition among manufacturer brand and private label brand , these retailers are continuously studying the consumer perception and producing private label product as a substitute to national brands. Consumers come in retail stores due to presence of huge variety of products in the respective category and finally purchasing private label products due to better price and quality. National brand manufacturers are facing tough competition with store brand and therefore needs to revise their marketing and promotional strategies to maintain their market share. The major objectives of all these researches are to explore the key factors which effect the consumer purchase decision of private label brands and there after understand the impact of identified factors such as Price, Quality, Brand, Store Image & Store loyalty on PLB purchase, hence market segmentation can be done for private label products.

Due to rapidly growing market and competition, customers are slowly becoming erratic hence it becomes difficult and complex to study consumer attitudes [3]. Attitudes (either positive or negative) plays a crucial role in customer buying behavior process and have positive impact on purchase decisions. These are mainly assessed by products attributes and services that are perceived to have and formal judgment based on level of customer satisfaction. If a customer is convinced with the products / services offered, he carries a favorable

attitude towards it, which ultimately develops a favorable perception in the mind of customer [4].

Private labels are defined as a products owned and branded by the companies whose core objective is distribution rather than production [5]. Two major advantages evolved due to production of private labels by retailers are larger margins and increased store loyalty [6].

To understand the retailer strategy of Private Label's products, researchers have studied various factors for example technology, required investments, category volume, category margins, manufacturer brand advertising and different promotional activities etc [7]. They also found that Private Label's in categories offering high margins have larger share, and they compete against few national manufacturers who spend less on national advertising.

The difference in the quality level between National Brands and Private Label's also depends on the technology requirements in producing varies product categories. Private Labels are introduced when the product market consists of a large number of National Brands. Moreover Private Labels have positive impact on amount of sales in the respective category [8].

Primarily, private label produced were produced by retailers as a low-priced alternative to compete against national or manufacture brands. The major aim was to catch low-income and price sensitive consumers. By using price as a key strategy, the private label brands emerged and starting competing with few of the heavily advertised leading brands [9]. Private Labels are introduced when major National Brands occupies huge market share, and its result confirms the positive impact of the total value of category sales as well as there is positive impact on probability of introducing Private Label with respect to advertising vs. Total sales ratio as stated in one of the study [10]. The quality gap between products of private label brands and national brands have narrowed down and the quality of private label products are much higher than ever before and are more consistent, primarily in innovative product categories [11].

Retailers are producing private label products with matching or better quality than national brand products. Due to which private label products are sold at slightly low price or in some product

categories at even higher prices [12]. Therefore showing major quality improvements done by the retailers in past years to compete with the challenges offered by national brand [2]. Consumers always consider price and quality association to understand the brand importance in their purchase decision [13]. Many times quality varies from retailer to retailer but taste is always equal to the premium products [14]. Private label brands are generally considered as a cheap alternatives to the premium products thought by price conscious customers [15].

A study [16] identified that sometimes it is dangerous for the retailers to use low price strategy alone as some customers may feel that it could substantiate quality. Customers with specific needs from various category, huge involvement and strong association toward specific brands still focuses on national brands [2].

One of the major study [17] tried to find various reasons influencing the purchase of Private Labels. In study of Private Labels, market share in 34 product categories and in 106 different locations in USA showed that 40% of the variance of their sample (variance of the market share of PLBs across product categories, retailers, and locations) was explained by differences across categories of products and that 17% of the variances by differences across retailers. Following were main factors favouring large market share of Private Labels which explains 70% of the variance of the market share of Private Labels in sample of 185 products.

High Quality compared to the National Brands,
 Low variability of quality of Private Labels,
 High product category sales, Small number of national manufacturers operating in the respective category and Low national advertising expenditures.

