

Understanding Marketing Strategy of Dabur India Ltd:2017-18 To 2021-22

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Abstract- This analysis explores how Dabur India Limited executed marketing strategy from 2017-18 to 2021-22. The research draws on Dabur India Limited's annual reports and first-hand survey data. The analysis applies the 4Ps framework to assess Dabur's marketing strategy, complemented by an examination of branding, packaging, advertising, digital marketing efforts and a SWOT analysis. The scope of this study covers digital marketing strategies, new developments in Ayurvedic products, interpretation of primary research findings, and potential pathways for enhancing the company's future marketing performance.

Index Terms- Ayurvedic, Dabur, FMCG, Marketing, SWOT, 4PS.

I. INTRODUCTION

Marketing strategy represents a company's overarching long-term plan to attain and maintain competitive edge by anticipating and fulfilling customer expectations. Philip Kotler [1] defined it as the "marketing logic" by which a business unit hopes to achieve its objectives. In the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, Dabur continues to create buzz through its potential customer marketing strategy. It has adopted a policy of adapting and moving forward with the changing market trends. More recent definitions by authors like Jeff Bezos and George S. Day 'highlight the role of digital transformation and continuous adaptation'. They suggest that strategy is no longer a static document but an emergent process that must be flexible enough to handle "strategic surprises" and rapidly shifting consumer data.

In this study, we examine Dabur India Limited's marketing strategy and analyze how it integrates the values of tradition, integrity, and stability into its branding. We will examine the marketing mix (4Ps) strategies used by the company namely product,

price, promotion and place. We will discuss the role of power bands, branding strategies, packaging strategies, advertising strategies, SWOT analysis, digital marketing, celebrity endorsements, and social codes in managing their marketing strategies.

II.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

- i. A detailed look at how Dabur is adopting its marketing strategy.
- ii. To assess the level of awareness among the public regarding Dabur's science-based Ayurvedic products.
- iii. To highlight Dabur's performance from 2017-18 to 2021-22 and its explanation by reviewing operating income, advertising and promotion expenses, research and development expenses and profit margin.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mohammad Razib Uddin (2008)[4] analyses diverse product portfolio, competitive pricing strategy, extensive distribution network and promotional activities which have strengthened its position in the market of the Dabur India as Asian Consumer Care Pvt. Ltd collecting information from different website and employees.

Ashish Shrestha, from Centria-ammattikorkeakoulu (2016)[5] analyzed 'product line strategies and brand image adopted by Dabur Nepal Pvt. Ltd.'

Lipani Sheikh, from BRAC University, (2018)[6] in his research titled "Brand promotion and successful marketing strategies of Dabur" evaluated the brand's growing popularity and trust in Bangladesh through promotional and marketing strategies, along with the provision of value-added quality products. The

researcher concluded that Dabur's strong and careful distribution system has played a crucial role.

Amit Kumar Dubey (2016)[7] in his article "a study on consumer perception with respect to dabur honey" showed that Dabur India limited is the largest player in Indian FMCG market and to attract potential future consumers. The results of the study suggest that high levels of motivation and satisfaction depend on brand name and product quality. The researchers concluded that this study has given researchers insight into the market and enriched marketing strategies.

Monirul Islam (2021)[8] in his work title "Adoption & standardization of marketing strategies by dabur during the pandemic to sustain the competition" proposed framework shows how both internal and external factors interact to impact whether a company standardizes or adapts its strategy.