An important study done [18] found the cause for development and promotion of Private Labels. Reasons to develop Private Labels are to increase customer loyalty, to improve positioning, to improve margins, and to lower prices. Private Labels are retailer specific brands which creates differentiation between retailers. Hence Private Labels helps retailers to compete with other retailers with respect to positioning and customer loyalty and their suppliers through improved

margins and lower prices. Thus, the growth of private labels not only affects the producers and retailers relationship but also impacts the competition between retailers [19]. Another study [20] found that both national brands and Private Label brands are consumed on the basis similar social and economic characteristics of households and their consumption pattern. In a study [21] found that consumers are best categorized by their own perceptions level rather than any other social and economic attributes. He also explained that respondent treat both Private label and National brand differently. As research done [22], perception differences among consumers are due to degree of experience, responses coming due to marketing activities, varying needs, perceived risk and different product importance given by variety of consumers.

Research found [23] that the poor performances of person psychographic and demographic factors are due to the consumer perception of price and quality association toward product. A study [24] explained that personal attributes between various factors are useful in understanding customer segments of national and store brand. As research done [25] found that the consumers perception and success of private label penetration is driven by the segments complexity, quality variance price and inter-purchase time. A study [26] found that consumer perceive private label products trustworthy and reliable and they consider it different from manufacture brand and value for money. In this research focus is on inter category attitudinal differences at consumer level by doing so the research can put light on what has made private label brand a successful strategy by the retailer making private label brand compete with national brands.

For considering any national brand the top three attributes are quality, price and packing whereas for private label brand attributes price, health and risk [27].

It is [28] identified that store brand has favourable effect on retailer image. The store brand price image is positively associated with the price image of retailer. Another research [29] has found that store image perceptions have major and favourable impact on Store brand purchase behaviour. Awareness towards stores directly effects Store Brand choice, but not the purchase behaviour

towards store brands. Socio-demographic variables does not impact store brand purchase decision. A study [30] found that Store Image directly influences the perceived risk associated with store brand, the intensity of which differs with value-consciousness. Research [31] studied that the impact of private label image and perceived quality on buying intention is associated with loyalty to some extent and also with manufacturer identification. The study [32] explored that store brand attitude, store image perceptions, Store brand price-image, store brand perceived value and store brand purchase intention have significant impact on choice of Store Brands overall, and for every retail chain.

2.1 Research gap and Research problem

- Private label penetration in current Indian retail is around 7 percent which is anticipated to grow upto 27% in next few years so it has huge market potential in India in next few years as private label share market in developed countries such as UK and Europe is approximately 45 percent followed by 18 percent share in US and Australia. The current retail market in India is growing at 10 percent and current private label market estimation is approximately 13 billion. Large number of Big Retail player are coming up with Private label products which in fact is contributing growth in sales and revenue of retailers. Private label share is 90 percent in Tata Trent, 80 percent in Reliance and 75% in pantaloons. Other retailers are also increasing private label products shares from 10% to 35% in next few years [33].
- As such there are only few studies on consumer perception towards purchase of private label products in India. Hence this study is aimed to explore the key attributes that are considered by Indian consumers and how these identified attributes impact the purchase decision of PLB consumers.

2.2. Objectives of the study

- To identify key factors that influences consumer purchase decision towards Private Label Brand (PLBs) in food & grocery and apparel's segment.
- To study the impact of explored factors on PLB Purchase Decision.

3. Research methodology

The research methodology is based on primary data collected of approximately 380 respondents of Top Retailers in NCR Region of India through structured questionnaire. The study is limited to food & Grocery and Clothing & Apparel segment. To ensure the validity and reliability of this study, the questionnaire was framed on previous tested items. All items, except those of demographic profile were based on a five-point Likert scale, where respondents indicate their level of agreement to a statement. Initially Exploratory Factor analysis was conducted to identify the key factors followed by multiple regression analysis to study significant impact of explored factors on private label product decision

3.1 Reliability coefficient

Cronbach Alpha is one of the most important indicators in scale development process. It describes the reliability of items with higher value of alpha indicating the high internal consistency. This means that all the items used in scale development is measuring the construct of interest.

Table 1. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.872	.872	18

Alpha is an indication of the proportion of variance in the scale scores that is attributable to the true score. Internal consistency of items is tested with Cronbach alpha coefficient. Using SPSS 17.0 version, scale reliability is calculated by estimation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Value of alpha came out as 0.872 which is well above the suggested minimum value of 0.7

3.2 Data Collection & Sampling Frame

This research is conducted to identify key factors considered by Indian consumer while purchasing private label products from the food & grocery and apparel & clothing segment of Indian retail and

further study the impact of these explored factors on PLB purchase decision that will make retailers to understand better insights about the consumer perception in evaluating PLB Products. In this study, data was collected by Survey method in which Structured questionnaire is used on different attributes identified from literature Questions were asked on likert scale of 5 to 1.

Table 2. Sampling Frame

Company Name	Total Distribution	Complete Response	Response %
FOOD & GROCERY	200	180	90
Big Bazaar	70	70	100
Easy day	35	30	86
MORE	35	30	86
Spencers	30	25	83
Vishal MegaMart	30	25	83
APPARELS & CLOTHINGS	200	190	95
Shopper Stop	75	60	80
Pantaloons	35	30	86
West Side	35	30	86
Reliance Trends	55	50	91
Source: Author calculation			

Total 18 statement were used along with 5 demographic questions on Age, Gender, Qualification, Occupation and Income. Sampling technique used was Stratified Random Sampling in which strata was made of top retailers in food and grocery and clothing and apparel segment. The responses were collected from consumers of NCR Region (Delhi, Noida, Gurgaon, Ghaziabad) who visits mall frequently. In this research data was collected from the consumers when they come in store for shopping. Total 400 questionnaires were floated in different malls of NCR Region to gather responses. Data was collected from Five Food and

grocery stores i.e. Big Bazaar, Easy day, More, Spencer's and Vishal Mega Mart and four Apparel and Clothing Stores such as Shopper Stops, Pantaloons, Westside and Reliance trends. As shown in above Table 2, Response of (180/200) people was used from food and grocery and responses of (190/200) from Apparels and Clothing was analysed.

Table 3. Sample Characteristics

Socio-Demographic Variables	Categories	Percent
Age (In Years)	18-25	37
	25-35	25
	35-45	19
	45 above	19
Occupation	Service	32
	Business	22
	Student	38
	Self Employed	8
Qualification	Undergraduate	5
	Graduate	36
	Post Graduate	51
	Doctorate	7
Income(INR/Month)	upto 10K	28
	10-20k	16
	20-40k	17
	Above 40k	39
Gender	Male	58
	Female	42

As shown in Table 3, Responses were collected from five demographic factors on Age, Occupation, Qualification, Income and gender. 37% of

consumers are in 18-25 years followed by 25% in 25-35 years and 19% in 35-45 year and 45 years and above. Occupation of respondents is as follows 38% are student, 32% are service class, 22% are business class and 8% are self employed. Maximum consumers are having Post graduate Qualification is 51% followed by 36% respondents are graduate, 5% are undergraduate and 7% are doctorate. Maximum Income (INR/Month) respondents are 39% having income above 40 thousand rupees per month followed by 28% up to ten thousand rupees per month, approximately 16% people are having income between ten to forty thousand rupees per month. In gender category, 58% are male and 42% are female respondents.

3.3. Data Analysis and Results

In the study initially factor analysis was performed to explore the key factors considered by Indian PLB Consumers while they go for purchasing PLB Products. KMO and Bartlett's is used to check sample adequacy before conducting EFA.

Table 4. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.876
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square Sphericity	1987.984
Df	153
Sig.	.000

For doing factor analysis the KMO Measure must be greater than 0.7 , KMO for this sample is found 0.876 which is suitable for conducting factor analysis also Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is done to test atleast few items should be correlated in the current study Approx chi square value is 1987.984 which is too high , p value is .000 hence it is significant (p<0.05) .Therefore Factor analysis can be performed on the collected data.