IV. RESEARCH GAP

Having analyzed the literature, we found the following research gaps:

1. There is insufficient or lack of data on the longterm changes in rural consumers' purchasing habits after the pandemic.
2. Company-based research on the impact of Dabur's marketing strategy through the use of digital marketing in rural and semi-urban areas is limited.
3. There is a lack of research on the direct impact of Dabur's "plastic waste-friendly" initiatives.
4. Dabur is currently introducing products in new areas such as heart health, stress management, and metabolism. There is a gap for research on how these modern lifestyle products align with Dabur's traditional 'Ayurvedic' image and how they are being received by the new generation (Gen G).
5. There is a gap in analyzing the impact of social norms and celebrity endorsements on product management and Dabur's marketing strategy.
6. Power branding strategies have not been sufficiently discussed in previous studies.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the backbone of any institutional inquiry. It includes theoretical analysis of the main methods and principles related to a branch of knowledge.

Reserch Design: The research has used exploratory research design for the study. The study aims to examine the marketing strategy of Dabur India limited both before and after the pandemic.

Data Sources : Both the primary data and secondary data were collected in this research.

Primary data: Data for this research was obtained directly from respondents using structured questionnaires.

Secondary data: The secondary data has been collected mainly through review of literature, Dabur's website, company annual report and journal etc.

Sample Design: Respondents were selected by using convenience sampling method.

Sample Size: A sample of 20 respondents was taken from the surrounding areas of Kolkata for this survey.

Tools : Bar diagrams and pie charts are used for analysis and presentation.

VI. COMPANY'S PROFILE

Dabur India Ltd: Building on 140 years of expertise and commitment to quality.

History: Founded in 1884 by 'Dr. S K. Burman' in India (Calcutta).

Corporate Office: Dabur House, Kaushambi, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad-201010, Uttar Pradesh, India

Mission Of Dabur: "Ghar Ghar Ayurveda – Contemporize Ayurveda and make it relevant for the new generation (Gen G)."

Products' Power Brands: Dabur Chyawanprash, Dabur Amla Hair Oil & Dabur Honey (for the convenience of the study, I have selected 3 power brands).

VII. MARKETING STRATEGY

• MARKETING MIX FRAMEWORK (4Ps)

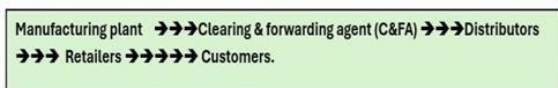
Product (Ayurvedic and Natural Core): Dabur is committed in offering its customer products that are of excellent quality and herbal. Flagship products like Dabur Chyawanprash and Dabur Honey focus on immunity and wellness.

Price (Value-Driven and Multi-Tier Pricing Approach): Dabur leverages both value-based and tiered pricing to optimize reach while upholding its premium appeal.

Value Ladders: Products are offered in various sizes, from low-cost sachets (₹1) for rural penetration to larger family packs and premium variants (priced 30–70% higher) for urban consumers.

Competitive Benchmarking: Pricing is regularly adjusted to match rivals like Hindustan Unilever, Amul, ITC, Nestle and Britannia often using selective price cuts or “buy-one-get-one” offers during festive seasons.

Place (Robust Distribution Network): Dabur’s distribution reach is among the most comprehensive in the Indian FMCG sector. A schematic of the distribution channels is provided below:



Promotion (360-Degree Integrated Marketing) : The promotional strategy blends traditional media with aggressive digital engagement to maintain brand salience. Dabur tries to strengthen its position in the market by outperforming competitors through celebrity endorsements, digital transformation, various campaigns etc.

• BRANDING STRATEGY OF DABUR

Dabur's branding strategy is founded on “Sciencebased Ayurveda”, reflecting its evolution from a traditional medicine manufacturer to a contemporary global FMCG company. The Dabur logo, which features a old banyan tree, symbolizes the brand's heritage, commitment and stability.



The company’s core strategy moved away from an umbrella branding model which placed all products under the Dabur name, toward a Power Brand strategy.

• PACKAGING STRATEGY OF DABUR

Dabur India Limited’s packaging strategy is built around sustainability, modernisation and consumer protection with a goal of ensuring 80% recyclable or compostable packaging by 2028. In Financial Year 2021-22, Dabur became the first Indian FMCG company to achieve plastic waste neutrality, meaning it collected and recycled more plastic than it used. As a plastic waste-conscious company, it focuses on reducing plastic weight, using recycled materials and introducing eco-friendly designs like carton-free toothpaste for key products.

• ADVERTISEMENT STRATEGY

Celebrity and Influencer Endorsement: Using Alisters (e.g. Amitabh Bachchan, MS Dhoni, Rani Mukherjee, Madhuri Dixit) to gain widespread trust and adding health bloggers and fitness influencers on Instagram/YouTube for specific digital engagement.

Hyper-local and regional language content:

Localizing ads in more than 7 languages (e.g., Hindi, Bengali, Tamil etc.) to reach different consumer groups, often resulting in higher engagement.

Rural Marketing Initiative: Penetrating remote rural markets through mobile vans and advertising in local languages, which contributes about 50% of domestic sales.

Purpose-driven marketing: Creating socially conscious and emotional campaigns, such as “Brave and Beautiful” for cancer survivors, that build love and trust in the brand.

• DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

Dabur has given special importance to the customer experience aspect on its website. Double has designed its website in a way where customers can find information about various Ayurvedic products, herbal products and other products available for purchase. Dabur products are now also available on various online e-shopping apps and online grocery stores. Dabur is targeting consumers between the ages of 18 and 35 through multiple social media accounts like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube etc. Through this, the brand can reach its desired customers. Dabur's digital marketing strategy is an important step in ensuring fast and effective service to meet the needs of digital-age customers in the post-pandemic era.

VIII. SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT terminology includes four characteristics namely Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The analysis of these characteristics in the case of Dabur India Limited is as follows:

STRENGTHS: Dabur India Ltd's competitive strengths stem from its century-long brand heritage, dominant position in herbal and Ayurvedic segments and one of the most robust distribution systems in the Indian FMCG industry.

WEAKNESSES: Many unbranded and duplicate products are being sold under the name of Dabur. This is one of the company's weaknesses.

OPPORTUNITIES: Dabur products experience strong demand in international markets. Diversifying the product portfolio through the introduction of Ayurvedic beverages may further accelerate business growth.

THREATS: The substitute Ayurvedic products that are present in the local market are a huge threat to Dabur's ayurvedic products. Existing competitors (such as ITC, HUL, Patanjali, Colgate Palmolive, Jandu and Vaidyanath etc.) will have to be countered through strong marketing and innovative strategies.

IX. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

• ANALYSIS OF REVENUE FORM OPERATION:

According to Dabur's annual report, I found that from the financial year 2017-18 to the financial year 2021-22, the Revenue from Operations of Dabur India Limited was Rs.7748.30 crore, Rs. 8533.10



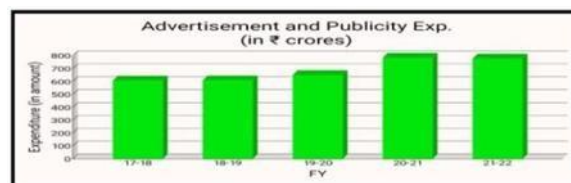
Source: Annual report (several issues)

crore, Rs. 8703.60 crore, Rs. 9561.70 crore and Rs. 10888.70 crore respectively.

This data highlights that Revenue from Operations was highest in FY 2021-22 during the period of study. This indicates an increase in sales in the pandemic period, which is a sign of improving business.

• ANALYSIS OF ADVERTISEMENT AND PUBLICITY EXPENSES:

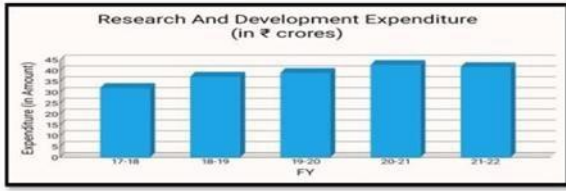
According to Dabur's annual report, I found that Dabur India Limited's Advertisement and Publicity Expenses from the financial years 2017-18 to 2021-22 were Rs 606.71 crore, Rs 608.33crore, Rs 649.98 crore, Rs 784.36 crore and Rs 777.94 crore respectively.