As shown in below table 5, Five components have emerged whose Eigen value are greater than 1. The maximum % of variance share is explained by component 1 having 31.873 % of variance share

followed by component 2 having % of variance share 8.041, third component has % of variance share 7.101, fourth component have variance share 6.226 followed by fifth component having % of variance share 5.838.Total cumulative variance shared by all five component is 59.079.

Table 5.Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.737	31.873	31.873	5.737	31.873	31.873
2	1.447	8.041	39.914	1.447	8.041	39.914
3	1.278	7.101	47.015	1.278	7.101	47.015
4	1.121	6.226	53.241	1.121	6.226	53.241
5	1.051	5.838	59.079	1.051	5.838	59.079
6	0.824	4.55	63.633			
7	0.778	4.32	67.957			
8	0.716	3.94	71.903			
9	0.676	3.75	75.658			
10	0.625	3.44	79.103			
11	0.599	3.27	82.379			
12	0.578	3.21	85.59			
13	0.564	3.13	88.721			
14	0.469	2.60	91.328			
15	0.458	2.54	93.874			
16	0.414	2.3	96.174			
17	0.374	2.05	98.227			
18	0.319	1.77	100			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6 .Rotated Component Matrix

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
I find economical to buy Private Label Brands (PLBs)	.733	.261	-.015	.075	.014
Private label brands are for those having low income	.685	.118	.085	.267	.154

I look at the price even for the little things.	.683	.256	.166	-.038	.175
When I shop, I usually compare information of price per unit for brands I normally buy.	.627	-.019	.158	.235	.220
Price is the primary reason for purchasing Private label brands	.618	.197	.077	.250	.174
It is important to get the cheapest price when purchasing a product.	.556	.248	.414	-.119	-.087
Beyond the money I save, buying brands on deal makes me happy	.151	.741	.091	.240	-.044
I look for private label brands when I go shopping.	.329	.690	.190	.047	.140
I love when private label brands are available for the product categories I purchase	.164	.680	.104	.126	.274
In general, private label brands are of inferior quality	.109	.007	.738	-.027	.341
When purchasing a product, I always try to maximize the quality I get for the money I spend.	.098	.262	.646	.240	-.137
For me high quality is important when I shop.	.130	.044	.594	.119	.453
Private label brands are similar in quality to national (manufacturer) brands.	.211	.127	.588	.413	-.229
Someone who buys private label is a smart shopper	.044	.218	.165	.680	.189
When I shop smartly, I feel like a winner.	.188	.282	.022	.675	.119
In general, I consider myself very familiar with Private Label	.453	-.174	.224	.576	.018
I Suggest People to buy PLBs on few selected store	.221	.091	.096	.154	.689

Private label products are made by the retailer to get you into the store	.182	.437	-.025	.087	.570
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Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.

As stated [34] for exploratory research, lower cutoff used are 0.4 for the central factor and 0.25 for other factors [35] explained that loadings to be above 0.6 as high and loading below 0.4 are low. In the Table 4 the item loading are in the range 0.556 to 0.741 which indicates the each item is extracted well to be clubbed in respective factors .Six items are clubbed into first component with item loading ranging from 0.556 to 0.733. Three items are clubbed into second component with item loading 0.680 to 0.741. Four items were clubbed into third component with item loading 0.588 to 0.738, three items were clubbed into fourth component with factor loading from 0.576 to 0.680, and two items were clubbed into fifth component with item loading 0.570 to 0.689.

Table 7. Inter Construct Correlation

Constr ucts	Price consci ousness	Brand Image	Quality Variability	Self Perception	Store Image
Price consci ousness	1	.520	.517	.462	.484
Brand Image	.520	1	.513	.436	.307
Quality Variability	.517	.513	1	.382	.372
Self Perception	.462	.436	.382	1	.522
Store Image	.484	.307	.372	.522	1

Note: Significant at * (p <0.05)

As shown in above Table 7, there is no evidence of Multi-collinearity among five different constructs that are Price Consciousness, Brand Image, Quality variability, Self perception and store image as inter correlation among these constructs are less than 0.5 in almost every items hence all items are independent and measuring the right construct.