The highest expenditure was on Advertisement And Publicity Expenses during 2020-21. This suggests that the company has spent a lot of money to increase its sales during the COVID-19 period.

• ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE:

According to Dabur's annual report, I found that Research and Development Expenditure of Dabur India Ltd for the Financial years from 17-18 to 21-22 were 32.04 Crore, 37.29 Crore, 38.99 Crore, 42.69 Crore and 41.72 Crore respectively.



This data highlights that Research And Development Expenditure was highest in FY 2020-21 during the period of study. This suggests that the company has spent a lot of money on innovating new Ayurvedic and herbal products and producing hygiene products during the pandemic.

• ANALYSIS OF PROFIT MARGIN:

According to Dabur's annual report, I found that Dabur India Limited's profit margins from 2017-18 to 2021-22 were 17.5%, 16.9%, 16.6%, 17.7%, and 16% respectively

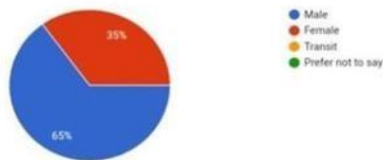


This data highlights that profit margin reached a record high of 17.7% in the FY 2020-21, mainly due to a jump in sales of immunity-boosting health products (such as Chyawanprash, honey) and the rapid expansion of e-commerce. This reflects high operational resilience and strategic agility during the pandemic-related cost-containment measures.

X. FINDINGS OF DATA

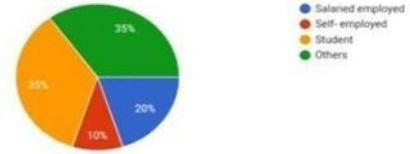
In this section, the results obtained from the survey (primary data) are analyzed through pie charts.

1) Gender Classification :
20 responses



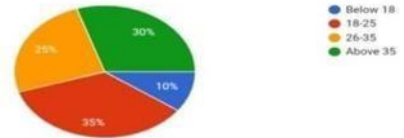
Interpretation: The pie chart shows that 65% respondents are male and remaining 35% respondents are female.

2) Profession Classification :
20 responses



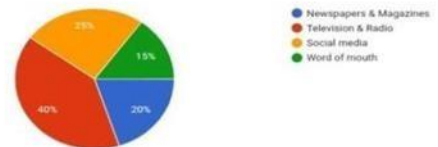
Interpretation: The pie chart above shows that 20% of the respondents are salaried employees, 10% are self-employed, 35% are students and the remaining 35% belong to other categories .

3) Age Group Classification :
20 responses



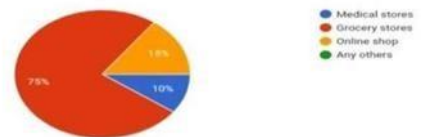
Interpretation: The above pie chart shows that 10% of respondents are below 18 age, 35% of respondents are 18-25 age, 25% of respondents are 26-35 age and 30% of respondents are above 35 age.

4) How do you know about Dabur :
20 responses



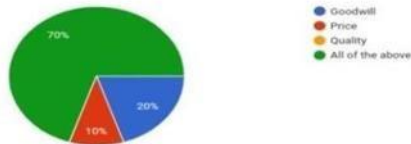
Interpretation: The pie chart above shows that 20% of respondents learned about it from newspapers and magazines, 40% from television and radio, 25% from social media and 15% from word of mouth.

5) From where do you buy Dabur 's products generally:
20 responses



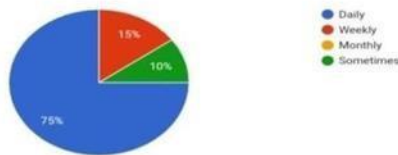
Interpretation: The above pie chart shows that 10% of respondents buy Dabur products from medical stores, 75% of respondents buy from Grocery store and 15% of respondents buy from Online shop.

6) According to you which factors has made Dabur survive for year?
 20 responses



Interpretation: 20% respondents identified goodwill, 10% respondents identified price and 70% respondents identified All of the above as the main reason for Dabur survive for long year.

7) How many times do you use Dabur products?
 20 responses



Interpretation: 75% respondents are using Dabur products daily, 15% respondents are using weekly and 10% respondents are using sometimes.

8) How easily Dabur products available in e-commerce site & any offline stores?
 20 responses



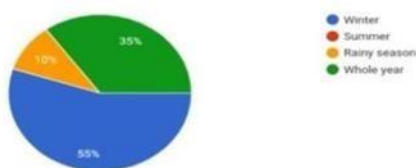
Interpretation: 65% respondents says that Dabur products available in e-commerce site are Very much, 25% respondents says it is Relatively readily available and 10% respondents says any others.

9) Which brand comes to your mind first when you heard of the word 'chyawanprash' ?
 20 responses



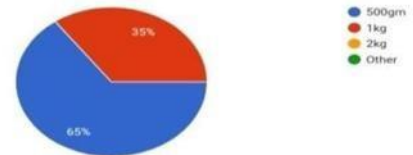
Interpretation: All respondents agreed that the first thing that comes to mind when hearing the word 'Chyawanprash' is the Dabur brand.

10) In which season do you purchase Dabur chyawanprash mostly ?
 20 responses



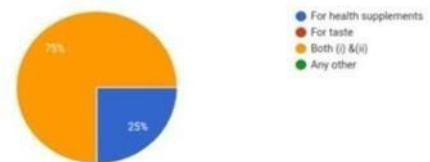
Interpretation: 55% respondents are buying Dabur Chyawanprash in Winter season, 10% respondents are buying in Rainy season and remaining 35% respondents are buying in Whole year.

11) Which packsize of Dabur Chyawanprash do you normally purchase ?
 20 responses



Interpretation: 65% respondents Generally consume 500gm pack size and 35% respondents consume 1kg pack size.

12) Why do you consume Dabur Honey?
 20 responses



Interpretation: 25% respondents consume Dabur honey for health supplement and 75% respondents consume Dabur Honey both for health supplement and taste.

13) How long you are consuming Dabur Honey?
 20 responses



Interpretation: 55% of the respondents have consumed Dabur honey for more than 12 months, 25% for more than 6 months, 10% for more than 3 months and the remaining 10% for more than 1 month.

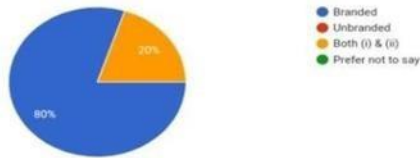
14) Is Dabur Honey or its other products cost-effective :
 20 responses



Interpretation: Regarding whether Dabur honey or its other products are affordable, 65% of respondents strongly agree, 10% agree, 15% neutral and the remaining 10% strongly disagree.

15) Which type of hair oil do you prefer?

20 responses



Interpretation: The above pie chart shows that 80% respondents are prefer Branded Hair Oil and 20% respondents are prefer both Branded and Unbranded Hair Oil .

16) The reason for you prefer Dabur Amla hair oil ?

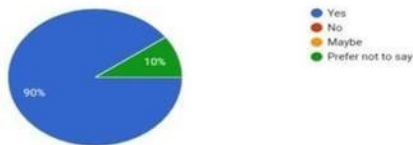
20 responses



Interpretation: 10% of respondents prefer Dabur Amla Hair Oil for its budget friendly price, 70% prefer it for its superior quality and performance, 10% prefer it due to brand loyalty and the remaining 10% prefer it for other reasons.