4 Discussions

In causal research it becomes necessary to understand the impact of independent variable on the dependent variable which is possible through performing statistical test for accepting or rejecting any relationship. The relationship is tested by developing hypothesis which is accepted or rejected by the outcome of the result. In the current study the dependent variable identified is PLB Purchase decision and its relationship with various independent variables explored in the research are price consciousness, brand image, quality variability, consumer self perception and store Image is tested through multiple regression analysis. Initially hypothesis with PLB purchase decision with different independent variables were framed and on the basis of multiple regression hypothesis is accepted or rejected. Following Five hypothesis was developed

H1- There is a significant Relationship between PLB purchase decision & Price Consciousness.

H2- There is a significant Relationship between PLB purchase decision & Brand Image.

H3- There is a significant Relationship between PLB purchase decision & Quality Variability.

H4- There is a significant Relationship between PLB purchase decision & Self Perception.

H5- There is a significant Relationship between PLB purchase decision & Store Image

Table 8. Mutiple Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandar dized Coefficien ts		Standar dized Coeffici ents	T	Sig .
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Consta nt)	3.311	0.032		104.036	0

Price Conciou sness	0.34	0.032	0.329	10.661	0
Brand Image	0.712	0.032	0.69	22.356	0
Quality Variabilt y	0.196	0.032	0.19	6.162	0
Self Percepti on	0.049	0.032	0.047	1.534	0.126
Store Image	0.144	0.032	0.14	4.531	0

a. Dependent Variable: I look for private label brands when I go shopping.

Multiple regression results as shown in table 8 shows that four factors namely Price consciousness, Brand image, Quality variability and Store image are significant for PLB purchase decision by consumer as p value is less than 0.05 where as Self perception is found to be insignificant with p value 0.126.

Hence in the first four hypothesis developed that there is a relationship between PLB purchase decision and different independent variable Price consciousness, Brand image, Quality variability and Store image as p value is significant (p<0.5) where as the relationship between the Self Perception and PLB purchase decision is insignificant as (p>.05).

So there exist a relationship between these variables in which strongest relation found is between brand Image and PLB purchase decision followed by price consciousness, Quality variability and Store Image and a very weak relationship is between self perception of consumer and PLB purchase decision.

5. Conclusion

This study identifies the key attributes that are considered by Indian consumer while making purchase decision for private label brand among top retail chains of food & grocery and clothing apparel sector. Several Price and Non Price related attributes were identified through literature review for different National and Private label brands. Nine of them namely Price Consciousness, Quality Variability, Self Perception, Value Consciousness, Brand Image, Brand loyalty, Store loyalty, Store

Image and Impulsiveness were identified crucial from consumer perspective for PLB Purchasing. These nine factors comprising of 18 items were surveyed from the top retail stores of food & grocery and clothing & apparels in NCR Region . EFA results revealed 18 items into 5 specific factors namely Price Consciousness, Brand Image, Quality Variability, Self perception and store image. Causal Analysis identified the most significant and discriminating factor as Brand image for PLB purchasing followed by price consciousness, quality variability and store image. Self perception found to be insignificant as the it varies from individual to individual.

5.1. Implication of the Study

Private label products are in the retail stores from last few decades but still there is a need to understand the consumer psychology by the retailers to increase the market share in India as the country has huge market potential. This study is important for those retailers who are planning to increase their store brands /private label brands acceptance in the market. This study explores retailers' consumers' attitudes, preferences and behavior towards private label products which will help retailers to devise new strategy for PLB consumers in India. As the future of India organized retail is expecting a tremendous scope compared to developed nations and future in retail will be of PLB products with innovation and differentiation.

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