17) Are you satisfied with Dabur Amla hair oil :

20 responses



Interpretation: The above pie chart shows that 90% respondents are satisfied with Dabur Amla hair oil and 10% respondents prefer not to say.

18) According to you, what scheme does a consumer prefer most ?

20 responses



Interpretation: 35% of respondents prefer price discounts, 10% of respondents prefer gift coupons, 45% of respondents prefer buy one get one free offer and the remaining 10% of respondents prefer other schemes.

19) According to you, the Dabur brand should be in which position in the market?

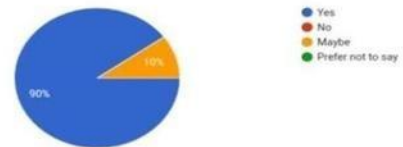
20 responses



Interpretation: 80% of respondents prefer Dabur as the top brand in the market, 10% of respondents prefer one of the top brands and remaining 10% of respondents prefer the average position in the market.

20) Do you recommended Dabur's products to others ?

20 responses



Interpretation: From the above pie chart shows that 90% respondents recommended Dabur products to others and 10% respondents says maybe.

[Sources: Primary Data]

XI. CONCLUSION

After reviewing all the aspects of the marketing strategy, primary data and secondary data of this FMCG company “Dabur India Limited”, it was truly an extraordinary experience. The purpose of this study was to analyze the ‘Marketing Strategy of Dabur India Limited’ in Kolkata and its surrounding areas and to understand the effectiveness of the company’s efforts to enter the world’s largest FMCG consumer market. Dabur has successfully established itself as the ‘Defender of Ayurveda’ through the use of traditional products backed by scientific research. This creates a high level of trust among consumers, which acts as a significant entry barrier for competitors.

Since 2020, Dabur has adopted a digital-first strategy. It uses e-commerce, quick commerce (e.g., Blinkit, Zepto) and regional influencer marketing to attract younger generations like Gen G and millennials. To counter price sensitive competitors like Patanjali, Dabur is increasingly focusing on ‘premiumization’- that is, bringing value-added versions of products like sugar free Chyawanprash, honey etc. It also various

projects of the company such as social initiatives in Sandesh, COVID Support Initiative, Environment Sustainability, Promotion Of Education, Eradicating Hunger And Poverty etc. indicate that the company is also committed to the society and such social responsibility is highly relevant to build a strong customer base and brand loyalty.

Dabur's future growth will come from strengthening its presence in e-commerce, further expansion in international markets such as the US, China and Europe and maintaining its leadership in the global wellness economy by practicing sustainable and environmentally friendly policies.

Future researchers can further expand their analysis on the marketing strategy of Dabur India Limited by extending their dataset to 2024-25 and using a wider geographical area, which is conspicuously absent in this study.

XII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis and the limitations observed, the following recommendations are proposed to further strengthen Dabur's marketing strategy:

- a. Dabur products should be viewed as health supplements, not medicines.
- b. More initiatives can be taken to increase brand awareness, such as 'Dabur Ki Diwar', which is an initiative to capture shelf space.
- c. QR codes (Quick Response Codes) should be used on product packaging or directly on the product itself.
- d. By scanning these, customers can instantly view detailed product reviews, ratings, instructions, ingredients and videos. This increases transparency and helps build customer trust and also helps verify whether the product is genuine or counterfeit.
- e. Dabur's new product launches are essential for risk diseases (like diabetes, anemia, cancer etc.), which will further expand their market presence in the future.
- f. Dabur India offers promotional video consultancy services with Ayurvedic doctors through their

official website and "Dabur Vedic Suraksha" app. Using the Dabur Doctor Consultation page users can seek home advice to resolve their problems. Steps must be taken to ensure that these things are easily accessible to everyone including in rural areas.

- g. Using AI tools to analyze customer needs, expand the scope of digital marketing and innovate new products.
- h. Exporting to new foreign markets to meet global demand and developing international markets for products.

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